

Vermont Country Sampler

Free

January
2021



- Statewide Calendar of Events, Vermont Map, Inns,
- Entertainment, Real Estate, Book Reviews
- Plenty of Good Reading!

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RANDOLPH, VERMONT



Deep Winter Journal

Bears in the Attic

by Bill Felker

All through last fall, we kept hearing things in our attic: Thump and clunk right above our bed. Part of our attic is accessible. It's full of junk, of course. The other part, the part above the bed, is virtually inaccessible, but there is a small passageway between the two spaces. So we put a radio up in the accessible part and ran it throughout the night, and that seemed to work from September until early January when the thumping began in earnest.

Must be a squirrel, we said. There was a small hole in one of the eaves, and it must have decided to get in there and spend the winter. I went to rent a trap.

"I've got a squirrel in the attic," I told the trap lady at the hardware store. "I think I need your small trap."

"Oh yeah, I've had them," she said. "A granola bar'll get 'em every time."

I set the trap with peanut butter because I forgot the granola bar. I turned off the radio. In the morning, the peanut butter was gone. No squirrel. For two more nights, the peanut butter disappeared, and the thief failed to set off the trap.

"Must be a mouse," I said.

"Or something bigger," said my wife, looking concerned.

"I'll put the peanut butter in a covered container," I said. "That way it'll have to really work at getting it out and will set off the trap."

The next night the peanut butter was gone again. The creature had reached in and just scooped out the bait through the small hole in the top of the container. The following night, the creature had taken the peanut butter and the container!

"Not a mouse," my wife and I agreed.

"Could be a bear," I thought.

The next night, I heard thumping near the trap. "We've got him," I said.

But as I entered the attic, I saw a raccoon scooting into the other part of the attic.

"We need the really big trap," I told the trap lady at the store. "Ooooo," she said, making a face. "Raccoon!"

With the really big trap, and tying a piece of bread covered with peanut butter on the trigger platform, we caught a well-fed raccoon that very night. It was one of the fattest raccoons we had ever seen. It weighed a ton.

As to how it had managed to get into our house without



Cross country skiing on the Catamount Trail.

photo by CTA

cutting a hole in the wall, we could not imagine. And so we took refuge in quantum theory.

"The world is not as solid as it appears," we said. "The universe is porous. Everything is connected, but nothing is fixed in space or time. Parallel universes are not only possible but likely. As Heraclitus noted, matter is always in flux. And since all of that really doesn't make sense, platitudes suffice: Things are never quite what they seem. Anything can happen. You often see what you look at, but often you really don't see what you look at. You notice what you pay attention to, but you may not pay attention to the right thing at the right time."

Andy told us that there must have been a hole. I vigorously denied it. I had looked and looked for holes through the years.

Of course, when I looked again, I found another hole, this time a behemoth one I hadn't noticed before. It wasn't a hole behemoth enough for bears, but it was certainly adequate for coons.

From all of this, we have learned a critical lesson: There could always be other holes, even bigger holes. No matter what we do or how many precautions we take, it is quite probable that a great big hole will open soon. Worse yet, we know it might have always been there.

We are keeping watch for bears.

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

photo by Billings Farm & Museum

Woodstock, VT

January is a Winter Wonderland At Billings Farm & Museum

Enjoy scenic winter landscapes among the barns and pastures of Billings Farm & Museum in January. Open each Saturday & Sunday from 10 am to 4 pm, plus Martin Luther King Jr. Day, January 18, with engaging activities indoors and out for visitors of all ages.

Farm Animals & Winter Fun

Visit the sheep, chickens and goats all cozy in the Small Animal Barn. Don snowshoes—bring your own or rent from the nearby Woodstock Inn & Resort Nordic Center – and venture through the picturesque snow-covered farm fields and along the Ottauquechee River.

Bring your sled to speed down the small hill next to the orchard. Gather round the fire pit and warm up with hot cider. Families can enjoy a poetic stroll along the Story Walk pasture fence featuring “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening” by Robert Frost.

Reserve a Sleigh Ride Billings Farm & Museum offers horse-drawn sleigh rides to families (socially distanced) throughout the winter. Reservations are required. Call (802) 457-2355 for more information and to schedule your ride.

Vermont’s Rural History

Explore the Farm Life Exhibits to see what life on the farm was like in the 1890’s and find the snowpeople hidden within the exhibits. Learn about the families and history of Billings Farm in our Upon This Land Exhibit. A Place in the Land, the Academy Award®-nominee film which chronicles the development of Billings Farm is shown throughout the day in the Visitor Center Theater. Guests are invited to view

re-creations of both the Sitting and Dining Rooms from the 1890 Farm Manager’s House within the Activity Barn.

Virtual Classes & Films

Join Billings Farm’s Chef Emery Gray for a fun, interactive, Pickling Class on Zoom, January 23. Follow along in your home kitchen to add flare to heavy winter dishes and international favorites by making quick pickled fruits and veggies! Cozy up at home as the Woodstock Vermont Film Series features four online films in January, including John Lewis: Good Trouble over Martin Luther King, Jr. Day weekend (January 14-17). Other films include: The Woman Who Loves Giraffes (December 31-January 3), Moynihan (January 7-10) and Made You Look: The True Story About Fake Art (January 21-24). Find links to tickets and reservations at www.billingsfarm.org.

Virtual Education Programs

Students can now visit Billings Farm from anywhere! Teachers and schools register now for Virtual Field Trips for students in grades K-5+. Slots available January 4-29. Winter Then & Now is also available as a Virtual Homeschool Program on January 26 and 28.

The Billings Farm & Museum is owned and operated by The Woodstock Foundation Inc., a charitable non-profit institution. Billings Farm & Museum is committed to providing educational opportunities and experiences to our visitors, whether here in Woodstock, Vermont or at home wherever you are through our online resources at Billings Farm at Home.

Billings Farm & Museum is located at 69 Old River Rd. off Rt. 12 just north of the village in Woodstock, VT. Open daily April through October, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., weekends November through February, and vacation weeks, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. or online anytime at billingsfarm.org/billings-farm-at-home.

Admission: adults \$16; 62 & over \$14; children 5-15 \$8; children 3-4 \$4; children 2 & under are free. For info call (802) 457-2355 or go to www.billingsfarm.org.

Note: the Billings Farm & Museum site is limited to a maximum capacity of 225 people at one time, per State of Vermont covid guidance, and face coverings must be worn by all guests over the age of two everywhere on the site, including the outdoors. For more about visiting Billings Farm safely, updates on our site capacity, and to learn which spaces are open, visit billingsfarm.org/safety.



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Live-Stream Jazz Concert With Emmett Cohen Trio

by Eugene Uman

The Vermont Jazz Center is excited to present a live-stream concert on Saturday, January 23rd at 8 p.m., with the Emmett Cohen Trio. Pianist Cohen will perform with his working trio including Russell Hall (acoustic bass) and Kyle Poole (drums). They will be joined by special guest Mark Whitfield on guitar.

The concert will be one 70-minute live set followed by a short interview. In accordance with state issued safety concerns, there will be no in-house audience; it will be live streamed on the Vermont Jazz Center's website at www.vtjazz.org and at www.facebook.com/VermontJazzCenter/live.

Emmett Cohen

Emmett Cohen's list of awards and accomplishments is impressive, but these days he's attracting a particularly high level of attention due to his weekly live stream Facebook concerts. As of this writing, Cohen has produced 36 episodes with special guests including Cyrille Aimée, Warren Wolf, Veronica Swift and guitar legend Mark Whitfield, with whom he'll be performing at the Vermont Jazz Center on January 23rd. These Monday-night Facebook sessions with A-list jazzers at Cohen's Harlem apartment give audiences the feel of a late-night New York club. Cohen says his concerts now garner about 1000 viewers per week.

Emmett Cohen has been the pianist in bassist Christian McBride's Tip City Trio project. McBride says "Emmett is one of the most dynamic young musicians on the scene today." His technique is breathtaking, his swing feeling is buoyant and his interactions amongst his musical cohorts are telepathic.

The winner of the 2019 American Pianists Awards, Cohen was chosen as this year's Cole Porter Fellow by the American Pianists Association and placed first in both the 2014 American Jazz Pianists Competition and the 2011 Phillips Piano Competition.

Cohen has appeared at jazz festivals throughout the world including Newport, Monterey, Detroit, North Sea, Bern, Edinburgh, Jerusalem and New Orleans. He has performed at the Village Vanguard, the Blue Note, Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola, Birdland, Jazz Standard, London's Ronnie Scott's, Jazzhaus Montmartre, Lincoln Center's Rose Hall, the Cotton Club in Tokyo, and Washington's Kennedy Center.

Cohen is a young musician (he turned 30 in May), well versed in the vernacular of modern styles. Yet he has been called "the obvious heir apparent to the neo-traditional jazz mantle" by New York Times jazz critic Giovanni Russonello. In order to pay respect to his mentors Cohen has initiated a project called the Masters Legacy Series which features a handful of the great elders still playing the clubs. On his website Cohen states that jazz "is enriched immeasurably by connecting and studying with jazz masters, forging backward to the very creation of the art form." Cohen lives by those words: to date he has produced a four-volume "Masters Legacy Series," where his trio accompanies and creates magic with jazz legends including Jimmy Cobb, Ron Carter, Benny Golson, Tootie Heath, and George Coleman. Videos of these sessions convey feelings of love, joy and mutual respect.



The Emmett Cohen Trio (from left: Russell Hall on acoustic bass, Kyle Poole on drums, and Emmett Cohen on piano) performs January 23rd in a live-stream concert. photo by Lauren Desberg

Russell Hall

The bassist in the Emmett Cohen Trio is Russell Hall. He performed at the Vermont Jazz Center with the Christian Sands Trio in February, 2017. Hall, who is originally from Jamaica, took part in the Essentially Ellington Jazz Competition from 2010 – 2012 and was awarded "Most Outstanding Bassist" all three years of his participation. He was a member of the 2012 Jazz Band of America, the Vail Jazz Workshop, and was recognized by Wynton Marsalis in Jet Magazine as "a jazz star of the future." Hall graduated from Juilliard where he studied with Ron Carter. He has performed or recorded with Wynton Marsalis, Branford Marsalis, Aaron Diehl, Emmett Cohen, Wayne Shorter, Roy Haynes, The Heath Brothers, Joshua Redman, Jon Hendricks, and many others.

Kyle Poole

On drums will be Kyle Poole, one of Wynton Marsalis' "Young Stars of Jazz." Poole has performed with George Cables, Sullivan Fortner, Jeremy Pelt, Mike Ledonne, Peter Bernstein, among many others. He was a semi-finalist in the 2012 Thelonious Monk Institute Competition. His ensemble "Poole and the Gang" features flute virtuosa Elena Pinderhughes.

Mark Whitfield

Guitarist Mark Whitfield is a highly regarded performer with a sound that touches upon both straight-ahead jazz and R&B. As a youth he was influenced by the warm, soulful stylings of George Benson whom he later befriended. Benson recommended Whitfield to funky organ titan Brother Jack McDuff, which led to tours and record deals. Later on Whitfield joined with another legendary player, Jimmy Smith, thus establishing him as a heavy-hitter in the organ trio sub-genre.

To date, Whitfield has appeared on over 200 albums as a sideman and has released a dozen as a leader. He is the featured guitarist on Christian McBride's newly released big band album with organist Joey DeFrancesco highlighting the music of Jimmy Smith and Wes Montgomery. Whitfield has performed with Herbie Hancock, Art Blakey, Dizzy Gillespie, Shirley Horn, Carmen McCrae and can be heard on recordings led by Camille Thurman, Warren Wolf, Herlin Riley, Chris Botti, Javon Jackson, James Williams, Juan Carlos Formell, Cleo Laine, and so many more. His flexibility

and deep, soulful sound have also earned him a place on R&B-influenced albums by Mary J. Blige, and D'Angelo.

The VJC is grateful for the generosity of dear friend and long-term supporter Diana Bingham, who is this concert's sponsor. Emmett Cohen's group provides an example of the music she loves – a swinging beat and a repertoire that is both familiar and exciting. Publicity is underwritten by The Commons and The Brattleboro Reformer. The VJC is also grateful to the Vermont Arts Council and the Vermont Humanities Council for their support and increased efforts to stabilize the existence of arts organizations during the pandemic.

This concert will be live streamed on the Vermont Jazz Center's website at www.vtjazz.org and at www.facebook.com/VermontJazzCenter/live.

Live streaming for this event is cost-free and open to the public. Admission to this concert is usually offered on a sliding fee scale from \$20 to \$40 per person but the VJC now offers our events without charge online. Donations to the Vermont Jazz Center are welcome and just a click away. Please give generously and support live music.



Mark Whitfield.



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Stranger

When Polly lived back in the old deep woods,
Sing, sing, sing and howdy, howdy-o!
Nobody ever went by her door,
Tum a-tum tum and danky, danky-o!

Valentine worked all day in the brush,
He grubbed out stumps and he chopped with his axe,
He chopped a clear road up out of the branch,
Their wheels made all the tracks.

And all they could see outdoors were the trees,
And all the night they could hear the wolves go;
But one cold time when the dark came on
A man's voice said, "Hello, there, hello!"

He stood away by the black oak tree
When they opened the door in the halfway light;
He stood away by the buttonwood stump,
And Valentine said, "Won't you stay all night?"

He sat by the fire and warmed his bones.
He had something hidden down deep in a sack,
And Polly watched close while she baked her ponies;
He felt of it once when she turned her back —
Polly had a fear of his sack.

Nobody lived this way or there,
And the night came down and the woods came dark,
A thin man sat by the fire that night,
And the cabin pane was one red spark.

He took the something out of his sack,
When the candle dimmed and the logs fell low,
It was something dark, as Polly could see,
Sing, sing, sing and howdy, howdy-o!

He held it up against his chest,
And the logs came bright with a fresh new glow,
And it was a fiddle that was on his breast,
Tum tum-a and danky, danky-o!

He played one tune and one tune more;
He played five tunes all in a long row.
The logs never heard any songs before.
Sing, sing, sing and howdy, howdy-o!

The tunes lay down like drowsy cats;
They tumbled over rocks where the waterfalls go;
They twinkled in the sun like little June gnats;
Tum a-tum tum and danky dee-o!

The stumps stood back in Valentine's mind;
The wolves went back so Polly couldn't see;
She forgot how they howled and
forgot how they whined.
Tum tum-a tum and danky-dee!

The tunes flew by like wild quick geese,
Sing, sing, sing and howdy howdy-o!
And Polly said, "That's a right good piece."
Tum tum tum and danky danky-o!
Tum a-tum tum and danky dee-o!

—ELIZABETH MADOX ROBERTS
1881-1941, Perryville, KY



An icy stream runs through the woods in Bethel, VT under cover of new-fallen snow.

photo by Nancy Cassidy

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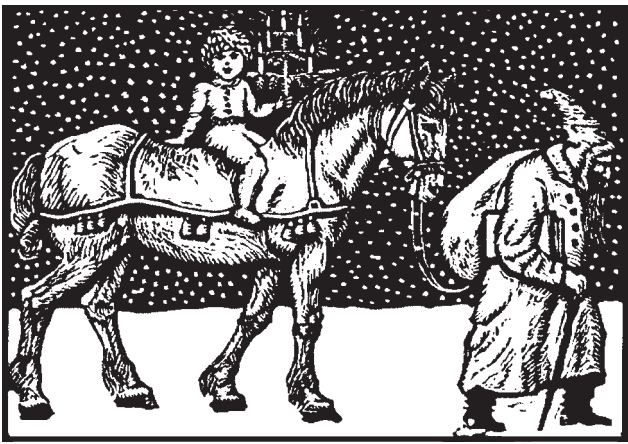
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The Natural Calendar

Deep Winter

by Bill Felker

January in the Field and Garden

Week One of January

Check houseplants, and especially plants that were brought inside before frost, for spider mites, scale and aphids. Early winter is often the time when these and other insect pests reach the level at which they can do serious damage.

Make sure your bees have enough ventilation to prevent moisture condensation within the hive. Also consider putting an entrance reducer in your hives to keep mice from coming in.

Cold weather reduces the impact of barn odors on our noses - but don't lighten up on your maintenance schedule: keep pens clean and bedding fresh - especially as lambing, kidding and calving time approaches.

Dig any root crops still in the garden. Plant live Christmas trees soon, and mulch heavily.

While the moon is dark, take out suckers, dead and crossing branches as the moon wanes. Don't prune what will bloom before June, and wait for July or August for the maples.

Explore marketing options for Chinese New Year, February 12-17. This market favors sheep and goats in the 60 to 80-pound live-weight range.

Epiphany (Three-Kings Day) is usually celebrated on or near January 6. Milk-fed lambs and kids are often in demand for this market.

Increase energy foods to animals in severe weather. Feeding energy foods in the evening may be most efficacious.

Week Two of January

Depending on where you live, this may be the time to lime your soil. Since lime reacts slowly with the ground, it should be worked in a few months before planting. Lime can also be applied to the surface for no-till fields.

Inspect young trees for rodent damage throughout the winter. Consider forage testing for your livestock soon if you suspect that quality is declining.

Some traditional supplements for your animals include a little whole barley, a teaspoon of molasses in a pint of milk, powdered slippery elm, calcium rich powdered willow bark, flaked oats, powdered seaweed, and mashed raw carrots. As with any supplement, use in moderation, and keep track of any results you notice.

The major lambing and kidding season now starts throughout the region: more lambs and kids are born in the next eight weeks than in any other months.



Snow covered roads and trees in Central Vermont.

photo by Nancy Cassidy

A light feeding in the morning, and a heavier feeding towards dark can provide your chickens with a little more heat as the mercury falls.

Egg production can be expected to decline when highs stay below 30 degrees, but warm water may help keep the hens laying a little.

Frost-seed crops like red clover in the pastures, and scatter grass seed over bare spots on the lawn. The process of freezing and thawing will plant the seeds.

Spray broad-leaved evergreens with anti-drying agent to prevent winterkill. Prepare landscaping, garden, and field maps, including plans for double cropping, intercropping, and companion planting.

Week Three of January

Test a sample of old seeds for germination. Order supplies for February lawn and pasture seeding. Have supplies ready for the birthing of lambs and kids.

Keeping animals in poorly ventilated barns can lead to disease and can encourage parasites. Make sure their housing provides the necessary mix of good ventilation but adequate heat.

Don't forget that the spring ethnic markets include demand from not only Middle Eastern immigrants and Muslims but from people who have roots in the Caribbean (including Haitian and Jamaican populations), Latin America, and Africa. Estimates of Muslims in the United States point to eight million people. Consumers with Hispanic or Caribbean backgrounds exceed twenty million.

Prepare for the seeding of broccoli, cabbage and kale after the next new moon. And get ready for the January thaw. Check perennials; cover them with extra mulch if they are sprouting early.

Christmas cacti can be saved and propagated during the warmer months. You can turn one cactus into a lucrative business if you're willing to work at it for a few years!

Prepare landscaping, garden, and field maps, including plans for double cropping, intercropping, and companion planting. Do your mid-winter pruning and other wood cutting. Spread manure as conditions permit. Test farm and garden soil as soon as possible.

Avoid giving greens to your outside rabbits when the temperature remains below freezing.

Week Four of January

Force daffodils and tulips into bloom. If you don't have any, go out and cut a pussy willow branch, put it in some nice warm sugar water and then watch March appear.

Reserve your spring chicks for March, April or May so they can gain weight throughout the summer and be ready to lay by late summer and early autumn.

Rhubarb leaves emerge in the sun, and Lenten roses are budding. Those farmers and gardeners who fly to central Florida for a January vacation can find elderberries and azaleas blooming in milder years. Calves and lambs will be out in the fields throughout the warm South.

Plan ahead and fertilize while the weather is still cold. Winter fertilizing not only frees up time in the spring for the many farm and garden chores that follow warm weather, but it provides a modicum of insurance against spring rain delays. The frozen soil of winter also resists compaction from heavy equipment.

In Late Winter, treat ash, bittersweet, fir, elm, flowering fruit trees, juniper, lilac, linden, maple, oak, pine, poplar, spruce, sweet gum, tulip tree, and willow for scales and mites. Spray trees when temperatures rise into the upper 30s or 40s.

The Easter Market (early April this year) is a major marketing time for lambs and kids. Explore the Passover Market, too.

Sap may be restless in the maples under the power of the full moon on January 28.

Night Milking Time

Night milking time in our goat barn
With hand-hewn frame and planking worn
From daily passing, night and morn;

Across the board wall, mellowed brown,
Light from the windowed loft slants down
Through the trap door where hay is thrown;

The dusky stable facing east
Rustles with many a munching beast,
Smelling of out-of-doors, snow-fleeced.

How low in light of all the sky
The space here covered dim and dry—
And yet so generous, so high,

One tenant more would cause no cramp
If I should make a corner-camp
In here tonight—no bed, no lamp.

—JAMES HAYFORD
Orleans, VT, 1951

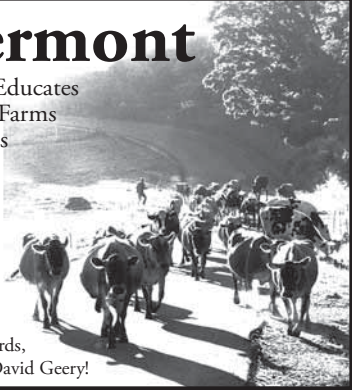
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The Community Asylum Seekers Project

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A Vermont Almanack for Deep Winter

by Bill Felker

Here is the glory of created things,
The earth and the sky,
The sun and the moon,
The stars and the vast expanses:
Here is fellowship with all that was created,
The air and the wind,
Cloud and rain,
Sunshine and snow.

—Euros Bowen, from “Gloria”

The Sun

Perihelion, the point at which the Earth and the Sun are closest to one another, occurs on January 2 at 9:00 a.m.

The Sun enters the Late Winter sign of Aquarius on January 19, and its declination passes 17 degrees 23 minutes by the 31st, one quarter of the way to spring equinox.

Phases of the Moon

The Stell Moon marks the period of the year during which livestock most frequently seek protection in “stells” or basic shelters. The Snow Flea Moon shines on Deep Winter’s most common insect where snows cover the landscape.

January 6: The Stell Moon enters last quarter: 4:37 a.m.

January 9: Lunar Perigee (when the Stell Moon is closest to Earth): 11:00 a.m.

January 13: The Snow Flea Moon is new at 12:00 a.m.

January 20: Second Quarter: 4:02 p.m.

January 21: Lunar Apogee (when the Moon is farthest from Earth): 8:00 a.m.

January 28: Full Moon: 2:16 p.m.

The Planets

Venus is the Morning Star as 2021 begins, coming up late in Sagittarius, leading Jupiter and Saturn (in Capricorn) across the sunrise sky. Mars is the Evening Star in Aries, setting well after midnight.

The Stars

In the evening sky, Orion now dominates the southeast. Sirius, the Dog Star, is at his heels. The Pleiades are overhead. Perseus follows Andromeda and the Great Square into the west. The Big Dipper begins to circle back out of the northeast. When its pointers to the North Star are positioned directly north and south at 9:00 p.m., it will be Deep Spring.



White-face heifer in a winter field in Central Vermont.

photo by Nancy Cassidy

Meteorology

High-pressure systems are due to cross the country on or around the following dates: January 1, 5, 10, 15, 19, 25, 31.

Lunar perigee on January 9, preceding new moon on the 13th is likely to increase the possibility of a major storm system in the second week of the month.

Lunar apogee on January 21 will favor a thaw in the third week of the month. Full moon on the 28th will exacerbate weather conditions related to the last cold front of January

and could delay or spoil the Groundhog Day Thaw (February 2). Lunar perigee on February 3 is likely to make the transition to the year’s second month a stormy one.

The Shooting Stars

The Quadrantid meteor shower occurs between January 1 and January 5, and reaches its best (up to 40 meteors in an hour) on January 2 and 3. Look for these meteors in the northern sky, near the North Star.

The Seasons of January

by Bill Felker

The Time of Perihelion

Time of Perihelion, when the Earth is closest to the Sun, occurs during the year’s first week. Even though perihelion sunlight is between 5 and 10 percent more intense than the sunlight of aphelion (which occurs in July), the day across the central and northern states is almost six hours shorter in January than it is in the middle of summer.

Deep Winter, the coldest period of the year throughout North America, generally begins with the arrival of a high-pressure system around January 1 and lasts until the last week of the month throughout the country.

The outside garden is almost always gone by now in the Middle Atlantic states. Collards and kale, and well-mulched carrots and beets can survive to this point in season, but January’s cold spells typically take them. Indoors, however, tomato and pepper plants, seeded in Deep Summer and brought inside before frost, could still be producing fruit in a south window. Basil, parsley, rosemary, thyme and oregano may also continue to provide fresh seasoning. And the seeds of bedding plants sprout under lights, softening winter with their April green.

