

Vermont Country Sampler

March 2016

Free

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

N. Cassidy



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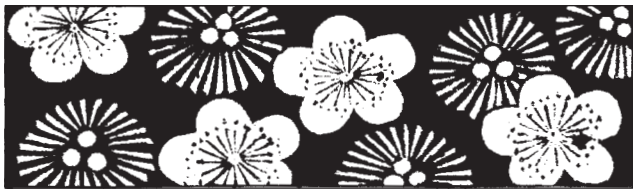
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March Journal

On Koi in Winter

by Bill Felker

I have a pond and four large koi (colorful Japanese carp). The fish have names: *Buh buh* (orange and white) and *Bud* (black and white), *Princess* (silver and black) and *Golden Shark* (gold and black).

Last summer, they produced almost two-dozen fingerlings, kaleidoscopic in color.

Over the years, I have fallen in love with their ways: their caution and their eagerness, their loose hierarchies and their mutual support, their gentleness and their occasional spurts of excitement.

When the water warms above sixty degrees, they are active and swim freely. They come toward the edge of the pond when I approach with their food.

They seem only mildly competitive, allowing the

young to eat first if they choose.

In the winter, cold seems to slow them all into contemplation. They move close to one another below the remnants of the lily pads. When I approach, they remain quiet, usually side-by-side, sometimes tucked together as though they were keeping each other warm. The fingerlings have a separate spot beside the lily roots, clustered like the adults in cenobitic security.

In this artificial sea, aerated by a pump and waterfall, climate controlled by a pond heater, the inhabitants lie out of danger waiting for spring. In their presence, I pretend that all is well. I make believe that the peaceful community of winter fishes is the real world and that some benevolent caretaker watches over us all.



A young guest digs in at the Sugar-on-Snow Supper at Guilford Community Church in Guilford, VT. This year the supper will be held on Saturday evening, March 19.

Guilford, VT

Annual Sugar-on-Snow Supper at Guilford Community Church

The Annual Sugar-on-Snow Supper at Guilford Community Church in Guilford, VT will be held on Saturday evening, March 19, 2016.

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

A half gallon of maple syrup will be raffled off during each seating. There are three seatings to choose from, at 4:30 p.m.,

5:45 p.m., and 7 p.m. Prices are \$11 adults, \$5 children age 11 and under, and \$3 for preschoolers.

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

Reservations are being taken now. Please call (802) 254-9562 or email guilfordchurchsupper@gmail.com. For questions call Fred Breunig at (802) 254-9109 or e-mail fmbreunig@comcast.net. For more information visit www.guilfordchurch.org.

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18TH ANNUAL WHITINGHAM VERMONT MAPLE FESTIVAL

APRIL 2 AND 3, 2016

Please check latest changes in operating times and schedules at the Information Booth - Twin Valley Middle High School, 4299 VT Rt. 100, Whitingham.

SATURDAY APRIL 2

7:00 - 10:00 PANCAKE BREAKFAST by Lions Club at the Jacksonville Municipal Center. \$8.00 adults, \$6.00 65+ years, and children 5-12 (children under five free)

8:00 - 4:00 INFORMATION BOOTH, Twin Valley Middle High School, 4299 VT Rt. 100, Whitingham.

8:00 - 5:00 SUGAR HOUSE TOURS* at eight local sugar houses open to the public. Hours vary.

9:00 - 4:00 CRAFT FAIR, Twin Valley Middle High School, 4299 VT Rt. 100, Whitingham.

10:00-2:00 HORSE DRAWN SLEIGH RIDES, snow or no snow - Across from Twin Valley Middle High School, 4299 VT Rt. 100 (Donations appreciated)

11:30 - 1:30 LUNCH by the Whitingham Ladies Benevolent Society at Twin Valley Middle High School, 4299 VT Rt. 100, Whitingham.

1:00 - 3:00 COOKING WITH MAPLE CONTEST, Twin Valley Middle High School, 4299 VT Rt. 100, Whitingham.

5:00 - 7:00 SUGAR ON SNOW HAM DINNER by Unity Lodge #89 F & AM at the Municipal Center, Jacksonville. \$12.00 adults, \$6.00 children 5-12, (children under five free)

SUNDAY APRIL 3

7:00 - 10:00 PANCAKE BREAKFAST by the American Legion, and Legion Auxiliary, at the Municipal Center, Jacksonville. \$8.00 adults, \$6.00 65+ years, (children under five free)

10:00 - 3:00 INFORMATION BOOTH, Twin Valley Middle High School, 4299 VT Rt. 100, Whitingham.

8:00 - 5:00 SUGAR HOUSE TOURS* at eight local sugar houses open to the public. Hours vary.

10:00 - 2:30 CRAFT FAIR, Twin Valley Middle High School, 4299 VT Rt. 100, Whitingham.

10:00-2:00 HORSE DRAWN SLEIGH RIDES, snow or no snow - Across from Twin Valley Middle High School, 4299 VT Rt. 100, Whitingham. (Donations appreciated)

11:30 - 1:30 LUNCH by the 8th grade class at Twin Valley Middle High School, 4299 VT Rt. 100, Whitingham.

visit our website:
www.whitingham-maplefest.us/
email us at:
info@whitingham-maplefest.us
(802) 368-2658

*Self-guided auto tour maps available at the information booth
Twin Valley Middle High School,
4299 VT Rt. 100, Whitingham.

“Vermont’s Own” 40th Army Band to Perform in Concert

The Vermont National Guard and the Office of the Adjutant General are proud to present “Vermont’s Own” 40th Army Band in concert. The program will feature traditional patriotic American tunes, as well as contemporary musical favorites. Come see the 40th Army Band perform! All concerts are free and open to the public.

- **Monday, March 14th** at 7 p.m. at Essex High School, 2 Educational Dr., Essex Junction, VT.
- **Tuesday, March 15th** at 7 p.m. at Hartford High School, 37 Highland Ave., White River Junction, VT.
- **Wednesday, March 16th** at 7:30 p.m. at the Vermont State House, 115 State St., Montpelier, VT as part of

the “Farmer’s Night” concert series.

• **Thursday, March 17th** at 7 p.m. Orwell Town Hall, 436 Main St., Orwell, VT.

Members of the 40th Army Band serve one weekend a month and two weeks of Annual Training each year in the Vermont Army National Guard. As civilians the rest of the year, they are engaged in such diverse occupations as education, law, security, technology, medicine, and sales.

For more information about the 40th Army Band call the unit’s office in Colchester, VT weekdays, at (802) 338-3480, or visit the 40th Army Band on Facebook and Twitter.



Vermont Country Sampler
March 2016, Vol. XXXI

The Vermont Country Sampler is distributed free over-the-counter in and out of Vermont. Back issues, \$2 per issue, first class. Subscriptions \$24/year for 12 monthly issues.

Advertising rates on request. Deadline the 10th of the preceding month. Calendar of Events published free of charge in the paper and on our website. Send your information to us by the 10th of the preceding month.

Vermont Country Sampler
P.O. Box 197, N. Clarendon, VT 05759
(802) 772-7463 • info@vermontcountrysampler.com
www.vermontcountrysampler.com



photo courtesy of the Vermont Historical Society Library
 Sugaring with oxen in Vermont in the early 1900's. The women here were most probably from Windham, VT, the home of the photographer Henry Luther 'Harry' Chapman (1875-1967), and might have been members of his family.

❦ ❦ In Sugarin' Time

It's sugarin' time up country; an' settin' here in town
 I seem to hear the "drip, drip, drip" of sap a tricklin' down
 Into them wooden buckets in our old sugar place,
 Afore Josiah died, an' our only daughter, Grace,
 Insisted 't wasn't no ways safe for me to live alone
 Up in that old brown farm-house that long's I'll live I own;
 And naught would do but I must come an' stay along o' her,
 Where sugarin' might be hayin' time—and all this bustlin' stir
 Where smells o' spring and tricklin' sap, an' wild flowers never come.
 There ain't no chance for such things round Grace's city home;
 And sugarin' time no different ain't from summer or from fall—
 I wisht Josiah 'n' me was back, a-workin' hard and all.

The children on these brick-paved walks they make me think o' Jim,
 What we had hoped would stay by us—the farm was meant for him.
 He died when he was twenty. Yes, there was young Josiah,
 Professor in a college now, with hope of something higher.
 An' Grace, our girl, she married what they called a railroad king,
 An' lives on Beacon Street, in all the style that she can swing.
 But all the same, when April comes, I see 'em all agin,
 Jest runnin' wild around that farm, them three, and in
 All sorts o' mischief daily, from early spring to fall.
 I wisht the hull on us was back—a-workin' hard and all.

I seem to see the tassels shakin' out upon the trees,
 I seem to smell the perfume of the May-flowers in the breeze,

I seem to feel the summer a-coming 'crost the hills,
 I seem, up in the pastur', to hear the singin' rills;
 I see the mowin' lot, an' hear the sharpenin' of the blades,
 I hear the cattle lowin', I go berryin' in the glades,
 I smell the harvest ripenin' over in the corner lot,
 I see Josiah bringin' home that last new pair he bought;
 I remember how together, when the children went away—
 Grown big and married—by the fire we sat at close of day,
 An' how together we had lived there fifty year, come fall—
 I wisht Josiah 'n' me was back—a-workin' hard an' all!

* * *

It's sugarin' time up country, but never once again
 Shall I, now nigh on eighty, see the spring a-comin' in
 The old way, thro' the maple trees, acrost the pasture's brown;
 For I must stay, in sugarin' time, on Beacon Street in town.
 The children never, as of old, shall I tuck in at night,
 Their little feet *so* tired, but their happy hearts so light.
 They wouldn't go back if they could, an' I'm too old they say,
 An' sence Josiah isn't there, I let them have their way.

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

—HELEN M. WINSLOW
 BOSTON, MA 1902



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Bellows Falls, VT

St. Patrick's Fiddle Frenzy At the Stone Church

The Stone Church on the Hill in Bellows Falls, VT, presents St. Patrick's Fiddle Frenzy on March 18 at 7:30 p.m., celebrating the Emerald Isle, and our own fair land, with Celtic music. This year we feature the Vermont trio Pete's Posse, composed of Pete Sutherland (fiddle, piano, banjo and vocals), Oliver Scanlon (fiddle, mandolin, dobro, foot percussion and vocals) and Tristan Henderson (guitars, mandolin, jaw harp, bodhran, foot percussion and vocals). The concert will be opened by fiddler Sarah Blair and guitarist Flynn Cohen.

The Main Act: Pete's Posse

Pete's Posse features twin fiddles play in tight, wild harmony over hi-powered guitar and pounding footwork with mandolin, clawhammer banjo, jawharp and rocking keyboards, with voices added to the mix. Old songs and tunes, lyrical and driving, are performed alongside brand new ones.

The well known multi-instrumentalist and troubadour Pete Sutherland has decades of concert touring, teaching and studio production behind him. A warm voiced singer, songsmith and accomplished multi-instrumentalist, known equally for his potent originals and his intense recreations of age-old ballads and fiery fiddle tunes, Pete Sutherland "covers the map". He has been on staff at dance and music camps coast to coast and is a widely known year-round teacher and performer at home.

Sutherland is a veteran of many touring and recording groups including Metamora, Rhythm In Shoes, The Woodshed Allstars, Woods Tea Company, Ira Bernstein's Ten Toe Percussion and is a founding member of the long running 'contradance jamband' The Clayfoot Strutters, celebrating a quarter century in 2014! He is also a producer with over 80 projects, and a prolific songwriter covered by the likes of Cathy Fink and Marcy Marxer, Jay Ungar and Molly Mason, Nightingale and Altan.

Quickly becoming a sought after accompanist, session musician and performer in Vermont, Tristan Henderson grew up playing a variety of music genres before jumping into traditional music. He acquired his ability to play anything with strings (and a few without) as a teenager at a weekly blues/country/folk music session near his family home in Pomfret, VT. He was a 2013 winner of the Young Tradition Vermont talent contest with bagpiper Hazen Metro. In addition to Pete's Posse, he also performs with Atlantic Crossing and Pipers Den.

With early training in viola, which led him to a stint with the Vermont Youth Orchestra, fiddler, mandolinist and tune-smith Oliver Scanlon was introduced to his mentor Pete at the age of nine. He worked with Mark Sustic's "Fiddleheads" program, and attended music camps where he studied with Alan Jabbour, Kimberley Fraser, Eric Favreau and other master fiddlers. In 2013 he both co-founded the Posse and became the youngest member of Pete's long running dance band The Clayfoot Strutters.



Pete's Posse will be performing at the Stone Church on the Hill in Bellows Falls, VT on March 18.

Opening Act: Sarah Blair and Flynn Cohen

Sarah Blair began playing Irish music in Rhode Island's thriving traditional music community and honed her skills as a sought-after session leader in Boston and in the world of American contra dancing. She has played at festivals, concerts, and dances from Alaska to Quebec to Florida, as well as performing at the U.S. Embassy in Dublin as a member of a mission led by Senator Patrick Leahy. Her most unusual gig was filling in for fiddler Liz Carroll on tour with The Eagles' singer Don Henley. She has been featured in a Fiddler Magazine cover story and is included in "Handy with the Stick: Fiddler Magazine's Best of Irish Fiddling," a Mel Bay book profiling top Irish fiddlers.

Acoustic guitarist Flynn Cohen has performed acoustic music all over the world. He can be seen in concert with the American folk band Low Lily (formerly known as Annalivia), and legendary Irish Accordion player John Whelan, as well as solo and duo shows playing music from his four solo albums. Flynn has also performed with Ruth Moody, Halali, The Sevens, Aoife Clancy, Cathie Ryan, Lawrence Nugent, Skip Healy, Joe Derrane and Frank Ferrel, John McGann, Matt Glaser, among many others.

Tickets are \$35/\$17/\$13. The Immanuel Episcopal Church is located at 12 Church St. in Bellows Falls, VT. (802) 460-0110. sca@sover.net. www.stonechurcharts.org.

Springtime Crossing Guards Needed For Salamanders

Have you ever seen a spotted salamander? Those big dark colored salamanders, as long as your hand, with yellow polka dots? They spend most of the year underground, in cool moist environments, but on rainy nights in late March and early April, they make the dangerous journey to their breeding pools.

On such nights, it is easy to see these salamanders if you know where to go. Better yet, you can help them make their migration safely.

The Bonnyvale Environmental Education Center in Brattleboro is among the groups that have organized salamander crossing brigades to help these amphibians.

While salamander crossing guards have the opportunity to see and save individual salamanders, they also help to ensure that enough survive each year to perpetuate the species. Studies have shown that in places where salamanders must cross even moderately traveled roads they will eventually disappear—unless they get some help.

Salamander crossing guards typically show up at a documented crossing site just after dark, and with a bright flashlight, stroll up and down the road (usually a stretch of about .2 miles). When a salamander or frog steps onto the road, crossing guards simply pick it up and give it a lift to the other side.

You will find much of the information you need at Bonnyvale Environmental Education Center's website: beec.org. There you will find a map of known crossing areas in southeastern Windham County, instructional videos, information on the amphibian species you might encounter on migration nights, and data sheets.

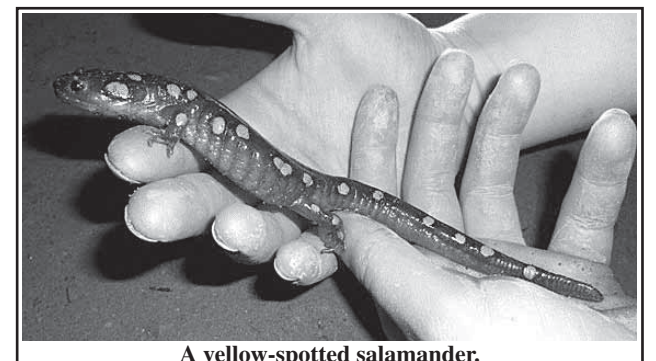
There are also recommendations for locating crossing sites if none have been mapped in your area.

If you can't become a crossing guard, the next best thing is to stay home on those first rainy nights of spring when the temperature is above 40°F.

If you must drive, keep an alert eye tuned for amphibians in the road. If you can safely pull over, a closer look might reveal the yellow spots of a salamander bewildered by this world of asphalt and rushing tires. Give him a lift across the road and you will be helping to perpetuate a very old tradition, and assuring one inhabitant of earthy darkness a successful journey to their breeding pool.

Bonnyvale Environmental Education Center is located at 1221 Bonnyvale Rd., West Brattleboro, VT.

For more information call (802) 257-5785. beec@sover.net. www.beec.org.



A yellow-spotted salamander.

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Where Arts and the Alpine Define the Landscape

With stunning vistas and the joy of an exhilarating winter sport, our state's ski resorts and communities also offer a cultural immersion that is equal parts pride and pleasure. While Vermont's ski resorts are virtual galleries and exhibition halls for Vermont artists. A deeper look at the resorts' "Made in Vermont" vibe reveals mountains of art to be discovered.

The mountains are well known for legacies of "firsts" in skiing and snowboarding history—Vermont was home to the first ski lift, first ski academy, first resort to offer snowboarding, and the first Nordic ski center—as well as a lot of winter Olympians in residence.

According to the 2012 U.S. Census, "Vermont ranks third in the nation for artists as a percentage of the workforce, second for fine artists and writers, and eighth for both musicians and photographers," Kira Bacon, of the Vermont Arts Council, said.

Explore Vermont's Mountains of Art. Here is a sampler of arts and arts activities at resorts and nearby mountain towns.

- Okemo Mountain Resort is brimming with original artwork. Art is a personal passion of co-owner Diane Mueller, herself an artist. The resort has a wealth of exclusively New England artists' works on site, including artwork for Jackson Gore's 284 rooms and public spaces, as well as a commissioned series of paintings by Vermont artist Donald Saaf, located in Epic at Solitude Village.

- After mastering moguls at Okemo or Killington, head to Rutland's Chaffee Arts Center and Paramount Theater, an exquisitely restored 1912 opera house. Also along Route 4, there's the world-renowned Carving Studio and Sculpture Center in West Rutland. Quechee Club in Quechee is a private ski resort that offers an annual Artisan Fair with more than 20 Vermont artists in attendance early in the season.

- The new Base Lodge at Stratton Mountain Resort has the distinction of artful illumination. Skiers can appreciate the lodge's hand-forged lighting and chandeliers, made by the nation's oldest and largest commercial forge, Hubbardton Forge in Castleton, VT. Also onsite, ski photography icon, Hubert Schriehl's works are on display.

- Once you've explored the glades of Stratton, venture into Jamaica for a tour of Elaine Beckwith's Gallery and dine at the Garden Cafe, a culinary-art-space and market.

- From Bromley Mountain Ski Resort head down into Manchester to visit some of the town's many arts offerings, including the Southern Vermont Arts Center and the Museum of Creative Process at the Wilburton Inn.

- Another southern Vermont artists' enclave and cross-roads junction for Mount Snow skiers is the town of Wilmington. Visitors are impressed by J. McGrath Fine Art Gallery, Ann Coleman Gallery, Quaigh Design Centre and Gallery Wright Sticks & Stones.

- There are arts opportunities in each corner of Vermont to the east and the west, in the towns of Brattleboro, home of the Harris Hill Ski Jump, with the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center; and Bennington with nearby Prospect Mountain Ski Area, home of the famed Bennington Museum and Bennington Center for the Arts.

- At Bolton Valley Resort, avid skier, mountain volunteer and in-house artist Natasha Bogar's local landscapes "canvases" the resort's lodge, tavern and hotel. She offers BYOB Paint Nights on the mountain several times throughout the season. Her landscapes, of which many are original works for sale, are of Bolton Valley vistas and feature dynamic use of light and color reflected on snow.

- Burlington, just 20 miles from Bolton, offers dozens



Bryant Cabin at Bolton Valley Resort—a painting by Natasha Bogar.

of arts venues, galleries and opportunities to purchase arts exclusively "Made in Vermont," like Burlington City Arts, the Flynn Center and Frog Hollow State Craft Center to name just a few.

- Smugglers' Notch Resort offers various multi-age and discipline craft and painting classes, with local artists Nancy Schade and Cheryl Pecor. Choose from adults' advanced acrylic painting and sculpting to children's offerings like painting a mug with a snowman.

- At the foot of Smugglers' Notch Resort, the village of Jeffersonville has been a haven for landscape painters for the last century. Visitors will see plein air artists along the roadsides, particularly in autumn. In town, the Mary Bryan Gallery and Visions of Vermont Gallery offer exceptional opportunities to see the works of local artists.

- At Rikert Nordic Center, the trails lead through forests, old farm fields and to many writers' delight, also to the historic Robert Frost Summer Cabin. The region surrounding Rikert Nordic Center and Middlebury Snow Bowl is also brimming with arts offerings. Meet Artist and Ski Coach Jean Cherouny for a private print-making or painting workshop or peruse group class offerings at Middlebury Studio School. Visit the Middlebury College Museum of Art and also get to know Vermont Artist Woody Jackson's works and see his cows of Ben & Jerry's fame.

- New this season, Sugarbush Resort is partnering with Burlington Paint and Sip to offer apres arts evenings during busy holiday weeks. The resort's events calendar also offers special arts events, like Snow Drawing with Sonja Hinrichsen. At the resort, you'll regularly see current exhibits of the works of Photographer Sandy Macys in the Gatehouse and Farmhouse Lodges. The Mad River Valley is home to several arts spaces, including the Artisan's Gallery, Mad River Glass Gallery and the Vermont Festival of the Arts Gallery as well as private ceramics lessons at the Naked Potter, just minutes from Sugarbush Resort and Mad River Glen.

- At Stowe Mountain Lodge, functional art items like custom-made lamps by Simon Pearce, pottery by Miranda Thomas, and furniture by Charles Shackleton offer up comfort and artistic integrity. There are classes for arts enthusiasts, like Furniture Making with Turner Mill Timbers; where students learn basic woodworking, joinery and finish

techniques. After skiing at Stowe Mountain Resort, relax with a performance at Spruce Peak Performing Arts Center; take a class or tour the latest exhibit at Helen Day Arts Center in the village, or enjoy the West Branch Gallery & Sculpture Park—a contemporary space, the small sculpture garden is a peaceful, contemplative place to walk in all seasons.

If Vermont's peaks and arts have piqued your interest, visit vermontarts2016.com. If you are interested in visiting resorts and mountain towns for arts immersion this winter and spring season contact (802) 355-5072, jenbutson@gmail.com. Visit skivermont.com and vermontartscouncil.org.

Chester, VT

LEGO Contest Coming March 5

The 2016 LEGO Contest takes place on Saturday March 5th from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the NewsBank Conference Center in Chester, VT. This event is open to LEGO maniacs Pre-K through Grade 8, their families, and anyone interested in coming to have a look at our children's creative genius.

Participants should construct their original creations (no kits allowed), with an increased maximum size of 24" x 36", and bring them

on March 5th between 9 and 10 a.m. to the spacious Conference Center, donated by NewsBank for the event. Entries will be judged from 10 a.m. to 12 noon for their originality, imagination, and presentation. Refreshments will be on sale.

NewsBank Conference Center is at 352 Main St., Chester, VT. For more info or to register, contact Lillian Willis at (802) 875-1340. lbwillisct@comcast.net.

Something Said

Nobody's out but a winter crow
And me, of course, inspector of snow.
I almost headed back, but no:

Till something occur or be made known
I'll keep my back to the valley town
Where tomorrow's already written down.

Beyond the pasture smooth as a sheet
And the grey-green spruces capped with white
Something is being said, but what?

Something about the way a rise
Articulates with trees and skies,
Which if we knew would make us wise.



—JAMES HAYFORD
Orleans, VT 1961



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Chester, VT

Ross Conrad's Organic Beekeeping Workshop

Celebrated Vermont beekeeper Ross Conrad of Dancing Bee Gardens will host an Organic Beekeeping Workshop on Saturday, March 12, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the NewsBank Conference Center, 352 Main Street, Chester, Vermont. The event is presented by The Nature Museum at Grafton.

This workshop includes three topics often requested by local beekeepers.

• **Working with Honey Bee Queens:** The queen bee, the only fertile female bee in the hive, can lay 1,500 or more eggs a day during the peak of summer. Ross Conrad will provide beekeepers with information to work productively with queens. Workshop participants will learn how to differentiate between healthy and unhealthy queens, and get tips on introducing queens into a hive and how to address queen problems. Note: This workshop is NOT about breeding queens and grafting.

• **Working with Swarms:** The swarm is an expression of the hive's vitality. Ross will talk about the intricate details of how the hive decides on a new location to build its home and its process of coordinating the movements of 10,000 bees so that they all arrive at the new location at the same time. Ross will share tips, based on research conducted at Cornell University, on understanding the swarm, how to work with the swarming impulse, and how to capture swarms.

• **Organic Controls for Pests and Disease (other than Varroa).** This topic will cover everything from bears and skunks, to wax moths, small hive beetles, foulbrood, nosema, viruses, and more.

In the workshop, Ross will present a balanced view of natural and organic beekeeping not often covered by conventional beekeeping lessons and will allot time to discuss beekeeping, answer questions, and meet other beekeepers. After the workshop, he will sign copies of his book, *Natural Beekeeping: Organic Approaches to Modern Apiculture*, and will have bee-related products for purchase. There will be raffles, a flow hive display, honey tasting and light refreshments, featuring special treats from Grafton Village Cheese. Participants are encouraged to bring a brown-bag lunch.