When the Sun Rises Earlier

Throughout the country, the sun starts to rise a little earlier in the second week of the year, marking a significant milestone in the progress of spring. The foxes know the days are lengthening. Watch for them playing and courting in the fields.

No matter the cold, beavers strip bark for food along the rivers. Skunks come out to root in the ground during the Deep Winter thaws. The tufted titmouse begins its spiral mating flights. Blue jays give their bell-like calls. Sometimes pileated woodpeckers appear at your birdfeeder. Sometimes a fly will emerge indoors from a potted plant.

In the warmer winters, snowdrops can push up when the sun starts to rise earlier. Moss lengthens a fraction of an inch in each thaw. There can be fresh poppy leaves in the garden, and new wrinkled lemon verbena foliage pushing up through the snow. Pine trees pollinate, initiating the first allergies of the new year. Sweet gum seed balls fall to the snow. A few more pussy willow catkins open. The buds of motherwort and multiflora roses become longer, some unraveling. Henbit can bloom any time an afternoon gets into the 50s.

On the mildest deep winter days of all, small pale moths venture out into the undergrowth. Crayfish wander the swamps in search of precocious prey, and thunderstorms forecast May.

The Season of Crow Migration

When the North lies in the middle of its peak snow period and average temperatures are the lowest of the year, then the advance of spring quickens. Crows know all about the expanding daylight. Their migration cycle typically starts at the Deep edge of the night’s retreat. Junco movement begins in mid-January, too, just as the sun comes into Aquarius. The prophetic calls of overwintering robins, the earthworms that

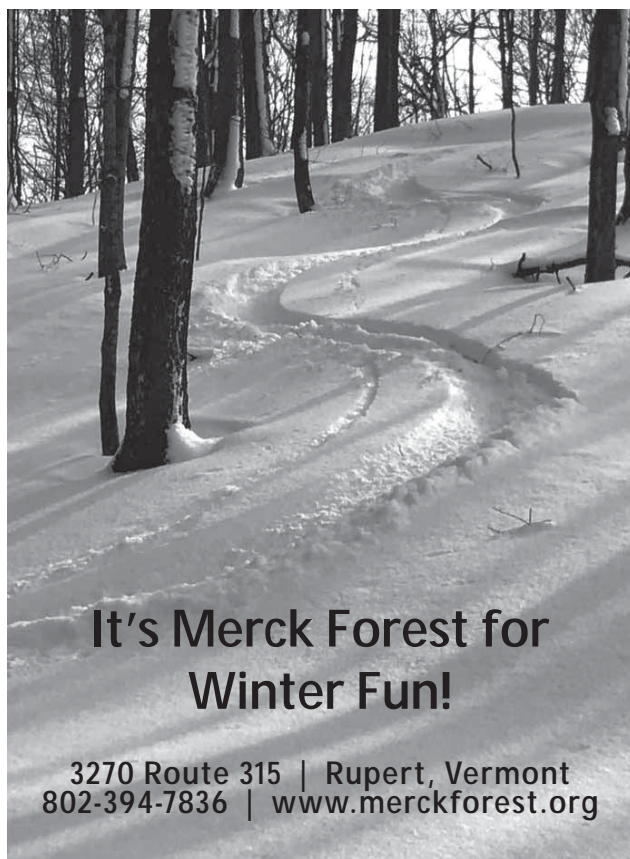
come up to avoid winter rains or thaws and the disappearance of autumn seeds all offer counterpoint to the subdued winter silence and the days of snow.

Skunk cabbage is up in the swamps, blackened by the cold but still strong. Watercress holds in the streams. Where the ground is not frozen, new mint grows under the protection of a southern hedge or wall. In the pastures, basal leaves of thistles and mullein are deep green beneath the snow. In town, winter-blooming hellebores and Chinese witch hazels blossom in the warmest microclimates.

As the thaws move north from the Border States, Deep Winter becomes Late Winter, a season of thaws and storms during which remnants of the past year no longer point back to October. On the hillsides, the springs are clear and the vegetation bright when the snow recedes. New chickweed covers parts of the bottomland. Basal foliage of sweet rocket and leafcup is lush and tall, waiting for April and May.

The Late Winter Fulcrum

January 27 is a pivotal statistical date in the fortunes of winter. Throughout the country average temperatures, which remained stable from the middle of January, climb one degree. That rise may not be obvious in any particular year, but it does represent the cumulative wisdom of all the years on record, revealing the inevitable turn of the earth toward June.



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Although this week marks the anniversary of the great blizzard of 1978 – a once-in-a-century phenomenon – snowfall is normally the lightest of any other period this month; highs often shoot up above 50, and a day in the 70s suddenly becomes possible (at least once or twice in a hundred years) in the Lower Midwest and Middle Atlantic states. A thunderstorm even occurs ten percent of the time.

Birds are often more attuned to the phases of cyclical natural history than they are to the weather. Cardinals begin their mating calls at around a half an hour before dawn this week, no matter if temperatures are mild or harsh. Many years, doves are cooing at the same time.

When all that happens, then multicolored Asian ladybeetles crawl out from hibernation, their soft presence on the delicate scales of time tipping the balance to spring.



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Grandma's Quilts

by Elisabeth Doren O'Kane

Back in the olden days when grandmothers were children and the snow was deeper, and the cold colder, we had no thermostat to push up. In fact we had no furnace, with or without a thermostat. We had wood stoves, big ones for the kitchen and parlor, little ones for the bedrooms.

One of my warmest memories is of my mother coming into my bedroom in mid-winter, dressed in a flannel nightgown and long fur-lined coat, with a fire shovel full of red hot coals to start the fire in the little stove in my bedroom. I snuggled even deeper under the covers until the room got warm enough for me to venture out from the cozy feather bed.

Yes, we slept on feather beds, or ticks, as they were called in those days—so thick and soft you sank deep into them and were soon sound asleep.

When winter came in that frigid northern climate we slept between wool blankets, with no cold sheets, but rather, soft warm cotton flannel blankets to protect us from the itchy wool. On top of the wool were thick soft quilts, pieced of squares and triangles and hexagons, or even the left-over pieces made into "crazy quilts."

At odd moments by day we cut and sewed the blocks into colorful quilts, and by night we rested from our labors, tucked under the covers we made by day—a perfect round of work and rest.

Sometimes a quilting job would be hired out. In those days there was an Indian settlement nearby, members

of one of the Iroquois tribes. A few of the families would do quilting, at so much per spool of thread used.

More occasionally there would be quilting parties, when the ladies of the neighborhood got together and finished up a quilt. If it was a quilting job, with all those tiny stitches tracing an intricate pattern, it would take several sessions. The quilting frame was set up in the little-used parlor and the ladies gathered around it, needles flying, tongues relaying the latest news.

"By night we rested from our labors, tucked under the covers we made by day."

Quilt making was an important craft in those days of "waste not, want not" frugality. Visit some of the country fairs

today and you will see samples of the quilter's craft.

Rare was the house that did not have a trunk or two filled with hand-pieced or embroidered quilts.

Today's quilter does not always go to the ragbag where Grandma saved every scrap of material left over from her home sewing activities. One can go to fabric and quilting stores to buy reproductions of the old patterns, not by the scrap, but by the yard or even bolt.

We may spend long hours at work, or longer hours looking for work, or still longer wishing we didn't have to work, but the raveled sleeve of care can still be best knit up with a good eight hours under one of Grandmother's prized quilts.

Elisabeth Doren O'Kane (1904-1998) wrote when she was in her eighties about her North Country childhood of over 100 years ago.



Statewide

Vermont Winter Farmers Markets

Bennington, VT. Bennington Winter Farmers Market. At the old Bennington middle school, 650 Main St. Curbside pick-up will be available—check out website. Masks required for in-person shopping. 1st and 3rd Saturdays, 10 am – 1 pm. November 21, 2020 – April 17, 2021. benningtonfarmersmarket@gmail.com. www.benningtonfarmersmarket.org
Brattleboro, VT. Brattleboro Winter Farmers Market. C.F. Church Building, 80 Flat St. Every Saturday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. November 7, 2020 – March 27, 2021. Sherry Maher, (802) 869-2141. farmersmarket@postsoilsolutions.org. www.brattleborowinterfarmersmarket.org.

Hartland, VT. Hartland Farmers Market. Winter pick-up, 57 VT Rt. 12. Friday, 4-6 p.m. November 6, 2020 – April 2021. The winter market will be a pre-order pick-up curbside market, only. Order online from multiple local vendors in one easy place and pick-up on Friday evenings. Brian Stroffolino, (603) 252-1288. hartlandfarmersmarket@gmail.com. www.hartlandfarmersmarket.com.

Middlebury, VT. Middlebury Winter Farmers Market. VFW Building, 530 Exchange St. Every Saturday, 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. November 7, 2020 – April 24, 2021. Janis McWayne, middleburyfarmersmkt@yahoo.com. www.middleburyfarmersmarket.org.

Norwich, VT. Norwich Farmers Market. Winter pick-up outside of Tracy Hall. Select Saturdays 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. January 9th, February 13th, March 13th, April 10th. We will be doing monthly pre-order curbside pick-ups only. Please visit our website for ordering details! Steve Hoffman, (802) 384-7447. manager@norwichfarmersmarket.org. www.norwichfarmersmarket.org.

Rutland, VT. Vermont Winter Farmers Market. Vermont Farmers Food Center, 251 West St., Rutland, VT. Every Saturday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. November 7 – May 1, 2021. Seasonal variety of produce, local grass-fed meat, eggs, artisan cheeses, baked goods, jellies & jams, maple products, honey, delicious hot foods, wine & spirits, and artisan crafts. Lori Pinkowski, (802) 342-4727, vfmrutland@gmail.com. www.vtfarmersmarket.org.

St. Johnsbury, VT. St. Johnsbury Farmers Market. Winter pick-up in the parking lot behind Star Theater, Pearl St. 1st & 3rd Saturday each month, 12-1 p.m. November 7, 2020 – April 17, 2021. Order by the Thursday before each market. Elizabeth Everts, (802) 592-3088, evertselizabeth@gmail.com. sites.google.com/site/caledoniafarmersmarket.

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Old-Time Soups and Chowders for a Winter's Day

by Ella Shannon Bowles & Dorothy S. Towle

These recipes were published over 75 years ago from a collection scanning the previous 150 years,

Black Bean Soup

2 cups black beans	¼ teaspoon mustard
6 cups water	4 tablespoons fat
2 medium onions, sliced	1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 clove garlic	¼ cup sherry
1½ teaspoons salt	1 lemon, sliced
¼ 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, add 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.

Tried-and-True Corn Chowder

½ cup diced salt pork	2¼ cups fresh corn, or 1 can corn, chopped
1 onion, sliced	1½ teaspoons salt
3 cups boiling water	½ teaspoon pepper
3 cups diced potatoes	6 crackers, split
2 cups hot milk	

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.

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.

3 large carrots	8 potatoes, cut in cubes
3 medium-sized onions	8 cups boiling water
½ 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	½ 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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A Morgan mare and Percheron stallion at rest in a snowy field on Stock Farm Rd. in Randolph, VT. photo by Nancy Cassidy

Mrs. Putnam's Oxtail Soup

1 oxtail	1 sliced carrot
1 quart water	1 diced turnip
2 cloves	¼ head cabbage, or
Salt and pepper	½ cup celery
1 onion, sliced	1 teaspoon lemon juice
2 tablespoons butter	

Boil the oxtail in the water with the spices for two hours. Strain, cool, and remove the fat. Fry the onion in butter until brown, add the cut-up oxtail, and brown it. Add with the other vegetables to the stock, and cook until the vegetables are tender. Add the lemon juice, and serve. Serves six. If a thicker and more highly seasoned soup is preferred, use one and one-half cups water and one and one-half cups tomatoes. Add one-fourth teaspoon cinnamon, one-eighth teaspoon thyme, one-eighth teaspoon marjoram, one bay leaf, and one-half bunch celery to the stock. The whole may be baked as a stew in a casserole. Two tablespoons sherry added just before serving improves the flavor.

Fish Chowder

1 medium-sized fresh codfish, sliced	2 tablespoons flour
½ pound salt pork, sliced	1½ cups hot milk
3 medium-sized onions, sliced	2 teaspoons salt
	¼ teaspoon pepper
	Soda crackers

First, put the fish head in a saucepan, cover with cold water, and start it cooking. Then try out the salt pork in a skillet until the slices are crisp and brown. Remove the pork and fry the sliced onions in the fat until very light brown. Cut the pork slices into bits, add them to the fat and onion, and put the combination in the chowder kettle. Add the codfish slices and the strained water in which the fish head was boiled. Then add enough water so the liquid stands about two inches above the fish. Cook slowly for about twenty minutes. Make a paste of the flour and a little cold water. Mix with the hot milk and stir into the chowder. Add the seasonings, and let the chowder boil up once. Place halved soda crackers in the bottom of a tureen and turn the hot chowder over them. Serve at once.

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. 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 and cook slowly until the meat falls from the bones. Strain and cool. 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 cooled 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 an hour, stir in the corn meal. Let cook until thick. Then put the kettle over low heat and simmer until ready to use. Season to taste with salt and pepper, and add the cooked cut-up meat if desired.

And now for some dessert...

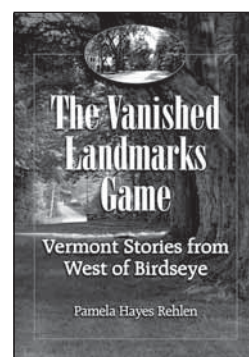
Sally's Lemon Pudding Cake

3 Tbsp. butter	¼ cup lemon juice
1 cup sugar (can use ½ cup)	1 tsp. grated lemon rind
3 egg yolks	1 cup milk
⅓ cup flour	3 egg whites
¼ tsp. salt	

This pudding may be baked in individual cups or in one pan. Serves six (ha-ha). Grease cups or pan. Heat oven to moderate, 350°. Cream butter, add sugar and cream together. Add beaten egg yolks, mixing them in well. Stir in flour, lemon juice, grated rind and milk in order names. Beat egg whites with salt until stiff but not dry, fold in last. Turn into cups or pan, set in a pan of hot water and bake in a moderate oven about 35 minutes. A cake top will form, with custard below.



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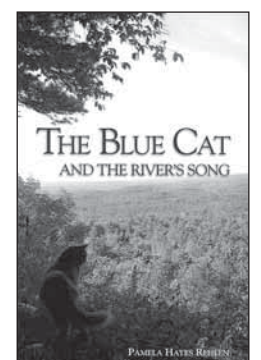
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by Pamela Hayes Rehlen
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Old-time and present-time people and places from west of Vermont's Birdseye Mountain. Here are their stories.

The Blue Cat

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— Bob Bushee, Owner —

Ice Fishing for Questions

New to ice fishing? Looking for fishing tips? Wondering how the fish survive a winter under the ice? Want to meet your local State Game Warden? The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department will be conducting Educational Patrols during winter 2021 on Vermont lakes and ponds.

"We know many anglers have questions they would like to ask a warden, and we also know anglers are always looking to learn new tips," said Education Specialist Corey Hart. "Vermont State Game Wardens and educational staff will be teaming up to conduct Educational Patrols this winter."

The current pandemic prohibits formal educational programs so as an alternative, anglers are encouraged to fish lakes hosting these Educational Patrols. Staff will be roaming the ice and will stop by to offer pointers or just chat.

"This is a great opportunity for anglers new to fishing that are looking to improve their or have questions about fishing regulations," said Chief Warden Colonel Jason Batchelder.

The Educational Patrols will last one to two hours. Participants should bring their own equipment and set up on the ice and start fishing. Department staff will be roaming among the anglers and plan to spend at least 10 minutes per group depending on the number of anglers on the ice and questions.

Educational Patrols Schedule (no registration required)

- **January 2:** Lake Carmi State Park, Franklin, 9-10:30 a.m.
- **January 9:** Deweys Mills Pond, Hartford, 9-10:30 a.m.
- **January 9:** Silver Lake, Barnard, 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
- **January 16:** Lake Caspian, Greensboro, 8:30-10 a.m.
- **January 16:** Marshfield Reservoir, Marshfield, 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
- **January 17:** St. Albans Bay, St Albans, 9-10:30 a.m.
- **January 17:** Shelburne Pond, Shelburne, 12-1:30 p.m.
- **January 22:** Lake Bomoseen: Kehoe Access (Green Dump), Castleton, 3:30-5 p.m.
- **January 30:** Chittenden Reservoir, Chittenden, 9-10:30 a.m.
- **January 30:** Lake Rescue, Ludlow, 12-1:30 p.m.
- **January 31:** Lake Paran, Bennington, 9-10:30 a.m.
- **January 31:** Retreat Meadows, Brattleboro, 12-1:30 p.m.
- **February 18:** Knights Point State Park, North Hero, 9-10:30 a.m.
- **February 18:** Dillenbeck Bay, Lake Champlain, Alburgh, 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
- **February 20:** Lake Memphremagog-South Bay, Newport, 9-10:30 a.m.
- **February 20:** Memphremagog-Whipple Point, Derby Line, 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
- **February 21:** Bomoseen- Kehoe Access (Green Dump), Castleton, 8-9:30 a.m.
- **February 21:** Bomoseen State Park, Castleton, 10-11:30 a.m.

For more information, email Corey.Hart@vermont.gov or call him at (802) 505-5562. Visit vtfishandwildlife.com.



photo by VT Fish & Wildlife Dept.
What a great catch—happy family enjoys ice fishing in Vermont.

Vermont Wintertime Ice Fishing Derbies

Newport, VT. January 8-9, 2021. Northeast Vermont Bass Anglers Annual Northern Pike Tournament. Lake Memphremagog. Fish: Northern Pike. Check-in location: South Bay Access Area, 3151 Glen Rd. Gordon Stone, (802) 673-9972 (day), (802) 673-9972 (evening), gstone@jaypeakresort.com.

Colchester, VT. January 30-31, 2021. 2021 Ice Breaker Derby. Lake Champlain. Fish: Bluegill, Crappie, Northern Pike, Pumpkinseed, Yellow Perch. Check-in location: The Tackle Box, 25 Raymond Rd. 5 a.m. Saturday to 5 p.m. Sunday. Scott Blair, (802) 891-9256 (day), (802) 324-6069 (evening), tackleboxenterprisellc@gmail.com.

Castleton, VT. February 13-14, 2021. Castleton Lions Club Lake Bomoseen Ice Fishing Derby. Lake Bomoseen. Check-in location: Crystal Beach, Route 30. Fish: Brown Trout, Largemouth Bass, Northern Pike, Smallmouth Bass, Yellow Perch. John Brough, (802) 265-7996 (day), jframes54@gmail.com.

Newport, VT. February 19-21, 2021. Eli Goss Memorial Ice Fishing Tournament. On Seymour Lake (Morgan), Echo Lake (Charleston), and Lake Memphremagog (Newport). Check-in location: Seymour Lake Access Area. Fish: all legal species. For more information, contact Stephanie Goss, (802) 673-8931 (day), (802) 673-8931 (evening), stee01@live.com.

For more information visit the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department at www.vtfishandwildlife.com.

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A New Heart

by Pamela Hayes Rehlen

I remember the first time I had a heart incident. Sometime in the 1950s my sister and I biked to Castleton's Crystal Beach on a cold day in June. There was a year or two when the town didn't open Crystal Beach as a recreational facility, and as I recall, that was one of those years.

We had the place to ourselves. We waded a distance out to get to water deep enough for swimming, and when it was time to come in, we started for the shore, and I found that it was a long, long way back, and suddenly I didn't think I could make it.

I felt pressed down by a great weight. Lifting my leg for each step seemed overwhelmingly difficult. And I was so cold. I thought, 'I'm going to faint,' and I kept making what felt like huge, wearying steps, and then I was lying on the shore's rough grass wrapped tight in my sister and my skimpy towels, unable to stop shaking.

The next day, my mother took me to Fair Haven's Doctor Stannard. He put a stethoscope to my scrawny little chest, listened for awhile, and said, "She has a heart murmur." Doc Stannard acted as if it were no big deal.

But it was.

Any check-up I had after that, every doctor mentioned my heart murmur, but just in passing. This year I had my yearly exam with Dr. Foster at the Castleton Medical Center, and

"Everyone knew the McCanns; the Leenman's from Rotterdam and Spring Lake Ranch were people no one knew."

after she'd finished with her stethoscope she said, "You've had that heart murmur for a long time haven't you?" And then she said, "It's gotten a lot louder. I'm going to send you for an echocardiogram."

And that led to my trip to Porter Hospital and to Dr. Foster calling soon after to tell me that I'd developed a lot of blockage in my bicuspid valve. On a four-step scale of concern, she said I was at Step Three, which is considered Severe.

Actually, I learned a week later when I visited Dr. Coleman at Rutland Cardiology, I was at Step Four, which is considered Critical.

I have a bicuspid aortic valve, a congenital heart defect. Over decades, one of my only two valves had narrowed to the point where there was no escaping corrective surgery. Otherwise, my survival rate was less than two years.

So I was referred to Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center in New Hampshire, where surgeons use a recent, revolutionarily-innovative, technique called Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement, TAVR, to repair narrowed aortic valves.

That was how I spent my long, hot, Covid-Pandemic, summer. My husband and I rounded up our masks and got in the car and drove to Lebanon, NH to the giant, gleaming, many-windowed, hospital that rises up out of the surrounding forest like a fairy tale castle.

The TAVR procedure is revolutionary because instead of cracking open the chest, as in traditional open-heart surgery, a replacement valve is inserted through a catheter and



Pamela Hayes Rehlen outside the Rutland Heart Center after her heart-healthy check up. photo by John Rehlen

threaded up the femoral artery into the heart. I had to keep my knowledge of particulars to a minimum because I found the details so unsettling.

When I was a little girl staying with her, my Fair Haven Grandmother Hayes had to lie down each day after lunch. If it was ever necessary, she told me where—sharing that sacred space on her dresser top next to the picture of her mother and the West Haven farmhouse where she was born—I could find a little cardboard box of emergency heart pills from Donovan's Pharmacy.

Later, when she became too breathless to climb the steep stairs to her second floor, she would manage by sitting on each tread, and then carefully bumping herself up to the next.

Recently, my cousin Sandra told me about the 1950s afternoon when Uncle Stan, the oldest of the boys, got a call—that inevitable call my aunts and uncles all dreaded—telling him it was time to come home and say good-bye to his father.

She remembers finding the Castleton Corners household in despair and Grampy Gibbs lying on the front room sofa. Sandra grew up to become a nurse and realizes now that the terrible struggle to breathe that went on all afternoon was because my grandfather was in congestive heart failure.

After I'd been home a week from Dartmouth Hitchcock, my husband made an appointment for us with the Rutland cardiologist, Dr. Coleman, who wanted to see how my TAVR operation had turned out.

He got his stethoscope and pressed it against my back and throat. He checked the two nicely-healed, leg-top, puncture spots where a tiny guiding camera, a catheter, and an aortic replacement valve had started their routes to my heart.

I thought about my valiant, stoic grandparents, how they would have reacted to hearing—which they never could—Dr. Coleman finishing up and saying to me, "Go home. Everything's really good. You have a new heart."

Recipes from a Century Past

Muffins, Biscuits, Popovers, and Scones

Entire Wheat Drop Biscuits

One-fourth of a cup of butter, two tablespoonfuls of sugar, one cup of sweet milk, two scant teaspoonfuls of baking-powder, a generous pinch of salt, enough whole-wheat flour to make a stiff batter. Drop by spoonfuls in heated pans and bake in quick oven twenty minutes.

—A Farmer's Wife

Tasty Scones

Two cupfuls of flour, two teaspoonfuls of baking-powder, one-half of a teaspoonful of salt, one-third of a cup of sugar, three tablespoonfuls of butter, one egg, currants if desired. Add enough milk to make a soft dough, divide in half, flatten with the hand into a round cake the thickness of a biscuit, mark with a knife into four scones and bake quickly. Serve with jam and butter.

—Mrs. N. T. Morden

Graham Gems

In a mixing bowl put two and one-half cupfuls of cold water. Sift in three cups of graham-meal, stirring briskly while you add the meal. Beat for five minutes, and drop them from the spoon into a hot pan and into a hot oven. This recipe I learned from a lady physician who has no faith in soda, yeast or molasses, as factors in producing good bread.

—Mrs. Carrie Otis

Pop-overs

Beat two eggs together until thoroughly mixed; add one cupful of milk. Put one cupful of flour, sifted twice, into another bowl; add to it gradually the eggs and milk and a little salt; beat until smooth. Put at once into greased hot gem-pans and bake in a moderately quick oven for forty-five minutes. If properly baked, they should swell six times their original bulk, and may be used for breakfast or luncheon, or served with a liquid pudding sauce as a dessert. Iron gem-pans insure better results than those made of lighter metals.

—Sabylia I. Martin

Corn Muffins

Sift together one and two-thirds cupfuls of flour, one cupful of corn-meal, either white or yellow, and three level teaspoonfuls of baking-powder. Beat to a cream two tablespoonfuls of butter with three tablespoonfuls of sugar and add to them three well-beaten eggs. Dilute this with a pint of whole milk, add a little salt, beat hard and put into two dozen small, well-buttered gem-pans. They bake in a few minutes. Serve hot with butter and jam if you like.

—C. E. Silloway

These recipes were contributed from "one thousand homemakers" to Woman's Favorite Cookbook by Annie R. Gregory, circa 1902.



Pamela Hayes Rehlen has written and lived most of her life in Castleton, Vermont. She is the author of stories, article, essays, magazine features, and of two books: *The Blue Cat and the River's Song* (\$17 plus shipping and handling) and *The Vanished Landmarks Game—Vermont Stories from West of Birdseye* (\$20 plus shipping and handling) available at the Castleton Village Store, P. O. Box 275, Castleton, Vermont 05735, and at a number of Vermont booksellers. To reach the store, call (802) 468-2213. All back issues of these columns can be read in the archives, usually on p. 11, at www.vermontcountrysampler.com.

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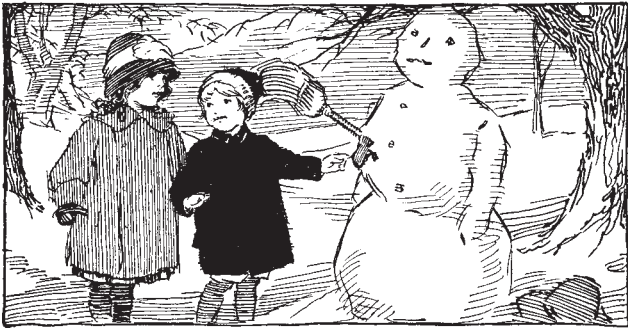
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Vermont Snow

It's dangerous business now, I know,
To speak a word in praise of snow,
The "solid whiteness" that we knew
In Whittier's time is now tabu;
Earth's natural coverlet of down
Is scraped and carted out of town,
And soon, no doubt, with squirtguns dire,
We'll roast it off with liquid fire.

In putting up this wicked fight
With snow, we've double-crossed delight;
The general uplift needed so
This time of year is in the snow.
We need the thrill of falling flakes,
The hoorah boys a snowstorm makes.
We need the tang of frosted air
That gets into our breath and hair.

Without these days of hoop-la stress
The winter world would be a mess.
We need the sleigh-bells tinkling notes
To start the singing in our throats;
High-stepping nag and coon-robed sleigh
Would "draw" a girl most any day.
And he was certainly a lout
Who'd let a pretty girl fall out.

The varnish on our plush-red sleigh
Still gleres as in my dapper day.
Reflected there the hitching-posts
And watering troughs skip past like ghosts.
The painted lady on the dash
Still looks she'd sell a kiss for cash;
Heaven bless the sleigh Nell Newcombe chose
To tote me through the leap-year snows.

Delicious snow, kind-hearted snow,
I'm sorry that I had to go
And leave the pangless pains you brought,
The bitter-sweet, or so I thought.
Come on, sift down while we're asleep
And bury earth a yardstick deep,
But leave our jolly straw-ride pung
Just where it was when I was young.

—DANIEL L. CADY
1861-1934, West Windsor, VT.

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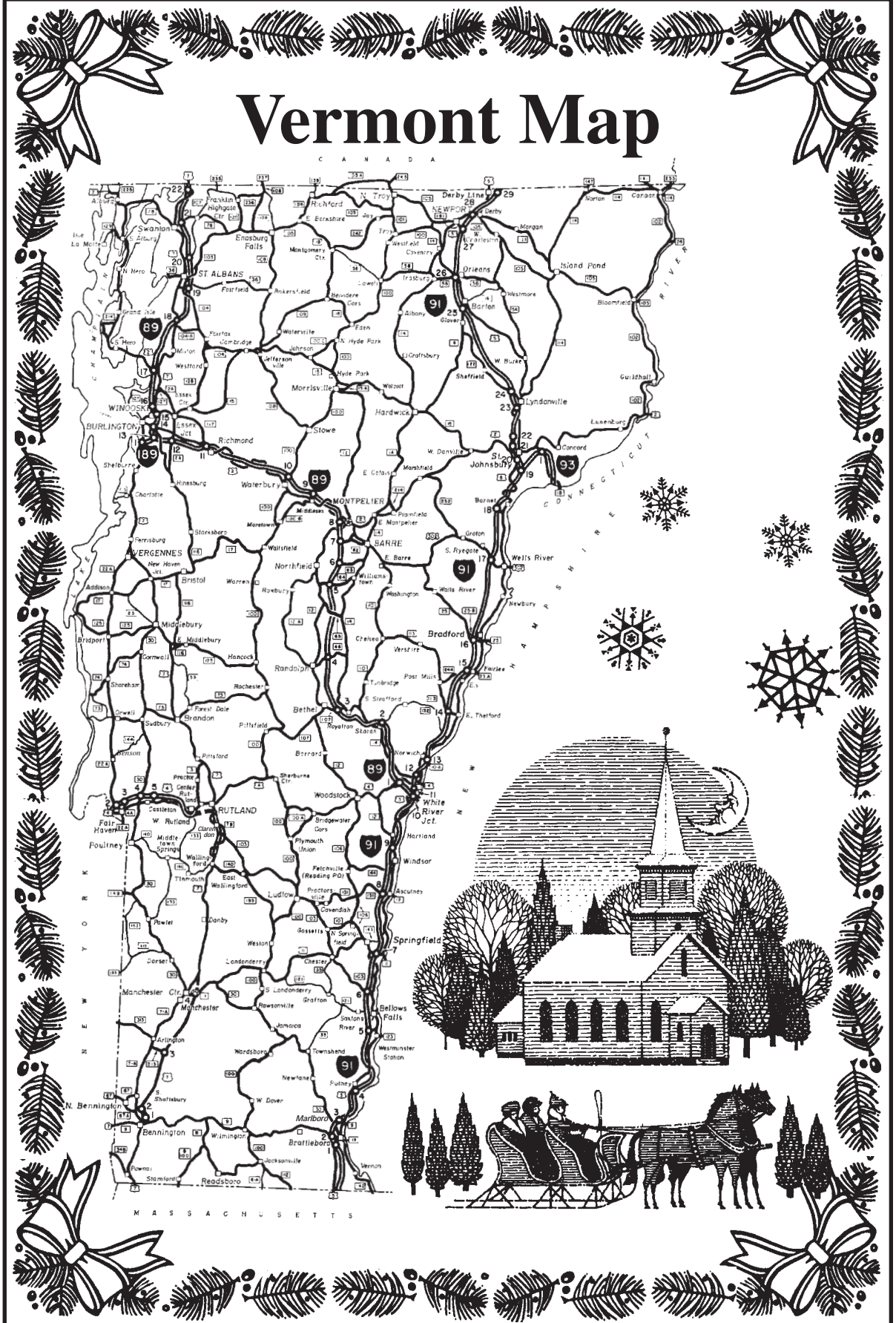
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Page 12 Vermont Country Sampler, January 2021

Vermont Country Calendar

See the end of the Ongoing Activities for daily listings. Call ahead to confirm events before going.

ONGOING ACTIVITIES 2021

BENNINGTON. Bennington Museum. The southern Vermont institution best known for housing several works by Grandma Moses. Closed January, February, March, reopening in April. Bennington Museum, 75 Main St. (802) 447-1571. www.benningtonmuseum.org.

BENNINGTON. Farmers Market: New Winter Location. Online pre-ordering and curbside pickup service only for January 9 & 23. Every other Saturday. Bennington High School and Junior High School, 650 Main St. BenningtonFarmersMarket@gmail.com. *January 9 & 23, February 6 & 20, March 6 & 20, April 3 & 17.*

BENNINGTON. The Dollhouse and Toy Museum of Vermont. Dolls and dollhouses, puppets, trucks and trains, toys, and educational displays. Museum shop. Admission is \$2 for children three and older, \$4 for adults and \$10 for families. Please wear masks inside museum. Open Saturdays and Sundays from 1-4 pm. 212 Union St. at the corner of Valentine St. (802) 681-3767. www.dollhouseandtoymuseumofvermont.com.

BERLIN. Kids Trade and Play. Kids Clothing exchange, newborn to junior size 12. Bring what you no longer need and take home what you do. Cost: \$3/family. 9:30-11:30 am. Central Vermont Capitol City Grange, 6612 VT Rt. 12. merrykaysings@gmail.com. capitalcitygrange.org. *Second Saturday of every month.*

BRANDON. Compass Music and Arts Center. Covid precautions in place. Revised opening hours: Tuesday-Friday 10 am - 4 pm. Visit The Phonograph Rooms, Divine Art Records CD store, Compass Treasure Chest, Compass Farmers' Market, Bagatelles (collectables, books and gifts), Artist galleries and studios. Compass Music and Arts Center/Brandon Music, 333 Jones Dr. cmactv.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Presentation: From The Beginning. "Photography's Coming of Age" is part of "2020 Vision: Seeing the World Through Technology." Starting with the first photograph captured in 1827, this unique exhibition features a wide variety of photographic technologies dating from the mid-1800's to today, showcasing a timeline of cameras as well as sample photographs from each era. Open by appointment due to covid, Thurs-Sun 12 noon-5 pm. Vermont Center for Photography, 49 Flat St. (802) 251-6051. vcphoto.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Exhibit. "Figuration Never Died: New York Painterly Painting, 1950-1970." 20 works by 10 New York artists who played a significant role in this midcentury movement. Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, 10 Vernon St. (802) 257-0124. brattleboromuseum.org. *Through February 14.*

BRATTLEBORO. Exhibit: "Our Storied Landscape: Revealing the Brattleboro Words Trail." Community-created, audio-based tours aggregating the unique cultural heritage of the area. Wednesday-Sunday, 10 am - 4 pm. Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, 10 Vernon St. (802) 257-0124. info@brattleboromuseum.org. brattleboromuseum.org. brattleborowords.org. *Through February 14.*

BRATTLEBORO. Retreat Farm. Animals grazing on pasture, growing food. Labyrinth garden, arts installations, walking paths and trails. Historic cow tunnel, pollinator pathway. Meadows waterfront trail. Forest playground, storybook walk. Woodlands Interpretive trail. Living sculpture, the Fiddlehead. Learn about the significance of this site to the Abenaki people. No restrooms or public facilities available. Free and open from dawn to dusk. 45 Farmhouse Square. (802) 490-2270. www.retreatfarm.org.

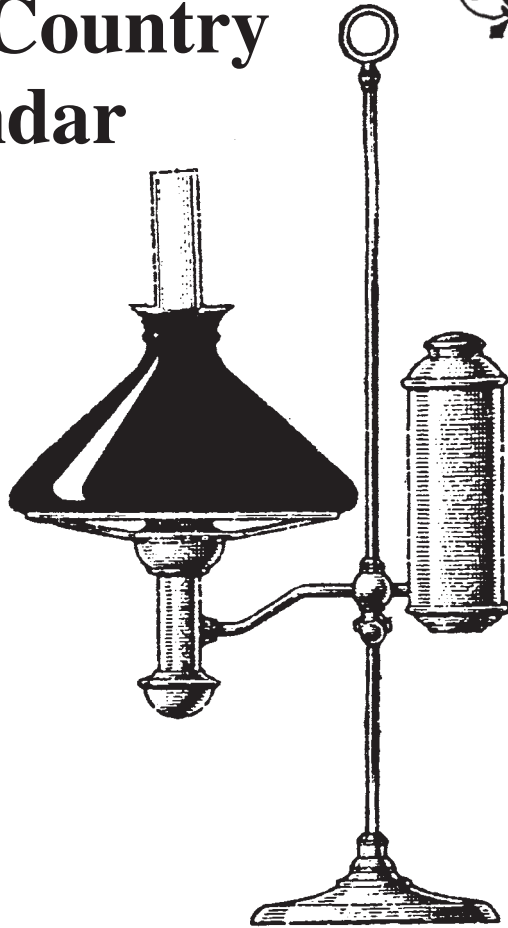
BRATTLEBORO. Winter Farmers Market. Convenient parking. Curbside pickup. Credit, debit, and EBT accepted. Every Saturday, 10 am - 2 pm. CF Church Building, 80 Flat St. (802) 869-2141. brattleborowinterfarmersmarket.org. *Through March.*

BURLINGTON. Exhibit: Comfort Food Series II. Original paintings by Charlie Hudson. Thursday-Saturday 11 am - 5 pm, and by appointment. Soapbox Arts, 266 Pine St., Ste. 119. (802) 324-0014. info@soapboxarts.com. soapboxarts.com.

BURLINGTON. ECHO, Leahy Center for Lake Champlain. "Return of the Butterflies" opens at ECHO for a seven month exhibit run. ECHO, Leahy Center for Lake Champlain, 1 College St. (802) 864-1848. www.echovermont.org.

BURLINGTON. Exhibit: "Take Flight." Traveling exhibit explores the forces behind aerodynamics. Make your own paper copters, rockets, planes and other flying machines and learn about the concepts behind flight. Admission charged; Get tickets online. Friday-Monday, 10 am - 4 pm. ECHO Leahy Center for Lake Champlain, 1 College St. (802) 864-1848. echovermont.org.

BURLINGTON. 4-H at Home. University of Vermont Extension is offering a smorgasbord of programs and activities for kids of all ages with topics ranging from veterinary science, civic engagement and environmental leadership to gardening and nutrition, babysitting and learning to code. Virtual program descriptions and links at www.uvm.edu/extension/youth/4-h-home. Free to all.



BURLINGTON. Watershed Science. Virtual programs explore Lake Champlain. Topics include virtual fish dissection, lake exploration, stream monitoring and stewardship, and watershed explorer challenge. For teachers, home-schoolers, families. This is a Lake Champlain Sea Grant program hosted by UVM in partnership with the State University of New York Plattsburgh. (802) 391-4410.

BURLINGTON. Indoor Climbing Center. Mountaineering school. Programs for kids and teens. Indoor and outdoor classes and excursions. Nature-based programming. Petra Cliffs Climbing Center & Mountaineering School, 105 Briggs St. (802) 657-3872. petracliffs.com.

COLCHESTER. Sam Mazza's Farm Market. Open 7 am to 7 pm. Sam Mazza's Farm Market, 277 Lavigne Rd. (802) 655-3440. sammazzafarms.com.

CHARLOTTE. Clemmons Family Farm. 148-acre historic farm, African-American owned land and cultural heritage resource. Due to Covid-19 pandemic our farm tours and events are closed to the public till further notice. (765) 560-5445. clemmonsfamilyfarm.org.

CHITTENDEN. Horse Drawn Sleigh Rides. 30-minute tours on resort grounds. Private rides available. Reservations required. Sleigh ride and dinner package (includes sleigh ride, 3-course dinner for two & taxes) for \$150. Open Wednesday-Sunday (weather permitting). Mountain Top Inn & Resort, 195 Mountain Top Rd. (802) 483-6089. mountaintopinn.com. *Through March.*

DORSET. Dorset Winter Farmers Market. Open Sundays 10 am - 2 pm. At JK Adams Kitchen Store, 1430 VT Rt. 30. marketmanager@dorsetfarmersmarket.com.

EAST CORINTH. Northeast Slopes: Oldest Continuously Operating Ski Tow in the USA. Season pass: individual \$150, family \$315. Weekend/holiday: full day \$15, half day \$12, little tow \$5. Wednesday: full hill 18+ \$10, under 18 \$6, little tow \$2. Weekends and Holidays 9:30 am - 4 pm, Wednesdays 12 noon - 4 pm. We are located on Route 25 between the Waits River Country Store and East Corinth General Store. (802) 439-5789. www.northeastropes.org.

EAST MONTPELIER. Bragg Farm Sugarhouse & Gift Shop. Tours. Maple syrup, candies & cream. Mail orders welcome by phone or on-line. For curbside pick-up call (802) 223-5757. 1005 Rt. 14. www.braggfarm.com.

EDEN MILLS. Eden Dogsledding. People-friendly, powerful and playful Alaskan Huskies. Learn how to harness and hitch your team, then take an exhilarating, scenic ride on our trail system. Lessons available to learn to mush or skijor. Lodging available. Eden Dogsledding & Dogsledding-On-Wheels, 1390 Square Rd. (802) 635-9070. edendogsledding.com.

ESSEX JUNCTION. Winter Lights in the Park. Walk through Maple Street Park and enjoy the bright lights and winter tunes. Free. 5-8 pm. Maple Street Park, 75 Maple St. (802) 878-1375. recreation@ejrp.org. *Through January 11.*

FAIRLEE. Lake Morey Resort. Longest skating trail in the United States, 4.5-mile loop around the lake. Up to 16 smaller rinks for skating and pick-up hockey games. Skate rentals complimentary for guests. Lake Morey Resort, 82 Clubhouse Rd. (800) 423-1211. lakemoreyresort.com.

GRAFTON. Sleigh Rides. Enjoy the winter scenery aboard a horse-drawn sleigh ride. Cost: adult \$20, youth \$12, 5 & under free. Sleigh rides leave every half hour from the cabin 11 am - 4 pm (final reservation time 3:30 pm). Reservations required in advance. No more than two households to a sleigh, masks required throughout the ride. Outdoor Center at Grafton Inn, 92 Main St. (802) 843-2350. graftoninnvermont.com. *January 1, 2, 16, February 6, 13, 14, 21.*



The Vermonter, circa 1931

Snowshoeing It in Montpelier

by Helen Jackson Hunt

It was the hour of benediction, the twilight time. Echoes of "thank God my arithmetic is done" in essence had effervesced in the air and while almost lacking fervor they breathed a humorous relief. The wind blew a mighty blast and snow flakes flurried. Donning a unique uniform of sweaters and caps, a call to taps and a snowshoe tramp allured to the summons of the storm. Combat if you will a more alluring wile than a tramp about the hills of Vermont's capital city.

Some people may scurry in knitting garb but for safety first and peace of mind be a wintry sport. You won't find it necessary to fling away cares. Take them with you. The snow flakes kiss you on the cheek and up you climb, slip and slide. Capitol Hill has means to provide the like. Below the bustle and anxious crowds, the shrill whistles of belated trains.

You ascend and meet new friends, trees that before were friendless. They talk to you, some in crowds, some apart, distinctly individual. Now and then a leaf that has escaped from some abyss hurries across the snow to greet you. Your feet sink in. At times you plunge and your face is all aglow. In fact you imagine a ruddy fireplace pictured thereon and laugh aloud. Freedom and liberty at ease to desist from narrow ways, and here and there divulge secrets which only you may share.

The pine tree scolds, yea, almost teases you at times.

You descend into the hollows surreptitiously at ease. You even play rabbit on your knees.

Alone you gaze into mysteries and memories of darker forms who once frequented these hills. Ah, Indian friends, how much you gave us in a snowshoe hike. You dream the sound of drums.

The woods seem kindly sympathetic. You understand you who guard our capital city, sentinels of freedom. Perhaps you'll echo until other trees in other seas shall hear the pleas of hearts at home.

Away in the distance are hills and valleys apparently courting one another's favor. They lie concealed in clouds of snow. These are neighbors of streets that are straight and some that know no end. As though a valley could hold so much of life!

The lights come on and beckon to you. A fence or two—you may leave souvenirs. Who knows but that the birdies in their nests depend upon such exploits for material, for fragments have been and always will be where barbed wires are concerned.

Back to a road, instructive as it were. Houses and home people and faces. The supper hour. A new earth. How changed in such a little time. Yes this kind of a night floats in a whisper through the air.

*The winds may blow
And cheeks may glow
There's power in the air
For life is love
With prayer above
And God is everywhere*

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Vermont Country Calendar

(Ongoing Activities 2021, continued)

HARDWICK. The Vermont Curators Group Itinerary. From Hardwick to Waitsfield. Five exhibitions with the shared theme of 2020 Vision: Reflecting on a World-Changing Year. Meandering scenic route on a trip through at least 11 towns. 251 Club of Vermont. thevt251club@gmail.com. vt251.com. VermontCuratorsGroup.com.

HARTFORD. Public Skating. Weekends through March at Wendell A. Barwood Arena. Public skate hours vary and daily reservations for a pass required. Drop-in public skating not permitted. Covid-19 procedures in place. Purchase daily admission at hartfordrec.com. For info call (802) 295-5036.

HARTLAND. Farmers Market (Winter Pick-up). Pre-order pick-up curbside market, only. Order online. Pick-up on Friday evenings, 4-6 pm. 57 Vermont Rt. 12. (603) 252-1288. hartlandfarmersmarket@gmail.com. hartlandfarmersmarket.com. *Fridays through April.*

HINESBURG. October Siberians Sled Dog Adventures. Siberian Huskies. Two-hour adventure. Learn the history of the sport, have the chance to drive the team. Tours offered during the day on Saturday and Sunday, and Wednesday and Thursday evenings. October Siberians Sled Dog Adventures. (802) 482-3460. octobersiberians.com.

HUNTINGTON. Birds of Vermont Museum. Discover birds: indoors as lifelike woodcarvings, and outdoors in their wild feathered selves. Winter hours by appointment Bird walks 8 am the last Saturday of the month through winter. The museum's 100 acres of trails are always open. Admission: adults \$7, seniors \$6, children 3-17 \$3.50. Birds of Vermont Museum, 900 Sherman Hollow Rd. (802) 434-2167. museum@birdsofvermont.org. birdsofvermont.org.

LAKE ELMORE. Peace Pups Dogsledding. Dog sledding, snowshoeing, school presentations. Dog-powered activities. Hand-built toboggan sleds over beautiful woodland trails. Night tours at Stowe Mountain Resort. Small kennel of Siberian Huskies, only three tours per day. Peace Pups Dogsledding. (802) 888-7733. peacepupsdogsledding.com.

LUDLOW. Black River Academy Museum. Open 12-4 pm, Tuesday-Saturday. Black River Academy Museum, 14 High St. (802) 228-5050. www.bramvt.org.

MANCHESTER. Dutton's Farmstand. Our own apples, cider, winter squash, and all your favorite fruits, and vegetables. Maple syrup, pies, bread, cookies including snickerdoodles, baked goods, creamees! Daily 9 am - 7 pm. Dutton's Farmstand, 2083 Depot St., Rts. 11/30. (802) 362-3083. www.duttonberryfarm.com.

MANCHESTER. Cross-Country Skiing & Snowshoeing. 12 miles of ski trails, varying levels of difficulty. Ski and snowshoe rentals for children and adults. Most trails natural and ungroomed. Adults \$23, youth \$6. Ski or snowshoe rental \$15. MicroSpikes rental \$5. 9:30 am - 4:30 pm. Pavilion adjacent to the Welcome Center, Hildene, 1005 Hildene Rd. (800) 578-1788. hildene.org. *Through mid-March.*

MANCHESTER. Hildene - The Lincoln Family Home. Masks and social distancing required. Admission: \$23 adults, \$6 youth, under 5 no charge. Open Thurs - Mon, 10 am - 4 pm. Hildene, 1005 Hildene Rd. off Rt. 7A south of the village. (800) 578-1788. hildene.org.

MANCHESTER. Southern Vermont Art Center. Fall/Winter Member Exhibition, Theme: "Hope", in response to the 2020 health pandemic. All artwork for sale. Covid-19 regulations in place. Social distancing, masks required. 10 am - 5 pm daily. Yester House, Southern Vermont Arts Center, 930 Southern Vermont Arts Center Dr. (802) 367-1302. acrites@svac.org. svac.org. *Through January 3.*

MENDON. Mendon Mountain Orchards. Family-run motel and 26-acre heirloom apple orchard. Bakery and country store. Apple pies and cider. Mendon Mountain Orchard, 16 US Rt. 4. (802) 775-5477. www.mendonorchards.com.

MIDDLEBURY. A Sculpture Haven. Stroll or have a picnic in the Sheldon Museum's Sculpture Garden where five new sculptures by three Vermont artists have been added to this in-town, outdoor oasis. Sun-rise to sun-set. Museum itself is temporarily closed. (802) 388-2117. henrysheldonmuseum.com.