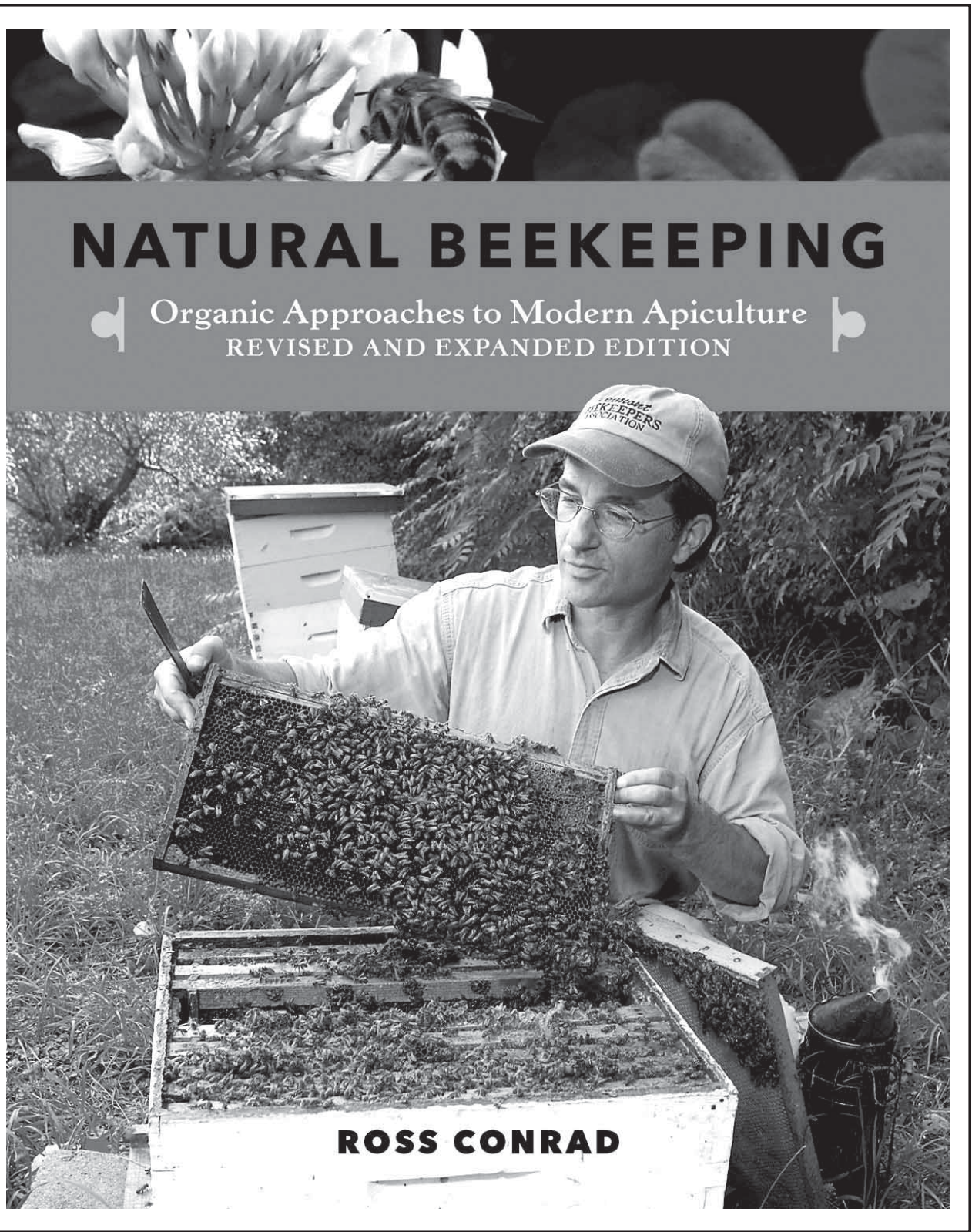
Ross Conrad, the author of *Natural Beekeeping: Organic Approaches to Modern Apiculture*, learned his craft from the late Charles Mraz, world-renowned beekeeper and founder of Champlain Valley Apiaries. He is a former president of the Vermont Beekeepers Association and a regular contributor to "Bee Culture: The Magazine of American Beekeeping." Ross has given bee related presentations and taught organic beekeeping workshops and classes throughout North America for many years now. His beekeeping business, Dancing Bee Gardens in Middlebury, VT, supplies honey, candles, and other bee-related products and provides bees for Vermont apple pollination. For more information and some informative articles, visit www.dancingbeegardens.com.

Ross Conrad will also be leading a workshop on Beginner's Organic Beekeeping on May 7 & 8 at Metta Earth Contemplative Ecology in Lincoln, VT. This workshop provides an introduction for folks interested in small scale and part-time (backyard) beekeeping. To register contact Ross at dancingbhoney@gmail.com or call (802) 349-4279.

The NewsBank Conference Center, 352 Main Street, is across from the main NewsBank campus in Chester, VT.

Please register by March 1 to receive the early-bird price of \$30 for this four-hour workshop. The price is \$35 after March 1 and at the door. Visit www.nature-museum.org or call (802) 843-2111 to register.

The Nature Museum is located at 186 Townshend Road in Grafton, VT. It offers museum admission by freewill donation, vacation camps for youth, and nature programs for adults, children, and schools. Visit: www.nature-museum.org.



Book Review

Natural Beekeeping: Organic Approaches to Modern Apiculture

Today's beekeepers face unprecedented challenges, with the spread of "colony collapse disorder." Newly introduced pests like varroa and tracheal mites have made chemical treatment of hives standard practice, but pest resistance is building, which in turn creates demand for new and even more toxic chemicals. In fact, there is evidence that chemical treatments are making matters worse. It's time for a new approach.

Natural Beekeeping: Organic Approaches to Modern Apiculture by Ross Conrad (\$35, Chelsea Green, www.chelseagreen.com) offers valuable information for organic beekeepers. The book features holistic, sensible alternatives to chemical practices with a program of natural hive management. There are sections on bee biology and anatomy, urban beekeeping, identifying and working with queens,

parasitic mite control, hive diseases, and marketing for those who intend to sell hive products.

Ross Conrad brings together the best "do no harm" strategies for keeping honeybees healthy and productive with nontoxic methods of controlling mites; eliminating American foulbrood disease without the use of an-

tibiotics; selective breeding for naturally resistant bees; and many other detailed management techniques.

Whether you are a novice, or an experienced apiculturist looking for ideas to develop an integrated pest-management approach, or someone who wants to sell honey at a premium price, this book will be an excellent guide.

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A Vermont Almanac for Early Spring

by Bill Felker

In the gardens, purple crocuses appeared—quite suddenly—and in the hills, small shoots of green rose among deadened stalks and branches. I sensed a rising feeling, a welling up, an expansiveness that filled up the dead spaces left by winter.

—Stephen Altschuler

The Weeks of the Moon in March

Week One

The Desert Wildflower Moon enters its final quarter at 6:11 p.m. on March 4. Rising after midnight and setting after lunch, this moon moves overhead in the morning, encouraging fish and dieters to bite. Eating activity is expected to increase even more during the mornings when the March 2, 5 and 9 cold fronts approach. Lunar position in Capricorn on the 3rd through the 5th favors the setting out of new trees and shrubs, as well as the planting of root crop seeds and sets.

Week Two

The Desert Wildflower Moon becomes the Robin Chorus Moon on March 8 at 8:54 p.m. Rising in the morning and setting in the evening, the new moon passes overhead in the middle of the day, increasing the likelihood that fishing will be successful around lunch time. Cold fronts typically push down the barometric pressure before their arrival around March 9 and 14, and the lower pressure should contribute not only to better fishing, but also to enhanced creativity. Lunar perigee (the moon's location closest to Earth) on March 9 increases the likelihood of storms—but also of angling success. Lunar position in Pisces (March 7-9), in Taurus (March 11-13) and Cancer (March 15-18) offer some of the very best lunar conditions (but not necessarily the best weather) for all your spring planting.

Week Three

As it waxes through the week, the Robin Chorus Moon continues to call forth the robins to mating and enters its second quarter at 12:03 p.m. on March 15. Rising in the middle of the day and setting after midnight, this moon increases the likelihood of angling success when it passes overhead during the evening, especially as the cold front of March 19 lowers the barometer. Lunar position in Taurus on the 14 and in Cancer on the 15-18 is very favorable for seeding all crops that will bear their fruit above the ground (like peas on St. Patrick's Day, March 17).

Week Four

The Robin Chorus Moon waxes full on March 23 at 7:01 p.m. Rising in the evening and setting in the morning, this moon passes overhead in the middle of the night, favoring midnight fishing (or noon, the second-best time) as the barometer sinks in advance of March 24 and 29 cold fronts. Lunar apogee (the moon's location farthest from earth) on March 24 is expected to soften the potential negative influence of full moon on weather and mood. Plant root crops and put in shrubs and trees after full moon, especially on the 25th through the 28th in Scorpio. Consider planting field corn just before new moon under Pisces, April 4-6.

Valley Lilies

Month of bold winds, you are stealing the snow!
Why do you hurry away from us so?
Baring the ground... deep rutted and wet...
Showing too soon where the lilies were set
Out on the bank, when the crinkled and gold
Had changed to a blanket of deep brown mold.

Someone was calling...left spade in the sod
Out near the sumac and loved golden-rod...
Covered with rust. March, March, do you know
Why I am dreading to see you go?

Too near the highway, all trampled and trod.
(Such was her faith in humanity—God.)
In your brave warring, blow over and past:
Do not uncover them, March, till the last.

—NELLIE S. RICHARDSON
Springfield, VT, 1929



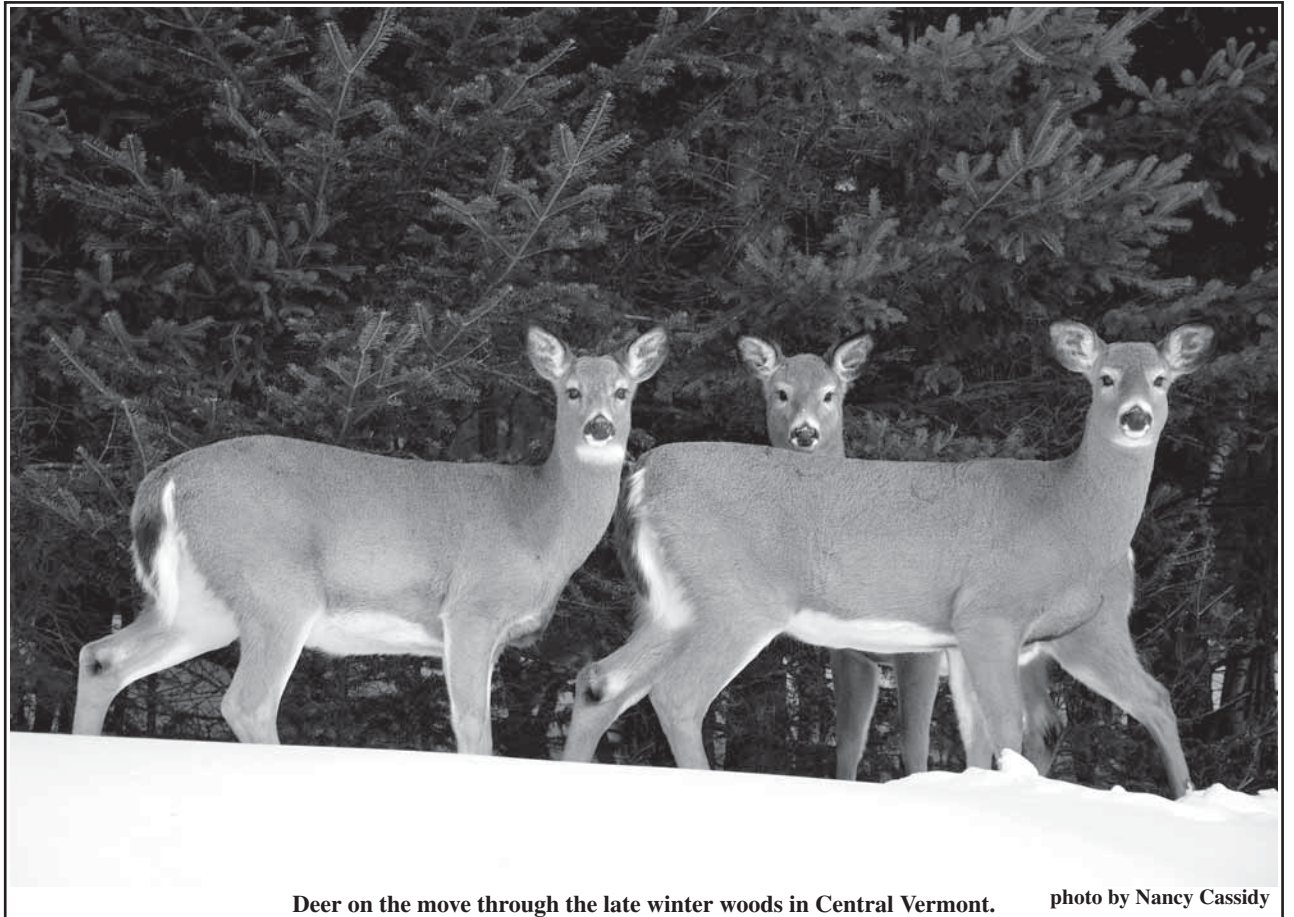
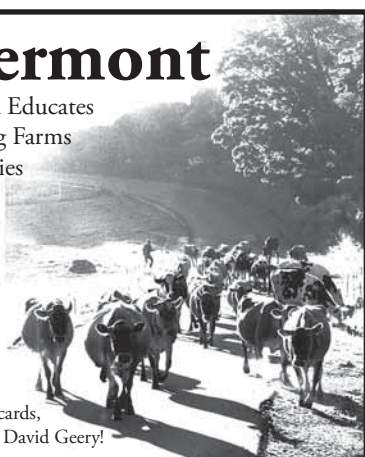
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including this photo from John David Geery!



Deer on the move through the late winter woods in Central Vermont. photo by Nancy Cassidy

The Natural Calendar for March

March 1: In the middle of the night, Saturn and Mars ride the southeast in Ophiucus.

March 2: Venus remains the morning star, outshining all the other lights in the east before sunrise.

March 3: Lupine leaves push out of the ground beside the snowdrops and aconites. The earliest blue squills blossom. Red maples flower soon. Crocus buds are opening.

March 4: Flocks of robins continue to move north even in the coldest springs. Red-winged blackbirds sing.

March 5: The first major storm window of March opens today – and stays open through the 14th.

March 6: When pussy willows open all the way, all the crocuses are in full bloom.

March 7: Woolly bear caterpillars come out from winter hibernation.

March 8: The Robin Chorus Moon is new today, strengthened by the power of lunar perigee on the 10th.

March 9: Red-tailed hawks, the horned grebe, the common snipe, all types of gulls, and black ducks are migrating.

March 10: After dark, Leo and bright Regulus lie overhead, forecasting daffodils. Arcturus is rising in the east, and when that star is above you at 10 p.m., tulips will be blossoming. Behind Arcturus comes the Corona Borealis, the corn planting star group.

March 11: Horseradish leaves stretch out to an inch or two. Honeysuckle buds are unravelling on the lowest branches.

March 12: Bleeding hearts are pushing their heads from the ground as day lilies reach to the top of your boots.

March 13: Daylight Saving Time begins at 2:00 a.m. Set clocks ahead one hour.

March 14: In warmest springs, snowdrops, aconites and snow crocus decline as peony stalks reach at least two inches.

March 15: This week is often marked by significant growth on rhubarb and skunk cabbage leaves.

March 16: The first ragweed and touch-me-not sprouts emerge. Pollen often forms on the pussy willows.

March 17: Mock orange leaves out, pacing the new honeysuckle foliage and the boxwood, the Japanese honeysuckle, lilac, black raspberry, multiflora rose and coralberry. In the greenhouse, tropical mother-of-millions blossom time ends just as day and night grow equal.

March 18: Motherwort swells into clumps, and purple deadnettle is in full bloom. Lamb's quarter, beggarticks, pigweed, and amaranth sprout.

March 19: Equinox occurs at 11:30 p.m., and although this solar event is more statistical than meteorological, it usually accompanies the intrusion of a strong high-pressure system from the North.

March 20: Clematis leaves emerge beside new growth of the dodder. Comfrey leaves reach two inches long.

March 21: Beginning today and lasting through the 30th, the second major March storm period increases the threat of sudden blizzards in the North and tornadoes in the South.

March 22: Watch for May apple plants to push out of the ground in parks and woodlots. When May apple "umbrellas" open, then the morels should be swelling in the dark.

March 23: In central Minnesota, robins finally arrive; between Tennessee and Wisconsin, red-winged blackbirds are nesting along the fencerows; sugaring is in full swing throughout Vermont.

March 24: Throughout most of North America, the normal average air temperature rises at the rate of one degree every three days as middle spring approaches.

March 25: When you see bumblebees and carpenter bees working in the flowers, then you know it's time for termites to swarm. And white cabbage butterflies in your back yard announce that bass and sunfish are moving to spawn in shallow waters.

March 26: When forsythia blooms, then farmers seed the first of the oats and field corn. In town, the lawn is almost long enough to cut. Then nettles, chicory and leafcup are six to eight inches tall, Asiatic lilies and columbine three to five inches. Ragwort and garlic mustard are forming clumps; some sweet rockets and money plants are getting ready to send out their flower stalks.

March 27: Ragwort and garlic mustard are forming clumps; some sweet rockets and money plants are getting ready to send out their flower stalks.

March 28: Japanese knotweed catches up with the rhubarb (just about big enough for a small pie).

March 29: Water rushes and purple loosestrife, water lilies and pickerel plants suddenly produce foliage in the ponds and streams, where small diving water beetles hunt for food.

March 30: Monarch butterflies have reached the Deep South, moving across Texas, then to Louisiana and Georgia. Some have flown north to Oklahoma and Arkansas, laying eggs all along the way.

March 31: Wildflower season begins in the woods. Go looking for bloodroot, hepatica, twinleaf and violet cress.

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Maple Celebration

And Pancake Breakfast

At Merck Forest and Farmland Center

Sweet! It's almost time for Merck Forest and Farmland Center's Annual Maple Celebration and Pancake Breakfast. This festive occasion is part of the Vermont Maple Sugar Makers Open House Weekend on April 2 & 3 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

All are welcome to join the fun. Guests ride in a horse-drawn wagon up to the Frank Hatch Sap House where the staff will serve Merck Forest and Farmland Center-raised breakfast sausages, locally-grown eggs, pancakes drizzled with Merck's Vermont-certified organic syrup, Tall-Cat coffee, Battenkill Creamery products, and juice. The cost for breakfast is \$10 for adults, \$5 for children aged 4 to 12, and free for children younger than 4. Tickets are available at the door.

There will be family-oriented activities to enjoy during the weekend. After breakfast, check out the maple-tap demonstrations, explore the property on the self-guided scavenger hunt, and of course, visit the new babies in the Small Animal Barn.

The mountain trails are open for seasonal fun—hiking and horseback riding, or

snowshoeing if there's still snow.

It's also the perfect opportunity to become part of the Merck Forest family. Stop by the membership table in the Sap House to learn about the benefits of membership in our organization. Join on Maple Celebration weekend and receive a small gift.

The Merck Forest and Farmland Center is a non-profit educational organization with a mission to teach and demonstrate the benefits of innovative, sustainable management of forest and farmland. They offer a variety of seasonal school programs, apprenticeships and recreational opportunities to individuals and families.

The 3,100-acre property in the Taconic Mountains of southwestern Vermont is open daily to the public free of charge. Visitors are welcome to spend time on the farm, and to enjoy the forest and over 30 miles of trails. Camping and cabin rentals are available year-round.

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



photo courtesy Merck Forest & Farmland
Pouring and flipping the pancakes at the annual maple celebration at Merck Forest & Farmland in Rupert, VT.

Middletown Springs Historical Society Maple Festival

The Middletown Springs Historical Society will be holding its 28th Annual Maple Festival on the Green and indoors on Sunday, March 20 from 1-4 p.m.

Maple desserts made by Society members, old-fashioned sugar-on-snow, maple cotton candy, maple products and new 2016 maple syrup will be available for sale.

There will be a demonstration of early maple sugaring in a cast iron kettle over an open fire.

Local sugarmaker Ryan Mahar and historians David Wright and Jon Mathewson will give a presentation on maple sugaring history as well as current practices using items from the Middletown Springs Historical Society collection.

Videos about Vermont maple sugaring will be shown

continuously. Enjoy acoustic music and kids' activities.

A silent auction with donations from local artists and craftsmen, merchants and professionals highlights the afternoon. A raffle with over 50 prizes including \$75 and \$50 in cash, maple gift baskets, maple syrup and maple products, craft items, and gift certificates from local businesses will go on continuously during the festival.

The Middletown Springs Historical Society on the Green is located at the intersection of Route 140 and Route 133 in Middletown Springs, VT. For more information about the Maple Festival call Linda Hurcomb at (802) 235-9299 or David Wright at (802) 235-2376. Visit middletownspringshistory.org.

Way Up In Old Vermont

There's a smell of maple sugar,
An entrancing steam of sap,
Tho' as yet the world-old mater
Holds big snow-banks on her lap;
And the wind is fit to chill us
And slaps us in the face—
But we can stand the challenge
With good and silent grace.
We can easy bear the burden
Of things we do not want,
For we are making sugar
'Way up in old Vermont.

March winds have raved and blustered;
To Spring they hold the key;
And the trumpet of the blue-jay
Calls up the chickadee;
And here's to recollections
Of childhood's kettle black
That held the seething nectar
In bubbling sweetness back!
The smoke pursued and blinded us,
But nothing could us daunt;
For we were sugar-making
'Way up in old Vermont.

We scraped the snow-crust neatly,
To spread the varnish thin,
Till a "hunk" of pork was needed
To keep it 'neath the rim.
We did the trick by sprinting,
Tho' chilblains pinched our toes,
While bright-hued freckles got in line
And marched across our nose.
But nothing mattered: life was young
And all a merry jaunt;
For we were sugaring for keeps
'Way up in old Vermont.

It may have been the flavor
Of stick, or leaf, or bark,
That makes our mouths to water now,
And to fond memory hark.
It may have been the home folk,
It may have been the time,—
It was all good and hot and sweet—
Thrilled thro' our veins like wine.
Ah, well! 't is past, but the same sun
Throws shadows long and gaunt—
And still we're making sugar
'Way up in old Vermont.

—EVA EDGERTON AMES
Wallingford, VT, 1856-1928





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Community Center
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Come Enjoy the Tinmouth Old Firehouse Spring Concerts

The Old Firehouse crew is delighted to announce its Spring 2016 dates. There are some amazing musicians performing on the Tinmouth Old Firehouse stage this spring. We hope to see you at all of them. All concerts are on Friday nights at 7:30 p.m. Suggested donation is \$10—90% goes to the musicians, 10% goes to the town to support the maintenance of the Old Firehouse. Local groups provide refreshments by donation.

Bluegrass by Possum Haw • April 8

The Old Firehouse is opening its 2016 season with an old favorite. This is a special combination: the drive of bluegrass and the original lyricism of folk, delivered by one of the finest female vocalists in the region, Colby Crehan. Formed in 2004 by Colby and husband Ryan, a banjo player, and lead guitarist Charley Eiseman, the group has evolved into a well-oiled machine with stunning vocal harmonies and stellar acoustic instrumentation. www.possumhaw.net.

Hilton Park • April 22

Hailing from Southern Maine, Hilton Park is known in the Northeastern U.S. for earthy, emotionally expressive and superbly crafted Americana, folk & blues. Combining veteran musical & songwriting skill with teen enthusiasm, father/son team Bruce and Conor Hilton and family friend Gregg Pannier explore intimate musical textures with their release “Strings”. The backdrop of their live performances looks like the wall of a music store, with acoustic guitars, mandolin, dobro, weissenborn, Irish bouzouki—up to nine instruments at any given show, plus Pannier’s piano. Along with the varied instrumentation, stylish and confident three-part vocal harmonies fill the repertoire. They’ve won multiple awards for their performances, including “Best Band in Maine”. www.hiltonparkband.com.

Bill Staines • May 13

Bill has performed all over the country since the early days of the folk revival. His songs are so familiar that sometimes people don’t know he wrote them, including the love song “Roseville Fair”. Singing mostly his own songs, he has become one of the most popular and durable singers on the folk music scene today, performing nearly 200 concerts a year and driving over 65,000 miles annually. He weaves a blend of gentle wit and humor into his performances. Bill’s music is a slice of Americana, reflecting with the same ease his feelings about the prairie people of the Midwest or the adventurers of the Yukon, the on-the-road truckers, and the cowboys and trappers of earlier times. Composer David Amram recently described Bill as “a modern day Stephen Foster...his songs will be around 100 years from now.” www.acousticmusic.com/staines.

House Blend • May 27

House Blend is an assembly of 20 veteran singers from Vermont and New Hampshire, devoted to the collective exploration of the many styles of mostly a cappella singing from around the world and throughout musical history. A democratically-governed party, House Blend looks to the artistic direction of all of its members rather than a single director. Their occupations range from teachers to a web designer, from an airline pilot to a carpenter. Their repertoire includes early music, contemporary arrangements by local composers, songs from American folk traditions such as spirituals, soulful gospel songs, hill songs from Appalachia; and village music from many countries. www.houseblend.org.



Possum Haw will be performing in Tinmouth, VT on April 8.

Jenni Johnson and the Jazz Junketeers June 10

Jenni Johnson is a widely travelled jazz singer whose home and roots are in Vermont. Her full, smooth voice offers an ideal format for her collection of American jazz classics, as well as blues, swing, and funk music. At the Old Firehouse concert she’ll be backed by the Jazz Junketeers, a group of jazz playing friends who blend perfectly with her. Born in NYC’s Harlem Hospital and raised in the Big Apple, she now resides in Burlington, VT and has an M.Ed. from the University of Vermont with credits towards a Ph.D. Jenni Johnson has been described as “a renaissance woman”. www.jennijohnson.net.

The Tinmouth Old Firehouse is on Mountain View Road near the intersection of Vt. 140 East in downtown Tinmouth, VT, five miles west of Wallingford, VT. Park on the road or on the Town Green in front of the church. Concerts are at 7:30 p.m. E-mail: old.firehouse.concerts@gmail.com. www.tinmouthvt.org. www.facebook.com/TinmouthOldFirehouseConcerts.

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All are welcome for FREE great meals! Please
bring your family and friends! We hope to see you here!

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Billings Farm's Baby Animal Day Saturday, March 26th

Billings Farm & Museum will feature Baby Animal Day on Saturday, March 26th, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The event will feature family-centered programs with the farm's calves, lambs, and more. There will be horse-drawn wagon rides and heirloom seed and children's craft activities.

Get up close with the farm's baby animals and learn about their care, diet, and growth from the farm staff. Craft activities include making pom-pom chicks and lamb handprints.

Start planning your garden, learn about the importance of heirloom seeds, and select a few varieties from the Billings Farm to plant at home.

Billings Farm is an operating Jersey dairy farm that

continues a 145-year tradition of agricultural excellence and offers farm programs and historical exhibits that explore Vermont's rural heritage.