MIDDLEBURY. Middlebury Farmer's Market. Indoors for the winter. Local agricultural products including vegetables, fruit, and CBD. Every Saturday 9 am - 12:30 pm at the VFW on Exchange St. Covid protocols posted. (802) 673-4158. middleburyfarmersmkt@yahoo.com. middleburyfarmersmarket.org. *Saturdays through April 24.*

MONTPELIER. Cross Vermont Trail Association. A project to build a multi-use, four-season path across the width of Vermont, following the Winooski River and Wells River valleys. The trail is connecting together communities, their schools, and the natural areas between. You can help. Everyone welcome to join. (802) 498-0079. greg@crossvermont.org. crossvermont.org.

MONTPELIER. Exhibit: Innovation in Vermont History. Objects from local historical societies and museums around the state provide an overview of innovation, invention, and technology throughout Vermont history. Tuesday-Saturday, 10 am - 4 pm. Vermont History Museum, 109 State St. (802) 828-2291. vermonthistory.org. *Through February 6.*

MONTPELIER. Exhibit: The State of Sculpture 2019. Overview of Vermont Sculptors. Vermont Arts Council Sculpture Garden, 136 State St. *Through August 2021.*

MONTPELIER. Exhibit: *When Women Lead: Governor Madeline Kunin of Vermont.* Explores the career of Gov. Madeleine Kunin and showcases the three inaugural gowns she wore in 1985, 1987, and 1989. Tuesday-Saturday, 10 am - 4 pm. Vermont History Museum, 109 State St. vermonthistory.org. *Through January.*

MONTPELIER. The Artist Relief Initiative is extending its offer to accept applications and distribute unrestricted \$5,000 grants through December 31 to U.S. artists in all disciplines facing dire financial situations. Applicants demonstrating the most severe needs in four categories - rent, food, medical and dependent care - will be prioritized. CERF+ (Craft Emergency Relief Fund+) is a field partner in this national effort. 535 Stone Cutters Way. (802) 221-2306.

MONTPELIER. Vermont History Museum. Run by the Vermont Historical Society. Open 10 am to 5 pm. Wednesdays-Saturdays. Vermont History Museum, 109 State St. (802) 479-8500. vermonthistory.org/museum.

MONTPELIER. Winter programs online and in person. North Branch Nature Ctr., 713 Elm St. northbranchnaturecenter.org.

NEWFANE. Dutton's Farmstand. Apples, winter squash, fruit, and vegetables. Maple syrup, homemade baked goods. Dutton's Farmstand, 391 & 407 Rt. 30. (802) 365-4168. www.duttonberryfarm.com. On Facebook.

NORWICH. Farmers Market (Winter Pick-up). monthly pre-order curbside pick-ups only. Please visit our website for ordering details. Select Saturdays, 11 am - 12:30 pm. Pick-up outside of Tracy Hall. (802) 384-7447. manager@norwichfarmersmarket.org. NorwichFarmersMarket.org. *January 9, February 13, March 13, April 10.*

NO. SPRINGFIELD. Displays and exhibits about the town's history, monthly programs, and items and documents available for viewing and research. Free. Saturdays 1-4 pm, or by appointment. Springfield Art and Historical Society, 65 Rt. 106. (802) 886-7935. sahs@vermontel.net.

ONLINE. "Lake Lessons." Place-based, hands-on STEM and local history/ecology workshop for area schools. "History from Home," virtual tour, digital exhibition, and "Northwest Passages" podcast. Free. Saint Albans Museum, 9 Church St. For information call (802) 527-7933. alex@stamuseum.org. www.stamuseum.org.

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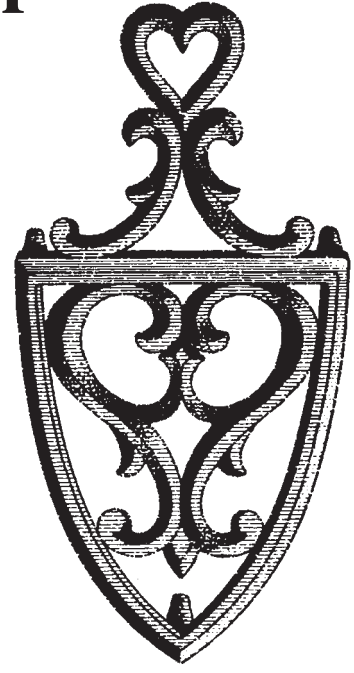
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Komen New Hampshire
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Saturday, February 6, 2021

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komennewengland.org/snowshoe

Vermont Country Calendar



ONLINE. 4-H at Home. University of Vermont Extension is offering a smorgasbord of programs and activities for kids of all ages with topics ranging from veterinary science, civic engagement and environmental leadership to gardening and nutrition, babysitting and learning to code. Free. Virtual program descriptions and links at www.uvm.edu/extension/youth/4-h-home.

ONLINE. Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol. Jefferson Mays is the sole performer in a unique adaptation of the story of Ebenezer Scrooge and a trio of ghosts. Presented by Vermont Stage in collaboration with TBD Pictures. Tickets: \$50 per household. vtstage@vtstage.org. vermontstage.org. Through January 3.

ONLINE. Official Vermont Snowmobile Safety Course. Accurate, interesting, and easy to understand. Live action, high definition videos. Lifetime card. Must be at least 12 years old. Fee: \$29.50, sign up for free, pay only when you pass, unlimited exam attempts. Snowmobile Ed. (800) 830-2268. info@kalkomey.com. snowmobile-ed.com/vermont.

ONLINE. NACHMO 2021 Challenge. In recognition of National Choreography Month, dancers, choreographers, and movement enthusiasts create new works as part of a Vermont Dance Alliance cohort. Free; preregister. marychrisdebelina@gmail.com. vermontdance.org/event/nachmo-2021-challenge. Through January 5.

ONLINE. Exhibit. Riopelle: The Call of Northern Landscapes and Indigenous Cultures. Free virtual exhibition of prolific 20th-century Canadian painter Jean Paul Riopelle, exploring his interest in northern and Indigenous culture through 160 works and more than 150 artifacts and documents. Montréal Museum of Fine Arts. mbam.qc.ca/en. Through January 11.

ONLINE. Chef Talk Tuesday. Chef Dante will focus on a different topic each week with special guests. Tune in and get your questions answered live! Tuesdays, 2-2:30 pm. The Essex Resort and Spa. facebook.com/events/297876411605308.

ONLINE. Real Organic Symposium, five-session online symposium. Virtual series of talks and live panels with more than 50 prominent organic farmers, scientists, and climate activists. BALE (Building A Local Economy). realorganicsymposium.org. All five Sundays in January.

ONLINE. Surviving the Future: Conversations for Our Time, led by Shaun Chamberlin. Flexible, interactive, eight-week course, designed to build and inspire a global community of people committed to helping their localities seek out new insights for times of

profound change. Sliding scale pricing. Sterling College. newamericanfarmstead.thinkific.com. January 4 through February 28.

ONLINE. Virtual Exhibit Tour. Our Storied Landscape: Revealing the Brattleboro Words Trail. Cynthia Parker-Houghton was commissioned to create a map as a companion piece to the Brattleboro Words Trail, which consists of audio-based tours of people and places significant to the history of words in the region. Brattleboro Museum & Art Center. (802) 257-0124. info@brattleboromuseum.org. brattleboromuseum.org. Through February 14.

ONLINE. Mid-Winter Eagle Survey. If you see an eagle in Vermont during the survey period, please email the following information to Margaret Fowle at mfowle@audubon.org: Date; location; time of day; number of Bald or Golden Eagles seen; approximate age of the eagles (i.e., adult Bald Eagle with white head and tail, or immature that is mostly brown); any notable behavior (i.e., carrying nesting material, flying with another eagle, etc.). January 4-18.

ONLINE. Daily Antidote of Song. Energize your day with the inspiration and connection of singing together. Song leaders from across the country and around the world. Free; donations to the Antidote Fund go directly to guest song leaders. Daily at 12 noon EST. Washington Revels. revelsdc.org/2020/daily-song. Ongoing until it is safe to gather again.

ONLINE. Online Merchandise Store by Williamsville artist Roger Sandes. High-quality products from credenzas to shower curtains, throw pillows to mobile phone cases. Art prints in various sizes and formats, in ten initial designs. Figurative works on nature-based and art historical themes. society6.com/rogersandes. rogersandes.com. www.rockriverartists.com.

ONLINE. Comics Classes. Virtual online class will teach the basics of cartooning to children ages 9-13. November 20, December 4, 11, 18. 3-4 pm. To register (802) 295-5036. hartfordvt.myrec.com.

ONLINE. UVM Extension Master Gardener Course. Six-week online course. Learn to create a healthy, sustainable home landscape & grow your own food. Become a volunteer and teach others environmentally friendly, research-based practices. Lecture recordings, live Q&A webinars, discussion forums, and weekly activities. Fee: In-State \$400 (\$27 per module), Out of State \$550 (\$39 per module). Scholarships available. (802) 656-9562. master.gardener@uvm.edu. uvm.edu/mastergardener. Opens January 8 (Track 1) or January 15 (Tracks 2 & 3), through week of May 21.

ONLINE. Class: Through A New Lens—Introduction to Digital Photography, with Rob Strong. Gain command of

your digital camera. This class requires a digital camera with manual controls (DSLR or mirrorless camera recommended). Via Zoom. Fee: \$200. Wednesdays 6-8 pm. AVA Gallery and Art Center. (603) 448-3117. avagallery.org. January 13 - February 10.

ONLINE. Interactive All-Vermont Band Guide. New interactive directory of Vermont's bands and solo musicians, searchable by state region, genre, and artist. Big Heavy World. (802) 865-1140. info@bigheavyworld.com. bigheavyworld.com/band-guide.

ONLINE. Virtual Exhibit Tour. Ice Shanties: Fishing, People & Culture. Federico Pardo's photographs offer an atmospheric survey of the structures, the stark landscape from which they spring, and the human presence residing tentatively on an icy surface. Brattleboro Museum & Art Center. (802) 257-0124. info@brattleboromuseum.org. brattleboromuseum.org. Through March 6.

ONLINE. Virtual Exhibit Tour. "Our Storied Landscape: Revealing the Brattleboro Words Trail". Cynthia Parker-Houghton was commissioned to create a map as a companion to the Brattleboro Words Trail, which consists of audio-based tours of people and places significant to the history of words in the region. Brattleboro Museum & Art Center. (802) 257-0124. brattleboromuseum.org. Thru February 14.

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Vermont Country Calendar

(Ongoing activities 2021, continued)

ONLINE. Stories for the Season Go Virtual. Lost Nation Theater artists step into Lost Nation Theater's chamber theater within Montpelier City Hall Arts Center to present dramatic readings of stories, poems, and song from around the world. Recommended for ages 5+. Each week another story will "drop" online. Free, donations gratefully accepted. lostonationtheater.org. *Through January.*

ONLINE. Mid-Winter Eagle Survey. If you see an eagle in Vermont during the survey period, please email the following information to Margaret Fowle at mfowle@audubon.org: date; location; time of day; number of Bald or Golden Eagles seen; approximate age of the eagles (i.e., adult Bald Eagle with white head and tail, or immature, mostly brown); any notable behavior (i.e., carrying nesting material, flying with another eagle, etc.). *January 4-18.*

ONLINE. Class: Introduction to Adobe Photoshop, with Christine Hauk. Via Zoom. Fee: \$300. Thursdays 6:30-8 pm. AVA Gallery and Art Center. (603) 448-3117. avagallery.org. *January 14 - March 18.*

ONLINE. Exhibit: "Painting at Home With Grandma Moses." Paintings and archival materials from the collections of the Shelburne and Bennington Museums that highlight Anna Mary Robertson's artistic process and inspirations. (802) 985-3346. *Through June 16, 2021.*

ONLINE. Class: Introduction to Adobe Illustrator, with Christine Hauk. Will cover the essential features and techniques in Illustrator. Online via Zoom. Fee: \$300. Tuesdays 6:30-8 pm. AVA Gallery and Art Center. (603) 448-3117. avagallery.org. *January 12 - March 16.*

ONLINE. The Lake Champlain Digital Museum: Digital Exhibits, Virtual Shipwreck Tours. High-definition 360° panoramas of some of the spaces on campus. Lake Champlain Maritime Museum. (802) 475-2022. lcmm.org.

ONLINE. Yoga and Fitness Classes, via Zoom. Slow Flow Vinyasa Yoga, Mondays 8:45-9:45 am or Wednesdays 5:30-6:30 pm. Energetic Vinyasa Flow Yoga, Tuesdays 5:30-6:30 pm or Thursdays 9-10:15 am. Basic/Beginner Inversions Core and Shoulder Strengthening and Flexibility, Saturdays 10:30-1:30 am. Strengthening and Conditioning Class, Wednesdays 8:30-9:30 am. Physical Theatre, Authentic Movement, and Dance Class, Sundays 11 am - 1 pm. Yoga & Strengthening \$165 for 12-week series, drop-ins \$16 per class. Movement \$350 for 12-week series. Just Move Yoga and Fitness. (802) 579-9003. bronwyn@strongcoffeestage.com. www.bronwynsimms.com. *January 4 through March 28.*

ONLINE. Virtual Exhibit Tour. Figuration Never Died: New York Painterly Painting, 1950-1970. Brattleboro Museum & Art Center. (802) 257-0124. info@brattleboromuseum.org. brattleboromuseum.org. *Through February 14.*

POULTNEY. Fourth Friday Literary Open Mic. Hosted by David Mook and other guests. Poets, storytellers, and spoken word artists in all genres invited to perform original pieces, classics, or other favorites. Face masks and social distancing required. Email or call to save your spot. Current limit of 10 people at inside events. Free. 7-9 pm. Stone Valley Arts at Fox Hill, 145 E. Main St. davidmook@aol.com. (802) 884-8052. *Fourth Friday of every month.*

QUECHEE. Art Exhibit: "Anything Goes." 24+ original oils, acrylics and watercolor paintings of Vermont scenes, by Joan Oppenheimer, Mary Church, Jennifer Dembinski, and Kate Reeves. Free. 10 am - 5 pm. The Quechee Inn at Marshland Farms, Quechee Rd. (802) 295-3133. emma@quecheeinn.com. quecheeinn.com. *December 31 through February 24.*

QUECHEE. February Nature Camp Registration Open. Survival Superpowers: Frozen World. For grades 1-4. Investigate the abilities of animals to survive in the depths of winter. Campers should be properly dressed for outdoor wintertime activities. Price: \$75 per day, February 15-19, Monday-Friday, 9 am - 3:30 pm. Extended day available until 5 pm for \$12 per day. VINS Nature Center, 149 Natures Way. (802) 359-5000. info@vinsweb.org. www.vinsweb.org. *February 15-19.*

QUECHEE. VINS Nature Center. Outdoor exhibits are open daily with educators presenting in person. Admission: adults: \$17.50, seniors (62 plus) \$16.50, college students \$16.50, educators & veterans: \$16.50, youth (4-17) \$15, children 3 & under free. Open daily 10 am - 4 pm. COVID protocols in place. Vermont Institute of Natural Science, 149 Natures Way, off Rt. 4. (802) 359-5000. www.vinsweb.org.

RUTLAND. Gallery Shoppe, Holiday Exhibit, and Gingerbread Contest Display. Thursday and Friday 12 noon - 4 pm Saturday 10 am - 2 pm. Chaffee Art Center, 16 South Main St. (802) 775-0356. info@chaffeeartcenter.org. chaffeeartcenter.org. *Through January 8.*

RUTLAND. Vermont Indoor Winter Farmers' Market. Farm fresh veggies, fruits, baked goods, artisan cheeses, meats, crafts, and more. Saturdays 10 am to 2 pm at the Farmers Food Center, 251 West St. (802) 342-4727. vtfarmersmarket.org. *Through May 1.*

RUTLAND. Wonderfeet Kids' Museum. Covid protocols in place. Fri-Sun, 10 am - 12 noon and 2-4 pm. Wonderfeet Kids' Museum, 11 Center St. (802) 282-2678. wonderfeetkidsmuseum.org.

SHELBURNE. Shelburne Farms. Walking trails open in the winter. The view east from Sheep's Knoll along the Farm Trail is spectacular. Use at your own risk as trails are not maintained. Park at the Welcome Center parking lot. Admission by donation. Shelburne Farms, 1611 Harbor Rd. (802) 985-8686. shelburnefarms.org.

SHOREHAM. Champlain Orchards. Open year-round 9 am - 4 pm daily. Covid protocols in place. Champlain Orchards, 2955 Rt. 74W. (802) 897-2777. champlainorchards.com.

SOUTH ROYALTON. Joseph Smith Birthplace Memorial. Includes historic artifacts, films, sculptures, hiking paths and screenings of Meet the Mormons. Free. Monday-Saturday 9 am - 5 pm, Sunday 1:30-5 pm November through April. 357 LDS Lane off Rt. 14. (802) 763-7742.

SPRINGFIELD. Art Exhibits, Art and Craft Sales. Wednesday and Saturday 11 am - 5 pm, Friday 11 am - 7 pm. Gallery at the VAULT, 68 Main St. (802) 885-7111. galleryvault.org.

ST. ALBANS. Study History at Home. St. Albans Museum is sponsoring an on-going home study program of historical topics including agriculture, railroads, women's issues, Vermont history. St. Albans Museum, 9 Church St. (802) 527-7933.

ST. JOHNSBURY. Farmers Market (Winter Pick-up). Go to our website or Facebook for details. Please order by the Thursday before each market. Pick-ups first and third Saturday of each month, 12 noon - 1 pm. In the parking lot behind Star Theater on Pearl St. (802) 592-3088. evertselizabeth@gmail.com. sites.google.com/site/caledoniafarmersmarket. *First and third Saturday each month, through April 17.*

ST. JOHNSBURY. Fairbanks Museum and Planetarium. Exhibits, programs, special events, wildflower table, collections, Star Space Astronomy Tours. Admission: adults \$9, seniors and children under 17 \$7, ages 4 and under free. Open Wednesday through Sunday 10 am - 5 pm. COVID protocols in place. Fairbanks Museum and Planetarium, 1302 Main St. (802) 748-2372. www.fairbanksmuseum.org.

ST. JOHNSBURY. The Stephen Huneck Gallery at Dog Mountain and Dog Chapel. Free. Hike the trails, run and play, open dawn to dusk seven days a week! Gallery and Dog Chapel open Fri 10 am - 4 pm, Sat & Sun 11 am - 5 pm. Dog Mountain, 143 Parks Rd. off Spaulding Rd. (800) 449-2580. contact@dogmt.com. www.dogmt.com.

ST. JOHNSBURY. Exhibits. Catamount Arts, 115 Eastern Ave. (802) 748-2600. catamountarts.org. *Through January 1.*

Florence, VT

Warming Your Feet by the Woodstove

by Allen Mills

As winter sets in, I am sitting here with my feet sitting on the hearth in front of the fire burning in my wood stove. The wood stove in my house is not the only source of heat but is a supplement to my oil-fired hot water furnace. The wood stove does keep the heating oil trucks from making so many visits to my house and it seems the added comfort it gives is well worth the effort of getting the wood to fuel it.

Our Whipple Hollow Farm consists of 280 acres with about 50 acres of open tillable land. The rest is over-grown pastures (as there are not cattle feeding in them anymore) and deep woodland.

I can get most of the wood I need from dead trees or trees that get blown down by the wind. I still have my father's old 1974 Ford tractor, a wood splitter and two chain saws and I am most fortunate that I have been given a strong healthy body to still gather my wood. I only have to maintain it in the duty-free outdoor gym. I need no fancy gym clothes only work boots, gloves, helmet and chain saw chaps.

It seems you always find something interesting while you are cutting wood which makes the job more enjoyable. My grandson, Ian Holmquist, and I found a metal hoop from an old farm implement with a Basswood or Linden tree growing up through it.

As I sit here warming my feet at the wood stove, I can't help thinking how much different it was getting wood enough for heating the old farmhouse and also enough wood to fuel the kitchen cook stove.

Our old farmhouse was heated exclusively with wood heat. The kitchen cook stove would heat the kitchen and the dining

room. The rest of the house was heated by a single pot-bellied stove. On a cold winter night, I appreciated loading down my bed with several warm blankets and the patchwork quilt my grandmother Kate made for me.

In my early youth, the tools we used to cut our firewood were a two-man cross-cut saw, double-bitted axe, splitting maul and several metal wedges.

In the winter after morning chores was a good time to cut wood for the next winter's fuel. When the weather was below thirty degrees was the best time to cut wood and if you were cold my father thought you were just not working hard enough.

I was always a big kid for my age and when Harry Wedin, the man who often helped my father was not available, I worked the other handle of the cross-cut saw. Dad would say, "Don't push the saw just pull it back to you and don't ride the saw, just let it do the work." We cut all our wood in four-foot lengths and then sawed it into stove lengths with the circular saw that ran from the power take-off of our little grey Ford tractor.

My father and I would cut, split and pile until we had eight to ten full cords of wood at which point my father would say, "There that will keep the wolf from the door." We would split the large chunks of wood with the splitting maul and several metal wedges. My father liked Rock Maple and Oak firewood best but since I was the wood splitter, I preferred straight-grained Ash.

My father taught me several lessons about splitting wood such as where to place the wedges and that it is more important to strike the wedge where you want to and not how hard you hit it with the maul. He said to split the wood where it wanted to split (although it seemed to me that it didn't want to split at all) and anything else you need to know the wood will teach you.

My dad had only one rule about splitting wood and that was: Don't strike over! This meant missing the wedge with the maul head and striking the wedge with the handle which would result at best in cracking the handle and at worst breaking the maul head completely off the handle.

I can remember one day when it was probably 20 degrees splitting some Rock Maple in our north pasture. When it is cold, the wood fibers freeze and seem to cling more closely together which keeps the wedge from penetrating as easily as it would if it was not frozen. I started the first wedge and expected the wood to start cracking apart. I struck the wedge soundly, but the wood seemed to spit the wedge out with great force. It seemed that the wedge had some heat seeking capability as it struck me squarely on the shin just



Something interesting found while cutting wood. An iron rim from the wooden wheel of a horse-drawn grain drill or seeder, encircling a tree. Allen Mills and grandson Ian Holmquist are holding the rim.

above the protection of my boot immediately raising a deep purple bruise on my shin. After some hopping and rubbing, I took a slightly different stance and swung the maul again with much the same result only this time the wedge struck my other shin. After uttering several of my father's curse words, I started the wedge again. This time a couple of sharp whacks started to crack the wood. One more mighty swing and another curse word would surely split this chunk. This time not the usual sound of the metallic maul head on the wedge but a loud crack instead. I had only the neatly cleaved maul handle in my hand and the maul head lay on the Rock Maple chunk.

With the sweat rolling down from underneath my wool hat, I brought the broken maul over to my father who was cutting smaller sticks with a double-bitted axe and piling the brush. His only comment was, "Struck over didn't ya? At least it looks like you were working hard enough to stay warm."

So, as I hold my feet to the fire, I say "Stay warm, stay healthy and keep the wolf from the door."

Allen A. Mills, Jr. has written a book about his childhood on the family farm in Florence VT, *Barnyards, Barefeet and Bluejeans—A Horse's Tale*. It can be ordered from Allen A. Mills, Jr., 362 Allen Mills Rd., Florence, VT 05744, for \$20 plus \$5 for P&H or call (802) 438-5653.

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Vermont Country Calendar



STATEWIDE. Vermont State Parks Gift Cards and Gift Certificates Now on Sale. Available in any denomination over \$20, they can be redeemed for season passes, camping, day entry, Seyon Lodge fly fishing passes, and more. Gift certificates are issued by email and can be forwarded to the person you are gifting. Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation. Order online anytime at vtstateparks.com or call 1-888-409-7579 Monday-Friday 9 am - 4 pm.

STATEWIDE. Catamount Trail Association. Backcountry tours: single-day outings, multi-day excursions, and overnights. Special events: Vermont Backcountry Forum, CTA Annual Meeting, Green Mountain Skimo Series, Catamount Trail Express: Backcountry Shuttle, Bolton Valley Splitfest, Vermont Backcountry Challenge, Race to the Top of Vermont. Catamount Trail Association. www.catamounttrail.org.

STATEWIDE. Kids: Become a Certified Watershed Explorer. Fun activities that teach about watershed science and the Lake Champlain Basin. For grades 5-8 and upper elementary or early high school students. 11 indoor and outdoor activities with a glossary and links to additional resources. Free copies of activities booklet available at libraries and other sites throughout Vermont. watershed@uvm.edu. go.uvm.edu/wse-challenge.

STATEWIDE. Vermont State Parks. Vermont has 55 developed and staffed state parks and other undeveloped state park lands. Visit our website for information and COVID precautions. (888) 409-7579. vtstateparks.com.

STOWE. Exhibits. Helen Day Art Center, 5 School St. (802) 253-8358. helenday.com.

TICONDEROGA, NY. Fort Ticonderoga National Historic Landmark. Now in Winter Quarters. Visit calendar for virtual events. Fort Ticonderoga, 84 Montcalm St. (518) 585-2821. fort@fort-ticonderoga.org. forticonderoga.org.

VERGENNES. Exhibit: Winter White. Works by Julia Jensen, Matthew Monk, Hannah Morris, Erika Lawlor Schmidt, Hannah Sessions, Pamela Smith, and Susanne Strater. Open by appointment. Northern Daughters Gallery, 221 Main St. (802) 877-2173. info@northerndaughters.com. northerndaughters.com. *Through January 15.*

VERGENNES. Youth Rowing. The Champlain Longboats youth rowing league meets March through May and September through November. Rowing teams organized by school meet after school for practice two to three times a week. Lake Champlain Maritime Museum, 4472 Basin Harbor Rd. (802) 475-2022 x 113.

WAITSFIELD. Exhibit: Triad 2020: Art During COVID-19. Large-scale new paintings by career artists Patrick Dunfey, Pam Glick, and Richard Jacobs. Gallery open anytime by appointment only; grounds only open Saturday and Sunday 12 noon - 5 pm. Bundy Modern, 361 Bundy Rd. (802) 777-2713. *Through June 25, 2021.*

WALDEN. Cottage Rental. Quiet country cottage located on a working tree farm. Small pond and year-round stream. Abundant wildlife, scenic mountain views. Pet friendly. Far View Tree Farm, 1879 Bayley-Hazen Rd. (802) 563-2028. pwclark@farviewtreefarm.com. www.farviewtreefarm.com.

WEST BRATTLEBORO. Dutton's Farmstand. Apples, winter squash, fruit, and vegetables. Our own maple syrup, homemade baked goods. Dutton's Farmstand, 308 Marlboro Rd. (802) 254-0254. www.duttonberryfarm.com. On Facebook.

WEST MARLBORO. Southern Vermont Natural History Museum. This collection of live animals and taxidermy exhibits is open daily 10 am to 4 pm by appointment. Over 600 mounted specimens of native northeastern birds and mammals, close to 250 species are represented. The Museum houses a northeastern Mineralogy Collection & live animal exhibits. On-site and regional educational programs. Southern Vermont Natural History Museum, 7599 Rt. 9. (802) 464-0048. vermontmuseum.org.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Public Skate. Reservation for a daily public skating pass required. Drop-in public skating not permitted. \$5 per person. Every Saturday, 5:15-6:45 pm. Wendell A. Barwood Arena, 431 Highland Ave. (802) 295-5036. kmcnull@hartford-vt.org. hartfordrec.com. *Through March 6.*

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Winter Online Cartooning Workshops. Starting January 11 include Digital Coloring for Comics with Ngozi Ukazu; Graphic Memoirs with Melanie Gillman '12; and Introduction to Hand-Drawn Animation with Alec Longstreth. The Center for Cartoon Studies, 94 S. Main St. (802) 295-3319. www.cartoonstudies.org.

WOODSTOCK. Christmas at the Farm - A Victorian Christmas. Experience the traditions of a late 19th-century Christmas. Authentically decorated exhibit of the farmhouse parlor. Enjoy holiday stories, candle dipping and cooking demonstrations of holiday foods and gingerbread ornaments. Warm up with a cup of Wassail along with cider donuts served at the Dairy Bar. Snowshoe trek available in farm fields. Adults \$14-\$16; children \$4-\$9. 10 am - 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, 69 Old River Rd. off Rt. 12, just north of the village in Woodstock. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org. *Daily through January 3.*

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm & Museum. Open for public onsite events as well as online. Admission \$16 adults ages 16-61, \$14 seniors ages 62 and over, \$9 students ages 16 & up, \$8 children ages 5-15, \$4 children ages 3-4. Open Thursday thru Sunday, 10 am - 4 pm. 69 Old River Rd. off Rt. 12 just north of the village in Woodstock. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org.

WORLDWIDE. The Museum of Modern Art. Offering free in-depth online courses through Coursera, a leading online learning platform for higher education, where 56 million learners from around the world come to learn. More than 200 of the world's top universities and industry educators partner with Coursera. The Museum of Modern Art is based in New York City. www.coursera.org/moma.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 30

BENNINGTON. "Noon" Year's Eve Give Back Event. Drop off a non-perishable food or personal care item to the Museum Courtyard. Donations will be given to a local non-profit organization. Receive a Noon Year's Eve Party Bag containing materials and instructions for Noon Year's Eve activities (firework painting, noisemakers, party hats, and the Year in Review), plus a chocolate Kiss and bubble wrap for the countdown to Noon. The next day, New Years Eve, lead your own raucous countdown to noon. 10 am - 2 pm. Bennington Museum, 75 Main St. ajones@benningtonmuseum.org. benningtonmuseum.org.

MANCHESTER. New Year's Family Concert. Taconic musicians present a 45-minute, family-friendly concert to ring out the year. Free-will offering. Reservations required; link will open in mid December. Location TBA. Sponsored by Taconic Music. (802) 362-7162. directors@taconicmusic.org. taconicmusic.org.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31

MANCHESTER. New Year's Celebration Concerts. Taconic String Band with Matthew Gold and Michael Rudiakov perform Bach, Viennese waltzes, tangos, Broadway tunes, and the traditional Radetzky March. Tickets: \$25. Reservations required; link will open in mid December. 3 pm and 5:30 pm. Inn at Manchester Celebration Barn. (802) 362-7162. directors@taconicmusic.org. taconicmusic.org.

ONLINE. Highlight House Party. The Queen City's New Year's Eve celebration produced by Signal Kitchen and Burlington City Arts goes virtual. Livestream performances by Vermont-grown musicians, artists, acrobats, and chefs. Tickets: \$11.79. 1 pm - 1 am. hello@highlight.community. highlight.community.

ONLINE: "It's a Wonderful Life: A Radio Play," starring an ensemble cast of Northern Stage favorites as "radio actors" playing multiple roles. Tickets: \$15-\$25 (\$25/household). 12 midnight. Northern Stage, White River Junction. (802) 296-7000. rklink@northernstage.org. northernstage.org. *Also January 1, 2, and 3.*

ONLINE. St. Johnsbury First Night North. From musicians to storytellers to comics to dancers, performers bring this annual celebration of the arts—and the new year—into Vermonters' homes via Kingdom Access Television. Watch on Spectrum Cable 192 or online. Free. 4 pm - 12 midnight. (802) 748-2600. catamountarts.org/first-night-north.

ONLINE. All Wheel for the Arts Car Raffle. Grand Prize: 2020 Mitsubishi Outlander Sport 2.0 ES CUV. Holdup tray hitch bike rack. Tow hitch. 2020/2021 Burke Mountain ski season pass. You don't need to be present to win. Tickets: \$50 each, 3 for \$100. Drawing: Tuesday, January 5, 7:45 pm. Catamount Arts, St Johnsbury. (802)748-2600. catamountarts.org/shows/details/all-wheel-for-the-arts-car-affle. *Through January 5.*

ONLINE. 11th Annual Woodstock Vermont Film Series: *The Woman Who Loves Giraffes.* Anne Innis Dagg (now 85) offers an intimate window into her life as a young woman, juxtaposed with the devastating reality that giraffes are facing today. Tickets: \$12, 8 films \$88, 15 films \$150. (802) 457-5303. billingsfarm.org/filmseries. *Through January 3.*

Ring Out, Wild Bells

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light;
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow;
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
For those that here we See no more;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times;
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

—ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON
1809-1892, Somersby, United Kingdom



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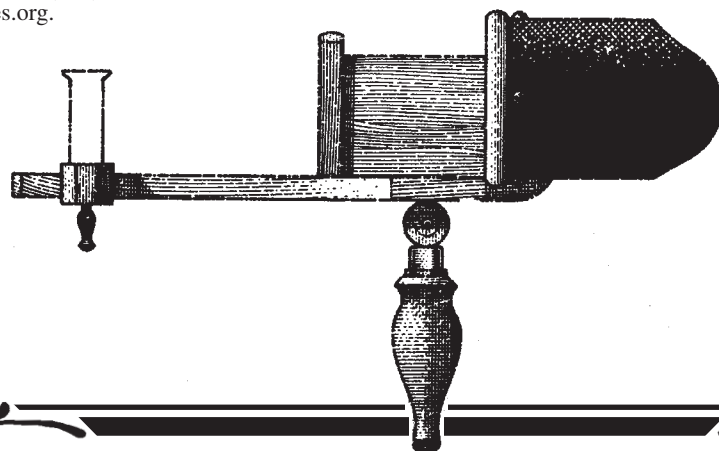
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Vermont Country Calendar

(Thursday, December 31, continued)

QUECHEE. Art Exhibit: "Anything Goes." 24+ original oils, acrylics and watercolor paintings of Vermont scenes. Free. 10 am – 5 pm. The Quechee Inn at Marshland Farms, Quechee Rd. (802) 295-3133. quecheeinn.com. *Through February 24.*

WOODSTOCK. Christmas at the Farm. Authentically decorated 1980 farmhouse parlor. Snowshoe trek in farm fields. Adults \$14-\$16; children \$4-\$9. 10 am – 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, 69 Old River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org. *Daily through January 3.*

FRIDAY, JANUARY 1

GRAFTON. Sleigh Rides. Enjoy the winter scenery aboard a horse-drawn sleigh ride. Adult \$20, youth \$12, 5 & under free. Sleigh. Leave every half hour from the cabin 11 am – 4 pm (final reservation time 3:30 pm). Reservations required. No more than two households to a sleigh, masks required throughout the ride. Outdoor Center at Grafton Inn, 92 Main St. (802) 843-2350. graftoninnvermont.com. *Also January 2, 16, February 6, 13, 14, 21.*

GREENSBORO. Open Air Gallery: Ski and Snowshoe Trail. Opening reception. Ski or snowshoe at your own pace, in and through artwork by Vermont artists. 1.8-mile trail loop. HCA cafe open 11 am – 2:30 pm. Social distancing and masks required. 8 am – 3 pm. Highland Center for the Arts, 2875 Hardwick St. (802) 533-2000. highlandartsvt.org.

HANOVER, NH. Community Dinner. Takeout meal sponsored by Hanover Community Kitchen. Free. 5 pm. Our Savior Lutheran Church, 5 Summer St. (603) 643-3703. oslchanover.org. *Also January 8.*

HUNTINGTON. Bill Koch Ski Program. Parent-run, after-school ski program. Split up by age and ability. Ages: 5–13. Cost: \$130 per child. Season ski rental fee: \$100 per child. Fridays 3:45–4:45 pm, Sundays 2–3:30 pm. Sleepy Hollow, 427 Ski Lodge Dr. jean_tufts@yahoo.com. skisleepyhollow.com/bill-koch-kids-ski-program.html. *Through February 21.*

ONLINE: "It's a Wonderful Life: A Radio Play," starring an ensemble cast of Northern Stage favorites as "radio actors" playing multiple roles (sound effects included). Tickets: \$15–\$25 (\$25/household). 12 midnight. Northern Stage, White River Junction. (802) 296-7000. rklink@northernstage.org. northernstage.org. *Also January 2 and 3.*

WOODSTOCK. Christmas at the Farm. Authentically decorated 1980 farmhouse parlor. Snowshoe trek in farm fields. Adults \$14-\$16; children \$4-\$9. 10 am – 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, 69 Old River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org. *Also daily through January 3.*

SATURDAY, JANUARY 2

BRATTLEBORO. Winter Farmers Market. Curbside pickup. 10 am – 2 pm. CF Church Building, 80 Flat St. (802) 869-2141. brattleborowinterfarmersmarket.org. *Saturdays through March.*

ESSEX JUNCTION. Winter Lights in the Park. Walk through Maple Street Park. Free. 5-8 pm. Maple Street Park, 75 Maple St. (802) 878-1375. ejrp.org. *Through January 11.*

FRANKLIN. Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department Educational Patrol. Game wardens and education staff will be roaming the ice, offering pointers. Bring your own equipment and set up on the ice to fish. Face masks, social distancing and fishing license required. 9-10:30 am. Lake Carmi State Park. (802) 505-5562. vtfishandwildlife.com.

GRAFTON. Sleigh Rides. Enjoy the winter scenery aboard a horse-drawn sleigh ride. Cost: adult \$20, youth \$12, 5 & under free. Sleigh rides leave every half hour from the cabin 11 am – 4 pm (final reservation time 3:30 pm). Reservations required in advance. No more than 2 households to a sleigh, masks required throughout the ride. Outdoor Center at Grafton Inn, 92 Main St. (802) 843-2350. graftoninnvermont.com. *Also January 16, February 6, 13, 14, 21.*

MIDDLEBURY. Middlebury Farmer's Market. Indoors for the winter. Local agricultural products including vegetables, fruit, and CBD. Every Saturday 9 am – 12:30 pm at the VFW on Exchange St. Covid protocols posted. (802) 673-4158. middleburyfarmersmkt@yahoo.com. middleburyfarmersmarket.org. *Saturdays through April 24.*

ONLINE: "It's a Wonderful Life: A Radio Play," starring an ensemble cast of Northern Stage favorites as "radio actors" playing multiple roles. Tickets: \$15–\$25 (\$25/household). 12 midnight. Northern Stage, White River Junction. (802) 296-7000. northernstage.org. *Also January 3.*

RUTLAND. Vermont Indoor Winter Farmers' Market. Farm fresh veggies, fruits, artisan cheeses, and more. Saturdays 10 am to 2 pm at the Farmers Food Center, 251 West St. (802) 342-4727. www.vtfarmersmarket.org. *Through May 1.*

WILMINGTON. Catamount Trail Ski Tour. Section 2: Harriman Dam to Route 9. Easy/Intermediate. Bring food and water for a full day and extra layers. Free and open to non-members. State of Vermont's COVID-related Outdoor Recreation & Travel Guidelines required. Schedule can change at any time. For details contact tour leader: Sam Bartlett, sam@bart-tech.com, (413) 834-0274. catamounttrail.org/cta-tours/single-day-tours. *Backup date: January 9.*

WOODSTOCK. Winter Weekend at the Farm. Visit the Jersey herd, draft horses, oxen, chickens, and sheep—inside for the winter—and tour the restored 1890 farm manager's house. Crafts and activities. A Place in the Land film shown every hour. Admission: adults \$16, seniors 62 and over \$14, 16 & up \$9, 5–15 \$8, 3–4 \$4, under 3 free. 10 am – 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, 69 Old River Rd. billingsfarm.org. *Also January 3, 9–10, 23–24, and 30–31.*

SUNDAY, JANUARY 3

ESSEX JUNCTION. Winter Lights in the Park. Walk through Maple Street Park and enjoy the bright lights and winter tunes. Free. 5-8 pm. Maple Street Park, 75 Maple St. (802) 878-1375. ejrp.org. *Through January 11.*

ONLINE: "It's a Wonderful Life: A Radio Play," starring an ensemble cast of Northern Stage favorites as "radio actors". Tickets: \$15–\$25 (\$25/household). 12 midnight. Northern Stage, White River Junction. (802) 296-7000. rklink@northernstage.org. northernstage.org.

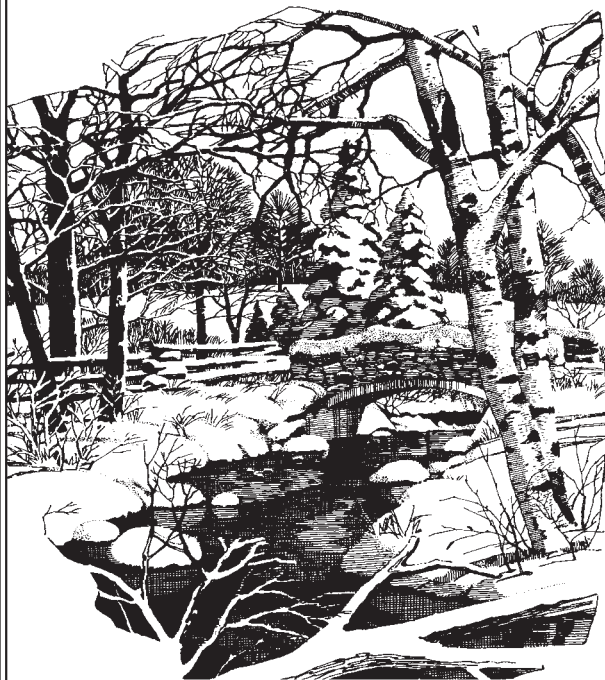
MONDAY, JANUARY 4

ONLINE. Mid-Winter Eagle Survey. If you see an eagle in Vermont during the survey period, please email the following information: date; location; time of day; number of Bald or Golden Eagles seen; approximate age of the eagles (i.e., adult Bald Eagle with white head and tail, or immature); any notable behavior (i.e., carrying nesting material, flying with another eagle, etc.). E-mail to Margaret Fowle at mfowle@audubon.org. *Through January 18.*

ONLINE. Slow Flow Vinyasa Yoga Classes, via Zoom. A slower pace class, mindfully moving and breathing while holding poses longer. Cost: \$165 for 12-week series, drops in \$16 per class. Mondays 8:45–9:45 am or Wednesdays 5:30–6:30 pm. Just Move Yoga and Fitness. (802) 579-9003. bronwyn@strongcoffeestage.com. www.bronwynsims.com. *Mondays January 4 thru March 22 or Wednesdays January 6 thru March 24.*

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Way Back Then

Surviving the Bitter Cold

by Charles Sutton

The arrival of unusually severe cold weather this January recalls a much grimmer time during the winter of 1970–71 when temperatures persisted below zero for at least a week.

Living in southern Maine at the time one might expect the ocean to moderate temperatures, but not so. Many salt-water coves froze over as well as parts of Portland harbor where incoming and outgoing tides moved pie-shaped 'snow ice' chunks around in the salt water, expelling 'sea smoke'—a fog created when cold air moves over comparatively warmer water.

On January 18th, 1971 a record 22 degrees below zero was recorded in Portland. During that January the country's lowest temperature ever recorded was 80 degrees below zero, reached in Alaska. That beats Vermont's coldest ever of 50 degrees below zero on January, 1933 in Bloomfield in Vermont's Northeast Kingdom.

My own troubles with the extreme cold in Maine began when the car wouldn't start mornings so I could go to work in Portland about 20 miles away. My usual way of pre-warming the engine was a 150-watt bulb under the hood which was then covered with a blanket. In that sub-zero cold, it was no use, nor was a heated oil dip stick left in all night. What did the job (and got me to work) was a head bolt heater (also called a block heater) whose electric current would warm the whole engine and its oil. Many motels and parking garages in northern places like Alaska have outlets for these heaters.

We were lucky as there was a lot of snow on the ground (around 140 inches) which acted as insulation around the house as well as for the underground water line to our spring. To keep out the cold we covered the window with blankets.

We had a mini-farm which included a small flock of laying hens that had their own small chicken house. A heated water device worked, but the main reason the hens stayed warm was the heat coming up from the floor with its 6-8-inch layer of composting wood shavings, chicken manure, sawdust and vegetable scrapes from the household. The chickens scratched around in this, but spent most of their time on off-ground roosts. They continued to lay eggs regardless of the weather.

It was quite a sight at night to see steam from the 'cooking' compost in the hen house coming out a vent.



I have long used good sense in bundling up for the extreme cold. Perhaps I learned my lesson about the dangers of hypothermia years earlier when I spent a very chilly night in a car off the road in the Catskill Mountains.

A college friend asked me if I would drive his car from Cornell to Connecticut for the winter break. He warned me that while it ran well, it had no heater, and the tires were getting 'a little bald.' This would save me a long, bumpy, tedious train ride home through coal country on the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad (the students called it the Leaky Valley Railroad)—so I said "yes."

The ride was uneventful and I was making good time until in the middle of the night and in an utterly desolate region, I hit an icy patch and the car, with its bald tires, slid into a snowbank. Absolutely no one came by and I had no idea how near a house or business was. I decided to stay in the car until morning when I could get help. No AAA then and no cell phones.

I was bringing a suitcase of laundry home to wash and I packed these layers of clothing around me to ward off the cold that was getting worse and worse. I recall my breath reaching the windshield and freezing on. I stayed awake all night. And survived.

When morning came I was able to walk to a village where I got something hot to drink. I borrowed a shovel, dug myself out, returned the shovel, and made my way home—a lot worse for wear, but with a new respect for how cold cold can be.

I arrived home to find that my parents had been worried half to death when I didn't show up as expected. The shock of the experience and so much cold must have dulled my sensibilities. These many years later I cannot think why I didn't call home to say what happened and that I was alive. Sorry, Mom.



Vermont Scenic Prints

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Vermont Country Calendar

TUESDAY, JANUARY 5

NORWICH. Mindfulness Meditation. Sitting and walking meditation in the tradition of Thich Nhat Hanh. After the meditation, the group studies a reading and engages in discussion. All backgrounds and experience levels welcome. Free. 9–11:30 am. Heart of the Valley Mindfulness Practice Center, St. Francis Catholic Church, 75 Beaver Meadow Rd. (603) 643-9487. wgersen@hotmail.com. Also *January 12*.

ONLINE. Energetic Vinyasa Flow Yoga Classes, via Zoom. an all-levels vinyasa class that is meant to invigorate the body, mind, and senses with physically challenging, yet accessible sequences. Cost: \$165 for 12-week series, drop-ins \$16 per class. Tuesdays 5:30-6:30 pm; Thursdays 9-10:15 am. Just Move Yoga and Fitness. (802) 579-9003. bronwyn@strongcoffeestage.com. www.bronwynsims.com. *Tuesdays January 5 through March 23 or Thursdays January 7 through March 25*.

ONLINE. Virtual Author Appearance. Tessa Wegert: The Dead Season, in conversation with Sarah Stewart Taylor. 7 pm. Phoenix Books. phoenixbooks.biz/events.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 6

GREENSBORO. Four-Week Workshop for Middle/High School Students: Drawing Fundamentals (and more), taught by Gabriel Tempesta. Learn the fundamentals of drawing, using the current exhibit at HCA as a jumping off point. Fee: \$40 (four-week session). Wednesdays 1–3 pm. Highland Center for the Arts, 2875 Hardwick St. (802) 533-2000. boxoffice@highlandartsvt.org. highlandartsvt.org. *Through January 27*.

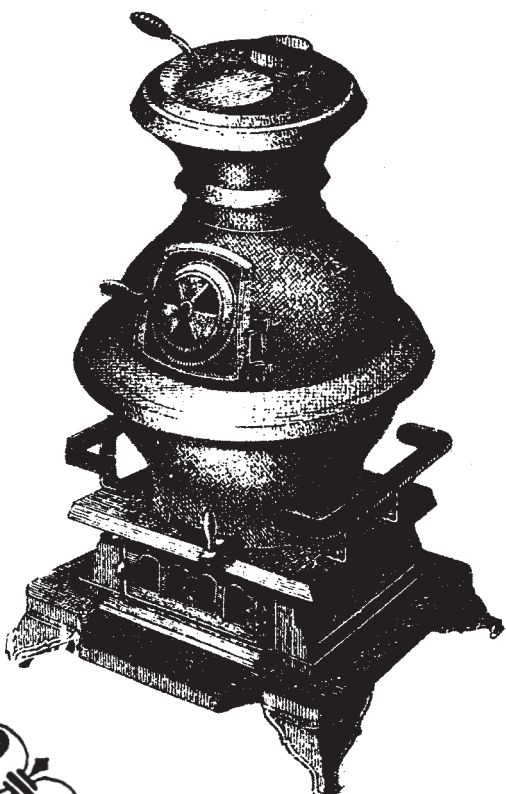
ONLINE. First Wednesdays Talk: Meeting Men Through Imagination. Josiah Rule Randazzo, creator of The Complete Dick podcast, will explore how we can use everyday experiences to ask better questions and transform our understanding of masculinity and manhood. Free. 7 pm. Brooks Memorial Library, Brattleboro. (802) 254-5290. brookslibraryvt.org. vermonthumanities.org/first-wednesdays.

ONLINE. Strengthening and Conditioning Fitness Classes via Zoom. A fun and dynamic combo of yoga, and acrobatic conditioning. Cost: \$165 for 12-week series, drop-ins \$16 per class. Wednesdays 8:30–9:30 am. Just Move Yoga and Fitness. (802) 579-9003. bronwyn@strongcoffeestage.com. www.bronwynsims.com. *Wednesdays January 6 through March 24*.

ONLINE. First Wednesdays Talk: Reinventing the Family Home. Erin Sassin examines how American reformers and homeowners have, in pursuit of “the simple life,” attempted to reinvent the form and idea of the single-family home, from farmhouses and communal experiments to the current tiny house phenomenon. Free. 7 pm. Kellogg-Hubbard Library, Montpelier. (802) 223-3338. kellogghubbard.org. vermonthumanities.org/first-wednesdays.