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

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

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

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

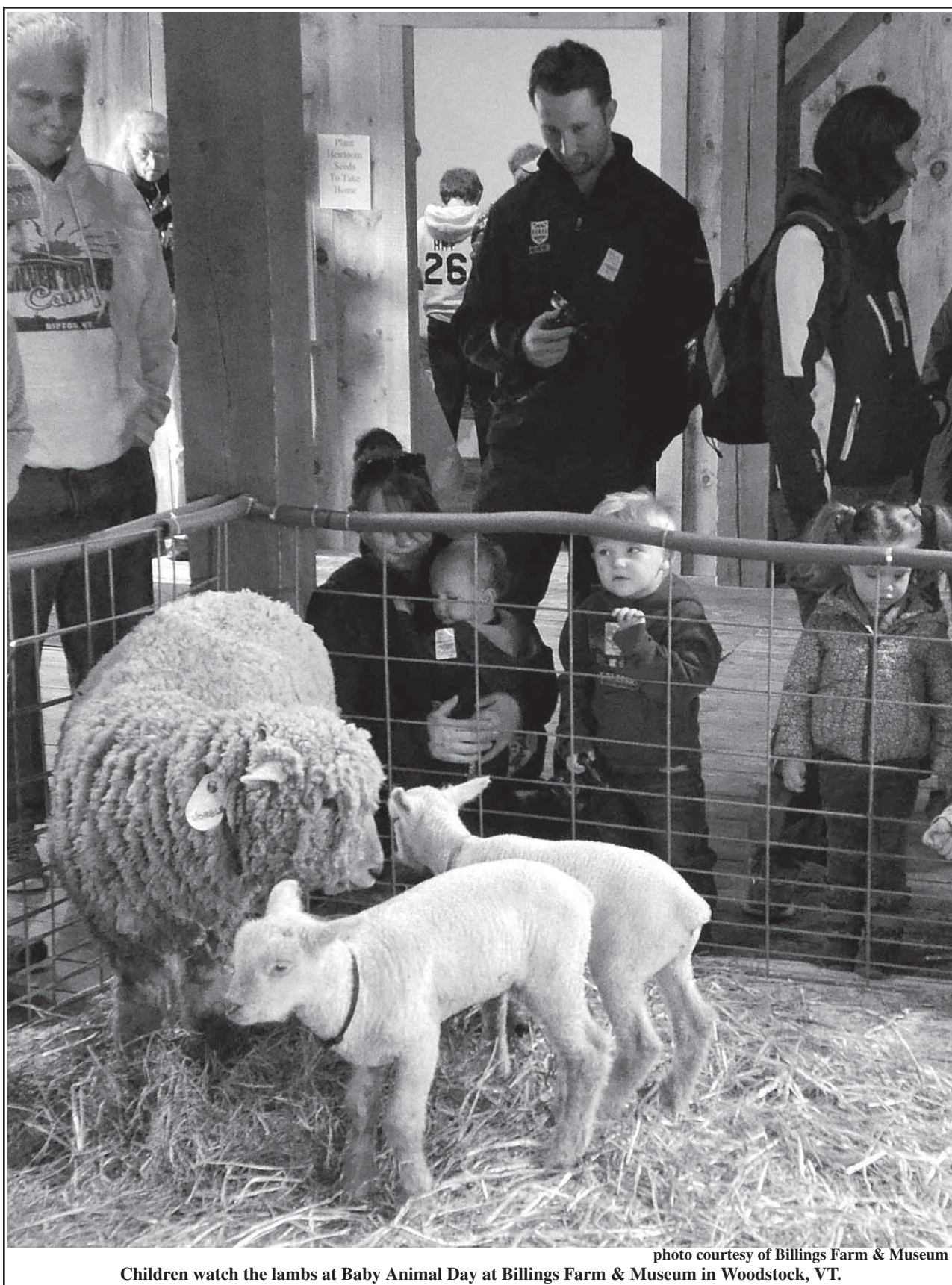
Maple Pie and Lost Mufflers

Spring comes quickly, by and by.

It brings with it
sugar snows and maple pie,
and dandelion greens, not so serene
and lost mufflers on muddy roads.

Did I forget the sounds of peepers and toads?

—RON KRUPP



Children watch the lambs at Baby Animal Day at Billings Farm & Museum in Woodstock, VT.

photo courtesy of Billings Farm & Museum

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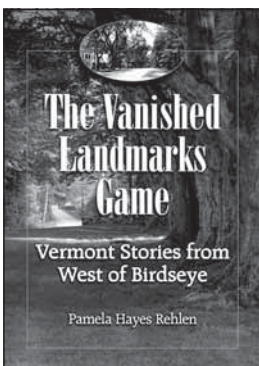


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The Vanished Landmarks Game

Vermont Stories from
West of Birdseye

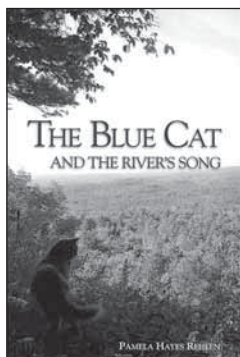
by Pamela Hayes Rehlen
\$20 (plus \$5 s&h)

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

The Blue Cat And The River's Song

by Pamela Hayes Rehlen
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Catherine Coblenz' 1949
children's story, *The Blue Cat of
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Vermont Winter Farmers Markets

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

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

Brattleboro Winter Farmers' Market at Robert H. Gibson River Garden, 153 Main St. Saturdays, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., November 7, 2015 through March 26, 2016. Accepts EBT and debit cards. Sherry Maher, (802) 869-2141. www.postoilsolutions.org.

Burlington Winter Farmers' Market at Memorial Auditorium, corner of Main St. and S. Union. 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. March 5 & 19; April 2. Accepts EBT and debit cards. Chris Wagner, (802) 310-5172. info@burlingtonfarmersmarket.org. burlingtonfarmersmarket.org.

Dorset Winter Farmers' Market at J.K. Adams Kitchen Store and Factory on Rt. 30. Sundays from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., October 18 through May 4. (802) 353-9656. marketmanager@dorsetfarmersmarket.com. www.dorsetfarmersmarket.com.

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

Middlebury Winter Farmer's Market at Mary Hogan Elementary School, 201 Mary Hogan Dr. Saturdays, 9:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. March 5, 12, 19, 26; April 2, 9, 23, 30. middleburyfarmersmkt@yahoo.com. middleburyfarmersmarket.org.

Montpelier Capital City Winter Farmers' Market. 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. March 5 & 19, April 2 & 16 at Montpelier High School cafeteria. Carolyn Grodinsky, (802) 223-2958. www.montpelierfarmersmarket.com.

Northfield Winter Farmers' Market. Norwich University's Plumley Armory. 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. March 6, and April 3. northfieldfarmersmarketvt@gmail.com. northfieldfarmersmarketvt.com.

Norwich Farmers' Winter Market at Tracy Hall, 300 Main St. 10 a.m. – 1 p.m., March 19 & 26; April 9 & 23. Steve Hoffman, (802) 384-7447. manager@norwichfarmersmarket.org. norwichfarmersmarket.org.

Rutland Winter Farmers' Market, Food Center Building at 251 West St. Saturdays, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.; Wednesdays 3-6 p.m. November 4 through May 7. (802) 342-4727. info@vtfarmersmarket.org. www.vtfarmersmarket.org.

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

Windsor Farmers Market at Windsor Welcome Center. First and third Saturdays, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m., November 7 through May 21. Accepts EBT and debit cards. Timothy Cary. (802) 359-2551. windsor.vt.farmers.market@gmail.com. windsorfarmersmarket.blogspot.com.

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The Old Barns

by Pamela Hayes Rehlen

There are two barns that I particularly remember from my childhood. The Roberts barn stood at the top of Fair Haven's Capitol Hill, not far from my Grandmother Hayes's house, and the Dunlop barn was in Castleton Corners, across the road from my Gibbs grandparents.

Both of these buildings were in pretty rough shape, even when I was young. Empty and derelict, they stayed much the same for decades, and then awhile back, the Dunlap barn burned, making way for a little modular-building nursing home.

The Roberts barn is still there, but it stands now next to a wide, new, driveway leading to a recently-built house. Black and broken-sided—but with a laid-up slate foundation and an unspoiled slate roof—this barn could endure for many more years, and I wish it would, but that new house up there on the ridge behind makes me worry about its future.

Castleton has old, still-standing farm barns, and old, still-working farm barns, but no new, working farm barns. Just across the New York State line in Whitehall, recently-arrived Amish families have started farming land that hadn't been tilled in generations. Driving west on Rt. 4 it's hard not to thrill to the ridgelines sight of big, new-built, farm barns.

There are no such sights in Castleton because, with two or three exceptions, occupational farming is a thing of the past. Around here, barns are mostly just reminders of an

"I remember the shadowy peacefulness of the barn, the cows munching and sighing, shifting their feet..."

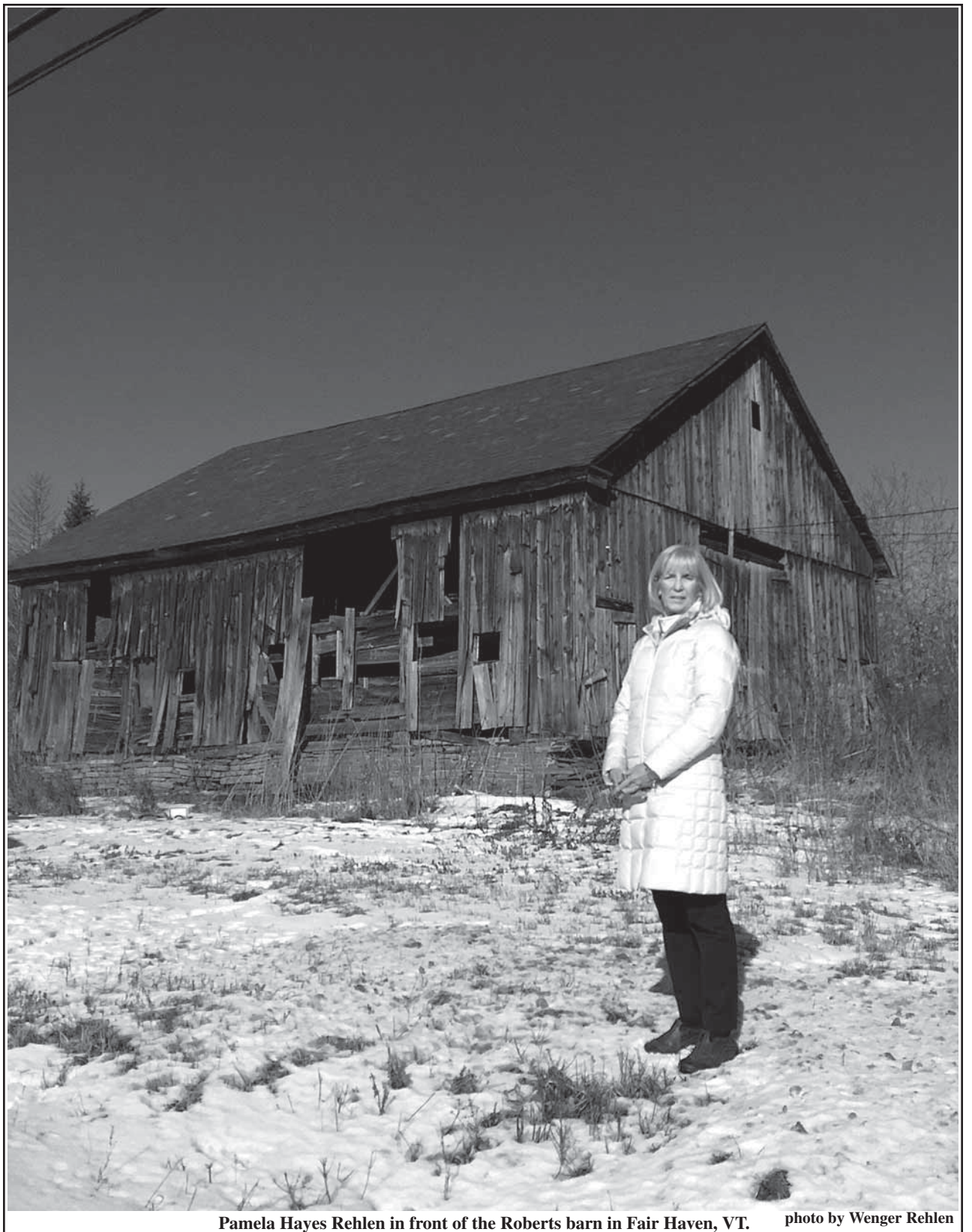
earlier way of life. Up the hill from town on North Road, the Eagans had a working farm, passed down to them from farming forbears, with a hard-used old barn. That barn door is now boarded up, and they're no longer milking.

The O'Rourke family with its horse-riding, horse-selling, horse-trading empire headquartered at the deep woods, uplands end of Castleton's Pond Hill Road, has been in business for several generations and maintains old barns. They also keep standing some scattered, nearly-derelict barns in which they store hay. The queen of still-working buildings around here is the yellow 1890s barn at Ransomvale Dairy Farm on the East Hubbardton Road.

I haven't just looked at old barns. I've spent time in them too. When I was a little girl, I lived for awhile in what was at that time remote West Castleton, behind a semi-abandoned, lake shore farmstead owned by Fair Haven school teacher Alice Ryan. One summer, someone hayed Miss Ryan's fields and filled her barn. My sister and I watched all this and later crept in, climbed up to the loft and jumped time after time into the deep, sweet-smelling bosom of that hay mound which filled the old building's dim and dusty interior.

And I remember being in my Castleton grandfather's barn where he kept cows and chickens. I sometimes fed the chickens—which was a scary task for a timid little girl—and when he did his evening milking I used to stand close to him. I remember the shadowy peacefulness of the barn, the cows munching and sighing, shifting their feet in scattered hay. Now, transformed into the Castleton Seniors' physical activities center, this building has been saved, but lost for me.

It's hard to see a particularly-admired barn in its death struggles. Out on Rt. 4A, a stealth demolition is going on



Pamela Hayes Rehlen in front of the Roberts barn in Fair Haven, VT. photo by Wenger Rehlen

where the east end of a grand barn building—the jewel in the center of a one-time perfect collection of 19th century farm outbuildings—is giving way as its foundation supports are slowly removed.

This will become one of the memory barns—the gems that have vanished. Theresa Eagan Monette remembers the remains of a big, probably contemporaneous, building next to the 18th century farmhouse that her family bought on Frisbee Hill Road in the early 1960s. People who live farther along Frisbee Hill reminisce about the giant barn with an upper level, drive-in, carriage ramp and an interior silo that stood on this road and was taken down in the 1990s.

A new family bought the one-time Blackwood place on Castleton's South Street, and, although they don't use them, they've maintained the outbuildings, including their barn's diminutive Toy Town wooden silo. Farther along, Cedar Meadow Farm, no longer in business, must at one time have been a prosperous operation because its name is marked out in the most expensive Granville-red slate across the roof of its grand barn.

I admire Castleton's remaining in-town barns, often garage-small. Old, sepia-colored, photographs show how many more once stood behind the Main Street houses. I like looking for the shy little tumble-down barns still peeking from behind other buildings out at Castleton Corners. They seem to be lying low, staying quiet, realizing they exist on borrowed time.

Old barns don't go easily. A heavy snowfall is usually what brings them down. As long as their slate roofs last, like old work horses, they'll stagger and sway, but endearingly—resolute, year after year they'll continue to stand, and as I drive past, it always lifts my spirits to see them hanging on.

*Pamela Hayes Rehlen has written and lived most of her life in Castleton, Vermont. She is the author of many stories, articles, essays and 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, VT 05735, and at a number of Vermont bookstores. To reach the store, call (802) 468-2213.*

Fair Haven, VT

Local Sawmill Builds Thrifty Tiny Houses to Suit Your Needs

Dick Walker Sawmill in Fair Haven, VT has been building and selling "tiny houses" for a long time (since before there was a tiny house movement). They are marketed as portable deer camps and more, and prebuilt, put on a truck or trailer and shipped.

Dick Walker's little buildings are built on skids. Sometimes an additional tow job (via tractor or skidder) is needed to get them to their final wooded site.

With the recent popularity

of the Tiny House movement in many parts of the U.S., different designs are cropping up, some including lofts. Some are too tall to truck down the road at 55 mph so you need to buy the lumber, or a lumber package, and build in place. Dick Walker Sawmill sells lumber and pre-designed packages. Prices start as low as \$2500.

Tiny Houses can suit many purposes. Dick Walker had a customer from Australia who

bought an 8' x 16' building that they had in stock to replace her camper. When she came to visit two years later, she ordered another, this one being 8' x 8' with an overhang. Now she has a two-room tiny house with a nice deck!

While the Tiny House has all sorts of applications—a vacation or hunting camp, a studio or writer's retreat, or even a residence, one of it's most endearing uses is for

kids. Who can resist a real playhouse!

For sizes, designs, and rates, call Dick Walker Sawmill at (802) 273-2077. Visit their website at www.dickwalkersawmill.com.



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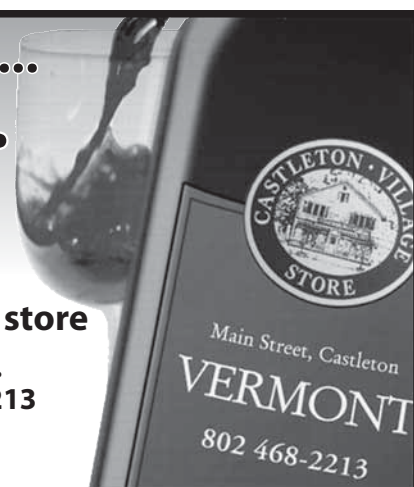
For farmer updates, cooking classes, and info about local farms and food, visit rutlandfarmandfood.org 802.417.1528

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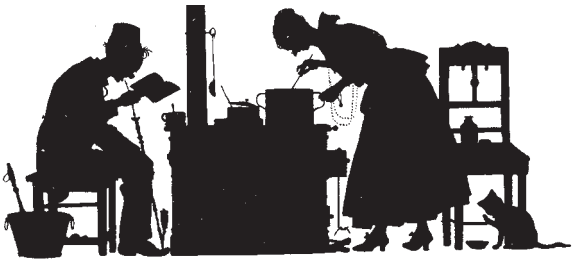
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Maple Cooking Tips

Vermont Maple Festival Cookbook

Measuring: Syrup tends to “hug” the sides of the measuring cup or spoon so first grease the container lightly then scrape out all the syrup.

Method of mixing: Combine syrup with liquid in recipe or melt shortening then mix thoroughly with liquid shortening.

Grades: Grade A Dark with Robust Taste syrup has a stronger flavor and will yield more maple flavor in a flour batter. In an icing or other cooking where delicate flavors are found, use Grade A Golden Color or Amber Color.

How to experiment: Start by using the lesser amount and remember to record the amounts and your results. If the results are not what you want, don't quit. Try again and increase syrup if sweeter product is wished. If it is dry, don't decrease liquid as much. If texture is too coarse, you probably need to mix syrup and liquid shortening more thoroughly. If it has a burned outer edge, lower oven temperature.

In making jellies: Maple syrup usually is not used as a substitute because the flavor fights with the flavor of the fruit.

Other uses: Baked beans, apple pies, pickles, ham sauces or glazes, sweet potatoes, candied carrots and others.

Hard Sugar

1. Use any grade maple syrup.
2. Heat the syrup to between 252° and 257°F.
3. Remove from heat and begin stirring the hot, thick syrup immediately.
4. Continue stirring until crystals form (syrup begins to stiffen).
5. Pour the partly crystallized syrup into molds to harden.

Granulated (stirred) Sugar

1. Use any grade Vermont maple syrup.
2. Heat the syrup to between 252° and 257°F.
3. Begin stirring immediately and continue stirring until granulation is completed.

Maple Syrup or Sugar-on-Snow

1. Use Golden or Amber color Vermont maple syrup.
2. Heat the syrup to between 234° and 238°F.
3. Without stirring, pour the syrup immediately onto the snow or ice; it will form a glassy, taffy like sheet of candy.

Substituting Maple Syrup for Granulated Sugar What to do instead of One cup granulated sugar

1. Use ¾–1 cup of maple syrup, because maple syrup is less sweet than granulated sugar. If you like sweet muffins use the larger amount of syrup. If you prefer something not as sweet, use only ¾ cup.
2. Decrease liquid to 2 to 4 tablespoons per 1 cup syrup used, because syrup contains more moisture than the solid granulated sugar which the recipe called for.
3. Add: ¼–½ teaspoon baking soda (note exception), because maple syrup has a slight acidity which needs to be neutralized for the batter to rise and form properly. (Do not add soda if recipe calls for buttermilk, sour milk, or sour cream since these liquids do the same thing.)
4. Decrease oven by 25°F, because the maple syrup will tend to caramelize and burn on the top and edges before a batter using a solid sweetener like sugar.

This information is from the Vermont Maple Festival Cookbook. To order a copy send \$13 (plus \$5 shipping & handling) to Vermont Maple Festival, Inc., P.O. Box 255, St. Albans, VT 05478.



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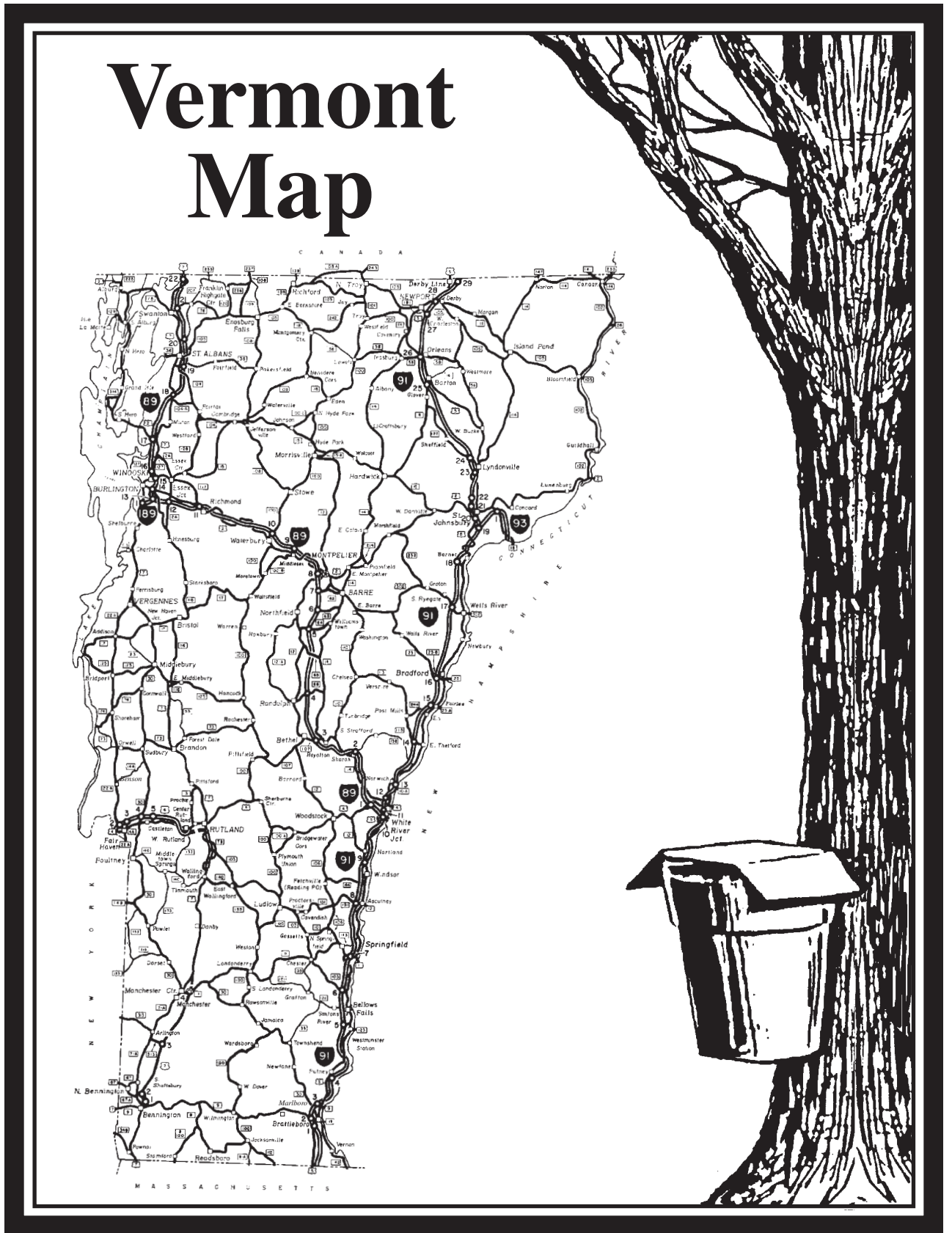
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An Old Orchard in Winter

It was years ago, and no one knows
Just who planted the orchard rows,
Bedded and firmed the tender feet
Of the Twenty Ounce and the Golden Sweet,
And the straggling clan whose branches meet
Over Pomona's little aisles,
Where sunbeams dimple the snow with smiles.

A tumble-down wall and an old rail fence
Guard the orchard with poor pretense;
And pilferers, footed and winged, come there
Even in winter when boughs are bare,
And the nuthatch hunts for his meagre share,
Peering and pecking this way and that,
First up, then down, like an acrobat.

Deer stroll in from the mountain pass
And paw the snow from the brittle grass,
Gratefully nosing the buried treat
Of fruit, frost-bitten, and brown, and sweet,
Brought to light by their trampling feet;
And up where weathering crab-apples cling
The grosbeaks cavil and feast and sing.

Skies are gray, and the laden wind
Clashes the branches, silver-rimmed,
Seals the eye of the flicker's hole
Leading into an ancient bole,
And fills old nests with winter's toll—
Here, where under the harvest moon
Quavered the cry of the gray raccoon.

Tracking the snow with padded paw,
Sharp hoofprint, and trace of claw,
All winter long to the Golden Sweet
And the Twenty Ounce and the trees that meet,
Neglected and old, in this wild retreat,
Come bird and beast in their need akin,
And make the old orchard their wayside inn.

—FLORENCE BOYCE DAVIS
Waitsfield, VT, 1932



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Vermont Country Calendar

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

TUESDAY, MARCH 1

NORWICH. Suds & Science Talk: Timber Rattlers, America's Snake. Writer and naturalist Ted Levin will discuss the natural history of rattlesnakes and their checkered past among humans. 7 pm at the Norwich Inn. (802) 649-1431. www.vtecostudies.org.

STATEWIDE. Vermont Cider Week. Hard cider has become very popular. Events at cider makers all over Vermont. Visit our website for locations and information. www.vermontciderweek.com. From February 26 through March 6.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2

BELLOWS FALLS. Program: Exploring Vernal Pools. With wetland ecologist Rebecca Chalmers. Free and open to the public. 7 pm. Rockingham Free Public Library, 65 Westminster St. (802) 463-4270. programming@rockinghamlibrary.org. www.rockinghamlibrary.org.

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers' Market. 3-6 pm. Vermont Farmers Food Center at 251 West St. in downtown Rutland. (802) 342-4727. vtfarmersmarket.org. Wednesdays and Saturdays through May 7.

ST. JOHNSBURY. Concert: Beth Hart. Tickets: \$54, \$44, \$29, \$15. 7 pm. Fuller Hall, St. Johnsbury Academy, 1000 Main St. (802) 748-2600. www.catamountarts.org.

THURSDAY, MARCH 3

BARNARD. Champlain Orchards Limited Edition Hard Cider Tasting at Barnard Inn & Max's Tavern. 5-8 pm. 5518 Rt. 12. (802) 234-9961. www.barnardinn.com.

HANOVER, NH. Performance: Rhythm and Dance of India. Sandeep Das and Ramesh Mishra engage in subtle musical conversations with dancers. Tickets: \$25, 18 & under \$17. 7 pm. The Moore Theater, Hopkins Center for the Arts. (603) 646-2422. hop.dartmouth.edu.

FRIDAY, MARCH 4

BELLOWS FALLS. A Lenten Retreat with Meister Eckhart. Contemplative prayer, song, music, optional spiritual direction, informal discussion and personal time, and the main group sessions. Registration: \$200-\$370. 5 pm Friday through 2 pm Sunday. Immanuel Retreat Center, 12 Church St. (802) 460-0110. sca@sover.net. stonechurcharts.org. Through March 6.

BURLINGTON. 21st Annual Magic Hat Mardi Gras Weekend. Three-day celebration, capped off by a parade through downtown. Musical performances, a costume contest, family-friendly activities. 10 am - 4 pm daily. Downtown Burlington. (802) 658-2739. www.magicchat.net/mardigras. Through March 6.