ONLINE. First Wednesdays Talk: China’s Belt and Road Initiative. Derek Boothby, former director of the UN’s Department of Political Affairs, explores the breadth and depth of this massive global initiative, and considers what it might mean for America’s future. Free. 7 pm. Rutland Free Library. (802) 773-1860. rutlandfree.org. vermonthumanities.org/first-wednesdays.

ONLINE. Virtual Author Appearance: Celebrate the launch of Julia Claiborne Johnson’s *Better Luck Next Time*, a charming story of endings, new beginnings, and the complexities and complications of friendship and love, set in late 1930s Reno. To attend, purchase a copy of the book; you will be registered to join the event on Crowdcast. 7 pm. Northshire Bookstore. (802) 362-2200. www.northshire.com.



THURSDAY, JANUARY 7

ONLINE. Virtual Featured Reading: Poet Ross Gay will read the entire book-length poem, *Be Holding*, his newest book. The reading will include images provided by the author. Zoom link will be provided. 7–8 pm. Vermont Studio Center. (802) 635-2727. info@vermontstudiocenter.org. vermontstudiocenter.org.

ONLINE. 11th Annual Woodstock Vermont Film Series. *Moynihan*. Daniel Patrick Moynihan (1927-2003) did not just live in the twentieth century, he strode across it: a colossus of ideas and a man of deeds. Stream on demand. Tickets: \$12. (802) 457-5303. billingsfarm.org/filmseries. *Through January 10*.

ONLINE. Virtual Featured Reading: Poet Ross Gay will read the entire book-length poem, *Be Holding*, his newest book. The reading will include images provided by the author. Zoom link will be provided. 7–8 pm. Vermont Studio Center. (802) 635-2727. info@vermontstudiocenter.org. vermontstudiocenter.org.

ONLINE. Virtual Author Appearance. An Evening with Vincent Panella. A discussion of his new novel, *Sicilian Dreams*. A bridge across the ocean, separating life there and life here, a tunnel connecting great characters and ideas. 7 pm. Phoenix Books. phoenixbooks.biz/events.

ONLINE. Virtual Author Appearance: Beloved Buddhist teacher and author Dzigar Kongtrul Rinpoche presents his new book, *Peaceful Heart: The Buddhist Practice of Peace*, an introductory guide to cultivating patience and opening your heart to difficult circumstances. Ticket includes a copy of *Peaceful Heart* and access to the Zoom event for your household. 5 pm. Northshire Bookstore. (802) 362.2200. events@northshire.com. northshire.com.

ONLINE. Virtual Film Series. On-Demand Movies: *Mayor*, a witty, darkly comic portrait of Ramallah’s magnetic mayor offers up a refreshingly new perspective on the region’s political conflicts. *Breaking Surface*: two sisters scuba diving on the Norwegian coast are in a race against time when one gets trapped underwater. Tickets: \$8. Hopkins Center for the Arts. (603) 646-2422. hop.box@dartmouth.edu. hop.dartmouth.edu. *Through January 13*.

ONLINE. Clean Water Series: In Action! The Stormwater Three-Acre General Permit, with Stormwater Program Manager, Padraic Monks. Free. 12 noon – 1 pm, via Microsoft Teams Live. All talks recorded and uploaded to DEC’s YouTube Channel: tiny.cc/CleanWaterYouTube. Agency of Natural Resources. (802) 760-9967. ANR. CleanWaterVT@vermont.gov. dec.vermont.gov/water-investment/cwi/outreach/lecture-series.

ONLINE. Talk by Mirna Valerio. Awe, Community & the Outdoors: A Perfect Trifecta. Spending time in the outdoors and having awe-filled experiences increases a sense of community, resilience, and joy and offers people the opportunity to find common (literal) ground. Free, registration required. 7–8 pm. Green Mountain Club. greenmountainclub.org/education/speaker-series.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 8

HANOVER, NH. Community Dinner. Takeout meal sponsored by Hanover Community Kitchen. Free. 5 pm. Our Savior Lutheran Church, 5 Summer St. (603) 643-3703. oslchanover.org.

ONLINE. 11th Annual Woodstock Vermont Film Series. *Moynihan*. Daniel Patrick Moynihan (1927-2003) did not just live in the twentieth century, he strode across it: a colossus of ideas and a man of deeds. Stream on demand. Tickets: \$12. (802) 457-5303. billingsfarm.org/filmseries. *Thru January 10*.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 9

BARNARD. Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department Educational Patrol. Game wardens and education staff will be roaming the ice, offering pointers, and chatting with anglers. Bring your own equipment and set up on the ice to fish. Face masks, social distancing and fishing license required. 11:30 am – 1 pm. Silver Lake. (802) 505-5562. Corey.Hart@vermont.gov. vtfishandwildlife.com.

BENNINGTON. Farmers Market: New Winter Location. Online pre-ordering and curbside pickup service only for January 9 & 23. Every other Saturday. Bennington High School and Junior High School, 650 Main St. BenningtonFarmersMarket@gmail.com. Also *January 23, February 6 & 20, March 6 & 20, April 3 & 17*.

BERLIN. Kids Trade and Play. Kids Clothing exchange, newborn to junior size 12. Bring what you no longer need and take home what you do. Cost: \$3/family. 9:30-11:30 am. Central Vermont Capitol City Grange, 6612 VT Rt. 12. capitalcitygrange.org. *Second Saturday of every month*.

BRATTLEBORO. Winter Farmers Market. Convenient parking. Curbside pickup. Credit, debit, and EBT accepted. Every Saturday, 10 am – 2 pm. CF Church Building, 80 Flat St. (802) 869-2141. brattleborowinterfarmersmarket.org. *Saturdays through March*.

DERRY, NH. Indoor Concert: The Breakers, Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers tribute band. Groupings of 2, 4, and 6 on lower and main levels. Mezzanine section flexible seating automatically accounts for 6 ft distancing by blocking out seats around those purchased. Tickets: \$40. 5 pm and 8 pm. Tupelo Music Hall, 10 A St. (603) 437-5100. tupelomusicall.com.



Vermont State Parks Gift Cards and Gift Certificates

Give the gift of the Vermont Outdoors. Want to treat someone to a full season of outdoor fun? Whether they like taking a swim after work, enjoying a weekend camping getaway, sitting by a waterfall, discovering a new trail, trying out a paddleboard or kayak, or simply having an impromptu picnic, Vermont State Parks has something for everyone. You can give these experiences and more by purchasing a gift certificate or gift card from Vermont State Parks.

Both gift cards and gift certificates are available in any denomination over \$20 and can be ordered online for a meaningful and hassle-free holiday gift. They can be redeemed for season passes, camping, day entry, Seyon Lodge fly fishing passes, and more. Endlessly customizable to each person’s taste, the recipient can choose what’s right for them and turn their dreams of a great year ahead into a reality.

“This past year, like no other, we’ve seen the value of spending time outdoors,” says Michael Snyder, Com-

missioner of the department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation. “Enjoying the outdoors is good for your body, mind, and spirit. And gifting a Vermont State Parks experience connects people to the natural world, promotes health and wellness, and provides the lasting gift of shared time with family and friends.”

Gift certificates are electronic documents that are issued by email and can be forwarded to the person you are gifting it to. With nothing to mail or package, this is fast and completely touch-free.

Gift cards are attractive credit card-sized cards, and these are mailed to the giver’s home to be gifted as they wish. Recipients can keep them in their wallets so they can be used whenever the mood for adventure strikes, whether heading to a park for day use or reserving campsites online.

Gift cards and certificates can be ordered online anytime at vtstateparks.com or by calling 1-888-409-7579 Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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Vermont Country Calendar

(Saturday, January 9, continued)

ESSEX JUNCTION. Winter Lights in the Park. Walk through Maple Street Park and enjoy the bright lights and winter tunes. Free. 5-8 pm. Maple Street Park, 75 Maple St. (802) 878-1375. ejrp.org. *Through January 11.*

HARTFORD. Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department Educational Patrol. Game wardens and education staff will be roaming the ice, offering pointers, and chatting with anglers. Bring your own equipment and set up on the ice to fish. Face masks, social distancing and fishing license required. 9-10:30 am. Deweys Mills Pond. (802) 505-5562. Corey.Hart@vermont.gov. vtfishandwildlife.com.

MIDDLEBURY. Middlebury Farmer's Market. Indoors for the winter. Local agricultural products including vegetables, fruit, and CBD. Every Saturday 9 am - 12:30 pm at the VFW on Exchange St. Covid protocols posted. (802) 673-4158. middleburyfarmersmkt@yahoo.com. middleburyfarmersmarket.org. *Saturdays through April 24.*

NORWICH. Norwich Farmers Market Curbside Pick-up. Order goods online at norwichfarmersmarket.org/preorder-details.html. 11 am - 12:30 pm. Pick-up at St. Barnabas Church, 262 Main St. (802) 384-7447. norwichfarmersmarket.org. *Second Saturdays thru April.*

ONLINE. Basic/Beginner Inversions Core and Shoulder Strengthening and Flexibility Classes, via Zoom. Learn the basic elements of handstanding and other inversions, and arm balances, including creative and fun exercises that build upper body strength and flexibility, as well as injury prevention for shoulders. Cost: \$165 for 12-week series, drop-ins \$16 per class. Saturdays 10:30-11:30 am. Just Move Yoga and Fitness. (802) 579-9003. bronwyn@strongcoffeestage.com. bronwynsims.com. *Saturdays January 9 through March 27.*

ONLINE. Virtual Author Appearance. James Kochalka presents *Banana Fox and the Secret Sour Society*. 11 am. Phoenix Books. phoenixbooks.biz/events.

ONLINE. World at Home Concert: Jason Anick Acoustic Trio. Fiddle, guitar, and bass, traditional instrumentation spinning ear-catching melodies. Streaming live, followed by Q & A. Intro subscription \$5/month for password to all past and current monthly concerts. 7:30 pm. Halcyon Arts. (413) 345-2917. halcyonartsma@gmail.com. halcyon-arts.org/world-at-home-concerts.html.

ONLINE. 11th Annual Woodstock Vermont Film Series. *Moynihan*. Daniel Patrick Moynihan (1927-2003) did not just live in the twentieth century, he strode across it: a colossus of ideas and a man of deeds. Stream on demand. Tickets: \$12. (802) 457-5303. billingsfarm.org/filmseries. *Also January 10.*

ONLINE. Dartmouth Idol Semi-Finals. Dartmouth students singing a variety of music from classical to contemporary. This year, go behind the scenes and watch the process as students audition to become the next Dartmouth Idol. Tickets: sliding scale. 8 pm. Hopkins Center. (603) 646.2422. hop.dartmouth.edu.

RUPERT. Saturday Hike. Guided winter hike through farmland and woods. 4-5:30 pm. Fee \$5. Merck Forest & Farmland Center, 3270 Rt. 315, west of Manchester. www.merckforest.org.

RUTLAND. Vermont Indoor Winter Farmers' Market. Farm fresh veggies, fruits, artisan cheeses, and more. 10 am to 2 pm at the Farmers Food Center, 251 West St. (802) 342-4727. vtfarmersmarket.org. *Saturdays through May 1.*

SHELBURNE. Webby's Art Studio. Specialized art activities for all ages, inspired by temporary and permanent exhibitions. Free with Museum admission. 11 am - 3 pm. Pizzagalli Center for Art and Education classroom, Shelburne Museum, 6000 Shelburne Rd. (802) 985-3346. shelburnemuseum.org.

SPRINGFIELD. Workshop: Painting the Winter Landscape in Watercolor, with Robert O'Brien. Work from photo reference and learn to create a finished painting from a favorite winter subject. Hands-on guidance, critique at the end. All Covid-19 protocols followed. Handicap accessible. Fee: \$90, materials list provided at registration. 9:30 am - 4 pm. Springfield Unitarian Meeting House, 21 Fairground Rd. Gallery at the VAULT. (802) 885-7111. galleryvault@vermontel.net. galleryvault.org.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 10

ESSEX JUNCTION. Winter Lights in the Park. Walk through Maple Street Park and enjoy the bright lights and winter tunes. Free. 5-8 pm. Maple Street Park, 75 Maple St. (802) 878-1375. ejrp.org. *Through January 11.*

ONLINE. 11th Annual Woodstock Vermont Film Series. *Moynihan*. Daniel Patrick Moynihan (1927-2003) did not just live in the twentieth century, he strode across it: a colossus of ideas and a man of deeds. Stream on demand. Tickets: \$12. (802) 457-5303. billingsfarm.org/filmseries.

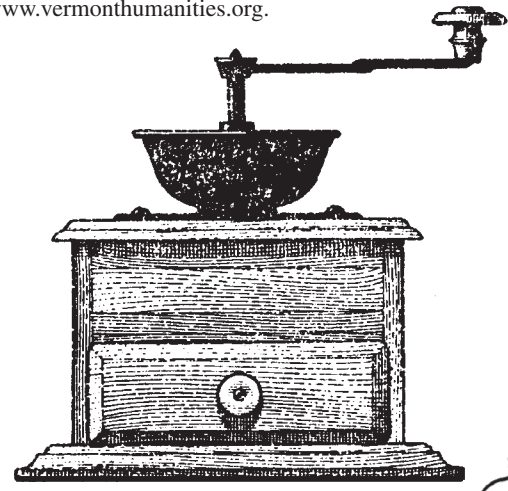
ONLINE. Physical Theatre, Authentic Movement, and Dance Classes via Zoom. explore the fundamental building blocks of authentic movement and theatre. Cost: \$350 for 12-week series. Sundays 11 am - 1 pm. Just Move Yoga and Fitness. (802) 579-9003. bronwyn@strongcoffeestage.com. www.bronwynsims.com. *Sundays January 10 through March 28.*

MONDAY, JANUARY 11

ESSEX JUNCTION. Winter Lights in the Park. Walk through Maple Street Park and enjoy the bright lights and winter tunes. Free. 5-8 pm. Maple Street Park, 75 Maple St. (802) 878-1375. ejrp.org. *Through January 11.*

ONLINE. Talk: Rick Winston, author of *Red Scare in the Green Mountains: Vermont in the McCarthy Era*, explores how a small, rural "rock-ribbed Republican" state with a historically libertarian streak handled the hysteria of the time. Free. 1:30 pm. Community Senior Center of Richmond, Huntington and Bolton. (802) 454-7103. (802) 434-3504. vermonthumanities.org.

ONLINE. Book Discussion: *Refugees* by Viet Thanh Nguyen. A book of short stories, a memoir and two novels bring us to present day consideration of migration, immigration and refuge. Their love and a sense of their past as they walk through fantastical doors to new lands. Free. 7 pm. Wake Robin Retirement Community. (802) 264-5100. dartpjdart@comcast.net. wakerobin.com. www.vermonthumanities.org.



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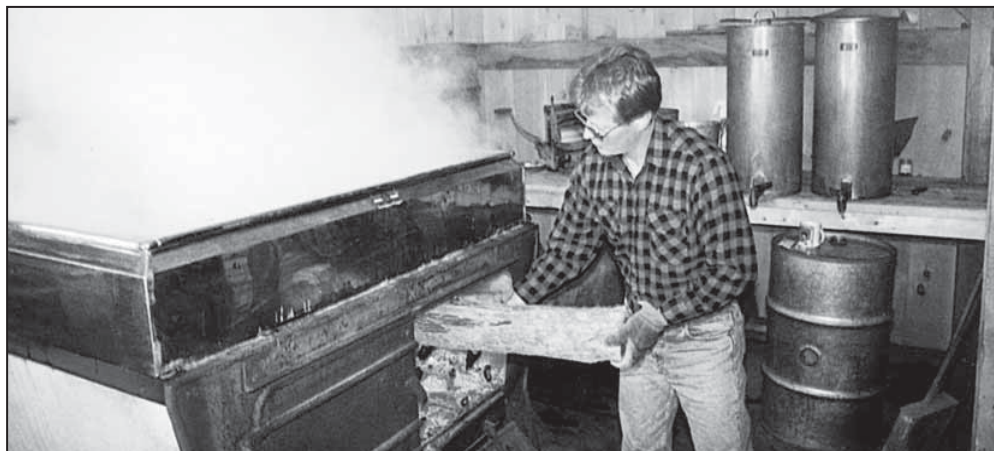
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New Year

If I could stand on some high place
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(Tomorrow we will have, please God,
A brighter, happier year),
All I could say to them would be:
Tonight the old year ends.
Let us not usher in the new
As foes, but loving friends.

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1944, Springfield, VT

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Vermont Country Calendar

TUESDAY, JANUARY 12

NORWICH. Mindfulness Meditation. Sitting and walking meditation in the tradition of Thich Nhat Hanh. After the meditation, the group studies a reading and engages in discussion. All backgrounds and experience levels welcome. Free. 9–11:30 am. Heart of the Valley Mindfulness Practice Center, St. Francis Catholic Church, 75 Beaver Meadow Rd. (603) 643-9487. wgersen@hotmail.com.

ONLINE. Webinar. “Wildlife Tracking with an Ecological Eye: One of Humanity’s First Sciences”. With local tracker Kyle Rodd. Learn the fundamentals of tracking and how to bring a landscape-level view to your own mammal tracking. Registration fee. 7-8 pm. The Nature Museum. www.nature-museum.org.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 14

ONLINE. 11th Annual Woodstock Vermont Film Series. *John Lewis: Good Trouble*. Plus filmmaker interview.. Stream on demand. Tickets: \$12. (802) 457-5303. billingsfarm.org/filmseries. *Through January 17.*

ONLINE. Artist Talk. “Linking Us Fondly: Hairwork in 19th-Century America”. Helen Sheumaker gives a livestreamed talk in connection with the exhibit Rachel Portesi: Hair Portraits. Free. 7 pm. Brattleboro Museum & Art Center. (802) 257-0124. brattleboromuseum.org.

ONLINE. Virtual Film Series. On-Demand Movies: *Nationtime*, a long-lost film documents the 1972 National Black Political Convention, where 10,000 black politicians, activists and artists met to forge a national unity platform. *Mountainfilm on Tour*, Colorado festival returns with an adrenaline-fueled lineup from across the globe. Tickets: \$8–\$10. Hopkins Center for the Arts. (603) 646-2422. hop.box@dartmouth.edu. hop.dartmouth.edu. *Thru January 20.*

ONLINE. Vermont Grazing and Livestock Virtual Conference. As Above, So Below: Taking stock of what we see to care for all we grow. Thursday workshops: Finishing beef, Working with the slaughter house, Direct marketing whole animals. vtgrassfarmers.org/2020-conference. *Through January 16.*

ONLINE. Concert. Catalyst Quartet: Uncovered. A genre-defying ensemble known for their rhythmic energy, polyphonic clarity, and tight ensemble-playing. Tickets on sale January 4 at 10:30 am. 8 pm. Hopkins Center. (603) 646.2422. hop.dartmouth.edu.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 15

GREENSBORO. Snowlights—Weekend One. Magical display of lights. Glowing fires and live music. The HCA Café will serve light dinner fare, decadent desserts and cozy drinks. Outside event with some uneven terrain. Winter boots and outdoor wear recommended. Social distancing and masks required. Tickets: \$5. Friday and Saturday, 5–8 pm. Highland Center for the Arts, 2875 Hardwick St. (802) 533-2000. boxoffice@highlandartsvt.org. highlandartsvt.org. *Through January 16, also January 22-23.*

JAY. Four-Day Catamount Trail Ski Tour: Sections 29 and 31. Sign up for as many days as you wish. All participants required to follow the State of Vermont’s COVID-related Outdoor Recreation & Travel Guidelines. Schedule can change at any time. For details contact tour leader: Paul Demers, demers.paul6@gmail.com. catamounttrail.org/cta-tours/single-day-tours. *Through January 18.*

ONLINE. 11th Annual Woodstock Vermont Film Series. *John Lewis: Good Trouble*. Plus filmmaker interview.. Stream on demand. Tickets: \$12. (802) 457-5303. billingsfarm.org/filmseries. *Through January 17.*

ONLINE. Vermont Grazing and Livestock Virtual Conference. As Above, So Below: Taking stock of what we see to care for all we grow. Friday workshops: Electro-net repairs with Wellscoft Fencing, Non-lethal predator protections, How to read and use soil and forage test results, and a conversation with keynote speaker, Nicole Masters. Friday night: Farmer story-telling event. vtgrassfarmers.org/2020-conference. *Through January 16.*

SATURDAY, JANUARY 16

BRATTLEBORO. Winter Farmers Market. Convenient parking. Curbside pickup. Credit, debit, and EBT accepted. Every Saturday, 10 am – 2 pm. CF Church Building, 80 Flat St. (802) 869-2141. brattleborowinterfarmersmarket.org. *Saturdays through March.*

GOSHEN. Catamount Trail Introductory Ski Tour: Rikert Nordic Center area loop. Easy/intermediate. Bring food and water for a full day and extra layers. Free and open to non-members. All participants required to follow the State of Vermont’s COVID-related Outdoor Recreation & Travel Guidelines. Schedule can change at any time. For details contact tour leader: Phil Kivlin, redsled@shoreham.net, (802) 897-8031. catamounttrail.org/cta-tours/single-day-tours. *Backup date: January 23.*

GRAFTON. Sleigh Rides. Enjoy the winter scenery. Cost: adult \$20, youth \$12, 5 & under free. Sleigh rides leave every half-hour 11 am – 4 pm (final reservation 3:30 pm). Reservations required. No more than two households to a sleigh, masks required. Outdoor Center at Grafton Inn, 92 Main St. (802) 843-2350. graftoninnvermont.com. *Also February 6, 13, 14, 21.*

GREENSBORO. Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department Educational Patrol. Game wardens and education staff will be roaming the ice, offering pointers. Bring your own equipment and set up on the ice to fish. Face masks, social distancing and fishing license required. 8:30–10 am. Lake Caspian. (802) 505-5562. vtfishandwildlife.com.

MARSHFIELD. Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department Educational Patrol. Game wardens and education staff will be roaming the ice, offering pointers, and chatting with anglers. Bring your own equipment and set up on the ice to fish. Face masks, social distancing and fishing license required. 11 am – 12:30 pm. Marshfield Reservoir. (802) 505-5562. Corey.Hart@vermont.gov. vtfishandwildlife.com.

MIDDLEBURY. Middlebury Farmer’s Market. Indoors for the winter. Local agricultural products including vegetables, fruit, and CBD. Every Saturday 9 am – 12:30 pm at the VFW on Exchange St. Covid protocols posted. (802) 673-4158. middleburyfarmersmkt@yahoo.com. middleburyfarmersmarket.org. *Saturdays through April 24.*

ONLINE. 11th Annual Woodstock Vermont Film Series. *John Lewis: Good Trouble*. Plus filmmaker interview.. Stream on demand. Tickets: \$12. (802) 457-5303. billingsfarm.org/filmseries. *Also January 17.*

ONLINE. Vermont Grazing and Livestock Virtual Conference. As Above, So Below: Taking stock of what we see to care for all we grow. Saturday Workshops: Grazing fundamentals Q&A to begin the day, Water innovations for all seasons, Stacking species and silvopasture, and a conversation with keynote speaker, Jonathan Lundgren. vtgrassfarmers.org/2020-conference.

RUTLAND. Vermont Indoor Winter Farmers’ Market. Farm fresh veggies, fruits, artisan cheeses, and more. Saturdays 10 am to 2 pm at the Farmers Food Center, 251 West St. (802) 342-4727. vtfarmersmarket.org. *Saturdays through May 1.*

THETFORD. Catamount Trail Women’s Day on Skis. Intermediate. Bring food and water for a full day and extra layers. Free and open to non-members. All participants required to follow the State of Vermont’s COVID-related Outdoor Recreation & Travel Guidelines. Schedule can change at any time. For details contact tour leader: Karen Heinzmann, karen.heinzmann@thet.net. catamounttrail.org/cta-tours/single-day-tours.

WESTON. Catamount Trail Ski Tour: Root Beer Ridge Loop (Mount Tabor). Mostly intermediate. Bring food and water for a full day and extra layers. Free and open to non-members. State of Vermont’s COVID-related Outdoor Recreation & Travel Guidelines required. Schedule can change at any time. For details contact tour leader: Andrew Harper, ap_harper@hotmail.com, (802) 430-3859. catamounttrail.org/cta-tours/single-day-tours.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 17

HUNTINGTON. Catamount Trail Ski Tour: Camel’s Hump Nordic Skiers Association, Woodchuck Ramble BC Area & Parts of CTA section 20. Easy/intermediate. Bring food and water for a full day and extra layers. Free and open to non-members. State of Vermont’s COVID-related Outdoor Recreation & Travel Guidelines required. Schedule can change at any time. Tour leader: Terry Ryan, (802) 434-3640, terrye_ryan@hotmail.com. catamounttrail.org/cta-tours/single-day-tours.