BURLINGTON. Concert: Bela Fleck and Abigail Washburn. Tickets \$15-\$45. 8 pm. MainStage, Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, 153 Main St. (802) 863-5966. www.flynncenter.org.

EAST MONTPELIER. Sugar-on-Snow at Bragg Farm. Free admission. 12-5 pm. Bragg Farm, 1005 Rt. 14 North. (802) 223-5757. braggfarm.com. Every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from March through mid-April.

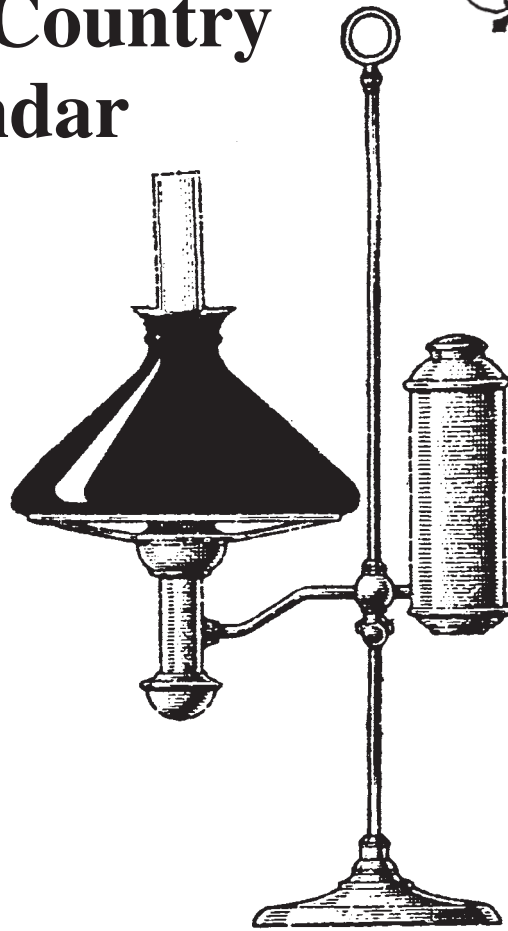
ESSEX JUNCTION. 16th Annual Vermont State Boat & Marine Show. Nearly 100,000 square feet of boats. Boat dealers from Vermont, New Hampshire, and New York. Admission: adults \$5, children under 16 free with adult. Free parking. 12-7 pm. Champlain Valley Expo, 105 Pearl St. (772) 631-7920. www.eastcoastshows.com. Also March 5 & 6.

LYNDONVILLE. Winterbike 2016 and Northeast Fatbike Summit. Group rides, fatbike demos, vendors, a bon fire, games, a fun race and food and beverages. Hosted by Kingdom Trails and The Vermont Mountain Bike Association. Cost: \$25, includes coffee & continental breakfast & lunch. 10 am - 4 pm. Lyndon State College, 1001 College Rd. tim@kingdomtrails.org. kingdomtrails.org. Through March 5.

MONTPELIER. Morse Farm Sugar Works Sugar-on-Snow. Treat yourself to "the works" - sugar on snow, a raised donut, dill pickle, and a beverage! Sugar on snow is served inside, on the back deck. Fee. 12-4 pm. Morse Farm Sugar Works, 1168 County Rd. (800) 242-2740. maple@morsefarm.com. morsefarm.com. Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, through March and April 2 & 3.

MONTPELIER. Happy Birthday, Vermont! On March 4, 2016, Vermont will celebrate 225 years of statehood. Join us at the Vermont History Museum to ring in this birthday. Tickets \$25, call to reserve. 5-8 pm. Vermont History Museum, 109 State St. (802) 828-2180. amanda.gustin@vermonthistory.org. vermonthistory.org.

NEWPORT. Second Annual Memphremagog Winter Swim Festival. 25 Meter Breast Stroke, 25 Meter Freestyle, 50 Meter Freestyle, 100 Meter Freestyle, 25 Meter Fly, 200 Meter Freestyle, 200 Meter Freestyle Relays. 10 am Friday to 3 pm Sunday. The Landing Restaurant and Pub, 47 Landing St. For info go to kingdomgames.com. Through March 6.



PLAINFIELD, NH. Henry's Ham & Bean Supper. Price: ages 13 and up \$10; ages 12-6 \$5; age 5 & under, free. 5-6:30 pm at Blow-Me-Down Grange #234, Rt. 12A. (603) 313-8047.

RANDOLPH. Concert. EagleMania, the world's greatest Eagles tribute band. Tickets: adults \$25, students \$5 with an adult. 7:30 pm. Chandler Center for the Arts, 71-73 Main St. (802) 728-6464. www.chandler-arts.org.

RUTLAND. Reception for Water Exhibit. The work of six watercolor artists, features an installation highlighting the work of Pure Water for the World, an international nonprofit whose mission is to improve the health and livelihood of children and families in the developing world. 5-7 pm. Chaffee Art Center, 16 South Main St. (802) 775-0356. info@chaffeeartcenter.org. www.chaffeeartcenter.org.

SATURDAY, MARCH 5

ASCUTNEY. Turkey and Biscuit Dinner. Menu includes roast turkey and vegetables with biscuits, mashed potatoes, tossed salad, cranberry sauce, beverages, and dessert. Tickets adults \$10, children 6-10 \$5, under 6 free. Take-out available. Sponsored by Ascutney Volunteer Fire Department. 5-7 pm. Martin Memorial Hall, 5259 Rt. 5. (802) 674-6869.

BARNARD. 4th Annual Masquerade Jazz and Funk Winter Music Carnival. BarnArts Center for the Arts presents the Funk Band "The ChopShop" and the WUHS Jazz Funk Band. Original Mask Silent Auction. \$20 adults, \$10 students, free ages six and under. 6-11 pm. Barnard Town Hall. barnarts.org.

BELLOWS FALLS. Guided Snowshoe Hike. Through the Bellows Falls Watershed Forest with State Forester Tim Morton. Snowshoes should be well-cleated or have built-in crampons. If there is limited snow, the event will shift to a winter walk with micro-spikes required. Free. Registration required. Carpooling will take place at the turn around along Rte. 5 directly across from Darby Hill Rd. at 8:45 am. 9 am - 12 noon. Rockingham Free Public Library, 65 Westminster St. (802) 463-4270. rockinghamlibrary.org.

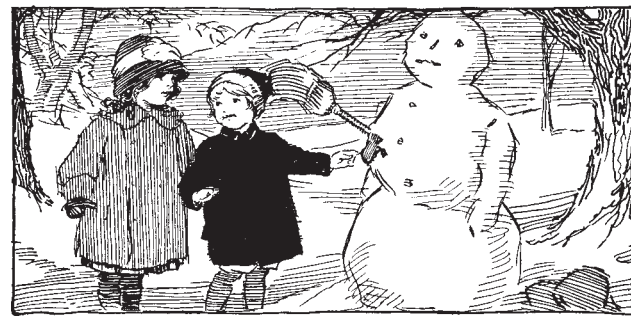
BELLOWS FALLS. Program: Reading with Rocket. Children, beginning and struggling readers, read to a specially trained therapy dog, who listens attentively, and does not laugh, judge, or criticize. Free. 12-1:30 pm. Rockingham Library, 65 Westminster St. (802) 463-4270. youthservices@rockinghamlibrary.org. www.rockinghamlibrary.org.

BETHEL. 11th Annual Home Show and Business Expo. Local businesses display and talk about their products. Refreshments available. Handicap accessible. Hosted by The Bethel Business Association. Free admission, everyone welcome. 9 am to 3 pm at the Whitcomb High School Gymnasium, 273 Pleasant St. For info call (802) 234-5562.

BOLTON. Frigid Infliction. A 10-hour winter adventure ski race for teams of two or three. 4:30 am - 6 pm. Bolton Valley Resort, 4302 Bolton Valley Access Rd. (802) 434-6813. www.boltonvalley.com.

BRADFORD. Two-Day Class: Arrow Making. Shaft harvesting, preparation and straightening, pitch preparation, fletching and hafting. Leave with a fully primitive hunting quality arrow. Good materials and tools included as well as meals and a warm place to sleep. Fee: \$220. 9 am Sat - 5 pm Sun. Roots School, 192 Bear Notch Rd. (802) 456-1253. info@rootsvt.com. www.rootsvt.com. Through March 6.

BRATTLEBORO. Winter Farmers' Market. Fresh produce and local meats, yummy sweet treats, great lunch offerings. Live music. 10 am - 2 pm. Robert H. Gibson River Garden, 153 Main St. (802) 869-2141. www.posttoilsolutions.org. Every Saturday through March 26.



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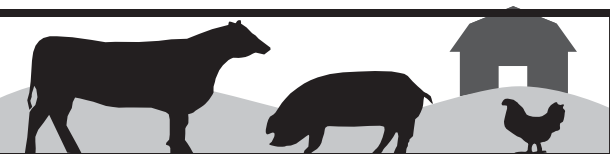
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Vermont Country Calendar

BRATTLEBORO. Circus Spectacular 2016. Presented by New England Center for Circus Arts. Professional performers and special guests from top circuses around the world! Tickets: \$15-\$50. 7:30-9:30 pm. Latchis Hotel and Theatre, 50 Main St. (802) 254-9780. necenterforcircusarts.org. Also March 6.

BURLINGTON. Concert: Joan Baez. Tickets \$82.50-\$52.50. 8 pm. MainStage, Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, 153 Main St. (802) 863-5966. www.flynncenter.org.

CHESTER. Eighth Annual Maple Fest Dinner. Roast turkey breast, cranberry sauce, peas, baked beans, crucifer salad, potatoes, and scones. Red or white wine available. A variety of desserts, all touched by maple. Raffle. Cost: adults \$10, children \$5. 5:30-8 pm. Willard Hall at St. Luke's Church, 313 Main St. (802) 875-3531. www.stlukesepiscopalvt.org.

CHESTER. 2016 LEGO Contest. Open to LEGOmaniacs Pre-K through Grade 8, their families, and anyone interested in coming to have a look at our children's creative genius. Construct your original creations (no kits allowed), with a maximum size of 24" x 36" and bring it between 9 and 10 am. Entries \$15. Register at www.stlukesepiscopalvt.org, www.ourchester.org, and www.chestertelegraph.org and Whiting Library on Main St. Held at the NewsBank Conference Center, 352 Main St. (802) 875-1340. lbwillist@comcast.net.

COLCHESTER. Whiffenpoofs in Concert. The world's oldest and best known collegiate a capella group, from Yale University. Tickets \$25/\$15, purchase from website. 7:30 pm. Elley-Long Center at St. Michael's College, 223 Ethan Allen Ave. capitalcityconcerts.org.

EAST MONTPELIER. Sugar-on-Snow at Bragg Farm. Gift shop and lots of maple. 12-5 pm. Bragg Farm, 1005 Rt. 14 North. (802) 223-5757. braggfarm.com. Every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from March through mid-April.

ESSEX JUNCTION. 16th Annual Vermont State Boat & Marine Show. Nearly 100,000 square feet of boats. Boat dealers from Vermont, New Hampshire, and New York. Admission: adults \$5, children under 16 free with adult. Free parking. 10 am - 7 pm. Champlain Valley Expo, 105 Pearl St. (772) 631-7920. www.eastcoastshows.com. Also March 6.

LUDLOW. Two-day Class: Learn to Sew and Make a Designer Pillow with Carolyn Scott. Tuition: \$165, materials fee \$25. 9 am - 4 pm. Fletcher Farm School for the Arts & Crafts, 611 Rt. 103 South. (802) 228-8770. www.fletcherfarm.org. Through March 6.

LUDLOW. Light the Night Rail Jam. Okemo is lighting up the snow on Bull Run, with a new rail garden, constructed specifically for this event. \$5,000 in cash and prizes. Okemo Mountain Resort, 77 Okemo Ridge Rd. (802) 228-1600. okemo.com.

MONTPELIER. Sugar-on-Snow. Treat yourself to "the works" - sugar on snow, a raised donut, dill pickle, and a beverage! Sugar on snow is served inside, on the back deck. Fee. 12-4 pm. Morse Farm Sugar Works, 1168 County Rd. (800) 242-2740. maple@morsefarm.com. www.morsefarm.com. Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, through March and April 2 & 3.

PLAINFIELD, NH. The Attic Shop. New and used items include antiques, books, gift items, collectables, jewelry, furniture, glassware, artwork, and gently used clothes. Free coffee. Free admission. 10 am - 3 pm. Blow-Me-Down Grange, 1107 Rt. 12A. (603) 448-0773. Every Saturday.

PLAINFIELD. Concert: Mayfly with Katie Trautz and Heidi Wilson. Vermont-based duo that performs old-time New England and Appalachian music, as well as original songwriting on fiddle, guitar, mandolin, banjo and vocals. Tickets: \$7-\$12, sold at the door. 7-8:30 pm. Plainfield Opera House, Plainfield Town Hall. (802) 485-9242. www.katietrautz.com. www.heidiannwilson.com.

RIPTON. Concert with Connor Garvey and Sorcha Cribben-Merrill. Admission \$15/\$10/\$3. 7:30 pm. Ripton Community Coffeehouse, Rt. 125. 388-9782. rcc.org.

RUPERT. Splint-Weaving Chair Seat Workshop. Chris Hubbard will teach you how to weave a chair seat using 1/2" wide flat reed in a herringbone pattern. Bring a chair with four rungs framing the seat, a bucket, scissors, and lunch. All other tools provided. Fee: \$75 including materials. Pre-register. 1 am - 2:30 pm. Merck Forest and Farmland Center, 3270 Rt. 315. (802) 394-7836. www.merckforest.org.

RUPERT. Pruning Workshop. Learn how to prune your fruit trees, with an emphasis on apple trees. Rico Balzano of Little Lake Orchard in Wells, VT will teach how to care for apple trees. Gather at the maintenance building for one hour inside, two hours outside. Bring your own tools and gloves. Fee: \$20. Pre-register. 9 am - 12 pm. Merck Forest and Farmland Center, 3270 Rt. 315. (802) 394-7836. www.merckforest.org.

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers' Market. Local produce, crafts, prepared foods. Live music. EBT and debit cards. Saturdays 10 am - 2 pm and Wednesdays 3-6 pm. Vermont Farmers, Food Center at 251 West St. in downtown Rutland. (802) 342-4727. info@vtfarmersmarket.org. www.vtfarmersmarket.org. Wednesdays and Saturdays through May 7.

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

WOODSTOCK. Sixth Annual Woodstock Film Series Screening: *Tangerines*. An elderly Estonian man opens his home and heart to two rival 'children of death' - a Chechen mercenary and a Georgian soldier. Tickets: \$11, children 3-15 \$6. 3 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org.

WOODSTOCK. Working Woodlands Workshop: Winter Animal Habitats. Science Communication Specialist Ed Sharron will lead a discussion and guided snowshoeing tour. Adult and child snowshoes available if needed. All ages welcome. Free, no reservations necessary. 10 am to 12 pm. Forest Center, Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park, 54 Elm St. Park at Billings Farm & Museum parking lot across Rt. 12 at 69 Old River Rd. (802) 457-3368 x 22. christine_frohloff@partner.nps.gov. www.nps.gov/mabi/naturescience/working-woodlands-workshops.htm.

SUNDAY, MARCH 6

BARRE. No Strings Marionettes Performance: "Treasure Hunt." The Vermont masters of puppetry present a swashbuckling tale of adventure on the high seas. Tickets: \$7. 1 pm. Barre Opera House, City Hall, 6 N. Main St. (802) 476-8188. www.barreoperahouse.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Chamber Music Concert: Benjamin Hochman performs music of Bach, Dallapiccola, Frescobaldi, Ligeti, and Schumann. Tickets: preferred \$30, general \$20. 4 pm. Centre Congregational Church, 193 Main St. (802) 257-4523. www.bmcvt.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Circus Spectacular 2016. Presented by New England Center for Circus Arts. Professional performers and special guests from top circuses around the world! Tickets: \$15-\$50. 1 pm. Latchis Hotel and Theatre, 50 Main St. (802) 254-9780. necenterforcircusarts.org.

EAST MONTPELIER. Sugar-on-Snow at Bragg Farm. Gift shop and lots of maple. 12-5 pm. Bragg Farm, 1005 Rt. 14 North. (802) 223-5757. braggfarm.com. Every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from March through mid-April.

ESSEX JUNCTION. 16th Annual Vermont State Boat & Marine Show. Nearly 100,000 square feet of boats. Boat dealers from Vermont, New Hampshire, and New York. Admission: adults \$5, children under 16 free with adult. Free parking. 10 am - 5 pm. Champlain Valley Expo, 105 Pearl St. (772) 631-7920. www.eastcoastshows.com.

Birding Hot Spots in Rutland County

Rutland County Audubon Society has developed a list of places to go birding in our area.

These birding hotspots are places that are publicly accessible. A few involve hiking and others can be canoed.

The spots are selected because they host special birds or habitats. Some are chosen because they are a good place to take kids or a place for a quick break from our everyday lives. We hope you will visit these places and report sightings to www.ebird.org.

If there is a place that is special to you, please let us know!

Kent Pond

Kent Pond, Gifford Woods State Park, and the Appalachian Trail in Killington afford plenty of birding opportunities. Located in the heart of the Green Mountains, this

area offers a variety of birds in a beautiful setting.

Common Merganser, Mallard, Common Loon and Spotted Sandpiper are often present on Kent Pond. Sometimes Osprey are seen and, on more rare occasions, Bald Eagle. Spotted Sandpipers nest here. In the summer of 2009 a pair of loons unsuccessfully attempted to nest on one of the islands in the pond; it is hoped they will succeed in future years.

The pond is a particularly good place to visit after stormy weather in spring or fall. On May 31, 2011, observers there to check on the nesting loons were startled to find an American White Pelican perched on one of the rocks near the loon nest.

There are two options for viewing Kent Pond. One is the fishing access on Rte 100 (on the west side of the

pond). The second is along the impoundment on Thundering Brook Road (the east side of the pond). The area is heavily used by fishermen and kayakers especially on summer weekends.

The Appalachian Trail runs through Gifford Woods State Park west of Kent Pond and passes along the south side of the pond. The trail in either direction offers the opportunity to see a wide variety of warblers including Nashville, Northern Parula, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Blackpoll, Black-and-white, American Redstart, Ovenbird and Canada warblers. Brown Creepers, Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers and Winter Wrens are present in good numbers.

A pleasant hike is to take the Appalachian Trail south of the parking lot and continue east along Kent Pond and across Thundering Brook Road. This route will take you over a ridge to the bottom of Thundering Brook Road. You can then return



the way you came or walk up Thundering Brook Road to the pond and then back along the trail to the fishing access parking lot.

Alternately you can turn east, cross Route 100 (traffic moves quickly so use caution) and take the Appalachian Trail through Gifford Woods State Park. Birding is best mid-May through summer and well into September. The pond is usually frozen in winter through mid-April.

Directions: Take Route 100 north from the intersection with Route 4 in Killington. The fishing access and parking lot are about 1/4 mile on the right. To view the pond from the east side, take Thundering Brook Road north from Route 4 (the first road east of the intersection of Route 100).

For more info visit rutlandcountyaudubon.org.

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Vermont Country Calendar

MIDDLEBURY. Classical Concert. Diana Fanning, piano. Featuring Brahms' monumental Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Handel. 7:30 pm. Mahaney Center for the Arts, 72 Porter Field Rd. (802) 443-3168. www.middlebury.edu.

MONTPELIER. Sugar-on-Snow. Treat yourself to "the works" – sugar on snow, a raised donut, dill pickle, and a beverage! Sugar on snow is served inside, on the back deck. Fee. 12-4 pm. Morse Farm Sugar Works, 1168 County Rd. (800) 242-2740. maple@morsefarm.com. www.morsefarm.com. *Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, through March and April 2 & 3.*

MONTPELIER. Flapjack Fundraiser. Enjoy pancakes, syrup, maple cured bacon, OJ, and coffee while supporting ECO – Educating Children Outdoors! \$8/ adults, \$6/ children, payable at the door. 8-10 am. Morse Farm Sugar Works, 1168 County Rd. (800) 242-2740. maple@morsefarm.com. www.morsefarm.com. *Also April 3.*

MONTPELIER. Whiffenpoofs in Concert. The world's oldest and best known collegiate a capella group, 14 male members from Yale University. Tickets \$25/\$15, purchase from website. 3 pm. Smilie Auditorium, Montpelier High School, 5 High School Dr. capitalcityconcerts.org.

POULTNEY. Frosty Derby. Annual ice fishing contest on Lake St. Catherine. Sponsored by the Poultney Fish & Game Club. Prizes awarded for largest fish in the categories of Pike, Trout, Perch, Bass, adult and child. For information and ice conditions call (802) 287-9742. At Lake St. Catherine, 3034 Rt. 30 South. www.vtstateparks.com/htm/catherine.

RUTLAND. Performance: Celtic Nights—Direct from Ireland. Celtic music and dance. Tickets: \$34.50-\$44.50. 7 pm. Paramount Theater, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. paramountlive.org.

MONDAY, MARCH 7

FAIR HAVEN. Irish Music Performance. Pete's Posse, a trio of talented Vermont performers, will be sharing a blend of Irish and folk tunes to keep your toes tapping. Free. 7 pm. Fair Haven Free Library, 107 Main St. (802) 265-7913 or (802) 265-8011.

TUESDAY, MARCH 8

MONTPELIER. Program: Starry, Starry Night. explore the night sky as we seek out nebulas, galaxies and star clusters, and learn the constellations of spring. Dress warmly, bring the whole family, and be prepared to be dazzled by the late winter night sky. Pre-registration is not required. Fee: \$10, children \$5. North Branch Nature Center, 713 Elm St. (802) 229-6206. northbranchnaturecenter.org.

ST. JOHNSBURY. Concert: Patty Griffin, Sara Watkins, and Anais Mitchell. Tickets: \$54, \$44, \$29, \$15. 7 pm. Fuller Hall, St. Johnsbury Academy, 1000 Main St. (802) 748-2600. www.catamountarts.org.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers' Market. 3-6 pm. Vermont Farmers, Food Center at 251 West Street in downtown Rutland. (802) 342-4727. www.vtfarmersmarket.org. *Wednesdays and Saturdays through May 7.*

THURSDAY, MARCH 10

HUNTINGTON. Program: Journey from Sap to Syrup. Find out how much hard work it takes to become a real Vermont sugarmaker as we tap a tree, collect sap from buckets, and help boil. Ages 3-5 with adult supervision. Fee: \$10 for adult/child, \$4 each additional child. Registration required. Audubon's Sugarhouse Parking Lot, Green Mountain Audubon Center, 255 Sherman Hollow Rd. (802) 434-3068. vt.audubon.org.

RANDOLPH CENTER. Vermont Organic Dairy Producers Conference. Keynote speaker Francis Thicke will discuss how he uses nature's ecology as a model to design and manage his farm. Fee: \$25. 9 am – 4 pm. Judd Hall, Vermont Technical College. www.uvm.edu/extension/organicdairy.

STRAFFORD. 1st Annual NOFA X-Country Ski Day. Cross-country ski on the cow lanes and meadows at Rockbottom Farm (home of Strafford Organic Creamery)! The organic farm hosts a nordic center with 30 km of groomed trails. Hot chocolate and cookies at the warming hut from 12-1 pm. Fee: \$10. Rentals available. 9 am – 4 pm. Strafford Nordic Center, Rockbottom Farm, 53 Rockbottom Rd. (802) 765-4309. info@straffordnordicskiing.com. straffordnordicskiing.com.

STRATTON. Vermont Open Snowboard and Music Festival. Three days of live music and snowboard competitions – rail jam, slopestyle, retro pipe and banked slalom – that hold a prize purse of \$20,000. Stratton Mountain Resort, 5 Village Lodge Rd. www.stratton.com. www.vermontopen.com. *Through March 13.*

FRIDAY, MARCH 11

BURLINGTON. Concert: Yamato. Japan's wildly entertaining group of drummers. Tickets \$15-\$42. 8 pm. MainStage, Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, 153 Main St. (802) 863-5966. www.flynncenter.org.

BURLINGTON. Burlington Irish Festival. Music, lectures, movies, drama and dance. A fun-filled and informative week, celebrating Irish-American culture and community. For a complete schedule of events and more information visit www.burlingtonirishheritage.org. *Through March 18.*

EAST MONTPELIER. Sugar-on-Snow at Bragg Farm. Gift shop and lots of maple. Free admission. 12-5 pm. Bragg Farm, 1005 Rt. 14 North. (802) 223-5757. braggfarm.com. *Every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from March through mid-April.*

FAIRLEE. Annual Winter Doe Camp—A Winter Retreat for Adventurous Women. Cost, all inclusive: \$370; mother/daughter and group discounts and day rates available. Hulbert Outdoor Center. vov@voga.org. www.voga.org/winter_doe_camp.htm. *Through March 13.*

MONTPELIER. Sugar-on-Snow. Treat yourself to "the works" – sugar on snow, a raised donut, dill pickle, and a beverage! Sugar-on-snow is served inside, on the back deck. Fee. 12-4 pm. Morse Farm Sugar Works, 1168 County Rd. (800) 242-2740. maple@morsefarm.com. www.morsefarm.com. *Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, through March and April 2 & 3.*

RUTLAND. Performance: A Spring Fling with Pink Martini. Tickets: \$49.75-79.75. 8 pm. Paramount Theater, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. paramountlive.org.

SO. LONDONDERRY. Vermont Open Snowboard and Music Festival. Snowboarders compete in signature contests, with national TV coverage, including big air, retro halfpipe. 9 am – 5 pm. Stratton Mountain Resort, 5 Village Lodge Rd. (802) 297-4124. www.stratton.com. *Through March 13.*

SWANTON. Talk: "Gift of the Forest—Wabanaki Maple Sugaring." Defining the role Native Americans had in developing maple sugaring techniques in the Northeast. 8 pm. Missisquoi Refuge HQ, 29 Tabor Road. (802) 868-4781. dave_frisque@fws.gov. www.fws.gov/refuge/missisquoi.

SATURDAY, MARCH 12

BARRE. Concert: Goitse quintet perform their own compositions interspersed with traditional tunes from Ireland and abroad. Tickets: \$16-\$27. 8 pm. Barre Opera House, 6 N. Main St. (802) 476-8188. www.barreoperahouse.org.

BRANDON. Concert: "Once Upon a Time." Vermont Virtuosi, perform a program of chamber music. Tickets: \$20; pre-concert dinner also available for \$20. Reservations required for dinner and recommended for show. Venue is BYOB. 7:30 pm. Brandon Music, 62 Country Club Rd. (802) 247-4295. brandon-music.net.