ONLINE. 2021 Komen Vermont Virtual Snowshoe. Wherever you are, snowshoe to make an impact in the fight against breast cancer. Funds raised support the Komen helpline, treatment assistance program, and national breast cancer research program. (802) 548-4691. lmaness@komen.org. komennewengland.org.

ONLINE. 11th Annual Woodstock Vermont Film Series. *John Lewis: Good Trouble*. Plus filmmaker interview.. Stream on demand. Tickets: \$12. (802) 457-5303. billingsfarm.org/filmseries.

ONLINE. Interactive Virtual Celebration: Sweet Honey in the Rock sing traditional American holiday spirituals, hymns, inspirational songs, and songs from around the world. Live-streamed from The Academy of Music. Tickets: \$15. 3–4:30 pm. Next Stage Arts Project. (802) 387-0102. info@nextstagearts.org. nextstagearts.org. thirdrow.live/events/sweet-honey-in-the-rock/p/nextstage

SHELburne. Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department Educational Patrol. Game wardens and education staff will be roaming the ice, offering pointers. Bring your own equipment and set up on the ice to fish. Face masks, social distancing and fishing license required. 12–1:30 pm. Shelburne Pond. (802) 505-5562. vtfishandwildlife.com.

ST. ALBANS. Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department Educational Patrol. Game wardens and education staff will be roaming the ice, offering pointers, and chatting with anglers. Bring your own equipment and set up on the ice to fish. Face masks, social distancing and fishing license required. 9–10:30 am. St. Albans Bay. (802) 505-5562. Corey.Hart@vermont.gov. vtfishandwildlife.com.

MONDAY, JANUARY 18

ONLINE. Virtual Featured Artist Talk: Lucy Pullen. A Canadian artist based in New York. Free. Zoom link will be provided. 7–8 pm. Vermont Studio Center. (802) 635-2727. info@vermontstudiocenter.org. vermontstudiocenter.org. lucypullen.com.

VT Fish & Wildlife Dept

Roxbury Fish Culture Station Back in Operation

The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department recently completed the reconstruction of the Roxbury Fish Culture Station in Roxbury, VT.

Locally known as “the fish hatchery,” the original facility was constructed in 1891 as Vermont’s first fish hatchery, but it was destroyed on August 28, 2011, during Tropical Storm Irene.

Efforts began immediately to restore the hatchery, and with support from Governor Scott, state legislators, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, State of Vermont Buildings and General Services, and E.F. Wall and Associates Inc., the site reached the milestone of substantial completion on September 23, 2020.

The facility is now back at full production after nine years of planning, permitting and rebuilding, starting with eggs that will be raised into yearlings and stocked into lakes, ponds and streams in the spring of 2022.

The former gravity-fed pond system was upgraded to meet modern clean water standards and to reduce sediment and particulate matter entering Vermont’s waterways.

The renovated facility will produce 25,000 pounds of fish—approximately 60,000 brook and rainbow trout

annually for stocking in state waters. These fish will provide opportunities for anglers and play an important role in Vermont’s economy. Previous studies from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have shown the Roxbury Fish Culture Station has contributed about \$2.4 million dollars in annual economic impact to the state.

“This facility is now Vermont’s oldest and newest fish hatchery,” said Roxbury Fish Culture Station Supervisor Jeremy Whalen. “We were able to preserve historic details of the original hatchery and meet modern water quality standards for the receiving watershed. The new and improved Roxbury hatchery will allow us to raise fish, provide angling opportunities and continue to be a mainstay in Vermont’s history, culture and economy.”

The outdoor grounds at the Roxbury Fish Culture Station will remain open during the COVID-19 pandemic and visitors are reminded to practice social distancing and wear face coverings while on-site.

Roxbury Fish Culture Station is located at 3696 Roxbury Rd. in Roxbury, VT. (802) 485-7568. www.vtfishandwildlife.com.

Useful Vermont Websites

Vermont Tourism Site: vermontvacation.com
Vermont State Parks: vtstateparks.com
Green Mountain National Forest: fs.fed.us/r9/gmfl
Vermont Outdoor Guide Association: voga.org
Golfing: vtga.org • Hunting & Fishing: vtfishandwildlife.com

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Vermont Country Calendar

(Monday, January 18, continued)

PERU. Catamount Trail Ski Tour: Jones Brook—Stone Place—Little Michigan—Utley Brook Loop. Easy/intermediate. Bring food and water for a full day and extra layers. All participants required to follow the State of Vermont's COVID-related Outdoor Recreation & Travel Guidelines. Schedule can change at any time. For details contact tour leader: Andrew Harper, ap_harper@hotmail.com, (802) 430-3859. catamounttrail.org/cta-tours/single-day-tours.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 19

BRATTLEBORO. Artist Talk: A Conversation with Lois Dodd. In conduction with the exhibit "Figuration Never Died: New York Painterly Painting, 1950-1970". 7 pm. Brattleboro Museum & Art Center. (802) 257-0124. info@brattleboromuseum.org. brattleboromuseum.org.

ONLINE. Artist Talk. Lois Dodd joins artist Eric Aho for an online conversation about her life and work. At 93, Dodd is among the artists featured in Figuration Never Died: New York Painterly Painting, 1950-1970. Free. 7 pm. Brattleboro Museum & Art Center. (802) 257-0124. brattleboromuseum.org.

ONLINE. Dawnland Storytelling: Traditional Abenaki Stories. An hour of captivating tales with Anne Jennison, Native American storyteller, historian, educator, and craftsman. Q&A with Anne will follow the performance. Tickets: \$5/household. 10-11 am. Highland Center for the Arts. (802) 533-2000. boxoffice@highlandartsvt.org. www.highlandartsvt.org.

ONLINE. Teacher Environmental Literacy Series, Session 3: Sustainability through Equitable Communities. Looks at establishing equity within our classrooms and for our students by having academic conversations of what equity looks like through the lens of sustainability. Teacher: Aimee Arandia Østensen. Cost: \$30 per teacher (sign up with a friend & get \$5 each off registration). 7-8:30 pm EST. celfeducation.z2systems.com/np/clients/celfeducation/eventRegistration.jsp.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 21

HANOVER, NH. Monthly Grab & Go Lunch, prepared by the Hartford Area Career & Technology Center's Culinary Arts program. Price: \$6, advance registration required.

12 noon - 12:30 pm. R.W. Black Community Center. (603) 643-5315. judy.stevens@hanovernh.org. hanovernh.org. *Third Thursday of the month.*

ONLINE. Writer to Writer: Conversations on Craft. Nandi Comer and Jonah Mixon-Webster touch on craft, literary friendship, publishing, sustaining a writing practice, and more. Zoom link will be provided. 7-8 pm. Vermont Studio Center. (802) 635-2727. info@vermontstudiocenter.org. vermontstudiocenter.org.

ONLINE. 11th Annual Woodstock Vermont Film Series. *Made You Look: The True Story About Fake Art.* Stream on demand. Tickets: \$12. (802) 457-5303. billingsfarm.org/filmseries. *Through January 24.*

ONLINE. Virtual Film Series. On-Demand Movies: *Coded Bias*, a fascinating study of how even the seemingly impartial world of technology is subject to embedded racism and privilege. *Jazz on a Summer's Day*, 1958 concert film captures legendary performers like Chuck Berry, Louis Armstrong, Dinah Washington & Mahalia Jackson in their prime. Tickets: \$8. Hopkins Center for the Arts. (603) 646-2422. hop.box@dartmouth.edu. hop.dartmouth.edu. *Through January 27.*

ONLINE. Talk: Paddling the Mississippi. Maya Dizack will be discussing her time kayaking the Mississippi River in the summer of 2019, sampling for microplastic abundance, and how this research plays a greater role in understanding the state of our environment and society. Free, registration required. 7-8 pm. Green Mountain Club. greenmountainclub.org/education/speaker-series.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 22

CASTLETON. Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department Educational Patrol. Game wardens and education staff will be roaming the ice, offering pointers, and chatting with anglers. Bring your own equipment and set up on the ice to fish. Face masks, social distancing and fishing license required. 3:30-5 pm. Lake Bomoseen: Kehoe Access (Green Dump). (802) 505-5562. Corey.Hart@vermont.gov. vtfishandwildlife.com.

GREENSBORO. Snowlights—Weekend Two. Magical display of lights. Glowing fires and live music. The HCA Café will serve light dinner fare, decadent desserts and cozy drinks. Outside event with some uneven terrain. Winter boots and outdoor wear recommended. Social distancing and masks required. Tickets: \$5. Friday and Saturday, 5-8 pm. Highland Center for the Arts, 2875 Hardwick St. (802) 533-2000.

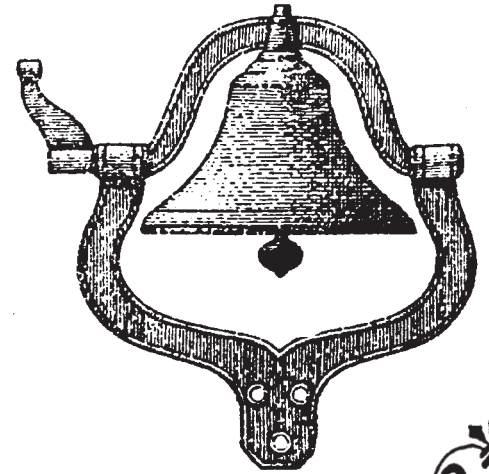
boxoffice@highlandartsvt.org. highlandartsvt.org. *Through January 23.*

JAY. Four-Day Catamount Trail Ski Tour: Sections 25 and 28. Sign up for as many days as you wish. All participants required to follow the State of Vermont's COVID-related Outdoor Recreation & Travel Guidelines. Schedule can change at any time. For details contact tour leader: Kevin Batson, kevbvt@gmail.com. catamounttrail.org/cta-tours/single-day-tours. *Through January 25.*

FAIRLEE. Frostbite Face-Off. Old-fashioned pond hockey. Build your team and join us on the ice. Lake Morey Resort, 82 Clubhouse Rd. (800) 423-1211. lakemoreyresort.com. *Through January 24.*

ONLINE. 11th Annual Woodstock Vermont Film Series. *Made You Look: The True Story About Fake Art.* Stream on demand. Tickets: \$12. (802) 457-5303. billingsfarm.org/filmseries. *Through January 24.*

POULTNEY. Fourth Friday Literary Open Mic. Hosted by David Mook and other guests. Poets, storytellers, and spoken word artists in all genres invited to perform original pieces, classics, or other favorites. Face masks and social distancing required. Email or call to save your spot. Current limit of 10 people at inside events. Free. 7-9 pm. Stone Valley Arts at Fox Hill, 145 E. Main St. davidmook@aol.com. (802) 884-8052. *Fourth Friday of every month.*



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Unfinished Business

Sir, please accept my resignation
As of next month,
And, if it seems right, plan on replacing me.
I'm leaving much unfinished work,
Whether out of laziness or actual problems.
I was supposed to tell someone something,
But I no longer know what and to whom: I've forgotten.
I was also supposed to donate something —
A wise word, a gift, a kiss;
I put it off from one day to the next. I'm sorry.
I'll do it in the short time that remains.
I'm afraid I've neglected important clients.
I was meant to visit
Distant cities, islands, desert lands;
You'll have to cut them from the program

Or entrust them to my successor.
I was supposed to plant trees and I didn't;
To build myself a house,
Maybe not beautiful, but based on plans.
Mainly, I had in mind
A marvelous book, kind sir,
Which would have revealed many secrets,
Alleviated pains and fears,
Eased doubts, given many
The gift of tears and laughter.
You'll find its outline in my drawer,
Down below, with the unfinished business;
I didn't have the time to write it out, which is a shame,
It would have been a fundamental work.

— PRIMO LEVI
1919-1987, Turin Italy
Translated from the Italian by Jonathan Galassi

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Vermont Country Calendar

SATURDAY, JANUARY 23

BENNINGTON. Farmers Market: New Winter Location. Online pre-ordering and curbside pickup service only for January 23. Every other Saturday. Bennington High School and Junior High School, 650 Main St. BenningtonFarmersMarket@gmail.com. Also February 6 & 20, March 6 & 20, April 3 & 17.

BRATTLEBORO. Workshop: Mini Upcycled Ice Shanties. In conjunction with the exhibit Ice Shanties: Fishing, People & Culture. 10 am. Brattleboro Museum & Art Center. (802) 257-0124. info@brattleboromuseum.org. brattleboromuseum.org. Also January 30.

BRATTLEBORO. Winter Farmers Market. Convenient parking. Curbside pickup. Credit, debit, and EBT accepted. Every Saturday, 10 am – 2 pm. CF Church Building, 80 Flat St. (802) 869-2141. brattleborowinterfarmersmarket.org. Saturdays through March.

FAIRLEE. Frostbite Face-Off. Old-fashioned pond hockey. Build your team and join us on the ice. Lake Morey Resort, 82 Clubhouse Rd. (800) 423-1211. lakemoreyresort.com. Also January 24.

GOSHEN. Catamount Trail Ski Tour: Explore Blueberry Hill portion of Section 15. Beginner/easy. Bring food and water for a full day and extra layers. Free and open to non-members. All participants required to follow the State of Vermont's COVID-related Outdoor Recreation & Travel Guidelines. Schedule can change at any time. For details contact tour leader: Amy Otten: amyotten@netscape.com. catamounttrail.org/cta-tours/single-day-tours.

MIDDLEBURY. Middlebury Farmer's Market. Indoors for the winter, Local agricultural products including vegetables, fruit, and CBD. Every Saturday 9 am – 12:30 pm at the VFW on Exchange St. Covid protocols posted. (802) 673-4158. middleburyfarmersmkt@yahoo.com. middleburyfarmersmarket.org. Saturdays through April 24.

ONLINE. Live Stream Jazz Concert and Interview: The Emmet Cohen Trio with special guest Mark Whitfield. Free, donations accepted. 8 pm. Vermont Jazz Center. (802) 254-9088. eugene@vtjazz.org. vtjazz.org. facebook.com/VermontJazzCenter/live.

ONLINE. Virtual Visiting Writer Reading: Jess Row, author of the novel *Your Face in Mine*, two collections of short stories, *The Train to Lo Wu* and *Nobody Ever Gets Lost*, and a collection of essays, *White Flights: Race, Fiction, and the American Imagination*. Zoom link will be provided. 7-8 pm. Vermont Studio Center. (802) 635-2727. info@vermontstudiocenter.org. vermontstudiocenter.org.

ONLINE. Writers on the Rise Reading Series: Kosiso Ugwueze, fiction writer and editor. She was born in Enugu, Nigeria but grew up in Southern California. Zoom link will be provided. 7-8 pm. Vermont Studio Center. (802) 635-2727. info@vermontstudiocenter.org. vermontstudiocenter.org. kosisougwueze.com.

ONLINE. 11th Annual Woodstock Vermont Film Series. *Made You Look: The True Story About Fake Art*. Stream on demand. Tickets: \$12. (802) 457-5303. billingsfarm.org/filmseries. Also January 24.

RUTLAND. Vermont Indoor Winter Farmers' Market. Farm fresh veggies, fruits, artisan cheeses, and more. Saturdays 10 am to 2 pm at the Farmers Food Center, 251 West St. (802) 342-4727. vtfarmersmarket.org. Saturdays through May 1.

WILMINGTON. Catamount Trail Ski Tour: Intermediate. Ski 8 miles on easy to intermediate terrain on private trails. Bring food and water for a full day and extra layers. Free and open to non-members. All participants required to follow the State of Vermont's COVID-related Outdoor Recreation & Travel Guidelines. Schedule can change at any time. For details contact tour leader: Alan Binnick, anbin@myfairpoint.net. (802) 464-3917. catamounttrail.org/cta-tours/single-day-tours. Rain date: Saturday, February 6.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 24

FAIRLEE. Frostbite Face-Off. Old-fashioned pond hockey. Build your team and join us on the ice. Lake Morey Resort, 82 Clubhouse Rd. (800) 423-1211. lakemoreyresort.com.

NORTH BENNINGTON. Annual Winter Festival. Come plunge into the icy waters in the Penguin Plunge Event. Continental breakfast is at 9 am and the plunge is at 11 am. Lake Paran, Houghton Lane. www.bennington.com/winterfest.

ONLINE. 11th Annual Woodstock Vermont Film Series. *Made You Look: The True Story About Fake Art*. Stream on demand. Tickets: \$12. (802) 457-5303. billingsfarm.org/filmseries.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 28

ONLINE. Virtual Film Series. On-Demand Movies: The Australian Dream: the remarkable story of Australian star athlete and indigenous rights activist Adam Goodes. *The Weasels' Tale: Juan José Campanella (The Secret in Their Eyes)* pays tribute to the golden age of Argentine cinema in this razor-sharp dark comedy. Tickets: \$8. Hopkins Center for the Arts. (603) 646-2422. hop.box@dartmouth.edu. hop.dartmouth.edu. Thru February 3.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 29

STOWE. Four-Day Catamount Trail Ski Tour: Sections 23 and 24. Sign up for as many days as you wish. State of Vermont's COVID-related Outdoor Recreation & Travel Guidelines required. Schedule may change. Tour leader: Jay Stearns, jaystearns@mac.com. catamounttrail.org/cta-tours/single-day-tours. Through February 1.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 30

BRATTLEBORO. Winter Farmers Market. Convenient parking. Curbside pickup. Every Saturday, 10 am – 2 pm. CF Church Building, 80 Flat St. (802) 869-2141. brattleborowinterfarmersmarket.org. Saturdays thru March.

BRATTLEBORO. Workshop: Mini Upcycled Ice Shanties. In conjunction with the exhibit Ice Shanties: Fishing, People & Culture. 10 am. Brattleboro Museum & Art Center. (802) 257-0124. brattleboromuseum.org.

CHITTENDEN. VT Fish & Wildlife Dept. Educational Patrol. Game wardens and education staff will be roaming the ice, offering pointers, and chatting about the season. Bring your own equipment and set up on the ice to fish. Face masks, social distancing and fishing license required. 9-10:30 am. Chittenden Reservoir. (802) 505-5562. www.vtfishandwildlife.com.

FAIRLEE. Vermont Pond Hockey Championship. Old-fashioned pond hockey. Build your team and join us on the ice. Lake Morey Resort, 82 Clubhouse Rd. (800) 423-1211. lakemoreyresort.com. Thru January 31, and February 6-7.

HUNTINGTON. Birds of Vermont Museum. Bird walks 8 am the last Saturday of the month through winter. The museum's 100 acres of trails are always open. Birds of Vermont Museum, 900 Sherman Hollow Rd. (802) 434-2167. museum@birdsofvermont.org. birdsofvermont.org.

LINCOLN. Catamount Trail Ski Tour: Section 17 North from Spruce Lodge to Lincoln Gap. Advanced intermediate. Bring food and water for a full day and extra layers. Free and open to non-members. All participants required to follow the State of Vermont's COVID-related Outdoor Recreation & Travel Guidelines. Schedule can change at any time. For details contact tour leader: Dean Bloch, dtbloch@gmail.com. catamounttrail.org/cta-tours/single-day-tours. Rain date: February 6.

LUDLOW. Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department Educational Patrol. Game wardens and education staff will be roaming the ice, offering pointers. Bring your own equipment and set up on the ice to fish. Face masks, social distancing and fishing license required. 12-1:30 pm. Lake Rescue. (802) 505-5562. vtfishandwildlife.com.

MIDDLEBURY. Middlebury Farmer's Market. Indoors for the winter, Local agricultural products including vegetables, fruit. Every Saturday 9 am – 12:30 pm at the VFW, 530 Exchange St. Covid protocols posted. (802) 673-4158. middleburyfarmersmkt@yahoo.com. middleburyfarmersmarket.org. Saturdays through April 24.

NORTH HERO. Free Ice Fishing Day: Anyone, resident or nonresident, may go fishing in Vermont without a fishing license. Fun family activities. Volunteers will help new ice anglers learn the basics of winter ice fishing. Fish fry and cocoa (BYO mug). Bring your own ice fishing equipment or borrow theirs. Dress warmly (layers) and wear winter boots. Free, registration required. 11 am – 3 pm. Knight Point State Park. (802) 318-1347. vtfishandwildlife.com.

RUTLAND. Vermont Indoor Winter Farmers' Market. Farm fresh veggies, fruits, artisan cheeses, and more. Saturdays 10 am to 2 pm at the Farmers Food Center, 251 West St. (802) 342-4727. vtfarmersmarket.org. Saturdays through May 1.

WESTON. Catamount Trail Ski Tour: Root Beer Ridge Loop (Mount Tabor). Mostly intermediate. Bring food and water for a full day and extra layers. Free and open to non-members. State of Vermont's COVID-related Outdoor Recreation & Travel Guidelines required. Schedule may change. Tour leader: Andrew Harper, ap_harper@hotmail.com, (802) 430-3859. catamounttrail.org/cta-tours/single-day-tours.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 31

BENNINGTON. Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department Educational Patrol. Game wardens and education staff will be roaming the ice, offering pointers. Bring your own equipment and set up on the ice to fish. Face masks, social distancing and fishing license required. 9-10:30 am. Lake Paran. (802) 505-5562. vtfishandwildlife.com.

BRATTLEBORO. Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department Educational Patrol. Game wardens and education staff will be roaming the ice, offering pointers, and chatting about the season. Bring your own equipment and set up on the ice to fish. Face masks, social distancing and fishing license required. 12 noon – 1:30 pm. Retreat Meadows. (802) 505-5562. vtfishandwildlife.com.

MORRISTOWN. Catamount Trail Ski Tour: 15th Annual Beaver Meadow Loop. Intermediate. Socially-distanced tailgate potluck, conditions permitting. Bring food and water for a full day and extra layers. Free and open to non-members. State of Vermont's COVID-related Outdoor Recreation & Travel Guidelines required. Schedule may change. Tour leaders: Kim Dunkley and Scott Meyer, tsimkim37@yahoo.com. (802) 635-2418, catamounttrail.org. Backup date: February 7.

NEWS FROM VERMONT

Radio Days

by Burr Morse

My first heart strings got pulled way back in 1951 up on our Robinson Hill family farm in Maple Corner. Back then, of course, the only electronic medium was radio and over our scratchy parlor model I, round-faced three-year-old, fell in love with the voice behind "Tennessee Waltz". And I'm not just talkin' music here. Yup, the old radio left everything non-audio up to the imagination and boy did I imagine..."I wuv Pahti Page" I'd say, not knowing a thing about her looks! Patti Page passed away at 85 and, y'know, it was only then that TV gave me my first look at her.

The Shadow

We must have been smarter back in radio times. These days, everything is presented to us in high resolution full color. My older brother Elliott told me of a popular radio show a bit before my time. "It was called 'The Shadow,'" he said, "and boy, was it ever scary!". He went on to describe the barn up there on Robinson Hill where the men-folk, including my two older brothers, spent much of their lives what with "the milkings both mornin' and night and the cleanin' in between." His description included the old barn radio..."It was a fixture in that stable, daubed with cow manure and constantly on. That 'Shadow' show would be playin' just before Tick and I had to go up to th' hayloft and throw hay down at night." He remembered the hayloft as a dark place full of shadows, shadows brought to life for two terrified boys by a creepy voice over the airwaves.

The Trading Post

Here in Central Vermont, we are fortunate to have grown up with another radio phenomenon, WDEV from over in Waterbury. WDEV was a fixture in these parts and "The Trading Post" has been part of its programming for all these years. Six mornings a week like clockwork or milkin' time, that show starts the same way with canned "moos, bleats and cock-a-doodle-dos" and the station's own words of disclaimer: "Maximum three items per call; one vehicle per caller per program; no personal ads; wait three days between call-in shows. For private sale – not for corporations or businesses, including home-based business." Those are the rules but there's a whole population out there just waitin' t' break 'em, like the fast-talkin' guy from Wolcott wanting to sell his "Chivvy" one time:

"Yahhh...gotta senty-foah Chivvy f'sale" he spewed. "she's got foah-fiftah-foah huss powah, foah speed stick an mistah man she's just a-smokin' sumbitch!"

"Sir" the radio guy interrupted, panic in his voice, "Y' can't use language like that on the radio and if you do again we'll have to shut you off!"

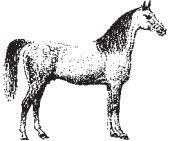
"Bbbbut" the Wolcott man struggled, defending the only language he knew..."Y' list all them rules at th' begginin' an' sh--, nowhere d'ya say 'no swearin'!"

Then and now

I know, folks my age always defend things from "back in the good ol' days" as better and I know younger folks would argue that point. Sure, some of TV's programming begs a little "imagination" but these days, what you see is what you get. Back in the good ol' days, "what you didn't see" was the best part and I sure appreciate "The Shadow", WDEV Radio, and most especially, my first love, Patti Page, for that!