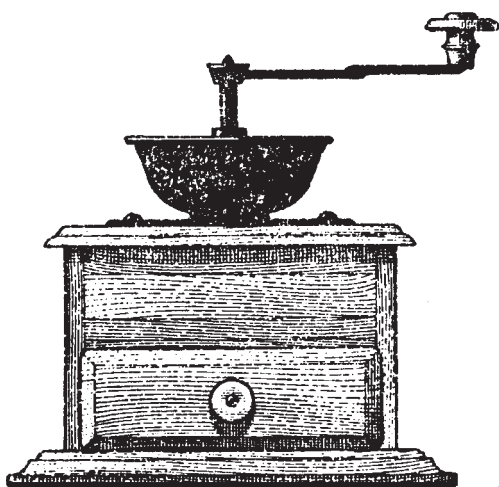
BRATTLEBORO. Jazz Concert: Fred Hersch Trio, including bassist John Hebert and drummer Eric McPherson. Tickets: \$20-\$40, \$15 for students w/valid ID. Vermont Jazz Center, 72 Cotton Mill Hill, Suite 222. (802) 254-9088. gingervjc@gmail.com. vtjazz.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Winter Farmers' Market. Fresh produce and local meats, yummy sweet treats, great lunch offerings, pies, preserves, live music. 10 am – 2 pm. Robert H. Gibson River Garden, 153 Main St. (802) 869-2141. postoiltsolutions.org. *Every Saturday through March 26.*

BURLINGTON. Concert: Jesse Cook. One of the most influential figures in Nuevo flamenco music. Tickets \$25-\$45. 8 pm. MainStage, Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, 153 Main St. (802) 863-5966. www.flynncenter.org.

BURLINGTON. Concert: Irish Harp & Song with Dominique Dodge. Presented by the Burlington Irish Heritage Festival and Young Tradition. Fee: \$8. 10 am 1 – 12 noon. Pickering Room, Fletcher Free Library, 235 College St. www.burlingtonirishheritage.org.

CASTLETON. Hunter Education Instructor Training Course. Upon completion, receive your full State of Vermont Hunter Education Instructor Certification. Register by March 5. 9 am – 4 pm. Kehoe Conservation Camp, 636 Point of Pines Rd. (802) 828-1193. nicole.meier@vermont.gov. www.tinyurl.com/VTNIT2016.




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Isn't it strange
That princes and kings,
And clowns that caper
In sawdust rings,
And common people
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A book of rules;
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A stumbling block
Or a steppingstone.

—R. L. SHARPE



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Vermont Country Calendar

CASTLETON. Freezin for a Reason Polar Plunge. To benefit the Shriners Hospital for Children. Food & drink, music, a 21 and over area, raffles and more! 10 am – 3 pm. Woodard Marina, 145 Creek Rd. (855) 247-5232. cairoshriners.com.

CHESTER. Makers Class: Marvelous Mosaics. Instructor: Laurie Marechoux. Learn how to chip with tile nippers and make a one-of-a-kind mirror. 103 Artisans Marketplace, 7 Pineview Dr. (802) 228-7144. lolo@tds.net. Also March 19.

EAST MONTPELIER. Sugar-on-Snow at Bragg Farm. Gift shop and lots of maple. Free admission. 12-5 pm. Bragg Farm, 1005 Rt. 14 North. (802) 223-5757. braggfarm.com. Every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from March through mid-April.

HANOVER, NH. Revels Traditions. Quebecois Song and Tune with Genticorum: Pascal Gemme, Nicholas Williams and Yann Falquet. Tickets: \$10. 2:30-5:30 pm. Church of Christ at Dartmouth. (603) 448-1642. info@uvmusic.org. www.revelsnorth.org.

MIDDLEBURY. Concert: Maria João Pires and Juline Broca, Piano. One of the finest musicians of her generation, Maria João Pires performs recitals with her most gifted piano students. 8 pm. Mahaney Center for the Arts, 72 Porter Field Rd. (802) 443-3168.

MIDDLEBURY. 8th Annual Vermont Chili Festival. Live music, parties, street performers, tons of great chili to sample, and more. 1 pm. Through the closed-off streets of downtown Middlebury. (802) 377-3557. www.experiencemiddlebury.com.

MONTPELIER. Sugar-on-Snow. Treat yourself to “the works” – sugar on snow, a raised donut, dill pickle, and a beverage! Sugar on snow is served inside, on the back deck. Fee. 12-4 pm. Morse Farm Sugar Works, 1168 County Rd. (800) 242-2740. www.morsefarm.com. Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, through March and April 2 & 3.

NORWICH. Contra Dance. Family contra dance 6:30-7:30 pm, by donation, Nils Fredland calling, music by Revels Band of Fools. Contra dance 8-11 pm, \$9 adults, under 16 free, seniors by donation, Nils Fredlund calling, music by Genticorum. Bring soft-soled shoes. All are welcome, no partner needed. Sponsored by Muskeg Music. Tracy Hall, 300 Main St. uppervalleydmc@gmail.com.

NORWICH. Quebecois Fiddle Workshop with Genticorum fiddler Pascal Gemme. Fee: \$25. 2:30-4 pm. Norwich Congregational Church. (603) 448-1642. info@uvmusic.org. www.revelsnorth.org.

PLAINFIELD, NH. The Attic Shop. New and used items include antiques, books, gift items, collectables, jewelry, furniture, glassware, artwork, and gently used clothes. Free coffee. Free admission. 10 am – 3 pm. Blow-Me-Down Grange, 1107 Rt. 12A. (603) 448-0773. Every Saturday.

RANDOLPH. Concert: The Chiara String Quartet. Two works by Gabriela Lena Frank and a quartet by Bela Bartok. A complimentary reception follows the concert in the Gallery. Tickets: adults \$40, students \$10. 7:30 pm. Chandler Center for the Arts, 71-73 Main St. (802) 728-6464. www.chandler-arts.org. www.chiaraquartet.net.

RUTLAND. Book & Author Event. Governor Jim Douglas talks about his book, *The Vermont Way*. Free. 2 pm. Phoenix Books Rutland, 2 Center St. (802) 855-8078. www.phoenixbooks.biz.

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers’ Market. 10 am – 2 pm. Vermont Farmers, Food Center at 251 West St. in downtown Rutland. (802) 342-4727. info@vtfarmersmarket.org. www.vtfarmersmarket.org. Wednesdays and Saturdays through May 7.

SPRINGFIELD. Workshop: Needle Felt a Wool Mouse. Instructor: Sue Carey. For beginning and intermediate felters. Fee: \$30, plus \$15 for materials. 11 am – 4 pm. Gallery at the VAULT, 68 Main St. (802) 885-7111. gallervault@vermontel.net. www.gallervault.org.

ST. ALBANS. Northwestern Vermont Model Railroad Association “Vermont Rails” Show. Operating HO, N, G and O-scale layouts. Over 100 tables of exhibits and vendors of model railroading supplies and railroad videos and books. Hands-on train activities for children. Admission: adults \$5, children 6-12 \$1, under 6 free, \$5 per family with an active military identification. 10 am – 4 pm. Collins Perley Sports & Fitness Center, 890 Fairfax Rd., exit 19 from I-89. (802) 878-1135. ronpiro@aol.com. www.nwvrrailroad.org.

ST. JOHNSBURY. Old Time Music Jam. Vicki Moore and Joe Godwin share some of their favorite Appalachian, country, gospel and original songs. A “back porch style” jam will follow in which all types of folk instruments are welcomed. Bring your instrument or just come to listen. 7 pm. Catamount Arts, 115 Eastern Ave. (802) 748-2600. www.catamountarts.org.

STRAFFORD. Brocklebank Craft Brew/Ski. Join us for a guided cross-country ski, with post-adventure snacks, delicious craft beer, and a souvenir beer glass. Must be 21+. \$10 charge, plus trail fee. Rentals available. 12-3 pm. Strafford Nordic Center, Rockbottom Farm, 53 Rockbottom Rd. (802) 765-4309. straffordnordicskiing.com. brocklebankvt.com.

WATERVILLE. Waterville Ceili Fundraiser. Join us for a wonderful evening of Irish music, dance and festivities! Traditional Irish drink and food will be available. Doors open at 6:30 pm with music to begin at 7 pm. Waterville Town Hall, 544 Rt. 109. For info call (802) 644-2093.

SUNDAY, MARCH 13

BURLINGTON. Burlington Irish Festival. Music, lectures, movies, drama and dance. A fun-filled and informative week, celebrating Irish-American culture and community. For a complete schedule of events and more information visit www.burlingtonirishheritage.org. Through March 18.

EAST CHARLESTON. Kingdom Coffeehouse: Cabin Fever Follies, Variety Open Mic Showcase. Play an instrument, tell a story, juggle, perform a stand-up routine, showcase a short video, or anything else you are proud to share. \$6 admission. 7-9 pm. Northwoods Stewardship Center, 154 Leadership Dr. (802) 723-6551. www.northwoodscenter.org.

EAST MONTPELIER. Sugar-on-Snow at Bragg Farm. Ice cream parlor with maple soft serve and maple milkshakes. Watch the boing, take a tour, maple trail. Gift shop and lots of maple. Free admission. 12-5 pm. Bragg Farm, 1005 Rt. 14 North. (802) 223-5757. braggfarm.com. Every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from March through mid-April.

MIDDLEBURY. Concert: Timothy Cummings and Guests. Music and dance of Ireland and Brittany, the “Celtic” region of northwestern France. Performers include Timothy Cummings (pipes, whistles), Pete Sutherland (fiddle, song, etc.), and Dominique Dodge (harp, song), along with Jeremiah McLane (accordion, piano), Mary Wesley (dance caller), and student guests. 4 pm. Wilson Hall, McCullough Social Space. (802) 443-3168. www.middlebury.edu.

MONTPELIER. Sugar-on-Snow. Treat yourself to “the works” – sugar on snow, a raised donut, dill pickle, and a beverage! Sugar on snow is served inside, on the back deck. Fee. 12-4 pm. Morse Farm Sugar Works, 1168 County Rd. (800) 242-2740. maple@morsefarm.com. www.morsefarm.com. Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, through March and April 2 & 3.

RUTLAND. Performance: Paul Taylor II. Modern dance with live music. Tickets: \$34.75-29.75. 8 pm. Paramount Theater, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. paramountlive.org.

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

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STORM LARGE

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3:00 PM

PAUL TAYLOR
TAYLOR 2

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Vermont Country Calendar



WEST PAWLET. Annual Pancake Breakfast. Menu includes pancakes: regular, chocolate chip, blueberry and cranberry; waffles; world-famous home fries and scrambled eggs; sausage and bacon; coffee, tea, milk and orange juice. \$9 for 12 years and up, \$5 for 5-12 years and free under 5. Sponsored by the West Pawlet Volunteer Fire Dept. 7:30-11 am at West Pawlet Fire House, Rt. 153 (Main St.). For info call Antonio Landon (802) 345-4312. wp5801@yahoo.com. Also April 10.

WEST TOPSHAM. Maple Sunday Sugarhouse Breakfast Buffet. All-you-can-eat buffet includes pancakes, waffles, scrambled eggs, eggs fritatta, biscuits, toast, home fries, maple French toast bake, sausage, bacon, ham, sausage gravy, assorted fruits, and donuts. Beverages extra. Our own maple syrup and maple cream. Cost: \$13.99 (plus tax). 8 am - 1 pm. Limlaw Family Maple Farm, 246 Rt. 25. (802) 439-6880. www.limlawmaplefarm.com. Also March 20, April 3 & 10, and May 8.

MONDAY, MARCH 14

BURLINGTON. Burlington Irish Festival. Music, lectures, movies, drama and dance. A fun-filled and informative week, celebrating Irish-American culture and community. For a complete schedule of events and more information visit www.burlingtonirishheritage.org. Through March 18.

ESSEX JUNCTION. 40th Army Band in Concert: "Vermont's Own." Traditional patriotic American tunes, as well as contemporary musical favorites. Free. 7 pm at Essex High School, 2 Educational Dr. (802) 338-3480.

TUESDAY, MARCH 15

RANDOLPH. Mud-Season Farmer Meet-Up. Meet fellow farmers, connect with friends, and celebrate the coming growing season. Join us at Black Krim, a farm-to-plate tavern, and enjoy delicious appetizers and cash bar. Suggested donation \$5. 5:30-7 pm. Black Krim Tavern, 21 Merchants Row. nancy@vitalcommunities.org. nofavt.org.

RUPERT. Snowshoe Hike. Sponsored by the Green Mountain Club. Join Trustee Keld Alstrup on a snowshoe hike to Spruce Peak/Gallup Mountain. Everyone welcome on this intermediate level hike. Meet at the Visitor's Center at 9:30 am. Merck Forest and Farmland Center, 3270 Rt. 315. (802) 394-7836. www.merckforest.org.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. 40th Army Band in Concert: "Vermont's Own." Traditional patriotic American tunes, as well as contemporary musical favorites. Free. 7 pm at Hartford High School, 37 Highland Ave. (802) 338-3480. On Facebook and Twitter.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16

MONTPELIER. 40th Army Band in Concert: "Vermont's Own," as part of the "Farmer's Night" concert series. Traditional patriotic American tunes, as well as contemporary musical favorites. Free. 7:30 pm at Vermont State House, 115 State St. (802) 338-3480. On Facebook and Twitter.

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers' Market. 3-6 pm. Vermont Farmers Food Center at 251 West St. in downtown Rutland. (802) 342-4727. www.vtfarmersmarket.org. Wednesdays and Saturdays through May 7.

RUTLAND. Program: A Trip to the Amazon. Lee Allen will share his experiences on a recent trip to the Amazon - birds, nature and more! Free and open to all. 7 pm. Rutland Free Library, Fox Room, 10 Court St. (802) 773-1860. Rutlandcountyaudubon.org.

THURSDAY, MARCH 17

BURLINGTON. Beetles, Bees & Butterflies—A Day-long Symposium on Vermont's Pollinators. Keynote speakers and panels of experts will examine the threats to pollinators. Hands-on round table discussions. Hosted by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources and its Endangered Species Committee. Fee: \$35 (includes lunch and reception). 8:30 am - 5 pm; evening reception to follow. ECHO Aquarium and Science Center, One College St. (802) 828-1000. charlee.drury@vermont.gov. www.echovermont.org.

BURLINGTON. St. Patrick's Day Celebration: Dervish. A high-spirited traditional group from Ireland's County Sligo. Tickets \$15-\$40. 7:30 pm. Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, 153 Main St. (802) 863-5966. www.flynncenter.org.

ESSEX. Grain Growers' Conference. Keynote speaker Bill McKibben will address climate change. Speakers, sessions on soil health, dry bean production, grain research and marketing, and hands-on baking. Farmer and processor Greg Johnsman from Geechee Boy Mills in Edisto Island, SC discusses heirloom corn and the secrets to milling corn into grits, meal and flour. Registration: \$55 (includes lunch). 9:30 am - 5:30 pm. Essex Resort and Spa, 70 Essex Way. (802) 764-1461. www.regonline.com/grainconference.

ORWELL. 40th Army Band in Concert: "Vermont's Own." Traditional patriotic American tunes, as well as contemporary musical favorites. Free. 7 pm at Orwell Town Hall, 436 Main St. (802) 338-3480. On Facebook and Twitter.

TINMOUTH. Contra Dance. Music by NOVA with Will Mentor calling. Admission \$10, 12 and under free. Refreshments. 8-11 pm at Tinmouth Community Center, Rt. 140, 5 miles west of Wallingford. For info or directions call (802) 446-2928. Tinmouthvt.org. Every third Friday.

FRIDAY, MARCH 18

BELLOWS FALLS. St. Patrick's Fiddle Frenzy. Vermont trio Pete's Posse with multi-instrumentalist and troubadour Pete Sutherland. Opening by fiddler Sarah Blair and guitarist Flynn Cohen. \$35/\$17/\$13. 7:30 pm. Immanuel Episcopal Church, 12 Church St. (802) 460-0110.stonechurch.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Chamber Music Concert: Asylum Quartet performs music of Ligeti, Debussy, and Dvorak. Tickets: preferred \$30, general \$20. 7:30 pm. Centre Congregational Church, 193 Main St. (802) 257-4523. www.bmcvt.org.

BURLINGTON. Burlington Irish Festival. Music, lectures, movies, drama and dance. A fun-filled and informative week, celebrating Irish-American culture and community. For a complete schedule of events and more information visit www.burlingtonirishheritage.org. Through March 18.

BURLINGTON. UVM Celtic Cats Showcase & Ceili. The Celtic Cats (UVM Irish Step Dance Club) will perform recent and varied pieces with guest performances by other UVM dance and music groups, followed by the Ceili. The Celtic Cats St. Patrick's Ceili is UVM's premier Irish cultural event. Admission \$5. 7 pm. Dance Studio at Patrick Gym, 97 Spear St. www.burlingtonirishheritage.org.



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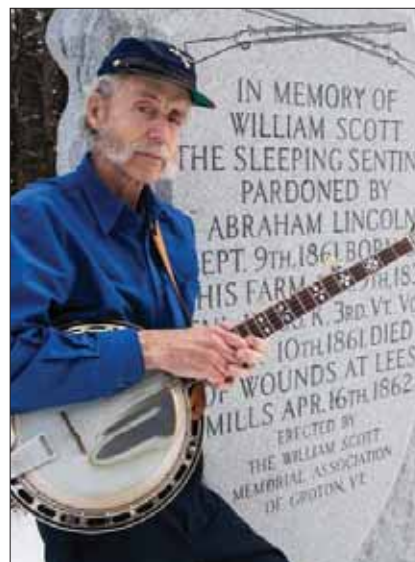
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Vermont Country Calendar

EAST MONTPELIER. Sugar-on-Snow at Bragg Farm. Free admission. 12-5 pm. Bragg Farm, 1005 Rt. 14 North. (802) 223-5757. braggfarm.com. *Every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from March through mid-April.*

MONTPELIER. Morse Farm Sugar Works Sugar-on-Snow. Treat yourself to "the works"—sugar on snow, a raised donut, dill pickle, and a beverage! Sugar on snow is served inside, on the back deck. 12-4 pm. Morse Farm Sugar Works, 1168 County Rd. (800) 242-2740. www.morsefarm.com. *Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, through March and April 2 & 3.*

MONTPELIER. 19th Annual Green Mountain Film Festival. Ticket office at 54 Main St. 9 am - 9 pm. Various venues around town. (802) 262-3423. gmffestival@gmail.com. www.gmffestival.org. *Through March 27.*

RUTLAND. Brewhaha! Your ticket gets you four, 4 oz. samples, a souvenir pint glass and a whole lot of laughs! 21+ only, please. Tickets: \$35. 7 pm. Paramount Theater, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. paramountlive.org.

RUTLAND. Friends of the Library Book Sale. Fri 10 am - 4 pm, Sat 10 am - 2 pm. Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St. (802) 773-1860. rutlandfree.org. *Also March 19, May 20-21.*

TINMOUTH. Contra Dance. Randy Miller on fiddle and Roger Kahle on guitar, awesome caller tba. Admission \$10, 12 and under free. Refreshments available. 8-11 pm at Tinmouth Community Center, Rt. 140. (802) 446-2928. Tinmouthvt.org. *Third Friday of most months.*

WELLS. Benefit Teacup Auction. Over 400 items to bid on: collectibles, knick knacks, household and personal care items. Jewelry, glassware, cereals and other food items, books and videos. Houseplants and other decor. Home-baked breads, pies, maple baked beans, brownies, cupcakes and cookies. Small silent auction of maple products, jams and other interesting things. Hot dogs and chili dogs, coffee, lemonade, ice cream, sundaes and cookies for sale. Sponsored by the Wells United Methodist Church. 5 pm view, 6:15 pm bid. At Modern Woodmen of America Hall, Main St. Rt. 30. (802) 325-3203.

SATURDAY, MARCH 19

BRANDON. Concert: The Bombadils. Rising folk-stars with a unique fusion of traditional, world and progressive folk. Tickets: \$20; pre-concert dinner also available for \$20. Reservations required for dinner and recommended for show. BYOB. 7:30 pm. Brandon Music, 62 Country Club Rd. (802) 247-4295. brandon-music.net.

BRATTLEBORO. Winter Farmers' Market. Fresh produce and local meats, yummy sweet treats, great lunch offerings, delicious pies, preserves and much, much more. Beautiful handmade holiday gifts and live music. 10 am - 2 pm. Robert H. Gibson River Garden, 153 Main St. (802) 869-2141. farmersmarket@posttoilsolutions.org. www.posttoilsolutions.org. *Every Saturday through March 26.*

BURLINGTON. Vermont Symphony Orchestra Concert. Performing Dvorak's Romance for Violin and Orchestra, the world premiere of David Ludwig's Violin Concerto, and Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. Tickets: adults \$61/\$48/\$32/\$16, students \$9. 8 pm. Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, 153 Main St. (802) 863-5596. box@flynncenter.org. www.flynncenter.org. www.vso.org.

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

CHESTER. Makers Class: Marvelous Mosaics. Instructor: Laurie Marechoux. Learn how to chip with tile nippers and make a one-of-a-kind mirror for your home. Fun and easy for all ages. 103 Artisans Marketplace, 7 Pineview Dr. (802) 228-7144. lolo@tds.net.

EAST MONTPELIER. Sugar-on-Snow at Bragg Farm. Gift shop and lots of maple. Free admission. 12-5 pm. Bragg Farm, 1005 Rt. 14 North. (802) 223-5757. braggfarm.com. *Every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from March through mid-April.*

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

HARTFORD. Sugar-on-Snow Supper. Menu: baked ham, mashed potatoes, green beans, coleslaw, homemade rolls. Raised donuts and sugar-on-snow for dessert, served family style. Adults \$12, children under 12 \$4, pre-school free. Servings at 5 & 6 pm. Greater Hartford United Church of Christ, Rt. 14. Reservations recommended. Call (802) 295-2510. *Also March 26.*

HUNTINGTON. Animal Tracks and Signs Workshop. Naturalist Bradley Materick leads for a session to learn about and look for the tracks and other signs of animals living on the Museum's land. Please bring your own lunch and dress for outdoors. Fee: \$40. Pre-register at museum@birdsofvermont.org or (802) 434-2167. 9:30 am - 3 pm. Birds of Vermont Museum, 900 Sherman Hollow Rd. (802) 434-2167. museum@birdsofvermont.org. www.birdsofvermont.org.

MANCHESTER. Apple Tree Pruning Workshop. Join Joe Blair for a demonstration of apple tree pruning on the grounds at Hildene. Blair will focus on two forms of pruning: corrective pruning for ornamentals and pruning to increase productivity for apple-bearing trees. The arborist will demonstrate these techniques on the Lincolns' historic apple trees. Free and open to the public. 12-2 pm. Check in at the Welcome Center. Hildene, off Rt. 7A, just south of the village. (802) 362-1788. www.hildene.org.

MONTPELIER. Morse Farm Sugar Works Sugar-on-Snow. Treat yourself to "the works"—sugar on snow, a raised donut, dill pickle, and a beverage! Sugar on snow is served inside, on the back deck. Fee: 12-4 pm. Morse Farm Sugar Works, 1168 County Rd. (800) 242-2740. maple@morsefarm.com. www.morsefarm.com. *Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, through March and April 2 & 3.*

PLAINFIELD, NH. March Madness Sale. Furniture, antiques, books for all ages, jewelry, records, collectibles, glassware, art. 10 am - 3 pm. The Attic Shop at Blow-Me-Down Grange #234, Rt. 12A. (603) 313-8047. *Through March 20.*

RANDOLPH. 'Cabin-Fever Reliever' Theatre Workshops. Taught by Chelsea Funnery theater expert Kailie Larkin. \$8-\$20 per workshop, sliding scale. 'Clowns Abound,' an introduction to clowning: 9 am for youngsters 6-8 years old; 10 am-12 noon for ages 9-12. 1-3 pm 'Theatre Improvisation: Building Characters and Scenes,' for older children and teens 12 years and up. Chandler Center for the Arts, 71-73 Main St. (802) 431-0204. emily@chandler-arts.org. www.chandler-arts.org. *Also March 20.*

RUTLAND. Friends of the Library Book Sale. 10,000 books. 10 am - 2 pm. Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St. (802) 773-1860. www.rutlandfree.org. *Also May 20-21.*

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

Ten Ways to Get from March to May

Dr. Leonard Perry

Horticulture Professor, University of Vermont

If you're like most in the north country you're ready for spring to be here when the maple sap starts flowing in March and the days become longer than the nights once again. This is really true for most gardeners. While you can't spend too much time in the garden yet, here are ten activities you can do, and projects to get you through until May.

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1. Garden Catalogs. If you haven't been browsing (and drooling over) seed and plant catalogs, or checking out these firms online, don't wait. Lots of new varieties, particularly perennials, sell out quickly. If you're starting flowers from seeds, you want to order them as some are started this month and many next month.

2. Flower Shows. Although the Vermont flower show is every other year (the next being in 2017), there are other home and garden shows, garden seminars, and symposia. Start your search at pss.uvm.edu/ppp/events.html.

3. Easter Flowers. Easter is early this year, March 27, so it's a great time to visit local greenhouse growers to see all the Easter flowers and even bring some home. Easter lilies are great (unless you have cats; they're toxic to them), but there are many other flowering plants available.

4. Houseplants. If you have houseplants, fertilize them if you haven't done so in a few weeks, and they are growing. Check them closely for pests. If dusty, give them a rinse in the shower or wipe leaves with a damp cloth. If they dry out quickly, and roots are totally filling the pot, perhaps you need to repot them into a good houseplant (not garden) soil.

5. Seed Starting Supplies. Many varieties of flowers and vegetables can't be purchased locally, so you'll need to start them yourself from seeds. This really is easy. Inventory your seed starting supplies and make a list of what you'll need. Visit a garden supply store to stock up. Get pots and flats, a special seed starting mix, and a watering can with special nozzle for seeds. A heating mat and lights for starting seeds is helpful. The latter can be special growing units, or inexpensive shop lights. Connect lights to a timer and light seedlings for about 16 hours a day. When seedlings

emerge, give them a dilute feeding (half to one-quarter the recommended soluble fertilizer label rate). Water often, but don't overwater.

6. Starting Seeds. March is the month to start some seeds, but not all. Start too many too soon, and you'll run out of space and plants will get too leggy. Since it is about 8-10 weeks before you'll be planting seedlings outside, some of those to start now indoors now include ageratum, dianthus, impatiens, American marigold, petunia, and snapdragon. Most vegetables you sow indoors next month, but parsley can be started now. If you want to protect your seedlings and plant out earlier in the spring, you can start tomatoes the end of this month.

7. Tend Your Beds. When any snow has gone, you can begin to clean up your beds. Remove straw, winter mulch, and leaves from strawberries, garlic beds, and from around roses or tender perennials. Cut back perennials if you didn't do so already last fall. If plants were diseased put the remains in the trash, otherwise add cut stems to a compost pile.

8. Pruning Trees. When days are slightly warm or sunny, you can prune any broken branches from shrubs and trees, or prune fruit trees to shape them. Pruning when it is too cold may damage the plant tissues and set their growth back this spring. If you have grape vines, prune them radically now, too. Depending on the variety and age, check online and in books to make sure you're pruning grapes correctly. One good reference on pruning most any fruits is the *Fruit Gardener's Bible*, by Lewis Hill and myself.

9. Cleaning Garden Tools. If you didn't clean your garden tools the end of last season, do so now. Check to make sure none need replacing, and to see if pruners or hoes need sharpening. You can do this yourself with sharpening stones, those with diamond bits being the best. If you have mowers or power tools, now is a good time to get them tuned up.

10. Forcing Flowering Branches. If you have some spring-flowering trees and shrubs, such as forsythia, crabapples, or pussy willows, cut some branches to force into bloom indoors. Put branches into water as soon as possible. Best is to submerge the stems overnight in water in a bathtub, then place stem ends in a bucket. Keep stems cool (60 to 65 degrees F), and replace the bucket water every three days or so, and recut stem ends each time. It helps with water uptake to make a slit or two in stem ends. Mist with water several times daily, the first few days, or mist branches, then cover stems with a plastic bag (out of direct sun). When buds show color, you can bring them into more warmth and use them in arrangements. They'll remind you that spring is not too far off!

Have you visited Leonard Perry's Perennial Pages lately? Go to: perrysperennials.info.

Vermont Country Calendar

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers' Market. 10 am – 2 pm. Vermont Farmers, Food Center at 251 West Street in downtown Rutland. (802) 342-4727. www.vtfarmersmarket.org. *Wednesdays and Saturdays through May 7.*

TUNBRIDGE. Folk Concert: Jim Rooney and the Starline Rhythm Boys. Tickets \$20. 7:30 pm. Tunbridge Town Hall, Rt. 110. folkbloke@hotmail.com. www.mtnfolk.org.

WOODSTOCK. Working Woodlands Workshop: Using Global Positioning System (GPS) in the Forest 101. Free, reservations not necessary. 10 am to 12 noon. Forest Center, Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park, 54 Elm St. (802) 457-3368 x 22. christine_frohloff@partner.nps.gov. www.nps.gov/mabi/naturescience/working-woodlands-workshops.htm.

SUNDAY, MARCH 20

BENNINGTON. St. Patrick's Day Parade. Breakfast with celebrity servers, Irish music, breakfast buffet, and more at 9:30 am at J.C.'s Tavern, corner of River St. and Depot St. Parade at 1 pm on Main St. St. Patrick's Celebration at J.C.'s at 2 pm. (802) 442-5758. www.betterbennington.com.

BONDVILLE. St. Patrick's Day Celebration. Corned Beef and Cabbage. Live Traditional music. 2 pm. Red Fox, 103 Winhall Hollow. (802) 297-2488.

EAST MONTPELIER. Sugar-on-Snow at Bragg Farm. Gift shop and lots of maple. 12-5 pm. Bragg Farm, 1005 Rt. 14 North. (802) 223-5757. braggfarm.com. *Every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday March through mid-April.*

MIDDLEBURY. Classical Concert: In Pace, Incomplete—Mozart Requiem (Introitus – Lacrymosa). The Middlebury College Choir and instrumentalists present the first parts of Mozart's Requiem in D, and other choral repertoire. Free. 3 pm. Mead Memorial Chapel, Middlebury College. (802) 443-3168. www.middlebury.edu.

MIDDLETOWN SPRINGS. 28th Annual Maple Festival. Demonstration of early maple sugar making. Presentation on maple sugaring history and current practice. Maple desserts, maple products and new 2016 syrup for sale. Videos about Vermont maple sugaring, silent auction, raffles. Acoustic music and kids' activities. Free. 1–4 pm. On the Green and indoors at Middletown Springs Historical Society, Rts. 140 & 133. (802) 235-2561. middletownspringshistoricalsociety.org.

MILTON. Maple Pancake Breakfast at Georgia Mountain Maples. Pancakes, eggs, ham, baked beans, home fries, sausage, gravy and biscuits, maple BBQ pulled pork, rag muffins, coffee, tea, hot chocolate, milk and juice. There will be maple syrup samples & sugarhouse tours. Breakfast fee: \$12.95 adult, kids \$6.95 (6 and under). 8 am – 1 pm. Georgia Mountain Maples, 345 North Rd. (802) 849-6688. www.georgiamountainmaples.com.

MONTPELIER. Morse Farm Sugar Works Sugar-on-Snow. Treat yourself to "the works" – sugar on snow, a raised donut, dill pickle, and a beverage! Sugar on snow is served inside, on the back deck. 12–4 pm. Morse Farm Sugar Works, 1168 County Rd. (800) 242-2740. www.morsefarm.com. *Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, through March and April 2 & 3.*

RUTLAND. The Vermont Symphony Orchestra Concert. Performing Dvorak's Romance for Violin and Orchestra, the world premiere of David Ludwig's Violin Concerto, and Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. Tickets: adults \$32–\$20; students \$9. 3 pm. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. www.paramountvt.org. www.vso.org.

SHELburne. Maple Sugaring Celebration at Shelburne Farms. 4-H breakfast, \$8/adult, \$4/child, 9 am – 1 pm. Exploring the sugarbush is free. Live bird demonstration. 9 am – 2 pm. Shelburne Farms, 1611 Harbor Rd. (802) 985-8686. www.shelburnefarms.org.

WEST TOPSHAM. Maple Sunday Sugarhouse Breakfast Buffet. All-you-can-eat buffet includes pancakes, waffles, scrambled eggs, eggs fritatta, biscuits, toast, home fries, maple French toast bake, sausage, bacon, ham, sausage gravy, assorted fruits, and donuts. Beverages extra. Our own maple syrup and maple cream. Cost: \$13.99 (plus tax). 8 am – 1 pm. Limlaw Family Maple Farm, 246 Rt. 25. (802) 439-6880. www.limlawmaplefarm.com. *Also April 3 & 10, and May 8.*

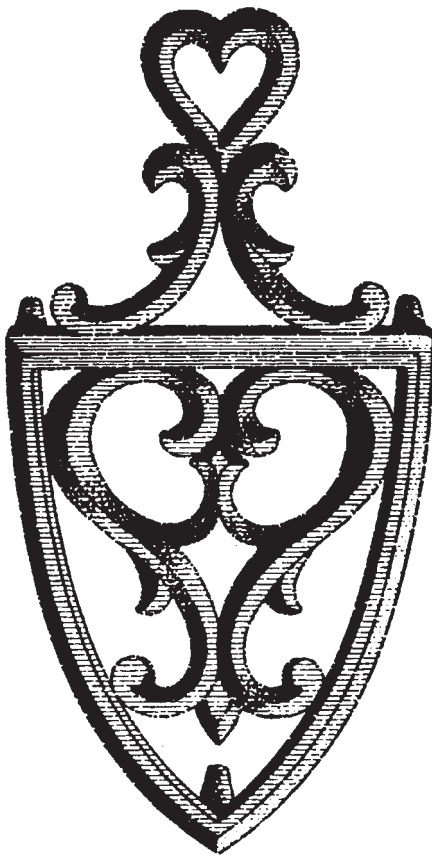
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23

MIDDLEBURY. Concert: Jupiter String Quartet. With Roger Tapping, viola, and Natasha Brofsky, cello. Tickets \$25. 7:30 pm. Mahaney Center for the Arts, 72 Porter Field Rd. (802) 443-3168. www.middlebury.edu.

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers' Market. 3-6 pm. Vermont Farmers, Food Center at 251 West Street in downtown Rutland. (802) 342-4727. www.vtfarmersmarket.org. *Wednesdays and Saturdays through May 7.*

THURSDAY, MARCH 24

WEST RUTLAND. West Rutland Monthly Marsh Monitoring Walk. 3.7 mile loop around the marsh (or go halfway) 8 am. Meet at West Rutland Price Chopper parking lot. For info contact birding@rutlandcountyaudubon.org. Visit rutlandcountyaudubon.org.



FRIDAY, MARCH 25

EAST MONTPELIER. Sugar-on-Snow at Bragg Farm. Gift shop and lots of maple. Free admission. 12-5 pm. Bragg Farm, 1005 Rt. 14 North. (802) 223-5757. braggfarm.com. *Every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from March through mid-April.*

MONTPELIER. Morse Farm Sugar Works Sugar-on-Snow. Treat yourself to "the works" – sugar on snow, a raised donut, dill pickle, and a beverage! Sugar on snow is served inside, on the back deck. Fee. 12–4 pm. Morse Farm Sugar Works, 1168 County Rd. (800) 242-2740. www.morsefarm.com. *Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, through March and April 2 & 3.*

SATURDAY, MARCH 26

BRANDON. Music Swap. Sell, swap and barter anything from vinyl records, CDs, 78s and tapes to new and vintage audio equipment, phonographs, radios, musical instruments, accessories and more. \$20 per space. 10 am – 2 pm. Compass Music and Arts Center, 333 Jones Dr. (802) 247-4295. www.cmacvt.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Jazz Concert: Saxophonist Michael Zsoldos and String Quartet, with pianist Miro Sprague. Tickets: \$20–40 sliding scale, students \$15. 8 pm. Vermont Jazz Center, 72 Cotton Mill Hill. (802) 254-9088. gingervjc@gmail.com. www.vtjazz.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Winter Farmers' Market. Fresh produce and local meats, yummy sweet treats, great lunch offerings, delicious pies, preserves and live music. 10 am – 2 pm. Robert H. Gibson River Garden, 153 Main St. (802) 869-2141. farmersmarket@posttoilsolutions.org. posttoilsolutions.org. *Every Saturday through March 26.*

EAST MONTPELIER. Sugar-on-Snow at Bragg Farm. Ice cream parlor with maple soft serve and maple milkshakes. Maple tasting, 20-minute video, walking trail. Watch sap boiling in our big wood-fired evaporator and taste the new crop of maple syrup. Gift shop and lots of maple. Free admission. 12-5 pm. Bragg Farm, 1005 Rt. 14 North. (802) 223-5757. www.braggfarm.com. *Every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from March through mid-April.*

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

HUNTINGTON. Bird Monitoring Walk. Experienced birders, walks in the woods, and bird-friendly coffee. Please bring your own binoculars and dress for the weather. Free; please pre-register. 7:30 am. The Birds of Vermont Museum, 900 Sherman Hollow Rd. (802) 434-2167. museum@birdsofvermont.org. www.birdsofvermont.org. *The last Saturday of every month.*

HARTFORD. Sugar-On-Snow Supper. Menu: baked ham, mashed potatoes, green beans, coleslaw, and homemade rolls. Raised donuts and sugar-on-snow for dessert, served family style. Adults \$12, children under 12 \$4, pre-school free. Servings at 5 & 6 pm. Greater Hartford United Church of Christ, Rt. 14. Reservations recommended. Call (802) 295-2510.

JAY. Guided Snowshoe Tours. Fee: \$29 adults, \$19 juniors, includes headlamp, snowshoes and two-hour guided tour. 5-7 pm. Nordic Center, Jay Peak Resort. (802) 988-4653. www.jaypeakresort.com. *Continues every Wednesday & Saturday through March 26.*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Vermont Country Calendar

MONTPELIER. Morse Farm Sugar Works Sugar-on-Snow. Treat yourself to “the works” – sugar on snow, a raised donut, dill pickle, and a beverage! Sugar on snow is served inside, on the back deck. Fee. 12–4 pm. Morse Farm Sugar Works, 1168 County Rd. (800) 242-2740. maple@morsefarm.com. morsefarm.com. *Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, through March and April 2 & 3.*

PERU. Fifth Annual Bromley Rando Race! Rando—short for randonné—ski racing harkens back to skiing’s early years, when skiers challenged the mountain both up and down, without the help of chairlifts. Racers start at the base of the mountain, ascend it, then descend it. Bromley Mountain Ski Resort, 3984 Rt. 11. (802) 824-5522. www.bromley.com.

RANDOLPH. Ninth Annual Mini Mud. The performance celebrates young talent from across the region. Tickets: adults \$15, students \$5. 7:30 pm. Chandler Center for the Arts, 71-73 Main St. (802) 728-6464. chandler-arts.org.

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers’ Market. 10 am – 2 pm. Vermont Farmers, Food Center at 251 West St. in downtown Rutland. (802) 342-4727. vtfarmersmarket.org. *Wednesdays and Saturdays through May 7.*

WOODSTOCK. Sixth Annual Woodstock Film Series Screening: *Keep On Keepin’ On*. A documentary that follows jazz legend Clark Terry over four years. Tickets: \$11, children 3–15 \$6. 5 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org.

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm Baby Animal Day. Family-centered programs with the farm’s calves, lambs. Horse-drawn wagon rides and heirloom seed and children’s craft activities. Admission: adults \$14, 62 & up \$13, ages 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, under 3 free. 10 am – 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12N. & Old River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org.

SUNDAY, MARCH 27

BOLTON. Easter Egg Hunt. The Easter Bunny makes a special trip up to Bolton Valley to deliver a fresh batch of eggs. For kids ages 12 and under. 9–9:30 am. Bolton Valley Resort, 4302 Bolton Valley Access Rd. (802) 434-6813. www.boltonvalley.com.

EAST MONTPELIER. Sugar-on-Snow at Bragg Farm. Watch sap boiling in our big wood-fired evaporator and taste the new crop of maple syrup. Gift shop and lots of maple. Free admission. 12-5 pm. Bragg Farm, 1005 Rt. 14 North. (802) 223-5757. braggfarm.com. *Every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from March through mid-April.*

JAY. Annual Easter Sunrise Service at the Summit. Ski or ride down to the base, or on Vermont’s only Aerial Tram starting at 4:45 am. Service runs from 6–7 am. Jay Peak Resort. (802) 988-4120. www.jaypeakresort.com.

MONTPELIER. Morse Farm Sugar Works Sugar-on-Snow. Treat yourself to “the works”—sugar on snow, a raised donut, dill pickle, and a beverage! Sugar on snow is served inside, on the back deck. Fee. 12–4 pm. Morse Farm Sugar Works, 1168 County Rd. (800) 242-2740. morsefarm.com. *Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays in March and April 2 & 3.*

PERU. Easter Egg Hunt. A very special golden egg is hidden somewhere on the mountain. In that golden egg will be a certificate for a Teen or Junior 2015/16 Winter Season Pass! Hunt for the golden egg begins at 8:30 am! Ages 17 and under only. Beginning at 11 am, there will be a traditional egg hunt for ages 4, 5-10, and 11 and up. Bromley Mountain Ski Resort, 3984 Rt. 11. (802) 824-5522. www.bromley.com.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30

DORSET. Free Winter Community Supper. Menu includes curried cauliflower soup, roasted pork loin with gravy, buttered noodles, red cabbage and apple sauce, tiny spring green peas, tossed green salad, rolls and butter, and assorted desserts. We offer gluten-free pasta and desserts. All are welcome, bring your family and friends. 5:30-7 pm. United Church of Dorset and East Rupert, 143 Church St. (802) 867-2260. www.dorsetchurch.org.

MONTPELIER. Small Farm Action Day—“Water Quality: Let’s Get it Right.” Small-scale farmers speak with legislators at the Vermont Statehouse about the impacts new water quality regulations, Act 64, will have on their livelihoods. The events are free and open to all. Farmers interested in receiving a stipend for speaking at any of Rural Vermont’s Small Farm Action Days can visit www.ruralvermont.org, or contact Rural Vermont at (802) 223-7222 or andrew@ruralvermont.org. *Also April 26.*

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers’ Market. Local produce, crafts, prepared foods. Live music. EBT and debit cards. Saturdays 10 am – 2 pm and Wednesdays 3-6 pm. Vermont Farmers, Food Center at 251 West St. in downtown Rutland. (802) 342-4727. info@vtfarmersmarket.org. www.vtfarmersmarket.org. *Wednesdays and Saturdays through May 7.*

ONGOING ACTIVITIES

BARTONSVILLE. Friday Night Bingo. 6:30 pm. Bartonville Grange (located across from Rockingham State Police Barracks on Rt. 103), 116 Upper Bartonville Rd. (802) 875-4438. *Every Friday.*

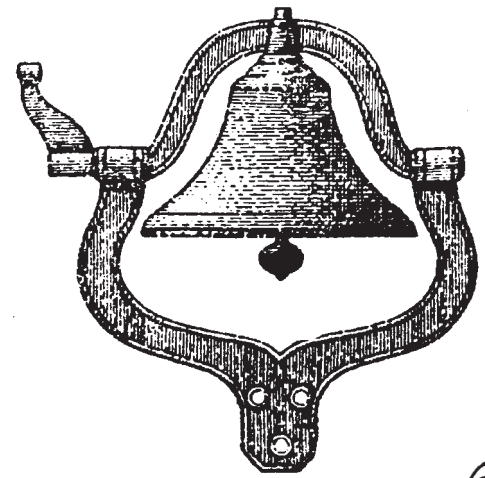
BELLOWS FALLS. Celtic Evening Prayer. All are welcome. Song and chant, verbal and silent prayer, readings from the Old or New Testament or stories or lives of Celtic saints, a brief homily or meditation, and some evenings we will have communion. A social time follows the service. 7 pm at Currier Hall, Immanuel Retreat Center, 12 Church St. (802) 460-0110. www.stonechurcharts.org. *Nearly every Thursday!*

BETHEL. Bethel University offers free mini-courses to anyone and everyone. Classes meet in the Town Hall, the school, the library, and in homes and businesses all over town. Anyone can teach a course on any topic, and anyone interested can take those courses for free. Registration begins in early February. (802) 392-8037. rebecca@communityworkshopllc.com. betheluniversityvt.org. *March 1–31.*

BOLTON. Late Night at Bolton Valley. Lifts running until 10 pm. Lift tickets just \$19 from 7–10 p.m. Bolton Valley Resort, 4302 Bolton Valley Access Rd. (802) 434-6813. www.boltonvalley.com. *Fridays through April 1.*

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

BRIDGEWATER. Bingo at the Bridgewater Grange. Doors open 5:30 pm, games 6:30 pm. Refreshments available—hot dogs, donuts, coffee, soda. Bridgewater Grange, Rt. 100A. (802) 672-6223. *Continuing on Saturdays.*



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Sweet Maple Springtime Treats

Maple Bread Pudding

7 slices bread	¼ teaspoon salt
3 cups scalded milk	1 teaspoon cinnamon
2 beaten eggs	½ cup raisins
1 cup Vermont maple syrup	

Break bread into buttered casserole. Mix remaining ingredients and pour over bread. Bake one hour in a moderate 350°F oven. Casserole may be placed in a pan of water.

Maple Cookie Squares

1 cup sugar	1½ cups flour
1 cup Vermont maple syrup	1½ teaspoons baking powder
1 cup oil	2 cups quick oats
2 eggs	1 teaspoon salt nuts if desired
2 teaspoons vanilla	

Combine sugar, syrup and oil, add eggs and vanilla. Sift flour, baking powder and salt. Add to batter. Add oatmeal and nuts. Bake at 350°F 30–35 minutes in greased 9” x 13” pan.

Maple Chiffon Pie

1 baked 9” pie shell	1 teaspoon butter
1 teaspoon gelatin	1 cup chopped nuts
½ cup Vermont maple syrup	½ cup sugar
½ cup milk	4 egg whites
4 egg yolks	

Dissolve gelatin in a small amount of cold water. Mix maple syrup, milk, egg yolks and butter. Cook in double boiler until thick, stirring constantly. Add gelatin, remove from heat. Beat to smooth consistency. Add chopped nuts and cool. Beat egg whites until stiff, add sugar slowly. fold into maple mixture. Do not beat. Turn into pie shell. Refrigerate. Top with whipped cream.

Quick Maple Spice Cake

½ cup shortening	2 teaspoons baking powder
¾ cup sugar	½ teaspoon salt
¼ cup Vermont maple syrup	½ teaspoon cinnamon
2 eggs	¼ teaspoon cloves
½ cup milk	1 teaspoon vanilla
1¾ cups flour	

Cream shortening, add sugar, syrup, beaten eggs and blend well. Add milk, then dry ingredients, mixed and sifted, and vanilla. Beat well and bake in greased 10” square cake pan in 350°F oven about 40 minutes. Frost with favorite icing.

We thank The Vermont Maple Festival for sharing these recipes from the *Vermont Maple Cookbook*. To order a copy send \$13 (plus \$5 shipping & handling) to Vermont Maple Festival, Inc., P.O. Box 255, St. Albans, VT 05478.

Billings Farm & Museum

Gateway to Vermont’s Rural Heritage

Baby Animal Day

Saturday, March 26, 2016

10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.



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and more!

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- 1890 Farm House

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Vermont Country Calendar



Home-Made Maple Candies

— circa 1902 —

Maple Fondant

Put one cup and a half of maple syrup, one cup of granulated sugar and half a cup of water over the fire. Stir until boiling begins. Wash down the sides of the saucepan with a cloth wet in cold water, cover the saucepan and let cook three or four minutes. Remove and cook without stirring, until a little of the syrup, tried in cold water, makes a soft ball. Turn the syrup onto a platter dampened with cold water, and let stand until cold, then proceed. Turn the mass onto an oiled marble or platter, and let it stand, until absolutely cold. (If a crust forms upon the outside, it indicates that it has boiled too long, and the crust must be entirely removed; or the whole mass may be returned to the saucepan, with two or more tablespoons of water, and boiled again.) Now work it with a wooden spoon or paddle, till the mass becomes a soft, smooth, creamy paste. Mould as you would bread for a few moments, then pack the fondant solid in a glass or earthen jar, cover closely with oiled paper, and let stand at least twenty-four hours before using. Fondant may be used for "dipping" or coating "centres" of nut or candied fruit, or the fondant itself may be moulded into shapes for coating.

Maple Fondant Bonbons

Use maple fondant centres; let them stand overnight, then dip in maple fondant, melted with one or two tablespoons of boiling water, while it is set over hot water. Centres containing chopped nuts and coated with maple fondant are particularly good.

Maple Sugar Fudge

Heat two cups (one pound) of maple sugar, grated or broken in small pieces, and two-thirds a cup of milk to the boiling-point. Add one square or ounce of chocolate, and stir constantly until the chocolate is melted. Boil eight minutes, stirring occasionally. Add one-fourth cup of butter, and boil about seven minutes longer, or until a soft ball can be formed, when the syrup is tested in cold water. Remove from the fire. Beat till creamy. The chocolate may be omitted. From half to a whole cup of nuts, broken in pieces, may be added. In all candies where maple or brown sugar is used with milk, the milk is liable to curdle. If this seems at all objectionable, use water or cream instead of milk.

Maple-and-Nut Creams

Break a pound of maple sugar into small pieces. Add half a cup of boiling water and boil, without stirring, to the soft-ball stage. Remove from the fire and stir until creamy. Drop from a teaspoon in small rounds upon a buttered plate. Finish by pressing the unbroken half of an English walnut meat upon the top of each.

From Hood's Book of Home-Made Candies, No. 2, 1902, C.I. Hood Co., Lowell, MA.

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Maple Open House Weekend

— April 1, 2, & 3 —

Sugar-on-Snow: Fri, Sat & Sun, Noon-4 pm
Maple Bake Off! See website for entry and details!
Solar Demonstration and Information

Pancake Breakfast: Saturday, 8-11 am
(Hosted by and to benefit Girl Scouts)

Hot Dogs Boiled in Sap: Sat & Sun, Noon-3 pm
(Hosted by and to benefit Boy Scouts)

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

BURLINGTON. Saturday Story Time. Enjoy timeless tales and new adventures with your little ones. Free. 11 am. Phoenix Books, 191 Bank St. (802) 448-3350. www.phoenixbooks.biz. On Saturdays.

CHESTER. Bingo at the Gassetts Grange Hall. Raffle and 50/50 drawings. Refreshments on sale in the kitchen. 6:30 pm. Junction of Rt. 10 & 103N. (802) 875-2637. Thursday nights.

CHESTER. Monthly Square Dance and Rounds. Refreshments on sale in the kitchen. 50/50 tickets on sale; drawing held for free admittance for the next month's dance. \$5 donation at the door. 7-11 pm. Breakfast 8-9:30 am for \$7. Gassetts Grange Hall, junction of Rt. 10 & 103N. (802) 875-2637. Monthly on first Saturdays.

LUDLOW. Fletcher Farms School for the Arts and Crafts. Vermont's oldest residential arts and crafts school. Register for our arts and crafts classes. Fletcher Farm School for the Arts & Crafts, 611 Rt. 103 South. (802) 228-8770. info@fletcherfarm.org. www.fletcherfarm.org.

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

NORWICH. Evening for Adults. The Montshire Museum is open after hours for adults of all ages. Pull up a stool at the science discovery lab or simply explore the museum's visiting and permanent exhibits on your own. Free with museum admission. 6-9 pm. Montshire Museum of Science, One Montshire Rd. (802) 649-2200. www.montshire.org. March 11, April 8, and May 13.

PLAINFIELD, NH. The Attic Shop. New and used items include antiques, books, gift items, collectables, jewelry, furniture, glassware, artwork, and gently used clothes. Free coffee. Free admission. 10 am - 3 pm. Blow-Me-Down Grange, 1107 Rt. 12A. (603) 448-0773. Every Saturday.

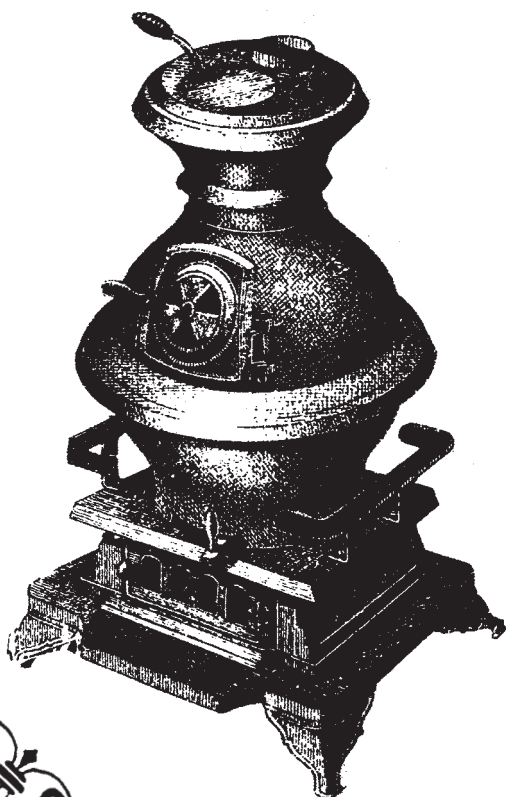
PUTNEY. Green Mountain Orchards Farm Store. Apples and cider year round. Pick-your-own in season. Horse-drawn wagon rides by reservation. Farm store with our own bakery. 130 West Hill Rd. (exit 4, I-91), look for signs in Putney Village. (802) 387-5851. greenmtorchards.com.

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

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

RUTLAND. Vermont Backroad Tours. Fee. Book in advance. (802) 446-3131. kelly@vtbackroadtours.com. www.vtbackroadtours.com.

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



ST. ALBANS. Book Cellar—Library Used Book Sale. Sponsored by Friends of the St. Albans Library. Tuesdays from 10 am - 8 pm. St. Albans Free Library, 11 Maiden Lane. (802) 524-1507. stalbansfreelibrary.org.

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

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

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

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

MUSEUMS, EXHIBITS & GALLERIES

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

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

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

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

BENNINGTON. Bennington Museum. Founding documents, fine art, Bennington Pottery, the 1924 Wasp Touring Car, Vermont furniture, and the Bennington Flag—one of America's oldest flags. Lectures, workshops, concerts, films, and the George Aiken Wildflower Trail. Admission: adults \$10, seniors and students over 18 \$9, children under 18 free. Free admission to the Gift Shop. Open 10 am - 5 pm every day except Wednesdays. Bennington Museum, 75 Main St. (802) 447-1571. www.benningtonmuseum.org.