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North Country Book News

Children's Book Reviews by Charles Sutton

Snuggle Up With a Good Story This Winter

When the cold north winds blow and snow flies, nothing is better than snuggling up with a nifty children's picture book, regardless the age of the reader. Here are a few to entertain through this winter.

For years now we have enjoyed artist Jan Brett's playful menagerie of domestic and wild animals of the North. Now she brings us a heart-warming story about a large, furry Alaskan musk ox who becomes a refuge to other animals trying to get warm in the Arctic cold.

In *Cozy* by Jan Brett (\$18.99. G.P. Putnam's Sons. www.penguin.com/kids) a giant musk ox is separated from his herd during a storm, forcing him to face the wintery blasts all alone. He should be okay thanks to his thick, soft, silky coat.

Discovering the ox's shelter of fur, a parade of animals arrive seeking warmth under the his coat. The first arrivals are a family of lemmings, followed by snowshoe hare, snowy owl, arctic ox and wolverine. Cozy has house rules: "quiet voices, gentle thumping, claws to yourself, no biting and no pouncing."

As winter drags on, however, the shut-in's become disagreeable and are anxious for Spring. Cozy has to play the heavy, but he, too, can't wait for Spring to find his family.

Finally we see a spectacular drawing of Cozy jumping, gamboling, and leaping high enough to see his herd. Happily he rejoins them while his winter companions promise to get cozy with Cozy again next winter.

Drawings of the various animals curled up and comforted in the fur all winter are both unusual and amazing.

Author/artist Jan Brett became familiar with musk ox (also called oomingmak) while visiting her daughter who had moved to Alaska. She notes "musk oxen share the tundra with all the animals in the story, but they always keep their distance." www.janbrett.com.

Seen more chickadees lately? They are with us year-round, but with cold weather and less to eat in the woods and countryside, these popular little birds will be looking for feeders loaded with sunflower seeds.

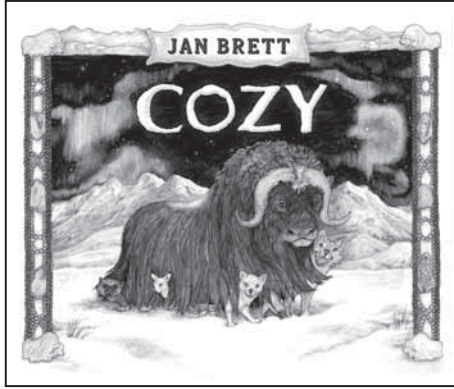
After reading *A Bird on My Hand* by Mary Bevis and illustrated by Consie Powell, (*Legacy Bound*, \$17.95, www.legacybound.net), your children will want to see if they can have chickadees land on their hands for a seed snack. In this story a grandmother teaches her grandson the skills needed to hand feed chickadees: a quiet, patient, caring manner and they will come and eat.

We learn there are seven kinds of chickadees: black-capped, chestnut backed, mountain, Mexican, gray-headed,

boreal and Carolina. The book includes a chickadee cut-out ready to sit on your hand—no seeds needed.

Children have long been intrigued by the tales of Skippyjon Jones, a big-eared Siamese kitten who imagines himself to be a chihuahua while off on a bunch of dog-gonned adventures!

In a wintertime story in this beloved series, *Skippyjon Jones Snow What* by Judy Schachner (*Dial Books for Young Readers*, \$17.99, www.penguin.com/youngreaders), our hero bounces on his big-boy bed and looks forward to what awaits him in the closet. Inside is a magical, snowy forest where a gang of seven Los Chimichangos challenge him to the dangerous task of awakening Nieve Que, a frozen princess, by kissing her. Would you, the reader, stoop to such an indignity? Judy's colorful drawings add still more humor to the story line. Enjoy all seventeen of the Skippyjon Jones books! www.judithbyronschachner.com.



Sometimes in the dead of winter we see trees that hang onto their all brown and out-of-place leaves. One small oak tree tells his story in *Little Tree* by Loren Long (\$17.99, Penguin, www.penguin.com/youngreaders). Here we learn about and see Little Tree in the middle of the forest hugging his leaves as tightly as possible hoping they will protect him from the cold winter's snow and wind. Maybe so, but by not letting go so that new leaves form each spring, Little Tree stays the same size and doesn't grow.

Finally one year Little Tree decides to let go of his old leaves so he can grow new ones and join the other trees who were once his size, but now whose branches reach into the sky. He gains the courage to let go and we see him now growing, growing, through the seasons. www.lorenlong.com.

Wouldn't be wonderful if books printed in one country were available in other language editions, too. This would introduce children to other "ways of saying it" while enjoying a good story.

NorthSouth Books of New York along with Edition bi:libri of Munich, Germany, have printed such books in a series entitled *Little Polar Bear—Where Are You Going, Lars?* by Hans de Beer (\$9.95. www.northsouth.com). This charming story is about a young polar bear making a round trip from the Arctic to Africa. There are 10 other languages editions in addition to English. Each has the original story in English as well as its foreign version.

Language editions (take your pick) are in Russian, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Japanese, Chinese, Arabic, Vietnamese and Korean.

The *Little Polar Bear* takes Lars onto the ice for the first time with his father, who shows him how he swims. He also brings back a big, beautiful fish which they have for dinner. They make snow piles to shelter them for a night of sleep.

But this once happy outing becomes a nightmare in the morning when Lars finds that he is alone on a little stand of ice, no sight of father.

An exciting adventure unfolds as the resourceful Lars transfers to a barrel which carries was to a Great Green Land (Africa). There he is befriended by a hippopotamus, chameleon, an eagle, and finally an orca whale who gives him passage on his back for a welcoming trip home.

North/South already has printed another successful children's book *The Rainbow Fish* in multi-language editions.



Book Notes by Charles Sutton

Migrant Children

We are still a living history of more wars of all kinds with people trying to flee these battlefields, creating a large army of another kind—that of refugees, 22.5 million today, of which half are children. Here are some children's books that address this continuing tragedy.

Can you imagine a teacher refusing to let a refugee girl into class because there wasn't a chair for her to sit on? This happened to a girl in England whose parents had been killed and her home destroyed, but still survived the hazardous trip to a safe land.

In *The Day War Came* by Nicola Davies and illustrated by Rebecca Cobb (\$16.99. *Candlewick Press*. www.candlewick.com), this true story also shows there are those who are willing to help these refugee children, even with something as simple as a chair. This book was published in coordination with www.helprefugees.org.

Nicola Davies is an award-winning author of numerous books for children. She lives in Wales. nicola-davies.com.

Rebecca Cobb illustrates children's books and lives in Falmouth, England.

Children are stuck inside today because of the pandemic, but think how sad and difficult it is for Syrian children who can not go outside because of fighting in their never-ending civil war. In *Tomorrow* by Nadine Kaadan (\$17.99. *Lanata Publishing*. www.lernerbooks.com) you will feel for Yazan who is waiting for a 'tomorrow'

when he can play outside, go to school, and meet with his friends.

Author/illustrator Nadine Kaadan's powerful drawings draw us into this continuing tragedy. She has published 15 books. nadinekaadan.com.

The plight of refugee children unveils itself before us in this small book with a big message.

There is no water nor bread for those 'strangers' on one side of a massive wire fence while others on the other side say this is "our water, our bread". Even their caring children ask "Why are parents like this?" Read *No Water No Bread* by Luis Arnavisca, and illustrated by Raul Nieto Guridi (\$15.95. *NubeOcho*. www.nubeocho.com). This book was created with the support of Amnesty International Spain.

Here we have an eye-opening allegory about the First World War. *An Anty-War Story* by Tony Ross (\$17.99. *Andersen Press*. www.andersenpressusa.com) follows a colony of ants as they recruit one of their biggest ants, named Douglas, the only one with his own personal name, not to be a worker, but to be a soldier. He likes the uniform, carrying a rifle and marching in line with other ants until one day the war comes to Antworld. Bang! No more ants. His name is highlighted in a war memorial. This story is grim, but then so is life on this planet.

Tony Ross has illustrated over 800 books, which are published all over the world. He lives in London, England.

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The Little Local Vermont Cookbook

Recipes for Classic Dishes

by Melissa Pasanen and illustrated by Courtney Zentzen

(\$14.95. Countryman Press, www.wwnorton.com)

Vermont may be best known as the nation's leading producer of maple syrup, but in recent years, thanks to the growing locavore movement, Vermont-made or produced foods have come into recognition. These include cheeses, special craft beers, naturally-raised meats, heirloom apples and cider, artisan breads and other baked goods, and an array of seasonal fruit, berries and unique vegetables. Vermont is also a state offering foraged mushrooms, fiddleheads (from wild ferns), ramps (wild spring onions), spring trout, and other edibles.

The author points out that Vermont has more cheesemakers, craft brewers, and farmers markets per capita than any other state. It is fitting that she takes us on this little tour of its culinary delights.

This colorful pocket-size 75-page hardcover book features classic recipes for 'Made in Vermont' foods and products. Some will be old-time favorites like maple cream pie, pork tenderloin with cider and thyme sauce, baked macaroni and cheese, and mulled hot cider.

The author tempts us with six to eight recipes each for breakfast and brunch; drinks and appetizers; soups, salads and sides; main courses; and desserts. Each category has specials depending on seasonal availability.

For deer season, she offers a venison chili; for winter, cheddar ale soup and chicken pot pie; for spring a wild greens pesto made of wild nettles, dandelion greens and cultivated sorrel, arugula, and tender radish greens; and for early summer, a strawberry rhubarb crisp.

For each category we have picked our choice for the first recipe to try:

Breakfast—Vermont Honey and Maple Granola. The author recalls how hippies and back-to-the-landers flocked to Vermont in the 1960s and 1970s, bringing with them

a fondness for granola. In addition to rolled oats her recipe includes two cups of raw nuts or seeds and two cups of dried fruits—cherries, cranberries, golden raisins and snipped dried apricots.

Drinks and Appetizers—Hard Cider and Cranberry Punch. We learn that during the past 20 years there has been a renaissance of small-scale hard cider making and a rediscovery of traditional cider apples, and that craft distillers are now making apple-based spirits like brandy. The sweet in the drink is the addition of a syrup made from cinnamon sticks.

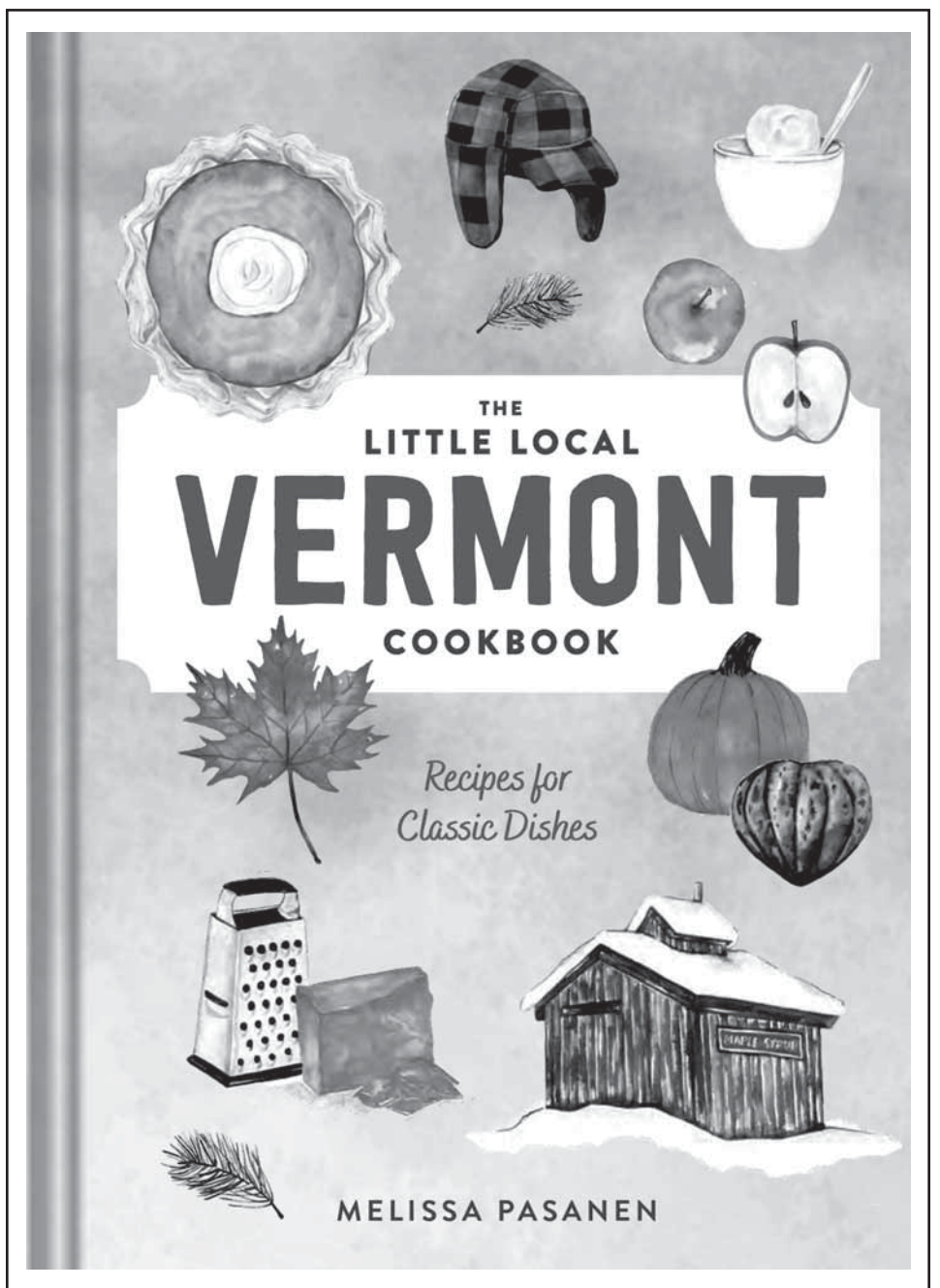
Soups, Salads, and Sides—Maple Mustard Roasted Roots. For a good winter side dish prepare a mixture of chopped root vegetables likes potatoes, parsnips, carrots, beets and turnips. The author would add the Vermont specialty, the Gilfeather Turnip, which has earned a place in Slow Food

USA's Ark of Taste for outstanding flavor and historic merit. Try dicing and frying with a little bacon as a bed for poached eggs or fried eggs.

Main Courses—Harvest Stuffed Squash. Isn't there a new and different way to prepare those oddly-shaped winter squashes? This recipe bakes them with a stuffing of ground turkey meat, a diced apple, finely diced carrot, chopped leek, mushrooms and spices.

Desserts—Chocolate Zucchini Cake. Vegetable gardeners have learned to be overrun with too many zucchini squash. Having them dumped in a pile on the kitchen table is a challenge to the cook. So bake a cake. Your secret ingredients will include orange zest, cinnamon, and chopped walnuts. The chocolate glaze is just the right final touch.

The Little Local Vermont Cookbook is enhanced by a variety Vermont scenes and foods. We liked best the full page of eight



Book News

Earth Almanac

by Ted Williams

(\$16.95. Storey Publishing, www.storey.com)

Noted nature writer Ted Williams invites readers on a year-long immersion in the wild and fleeting moments of the natural world, from winter candy and spring quackers to summer's scarlet farewell and autumn reveilles.

This beautifully crafted collection of short, seasonal essays combines in-depth information with evocative descriptions of nature's marvels and mysteries.

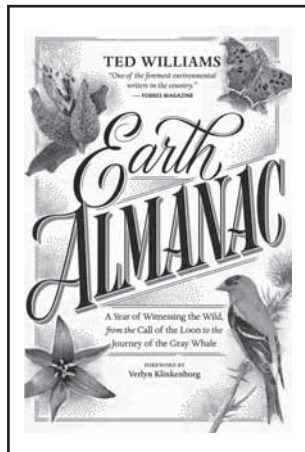
Williams explains the weather conditions that bring out the brightest reds in autumn leaves, how hungry wolf spiders catch their prey, and why American goldfinches wait until late July or August to build their nests.

In the tradition of Thoreau, Carson, and Leopold, Ted Williams's writing stands as a testament to the delicate balance of nature's resilience and fragility, and inspires readers to experience the

natural world for themselves and to become advocates for protecting and preserving its amazing diversity and activity.

Ted Williams writes full-time on fish and wildlife issues in a monthly "Recovery" column for The Nature Conservancy's Cool Green Science and in various other publications. A longtime

contributor to Audubon magazine, Williams was recognized by the Outdoor Writers Association of America as the nation's best outdoor columnist and has received numerous national writing and conservation awards. He serves as national chair of the Native Fish Coalition and lives in Grafton, MA.



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Poor Will's Almanack for 2021 is not your grandfather's almanac. It is a guide to living in sync with nature—that is, with descriptions of the 48 seasons of the year; the Seasonal Affective Disorder Index (which measures the forces that cause seasonal stress); the weather systems that cross the continent, and the winter forecast; animal and fish activity times; notes on the stars and sun and the moon. Besides that, Poor Will's Almanack contains 30 stories by Poor Will's readers that range from outhouse tales to a sheep dog that helps deliver lambs!

If you order in December or January, I'll send you the Poor Will's Almanack for 2020, too, with its 60 amazing outhouse stories! Or, if you wish, I'll include The Weather Book of Poor Will's Almanack, a detailed approach to weather along the 40th Parallel. Send \$20.00 for your autographed copies to Bill Felker, P.O. Box 431, Yellow Springs, OH 45387.



North Country Reflections

A Very Cool Greenhouse

by Judith Irven

It is pure bliss to step into our greenhouse on a sunny winter's morning, and savor the earthy smells of green growing things. As I soak up the sun's warming rays, the stark white world outside gradually recedes into the background.

Since our greenhouse (just 18' wide and 10' deep) is attached to the southern wall of our house and reached from our dining room, it could also be considered a sun-room or conservatory.

Although it has baseboard heat, we set the thermostat for a night-time temperature of 50°, meaning it is technically classified as a 'cool greenhouse'. While this certainly places some limits on our choice of heat-lovers—most notably orchids—it is perfect for growing plants that hail from places where the winters are cool but not cold.

Indeed, if you already have a south-facing sun-porch, by enclosing the space with thermo-pane glass and insulating the walls, maybe you could create a greenhouse similar to ours and enjoy some of these same plants.

So, to give you an idea about what will thrive in a 'cool greenhouse' in chilly New England, let me tell you about some of the plants I grow all winter long, up here on the western slopes of the Green Mountains.

Winter flowering camellias—my pride and joy

Camellias are elegant evergreen shrubs, originating in China, Japan and Southeast Asia, that flower in the winter months. Today in America they are commonly seen in places like the southern Appalachian Mountains, which have cool but not cold winters, a decent amount of rainfall all year long and also acidic soil.

So, about 15 years ago now, I asked myself whether camellias might also do well in our cool Vermont greenhouse.

Traditionally the leaves of some varieties of camellias were dried for tea making. But, for many years now, plant hybridizers have also been breeding camellias to achieve bigger and better flowers—resulting in a bewildering number of cultivars with plenty of fancy names!

So, when thinking about what varieties might work well in my special situation, I started out by having a long chat with David, one of the owners of Camellia Forest Nursery in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, about ones he would recommend for growing under glass.

And the plants I purchased from him, way back then, have all done beautifully in our greenhouse. Some are cultivars of *Camellia sasanqua*, and have become smallish shrubs (around three feet high) with an abundance of smaller flowers in early winter.

The others, all derived from *Camellia japonica*, are now between five and six feet high in quite large pots. They bloom primarily from December to February, at a time of year when the sun is low and the days are short, and when their stunning rose-formed flowers, each up to four inches across, feel nothing short of amazing.

My particular favorites are 'Charlie Bettes' with rings of pure white petals framing a central cluster of yellow stamens, and C. M. Wilson' (seen in this picture) with deep pink petals around the outside and fading to pale pink in the center.

Since camellias grow naturally in areas with acidic soil and reasonable rainfall, these are the conditions I try to



photo by Dick Conrad

Judith Irven in her 'cool greenhouse', showing off one of her prize camellia blossoms at dead of winter.

replicate here. I use a peat-based potting soil formulated for azaleas (that also need an acidic soil) and plant each shrub in an individual pot which is large enough to accommodate the roots without crowding.

Also I know that (despite ceiling blinds) the daytime temperatures in our south-facing greenhouse at the height of summer can get fairly high. So each May (once the weather is reliably warm) I carefully move all my camellias outside to a partially shaded spot for the summer months.

Also, since the new flower buds for next winter's display actually start to form during the summer, I am mindful to water the pots regularly and deeply during the hot weather. I also apply some fertilizer formulated for acid-loving plants and gently work it into the top of the soil.

The only problems I have encountered with my camellias are occasional scale infestations—tiny insects that appear on the leaves. When I spot any invaders I gently scrape them off using a rag soaked in rubbing alcohol, followed with some Neem oil spray (appropriately diluted), and paying special attention to the undersides of the leaves.

Smooth succulents—the perfect greenhouse plants

Succulents—found all across the world in arid areas where rainfall is both infrequent and unpredictable—are the quintessential opportunists of the plant kingdom. Indeed, over the millennia they have evolved a variety of interesting techniques that allow them to readily absorb water when it is available and then—in anticipation of dry days ahead—store it in specially adapted tissues.

When the word succulent is mentioned, most people think of a cactus. Cacti are indeed succulents that store water in their swollen stems. Also to help to fend off would-be predators, the leaves of all cacti have become fiercely sharp needles—a very useful trait in the wild.

But, in the confines of a small space, these needles make all cacti extremely unfriendly!! So I do not welcome any cacti into my own greenhouse. Actually, for a similar reason, I decided to dump a large agave plant which I had mistakenly purchased a few years back.

But there are plenty of succulents that do make delightful greenhouse guests. In particular I have had great success with members of the Stonecrop family (*Crassulaceae*). Rather than storing water in their stems as cacti do, stonecrops use their thick fleshy leaves. The familiar medicinal aloe, Aloe vera, a member of the stonecrop family, can hold a prodigious amount of water in its leaves—just cut into one and see how it positively oozes liquid.

Some members of the *Crassulaceae* family are actually quite familiar to northern gardeners, for instance the various Sedums we grow in our gardens, as well as the delightful

low-growing Hens and Chicks. But *Crassulaceae* is a vast family with many attractive plants that can be found all across the globe; indeed one could make a life hobby of studying the various members of this family.

I started collecting stonecrops for my greenhouse about ten years ago, when my daughter-in-law took me shopping near their home outside San Diego. We visited a huge garden-center with hundreds of different plants on display, all selected for their local climate which is dry and hot in summer and cool but not freezing in winter...a bit like my greenhouse!

I came home with a treasure-trove of unfamiliar-looking plants in three-inch pots (but NO cacti!), which I carefully transported across country in my hand-luggage—including several Echeveria.

Echeveria are delightful small plants from the semi-deserts in Texas, Mexico, and southward to Central and South America, characterized by thick leaves growing out from their stems to form beautiful rosettes.

I acquired two varieties on my visit to San Diego: *Echeveria elegans* (also known as Hens and Chicks), and *Echeveria 'Western Blue'*. Since then I have added a couple more from local stores. All are low-growing spreaders that gradually multiply via stem off-shoots.

I repotted my little plants using a gritty potting soil formulated for cactus. All have gradually expanded, thriving on a regime of benign neglect with intermittent watering. Eventually my acquisitions became large enough to warrant a three-foot wide shallow bowl, where today their charming rosettes now cover the entire soil surface.

I also have three other gentle succulents in my greenhouse which, since they all have different growing habits, are planted solo in their own pots:

- An ancient Aloe vera from Dick's family, is an outward growing plant that always seems to be reaching to get outside its 12 inch pot.
- A Jade Plant, acquired as a cutting many years ago from a friend, is like a charming miniature tree.
- A Donkey's Tail plant, with long stems covered in tiny succulent leaves, grows gently down over the edge of its pot.

The occasional infestation of mealy bugs, which look like a fuzz of white-cotton, is the only real pest problem I have encountered among my succulents. They usually appear in hard-to-reach places like in the leaf axil, and for this reason they are difficult to eradicate completely. But with a little diligence I can keep them under control. I start by removing what I can by gently rubbing the affected area either with a cotton-swab dipped in alcohol, or even just plain water. I then treat the plant with insecticidal soap, repeating this weekly.

The best of the rest

Our cool greenhouse is also home to several other delightful plants, including colorful begonias, a fragrant jasmine, and some delicious herbs for the kitchen, all of which I will describe in next month's issue.

Please stay tuned!!

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

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

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