BRANDON. Compass Music and Arts Center. Juried Exhibit: "Winter as Prism or Prison"—winter can be a long, cold endeavor that some find to be a magical time full of fun and striking as a beautiful prism of light or a prison of epic proportions. January 15 through March 26. Arts businesses and studios, workshops & classes, exhibits, concerts, and community events. A gift shop features art and music related books, collectibles, and the music of the classical recording company, Divine Art Records. Onsite café. Open daily 10 am - 5 pm. Compass Music and Arts Center, 333 Jones Drive, Park Village, 1.5 miles north of downtown. (802) 247-4295. www.cmacvt.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Brattleboro Museum & Art Center. Open daily 11-5, closed Tues. Admission \$8 adults, \$6 seniors, \$4 students, free for youth 18 and under. 10 Vernon St. (802) 257-0124. brattleboromuseum.org.

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

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

Vermont Country Calendar

BURLINGTON. Fleming Museum of Art. More than 20,000 objects that span the history of civilization, from early Mesopotamia through contemporary America. Admission: adults \$5, family \$10, students and seniors \$3, children 6 and under free. Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 10 am – 4 pm, Wednesday 10 am – 7 pm, Saturday– Sunday noon – 4 pm. Fleming Museum of Art, 61 Colchester Ave. (802) 656-0750. fleming@uvm.edu. www.flemingmuseum.org.

BURLINGTON. First Friday Art Walk. Visit over 30 galleries, studios, and interesting venues all around town. Free. 5-8 pm. Map available. (802) 264-4839. www.artmapburlington.com. *Monthly on the first Friday.*

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

HUNTINGTON. Birds of Vermont Museum. Features over 500 carved wooden birds, representing 259 species. Museum, special events and bird walks, exhibits, children's programs, gift shop, video, restrooms and trails with maps available. Admission: adult \$7, senior \$6, child 3-17 \$3.50. Open by appointment. The Birds of Vermont Museum, 900 Sherman Hollow Rd. (802) 434-2167. birdsofvermont.org. *By appointment November 1 through May 1.*

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

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

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

MARLBORO. Southern Vermont Natural History Museum. Perched on an overlook—on a clear day the horizon is 100 miles away! See mounted specimens of over 600 native New England birds and mammals, a Raptor Center with live hawks and owls, amphibian and reptile exhibit and fall wildflower exhibit. Hogback Mountain Gift Shop next door. Admission: adults \$5, seniors \$3, children 5-12 \$2, kids 4 and under are free. Open daily 10 am – 4 pm, 10 am – 5 pm weekends. Rt. 9, Hogback Mountain. (802) 464-0048. www.vermontmuseum.org.

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

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

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

MIDDLEBURY. The National Museum of the Morgan Horse. Exhibit: Stacey Stanhope Dundon's oil paintings, functional pottery, and full size horse heads, and local artist Gayl Braisted's paintings of barns. Gift shop full of Morgan horse t-shirts, books, and posters. Open Thursday & Friday 1-5 pm, Saturday 10 am - 5 pm, and by appointment. The National Museum of the Morgan Horse (NMMH), 34 Main St. (802) 388-1639. www.morganhorse.com/museum.

MONTPELIER. Montpelier Art Walk. Art lovers are invited into downtown shops and galleries featuring local art on display. staff@drawingboardvt.com. *First Fridays in May, September & December.*

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

NORWICH. Montshire Museum of Science. Exhibit—“Human Plus: Real Lives + Real Engineering” through May 8. Explore engineering concepts and create a range of low- and high-tech tools that extend the potential of the human body. Trails, programs, and museum store. Open 10 am – 5 pm daily. Admission \$14 adults, \$11 children 2-17, under 2 free. Open daily 10 am – 5 pm. One Montshire Rd. (802) 649-2200. www.montshire.org.

RANDOLPH. Salvage Gallery Opening. This thought-provoking group show features more than 20 Vermont artists working with found materials. From assemblage and collage to large-scale sculpture, artists mix mediums and blur the lines between art and daily life. Viewers will be taken beyond the banality of decay to a place where remarkable beauty lays within discarded gems rescued from waste. Opening reception 5-7 pm January 30. Chandler Center for the Arts, 71-73 Main St. (802) 431-0204. outreach@chandler-arts.org. *Through March 19.*

ROCHESTER. Exhibit: Director's Choice. Featured Artists: Varujan Boghosian, Pat di Paula, Helen Matteson, Ira Matteson, Nick Santoro, Hugh Towny, John Udvardy. Gallery Hours: Wed-Fri 10-5, Sat 12-5, Sun-Tues by appointment. BigTown Gallery, 99 North Main St. (802) 767-9670. info@bigtowngallery.com. www.bigtowngallery.com. *February 24th through July 9th.*

RUTLAND. Water Exhibit. The work of six watercolor artists, features an installation highlighting the work of Pure Water for the World, an international nonprofit whose mission is to improve the health and livelihood of children and families in the developing world. Gallery hours: Wednesday-Friday noon-6 pm, Saturday noon-4 pm. Chaffee Art Center, 16 South Main St. (802) 775-0356. info@chaffeeartcenter.org. chaffeeartcenter.org. *Through March 25.*

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

SAXTONS RIVER. River Artisans Cooperative. Over 50 craftspeople keep the shelves stocked with a wide variety of handcrafted items. Year round, weekdays from 12-5 pm and weekends from 10 am – 3 pm. The River Artisans Cooperative, on Main Street, across from the Saxtons River Inn, 26B Main St. (802) 869-2099. www.riverartisans.com.

Free Calendar Listings

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

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Never gets the peeves.

Mansfield and The Hump
Bore the winter well;
Both stand up as straight
As when the first snow fell.
Winooski and Lamoille
Sprint the best they can—
All good things will come
With the hired man.

E'en the crow's raw note
Doesn't sound so bad;
Devil though he is
He seems a little glad.
Listen how "the cars"
Make a different sound;

Seems as though
The wheels are glad
They're going 'round.

Hay will soon be cheap;
Soon the robins build;
Nothing much but sleds
And sleighs are winter-killed.
Soon the plough
Will grinch through the
Greensward piece,
And the crying cart
Get a slap of grease.

Winter wan't so tough!
Smelt for breakfast food;
Now the syrup tastes
'Zactly jest as good.
Tomaters up in-doors,
Gardens half-way dry —
Nothing ails Vermont
When the sun runs high.

—DANIEL L. CADY
Burlington, VT, 1919

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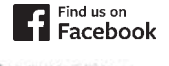
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Vermont Country Calendar

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

SHELburnE. Exhibit: Birds of a Feather. American wildfowl decoys, representing the work of master artisans, including A. Elmer Crowell, Charles "Shang" Wheeler, and Albert Laing. 10 am – 5 pm. Pizzagalli Center for Art and Education, Shelburne Museum, 6000 Shelburne Rd. (802) 985-3346. shelburnemuseum.org. *Through May 1.*

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

SPRINGFIELD. Exhibit: On The Wings of Spring. Hand drawn and painted silk scarves and shawls featuring beautiful butterflies, debonair dragonflies, handsome honey bees and luscious ladybugs from silk artist Teresa Hillary. A Vermont State Craft Center featuring fine art and hand-crafted gifts from over 125 local and regional artists and craftsmen. Exhibits, classes, workshops. Tues – Sat, 11 am – 5 pm. The Gallery at the Vault, 68 Main St. (802) 885-7111. www.galleryvault.org. *March 19 through May 5.*

SPRINGFIELD. Art Exhibit Feather & Fur—Portraits of Field, Forest & Farm. 9 am – 5 pm Mon-Fri. The Great Hall, One Hundred, River St. (802) 258-3992. www.facebook.com/GreatHallSpringfield. *Through end of April.*

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

ST. JOHNSBURY. The Stephen Huneck Gallery at Dog Mountain and Dog Chapel. Free. Winter hours: Thursday - Monday: 11 am - 4 pm. Closed Tuesday and Wednesday. Dog Mountain, 143 Parks Rd. off Spaulding Rd. (800) 449-2580. contact@dogmt.com. www.dogmt.com. *November 1 through May 14.*

STOWE. A Solo Art Installation. Curated by Helen Day Art Center. Two distinct installations by Michael Zebrowski: Level and Sunrise Sunset, both painted bright safety yellow. With reference transits, the surveyor tools for measuring horizontal angles, and construction. Spruce Peak, 7320 Mountain Rd. (802) 253-8358. www.helenday.com. sprucepeak.com. *March 20 through May 1.*

STOWE. Exhibit: "People's Cloth Trade Show: The t-shirt is the Problem" through April 10 by Carole Frances Lung aka Frau Fiber. Open Wednesday-Sunday, 12 noon - 5 pm. Helen Day Art Center, 90 Pond St. (802) 253-8358. www.helenday.com.

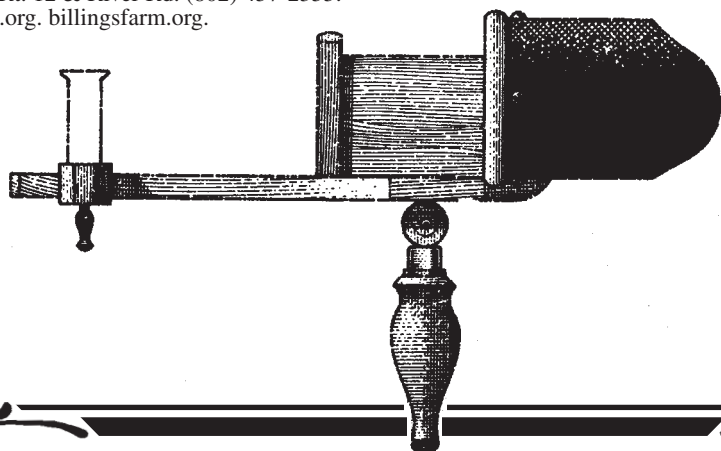
WEST RUTLAND. Carving Studio and Sculpture Center Gallery. Hours are Monday-Friday, 10 am - 1 pm, or by appointment. 636 Marble St. (802) 438-2097. info@carvingstudio.org. carvingstudio.org.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Private and Semi-Private Printmaking Lessons: Collagraph with Susan Berry, Etching with Rachel Gross, Monoprint with Lois Beatty, and Solarplates with Sheri Hancock-Tomek. Fees: \$125 for a 3-hour one-on-one session, including materials. Two Rivers Printmaking Studio, 85 North Main Street, Suite 160. (802) 295-5901. TRPS@sover.net. www.tworiversprintmaking.org.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Main Street Museum. A small, public collection of curiosities and artifacts. Open Thurs-Sun 1-6 pm. 58 Bridge St., Studio 6, near the underpass. (802) 356-2776. www.mainstreetmuseum.org.

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

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm & Museum. Visit the Jersey herd, draft horses, oxen, and sheep and tour the restored and furnished 1890 Farm House. Admission: adults \$14, age 62 & up \$13, children ages 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, under 3 free. Open May 1 through October 31, 10 am – 5 pm. Open weekends November through February and Christmas and vacation weeks, 10 am – 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. billingsfarm.org.



HORSEBACK RIDING & WAGON RIDES

BRATTLEBORO. Fair Winds Farm Sleigh or Wagon Rides. Half-hour reserved horse-drawn rides through fields and woods. Adults \$12, kids 3-12 \$8, minimum \$75, additional after 5 pm. Visit our farm store. Fair Winds Farm is a "Diversified, Horse Powered, Vermont Family Farm" at 511 Upper Dummerston Rd., off Rt. 30. (802) 254-9067. fairwinds@fairwindsfarm.org. www.fairwindsfarm.org.

CHITTENDEN. Horse-Drawn Sleigh Rides. 30-minute rides Wednesday through Sunday 11 am – 6 pm. \$30 for 15 years and older, \$20 for 4-14 years, 3 and under free. Private rides available. To reserve, call the Nordic Ski & Snowshoe Center at (802) 483-6089 from 9 am – 5 pm or after hours call the front desk at (802) 483-2311. Mountain Top Inn & Resort, 195 Mountain Top Rd. www.mountaintoppinn.com. *Through March.*

LONDONDERRY. Wagon & Sleigh Rides at Taylor Farm. On the hour on the weekends. Rides last 45 minutes and include a fireside stop. Come early and pack up a picnic basket of goodies from our farm store. Our wagons each hold up to 10 adults. Prices: \$20 for everyone over age 7, \$10 for ages 7-3, under 2 free; private rides \$150 for 1-5 people, \$200 for 6-10 people. Mid-week private rides available on request with advance notice. Taylor Farm, 825 Rt. 11. By reservation only, call (802) 824-5690. www.taylorfarmvermont.com.

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

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

WILMINGTON. Sleigh Rides at Adams Farm. Teams of horses take you around the perimeter of the farm, through the woods, across the ridge of a mountain, to an old log cabin. Warm up by the wood stoves, enjoy hot chocolate, and try the old player piano! Blankets provided, but dress accordingly. Weather permitting. Reservations required. Adults \$22, children 2-12 \$12, under 2 free. 12:30-8:15 pm. Adams Farm, 15 Higley Hill Rd. (802) 464-3762. adamsfamilyfarm.com. *Tuesdays through Sundays through March.*

RECREATION & NATURE CENTERS

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

GRAFTON. Grafton Ponds Outdoor Center. A year-round recreation center. Nordic skiing, dog sled rides, snow tubing, snow shoeing, fat bikes. 783 Townshend Rd. (802) 843-2400. graftonponds.com.

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

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

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

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

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



Free Wild Apple Tree Release And Pruning Workshop

You're invited to attend a free Wild Apple Tree Release and Pruning workshop on March 12, 2016 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Tunbridge, VT.

Join Rich Chalmers, Dave Paganelli, and Larry Mengedoht at a joint Vermont Coverts and Vermont Woodlands Association stewardship workshop.

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then allow a hands-on pruning for those that want to practice.

Please feel free to bring your own pruning and safety equipment. The workshop location is 218 Dickerman Hill Rd., Tunbridge, VT.

For more information about the workshop e-mail larrymengedoht@gmail.com. For information about Vermont Woodlands Association, call (802) 747-7900, e-mail info@vermontwoodlands.org, or visit www.vermontwoodlands.org.

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Chiara String Quartet to Perform at Chandler

The Chiara String Quartet makes its return to Randolph on Saturday, March 12 at 7:30 p.m. On the program will be two works by composer and friend, Gabriela Lena Frank, and Bela Bartok's String Quartet #4. A complimentary reception follows the concert in the Gallery.

Harkening back to a tradition that is centuries old and still common among soloists, The Chiara String Quartet has adopted performing from memory, without printed sheet music, "by heart." After spending countless hours working on their repertoire by memory, they now feel that the score is a distraction to the performance instead of an aid. After memorizing a work, the Quartet is rewarded with deeply gratifying performances where each member feels fully present in the moment, truly performing with heart, by heart.

The Chiara String Quartet performs a work written expressly for them by Frank

Composer and pianist Gabriela Frank draws on her Peruvian roots for the work, *Leyendas: An Andean Walkabout for String Quartet*, which was written expressly for the Chiara Quartet. The Quartet will also play her transcriptions of Bela Bartok's piano music arranged for string quartet with Bartok's *String Quartet #4* the final work of the evening.

Frank's father is an American of Lithuanian Jewish heritage and her mother is Peruvian of Chinese descent and her work often draws on her multicultural background. She was greatly influenced by Bartok in her own passion for ethnomusicology. Bartok traveled to the far corners of his native Hungary as a young man and collected a vast reservoir of folk music. He incorporated many elements of this music into his own works and became one of the founders of comparative musicology.

Frank's music has been commissioned and performed by not only the Chiaras but also the Kronos Quartet, the San Francisco Symphony, the Houston Symphony, Chanticleer, the Brentano Quartet, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, soprano Dawn Upshaw, the King's Singers, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, and others. Past performances include those by the Boston Symphony, the Baltimore Symphony, the Cleveland Symphony, and the Los Angeles Philharmonic. She is also a Grammy-nominated pianist and



Chiara String Quartet to perform at Chandler Music Hall in Randolph, VT on March 12.

a member of Yo Yo Ma's Silk Road Ensemble for which she has also composed works.

Performing internationally

In addition to the Quartet's regular performances in major concert halls across the country, including Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall, Carnegie Hall, Philadelphia's Kimmel Center, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and the

National Gallery in Washington D.C., the ensemble has toured in China, Korea, and Sweden. They are currently the quartet-in-residence at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. The Quartet is made up of violinists Rebecca Fischer and Hyeyung Yoon, violist Jonah Sirota, and cellist Gregory Beaver.

The Chiara has been committed to the creation of new music for string quartet since its inception and has commissioned composers and collaborated with musicians including Robert Sirota, Nico Muhly, Erik Nielsen, Simone Dinnerstein, Norman Fischer, Nadia Sirota (of ACME) and members of the Ying and Pacifica Quartets.

Now in its 16th season, The Chiara is currently recording "Bartok by Heart," featuring all six of the Bartok string quartets, played entirely from memory. The 2-CD set is slated for release this year. Their most recent album, "Brahms by Heart," was released in March, 2014. As Strings Magazine writes, "Like aural three-dimensional chess, each player seems to be aware of what the other three—and the music—are doing at all times."

Master Class open to all

The Quartet will hold a chamber music master class at the Upper Valley Music Center at 63 Hanover Street in Lebanon, NH on Friday, March 11 from 4-6 p.m. Participants will include middle school/teens and adults. The event is open to the public and offers a great opportunity to watch master artists work with young players and experienced adult amateurs. For more information, call UVMC at (603) 448-1642.

Tickets for the Chandler concert are \$40 for adults and \$10 for students. They are available online at www.chandlerarts.org or by calling the box office at (802) 728-6464 weekdays from 3-6 p.m.

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Holy Smoke

by Burr Morse

Sugar season can almost be a religion for Vermont maple families whose roots reach sweetly clear to the bedrock. I've always been told that there was a blizzard going on March 16th, 1948, the day I was born. As the story goes, my mother and father left our farm up in Maple Corner in the wee hours and headed toward Montpelier, eight miles away. As they went past the place where we now reside, Dad almost left the road—heck if I'd been born in the car, they probably would have named me “DeSoto”—but they did make it to Heaton Hospital, brought me into the world, and I got named “Burr”.

The blizzard theory came into question, however, when my cousins, Wayne and Liz Morse came into the sugarhouse. They said sugarin' was going on hot and heavy when I was born. Wayne said they were gathering sap from 3000 buckets up at the family homestead on Robinson Hill in Calais and also had trees tapped at the Chapell Farm down in East Montpelier. “Your grandpa had bought a brand new '48 Ford truck and we took it with a tank on it down to Chapells—me, your Uncle Bernard and a couple other guys was gathering sap at two in the mornin' so the sap wouldn't freeze up and break th'buckets.” He said one of the guys grumbled that my parents would “have a damned kid right during sugar season!” He went on to say that my father had to hurry right back and boil the sap brought in from the freezing buckets as soon as I came into the world.

While Wayne reminisced, there were four of us in our sugarhouse: Wayne, Liz, my buddy Steffen Parker, and me.

“...one of the guys grumbled that my parents would have a damned kid right during sugaring season!”

We were freezing to death as I boiled the last vestiges from our most recent sap run. I said, “had a good early run like '48 and now we sit in limbo with a cold weather interruption—only this year there's no ‘damned kid’ to be born!” We all laughed but Wayne had a puzzled look on his face. “I remember great sugarin' that spring” he said “so it must'a turned out good after you were born”.

At that, Steffen, computer whiz, high-footed it out of the sugarhouse. When he returned he had a weather report from 1948. Wow, how'd we ever manage before the internet? It seems the “cold weather interruption” happened just long enough to give my dad a break from the sugarhouse to help me get born! The day after, it went back above freezing and stayed perfect sugaring weather for the next ten days.

We're all hoping that the sap run we're sure to get after our weather moderates will be greeted by an April compassionate to sugarmakers. April often offers grass-growing temperatures instead of sap running temperatures. In a fashion as “neurotic” as the weather, I've gone from worrying to ranting and raving to an acceptance that we can't do a thing about it except pray. Yes, I believe that this troubled world needs all the spiritual guidance it can get. I'm also thinking of something very close to home: “Dear God, please bring us freezing nights and thawing days, winds from the west, and willing maple trees right through April. And let lots of white steam billow from Vermont sugarhouses for a while yet”.

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Burr Morse, on left, with son Tom Morse and brother Elliot Morse at Morse Farm Maple Sugarworks in Montpelier, VT.

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North Country Reflections

Creating a North Country Garden with A 'Sense of Place'

by Judith Irven

I am captivated by the stark beauty of the American Southwest, from the wind-sculpted rocks and deep canyons to all the amazing plants and animals that thrive in this arid world.

So, when in Tucson, it was an absolute delight to discover an authentic desert garden, set against the beautiful backdrop of a wider landscape. With angular rocks and sandy soil, it offered a diminutive interpretation of the desert and, for up-close enjoyment, a profusion of succulents, cacti, sagebrush and other desert plants in all shapes and sizes.

I was struck by how this lovely garden felt completely at home within its world—a perfect example of a 'sense of place'. It goes without saying that here the 'place' was the unique American Southwest and the garden was true to that setting.

Of course, our beloved New England landscape—with its rounded mountains, majestic forests, small towns, family farms and fertile fields—could not be more different. Our distinctive world is rich in both imagery and history, which we enjoy in many diverse ways—from physical immersion to artistic endeavors. It can also become our inspiration for creating a North Country garden with that elusive 'sense of place'.

But how does one actually go about creating a garden that feels 'at home' in its surroundings?

I suggest you seek inspiration and guidance in three distinct areas:

- Ask yourself what is special about your site;
- Research the history of the land for details you might include in your garden;
- Let the ecology and character of the New England landscape be your guide.

Let's take a look at each of these in turn:

A garden that captures the specialness of the site

All properties offer a unique 'something' to draw upon. But sometimes it takes fresh eyes to see what this might be!

My suggestion is to take some quiet time and just walk your land. What special features do you see? Perhaps that large tree, with a little careful pruning, could become a beautiful centerpiece. Is there a protruding rock or ledge which could be further revealed?

Often the best aspects of the site are not on the property at all, but dramatic features visible on a neighbor's property or even off in the distance. Try to incorporate such a view into the visual experience of your own garden. The Japanese call this creating a 'borrowed view'.

As an example of different ways of playing off the specialness of the site, let me share with you the beginnings of our garden. When Dick and I first moved to our Goshen home twenty years ago there was just a small front lawn to the west of the house and a long empty expanse of back lawn (really more of a meadow) to the north of the house.

But, as I wandered around contemplating what we might create here, three things stood out:

- Standing on the back lawn and barely visible behind a jumble of trees, to the west I could discern the fuzzy silhouette of a mountain;
- There was a small pond at the north end of the back lawn;
- An enormous rock, flanked by two smaller rocks, separated the front and back lawns.

The starting point was to reveal and frame the mountain by removing selected trees along the western edge of the lawn. This simple step created a stunning 'borrowed view'.



photo by Dick Conrad

Gordon and Mary Hayward have reused this lovely old weathered shed to keep all their garden tools readily at hand.

Then, to separate the back garden from the road, we thinned the remaining trees, leaving just some beautiful white birches (*Betula papyrifera*) and the lower growing native wild roses (*Rosa blanda*). From here, with the birches as a backdrop, it was an easy decision to add a large flower bed along the western edge of the lawn.

Next we made a small surprise patio on top of the big rock, accessed from either direction by half-a-dozen simple stone steps. And, to make it feel part of the garden, we surrounded the rock with a couple of smaller beds.

Finally we enlarged the pond. At the far end, we were delighted to discover another large rock which became the perfect platform for a garden bench that now casts its reflection in the water. A river birch behind the bench completes the picture.

A garden that is rooted in time

Gardening is also about honoring the people who used the land before us. Sometimes this means accentuating an old house with a period garden. In other cases it is more about reusing the historic features of the land.

Some of you may know of Gordon and Mary Hayward's lovely garden in Westminster Vermont. The Haywards open it to the public from time to time and we had a chance to visit a few years back. It is a garden rooted in the farming history of the area. I still recall their old weathered shed, now a repository for garden tools, and the old silo foundation they have transformed into a tranquil garden pool.

Like the Haywards, our garden was also once part of a large farm, and it has given us much pleasure to restore the hundred-year old barn foundation. This now makes a handsome wall that edges the east side of the garden.

A garden in harmony with the wider landscape

And finally the third component for creating a garden with a sense of place is to take our cues from the wider landscape.

The magic of our Vermont landscape has intrigued generations of photographers and painters, including my husband, Dick Conrad. And this is the imagery that I carry in my subconscious as I think about creating a garden that truly belongs in our unique part of the world.

If you look at Dick's photographs of the Vermont landscape at www.northcountryimpressions.com you will see

meandering country roads and flowing fields nestled against the nearby woods. In my gardener's eye I transform these shapes into winding paths and curving flowerbeds.

As we examine the structure of our northern forests, we see they are composed of distinct layers—tall canopy trees, smaller understory trees and then shrubs. And the ground is completely covered with spring wildflowers and ferns. And each of these layers provides both food and shelter for different types of wildlife.

Used on a smaller scale in our gardens, this same layered composition—tall trees, shorter trees shrubs, and shade-loving plants on the ground—provides strong visual interest for people as well as valuable habitat for insects and birds.

Now look at the open areas along the roads and around the fields. Here a wide mix of sun-loving wildflowers—fleabane, black-eyed Susans, ox-eye daisies, asters goldenrod, milkweed, and Joe Pye Weed—thrive among the grasses. Taking these images as my cue, in the garden I use an informal planting style where the perennials and garden grasses are intermingled together, and there is no bare ground to be seen. And since they are the basis of the food web that sustains our wildlife. I also favor native plants where possible.

Of course, non-living elements—arbors, benches, walls and decorations—are also a part of our gardens. Again, as you choose these garden artifacts, think about what you see in the wider landscape. The weathered barns, old stone walls, rocky stream beds and woodland pools all become inspirations for the creative gardener.

To learn more

For more on using plants to create a sense of place, I highly recommend three books all published by Timber Press. The first, *'The Living Landscape'* by Doug Tallamy and Rick Darke delves into the role of trees and shrubs in a natural garden. The other two, *'Planting; a New Perspective'* by Piet Oudolf and Noel Kingsbury and *'Planting in a Post-Wild World'* by Thomas Rainer and Claudia West focus on nature-inspired perennial designs.

On my North Country Reflections blog I have posted this article with several accompanying pictures.

And on April 9 at Fort Ticonderoga's Spring Garden Symposium (www.fortticonderoga.org/education/workshop-seminars/garden) I will be giving a fully illustrated talk about creating a North Country Garden with a Sense of Place.

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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Banjo Dan's "Sleeping Sentinel" Project Launched

Dan Lindner's Kickstarter

Vermont musician Dan Lindner of Banjo Dan and the Mid-nite Plowboys and The Skyblue Boys is working on a new CD titled "The Sleeping Sentinel". The new project will open with a suite of songs dealing with Vermont's role in the Civil War and conveying the remarkable story of Private William Scott of Groton, the "Sleeping Sentinel" who was sentenced to execution by firing squad for falling asleep at his sentry post, pardoned by President Lincoln, and later died a hero's death in a battle in Virginia.

With recording costs way up and CD sales undercut by downloading, Banjo Dan is counting on financing the new recording through a Kickstarter campaign. Interested music lovers are encouraged to visit www.banjodan.com and click on the "Sleeping Sentinel" button for a link to Dan's Kickstarter page, or, to enter their pledge, go directly to: <https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1081560633/the-sleeping-sentinel-banjodans-songs-of-vermont>.

Pledges will be accepted only until March 31. If the fundraising goal of \$9,500 is met by that deadline recording sessions will begin in April, with an anticipated CD release date in early summer.

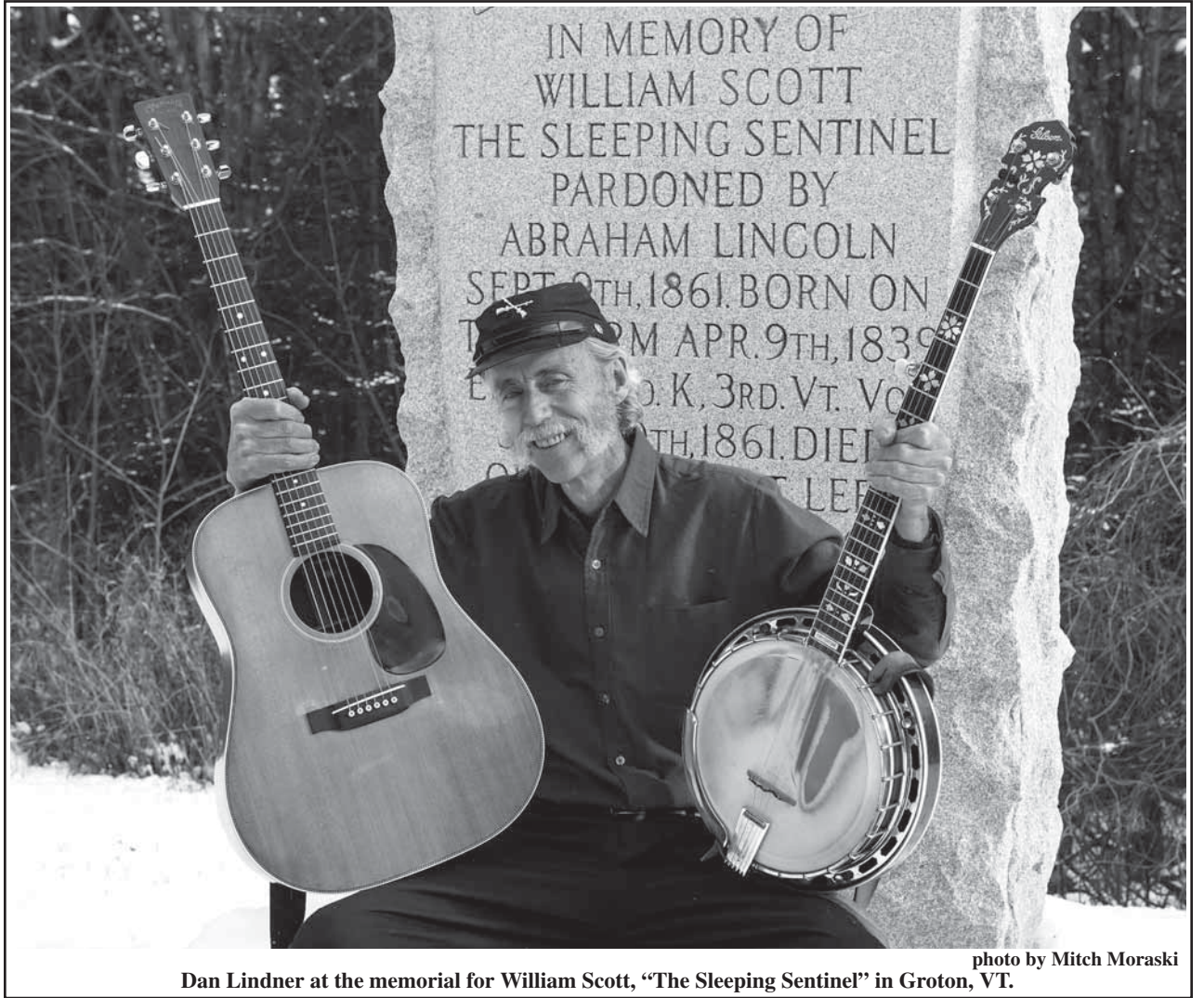
A prolific songwriter whose compositions have appeared on recordings by Banjo Dan and the Mid-nite Plowboys, The Sky Blue Boys and others, Lindner is known especially for his story songs. Previous Vermont albums have included memorable numbers such

as "The Saint Albans Raid," "The Ghost of Gold Brook Bridge," "Who Killed Orville Gibson?," "The Old Arch Bridge" and others that capture the essence of Vermont—its history, legends, lore and personalities.

Additional songs included on "The Sleeping Sentinel" CD are based on stories from Ascutney, Berlin, St. Albans, Montpelier and elsewhere. A video on Dan's Kickstarter page includes more details on these captivating new songs.

Rather than simply appealing for donations, the Kickstarter approach provides an opportunity for people from all walks of life to get behind a creative project by pledging support at various levels. Tangible rewards are attached to each pledge level, from CDs (including a disc of recently-discovered live recordings by Banjo Dan and the Mid-nite Plowboys exclusive to this campaign), DVDs, lyric sheets, granola (that's right) and more—right up to a live home concert and a personal song written and recorded for the backer.

"I'm asking folks to come onboard as soon as possible, because we have a pretty ambitious goal here," says Lindner. "I believe anyone who loves Vermont, appreciates a good story, or has enjoyed our previous recordings of Vermont songs, will really love this new collection. I plan to record the best-ever album of Banjo Dan's Songs of Vermont and I'm deeply grateful to all who are able to help make it a reality."



Dan Lindner at the memorial for William Scott, "The Sleeping Sentinel" in Groton, VT. photo by Mitch Moraski

For forty solid years—1972 through 2012—Dan Lindner had been part of Banjo Dan and the Mid-nite Plowboys with his brother Willy Lindner, Al Davis, Peter Tourin, and others, representing The Soul of Bluegrass...from The Heart of Vermont.

Dan now plays in and manages The Sky Blue Boys, a duo he formed with his

brother Willy Lindner. A venerable tradition as old as American music itself, the "brothers duets" were the predominant format in country music in the 1930s and '40s. They have now revived it in Vermont.

For more information call Dan Lindner at (802) 223-6965. banjodan@pshift.com. Visit www.banjodan.com.

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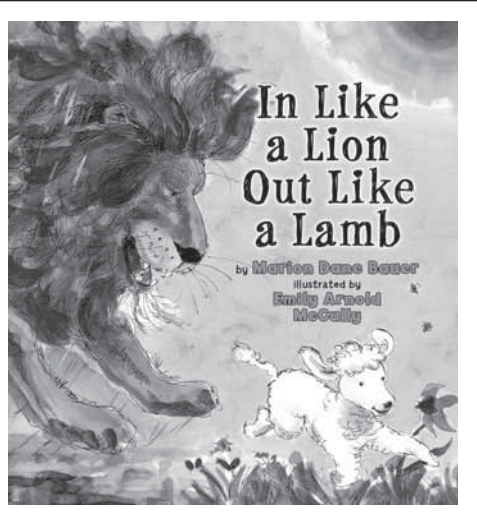
North Country Book News

Children's Book Reviews by Charles Sutton

Tales of Ducklings, Bunnies, and Windy March

We see steam and smoke coming out of maple sugaring houses, grasses turning green, a few robins, pussywillows in bloom, and then suddenly Spring is here. Children's books celebrate this event with their own colorful display of Easter bunnies, ducks on the open waters, trees budding out, and early flowers in bloom.

The long-awaited seasonal change from winter to spring has been likened to lions and lambs. So it is no surprise that in *In Like a Lion Out Like a Lamb* by Marion Dane Bauer and illustrated by Emily Arnold McCully (\$16.95, *Holiday House*, www.holidayhouse.com) a rather likable lion is only living up to what he's expected to do—behave like March weather. At the start he rattles windows, scratches the door, and turns snow into mud which he then tromps across the living room floor. A young boy waits out the lion's growls and howls until soft morning breezes come and trees bud out. The lion instinctively know it's time to give up, find a patch of green grass and fall asleep until next March. He is replaced by a lamb who is in charge of "grass and flowers, sunshine and showers; of babies large and small." The artist captures a profusion of colors we all will be seeing, not soon enough!



If you can't wait for spring then *When Spring Comes* by Kevin Henkes and illustrated by Laure Dronzek (\$17.99, *HarperCollins*, www.harpercollinschildrens.com) will remind one of just what wonderful sights will soon be here. Simply stated, but eye catching illustrations show mounds of snow getting smaller and smaller, brown grass turning green with little flowers, an egg becoming a bird, a seed starting to grow. There's also lots of rain and puddles, mud season, green shoots coming up in the garden (attracting rabbits, too), and happy children amid the "buds, bees, boots and bubbles." When spring is finally here to stay, one might think your waiting days are over. But not yet, as the story reminds us, "you can wait for summer."

Every Spring we hope that the field mice that wintered over in our homes will return to the great outdoors. But we learn in *Hickory* by Palmer Brown (\$14.95, *New York Review of Books*, www.nyrb.com) that some mice like to stay where they are, inside, and in this case living in the bottom

of a grandfather clock in a farmhouse. Of the three mouse children, aptly named Hickory, Dickory and Dock, Hickory is the biggest and boldest, who alone isn't afraid of swinging on the weight-chains in the clockworks. Curious and bold, Hickory does get one of his feet pinched in a mouse trap baited with crispy turkey skin, but his parents rescue him and his father makes him a crutch out of two toothpicks and a match stick. Field mice who are family friends convince Hickory that he ought to leave home for the much better life in their fields. "It is a wonderful place," the oldest fieldmouse said. "Each blade of grass you pull has a sweet white nibble at the base, each honeysuckle flower a drop of nectar." As the story unfolds Hickory finds a home in an unused rabbit burrow in the meadow. He loves his new life but is lonely until he meets up with a grasshopper and they become fast friends. Intriguing little drawings compliment this remarkable friendship. We are indebted to the *New York Review of Books* for this book in their collection of reprinted children's classics.

We know that all kinds of wild-life don't mind setting up home in abandoned buildings. This can sometimes have happy results, as seen in the adventures of a huge number of rabbit families that take over a shut-down factory in *The Funny Bunny Factory* by Adam Green and illustrated by Leonard Weisgard (\$9.99, *Penguin*, www.penguin.com/youngreaders). An ever-growing bunch of rabbits enjoy and play in their new home in an old factory. But see what happens one day when by mistake they flip a switch and all the machinery in the factory comes to life: "Wheels began to turn with a sniping, snapping, rapping, tapping, clashing, clicking, clanking, slamming, banging and thumping." To the astonishment of the rabbits the factory starts producing sugar eggs, penny candies, chocolate bunnies and other Easter treats, toys, and party hats like the Mexican sombrero and Turkish fez as well as baseball hats, Derbies, and hats worn by soldiers and sailors. The rabbits try these on for the fun of it, but one lone rabbit is not impressed, nor was he with the candies. Instead he searches for and finds real rabbit food in the cellar—crates and barrels of carrots! Aside from this being such an amusing story, the illustrator's rabbits are wonderful (and abundant) as are his many colorful Easter eggs. This is a reprint of the *Wonder Books* line originally published between 1940 and 1960.

Old-timers remember wonderful books from their childhood and we are fortunate when they are made available again for our children and grandchildren. *Make Way for Ducklings* by Robert McCloskey (\$24.99, *Penguin*, www.penguin.com/youngreaders), has now been reprinted in a large, handsome 75th anniversary edition which includes a landmark poster of the ducklings' Boston trek and an audio CD. This tale of mallards on the move through city streets avoiding kids on bikes and speeding cars (1940s vintages) won the Caldecott Medal for McCloskey's illustrations in 1942 and has sold millions of copies.

In the story Mr. and Mrs. Mallard duck fly into Boston looking for a place to build a nest to raise their about-to-be family. After a brief stay at a pond in Boston Garden they settle on an island in the Charles River. It's not long before their nest of eggs hatch out into ducklings named Jack, Kack, Lack, Mack, Nack, Quack, Pack and Quack. As they get a little older they learn to dive and swim, and then on one momentous day follow mother in a line formation to explore the streets of Boston. No place for ducklings, but eager-to-help policemen helped them through the traffic, and in the final charming drawing we see the line of ducklings being led by mother duck on to their safe-haven island for the night. Children today will love this timeless classic.



Springtime Book News

Salamanders and Ospreys!

Not all signs of Spring are obvious, so don't be surprised if you are driving home one night and see volunteers by the roadside on 'Salamander Night' urging you to slow down or stop so that hundreds of spotted salamanders can be helped across the roadway to vernal pools to breed and lay eggs. They had been in the woods under logs and other debris since the end of last summer and now are beginning their mating and breeding ritual.

In *Salamander Season* by Jennifer Keats Curtis, J. Adam Frederick and Shennen Bersani (\$9.95, *Arbordale Publishing*, www.arbordalepublishing.com) a father-child team study this amphibian metamorphosis as related by the girl through her illustrated, photographic text.

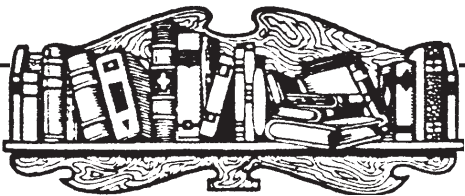
We learn that the salamanders seen with bright yellow spots on their backs push through a thin layer of ice before diving into the cold water to lay eggs in jiggy, jellybean-shaped masses to sticks and reeds. The eggs hatch out in May and interestingly we learn that the babies have no hind legs and are "terrible swimmers." They creep rather than swim and eventually do get hind legs. They change colors, too, from grey to green to olive. This whole sequence is shown through close-up photography and colorful drawings. For the first part of their lives the salamanders breath oxygen from the water through gills; later when they live on land, they breathe through their lungs.

Check out nature centers and parks that may be sponsoring a 'Salamander Night' this March or April. Visit these websites: Bonnyvale Environmental Center in West Brattleboro, VT at beec.org; North Branch Nature Center in Montpelier, VT at northbranchnaturecenter.org; Vermont Center for Ecostudies in Norwich, VT at vtecostudies.org. For information about the Vermont Reptile and Amphibian Atlas, e-mail jandrews@middlebury.edu. Otter Creek Audubon is partnering with the Salisbury Conservation Commission on Salamander crossings. To sign up on an e-mail list to be notified when a Salamander crossing will occur in Salisbury, VT e-mail Warren King at kingle@together.net. Visit Otter Creek Audubon at ottercreek.wordpress.com.

When birds return to the Northeast this Spring, birders and naturalists will be hoping to sight an osprey—that powerful raptor with a six-foot wingspan known as the 'fish-hawk' which nest atop dead trees, telephone poles or artificial platforms. In Vermont ospreys can be spotted along Lake Champlain, Lake Memphremagog and the Connecticut River.

To learn about this unusual raptor and its continuing struggle to repopulate itself (with human help, too) after having been almost totally destroyed by DDT, an informative place to start is *The Call of The Osprey* by Dorothy Henshaw Patent and Photography by William Munoz (\$18.99, *Houghton Mifflin Harcourt*, www.hmco.com).

This highly informative work concentrates on efforts to attract and restore the osprey to Montana, but its message applies to all over North America where the species spends its summers. The problem was exacerbated in the West by the birds being exposed to poisonous heavy metals released into waterways from past mining activities. The book includes amazing close-up photos of ospreys catching fish, roosting in high places, and naturalists gingerly putting on leg bands.

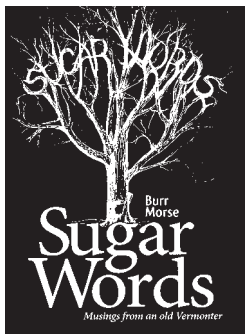


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Sugaring Season is Upon Us

Maple Syrup and Maple Recipes Galore

One of the joys of leaving winter behind is to venture into one of those welcoming sugar houses scattered across Vermont that are converting maple tree sap into sweet syrup. If you want to find out what's going on and how it happens then *Maple Sugar—From Sap to Syrup—The History, Lore, and How-To Behind of This Sweet Treat* by Tim Herd (\$12.95, Storey Publishing, www.storey.com) is the perfect book of 'know-how' for fielding your questions with just the right answers.

One learns that our form of 'sugaring' was discovered first by native American Indians who also taught the colonists to plant beans, squash and corn together and to drink stag-horn sumac tea, a cure for scurvy.

Follow, too, the evolution of sugaring from using wooden and metal collection buckets to plastic lines, from kettles over a wooden fire to modern-day evaporators fired by other fuels, and new machinery like reverse osmosis machines

each pictured with details about their leaves, bark, twigs, buds, flowers and fruit, as well as sugar-making potential.

Among the book's illustrations are photographs of containers used to store and market syrup in the 'old' days. Among them are Citadel Quebec Pure Maple Syrup in a large tin and also Citadel Sirop d'Erable Pur (translated: pure maple syrup); a New York State brand showing mother pouring syrup on pancakes for two children; Sugar Bird Cane and Maple Syrup from the Vermont Maple Syrup Co., Essex Junction, VT; and Old Manse Absolutely Pure Delicious Syrup (from refined cane sugar and Canadian maple sugar). These tin containers would be collectors' items today.

A maple sugar book would not be complete without a few favorite recipes. These include

a maple milkshake, maple eggnog and maple fizz (uses gingerale); sweet and sour chicken, a maple-

glazed salmon, maple sponge cake and maple mousse and more. Enjoy and learn all about sugaring and more in this handy book.

While one could be tending a small, backyard maple-sugaring operation or a large in-house evaporator, thoughts often go to how many ways this tasty, new syrup can be used. For plenty of ideas—many of them unusual and new, try *Maple—100 Sweet and Savory Recipes Featuring Pure Maple Syrup* by Katie Webster (\$22.95, Quirk Books, www.quirkbooks.com).

The author and her family live in Richmond, VT. Each spring they set up a 500-pound evaporator in their driveway and make a little more syrup than the year before. And then Katie is extra busy in the kitchen.

One can tell from the eye-catching photo-

Book Reviews by Charles Sutton

to remove water from the sap and special sap heating devices. Part of this history includes a picture of the earliest known container for collecting sap—a mokuk made of birch bark and sealed with pine resin. We are reminded, too, that up until recent years the sap was collected by horse or oxen teams pulling wooden tubs on sleds.

Do-it-yourselfers will learn what trees can be tapped, timing for tapping, equipment needed, how the sugaring-off process works, packaging, and clean-up advice.

We learn about maple trees other than our beloved 'sugar' maple which is such a beautiful site through the seasons and is the main producer of maple sugar sap. Other maples are big leaf, black, box elder, canyon, chalk, Florida, mountain, red, Rocky Mountain, silver, stripes and vine. These are

The Wonders of a Book Fair

by Donna Howard

On April 2nd, people from all over Vermont will attend the Vermont Antiquarian Booksellers Association Spring Book Fair at the Hilton Hotel in Burlington, VT.

People think of a book fair as a place where extremely old and rare books are sold—books from the 1600s and 1700s, written in Latin or other exotic tongues. Most books, however, are far more modern and accessible.

Any book lover can appreciate the books on Vermont history, modern literature, poetry, the American Civil War, and many other subjects offered at a fair. Children's books are always popular—while some dealers offer rare Victorian children's titles, others sell original editions of the Nancy Drew series or Dr. Seuss.

A book fair is a good place to learn about the rare and used book market. Most dealers know what prices and trends are throughout the country or even the world. By seeing what dealers are selling and what prices are asked, the visitor can learn what is "hot" in the current market. You may even learn what

some of your own books are worth, by spotting copies at a dealer's booth. A fair is also a good place to meet other people who are interested in books. Dealers met at a fair may be able to find books for you through a book search. Alternately, they may be interested in later purchasing your collection.

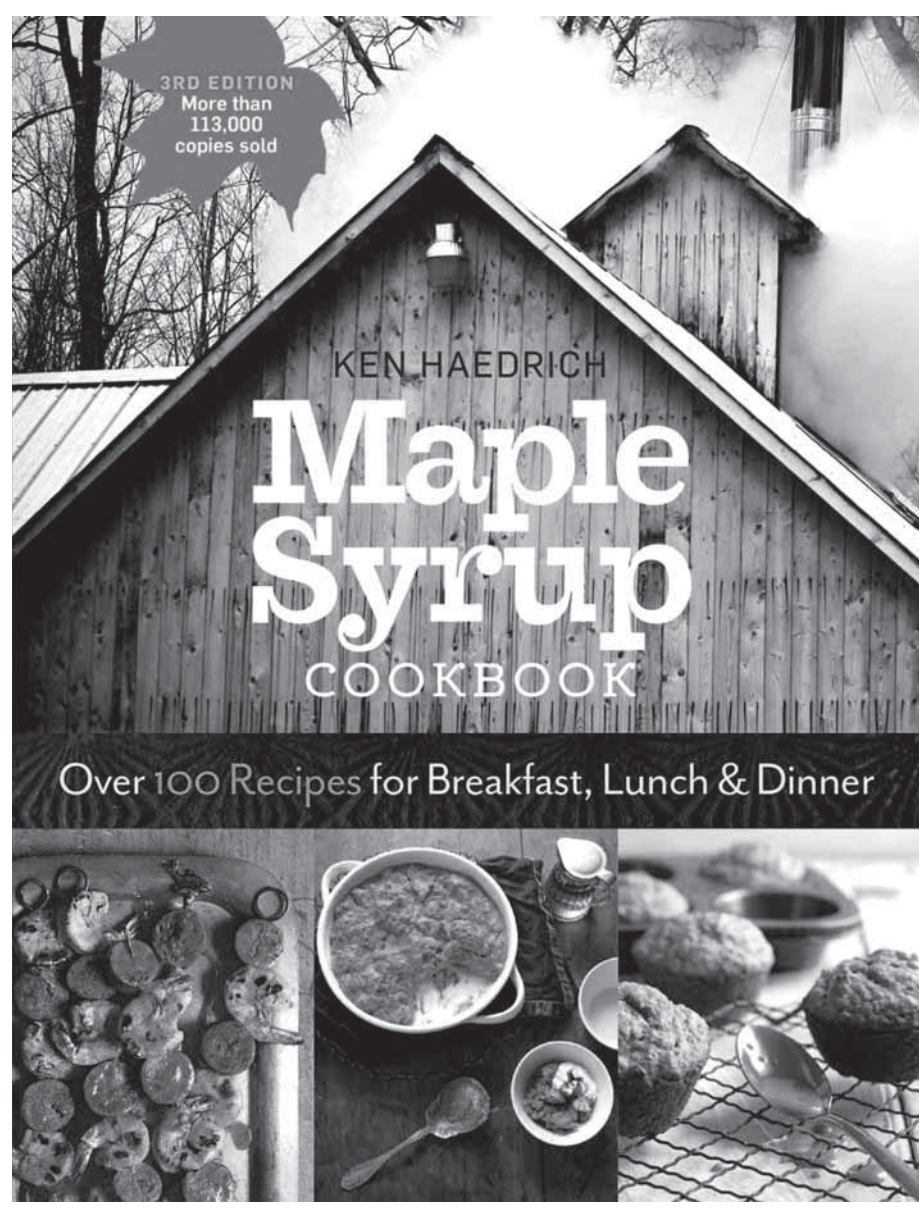
Prices vary as widely as the books—an old postcard of Burlington may be available for as little as \$2, while a rare Hemingway first edition may sell for \$2,000. Most titles at a book fair sell for under \$50, and many for under \$20. Factors that affect a book's price include condition (especially important for modern first editions), edition, rarity, and current market trends. Books once in great demand can fade in importance, while books formerly scorned bring high prices.

Most titles are common and worth very little. These include most book club editions, most former library books, later printings of fiction, and most older fiction. Books that have a high value are usually those sought by collectors, scholars, or libraries. Browsing through a book

fair can be fun, as well as educational.

Few other places in Vermont offer the possibility of seeing a wood-cut from the *Nuremberg Chronicle* (circa 1493), a first edition of Anne Rice's *Interview with the Vampire*, a cookbook from 1917 called *A Thousand Ways to Please a Husband with Bettina's Best Recipes*, or a bound copy of the "Gentleman's Magazine" featuring an article on the war with the American colonies.

These, and many other unusual books, have been offered in previous years at the VABA fairs. Even veteran dealers and collectors find items at a fair that they had never even heard of, much less seen before. Collectors, history buffs, scholars, and book lovers should not miss the opportunity to see what is new and unusual at a book fair. Book fairs are a wonder and an education.



graphs of maple dishes as well as the ones of her family sugaring that she is creative and skilled in what she does. In addition to writing articles for food magazines, she is the family chef, food blogger and food photographer.

Her book has recipes for everyone and are easily adaptable to different diets such as gluten intolerant (65), paleo (22) or vegan (29).

Here are a few of her recipes that may tempt you. For breakfast: lemon poppy seed whole grain pancakes with blueberry maple sauce; for appetizers: maple cashew chicken satay or black pepper maple-glazed sausage biscuit bites; for soups or sides: carrot ginger soup with maple yogurt or spinach salad with blue cheese and candied bacon; for main course: maple pork loin roast with apple chutney or maple ginger chicken thighs; and for dessert: maple apricot hermit cookies or maple pear ginger sorbet. And there are plenty more!

In 1985 a chef-cook at a group home for children in New Hampshire self-published a 48-page book, *The Maple Syrup Baking and Dessert Cookbook*. He had limited success selling it to bookstores throughout New England working out of and sometimes sleeping in his pick-up truck. Now 30 years and 15 cookbooks later a much revised third edition is available: *Maple Syrup Cookbook—Over 100 Recipes for Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner* by Ken Haedrich (\$14.95, Storey Publishing, www.storey.com). The previous edition updated in 2001 has 113,000 copies in print.

In addition to mouth-watering recipes, the book contains famous maple quotes, historical information, the new grading system explained, and production statistics where we learn Vermont remains the largest U.S. producer followed by New York and Maine.

Tasty recipes are interspersed with profiles of maple sugar producers including Vermont's own Bill Clark of Wells, the former president of the Rutland County Maple Producers Association, a post he held for 32 years. The profile tells the story of how Bill and his brother as young boys began a 'maple renaissance' with 85 taps that produced 15 gallons of syrup.

Other profiles include the 2,000-member Citadelle Maple Syrup Producers Cooperative in Quebec and the South Face Farm in Ashfield, MA, where Tom McCrumm collects sap from 4,000-4,500 taps.

Haedrich says "the trick to using maple syrup in the kitchen is often less about quantity than it is about compatibility." Most of his recipes then do use just a 'light touch' to create maple magic.

His recipes are divided into three categories—Maple Mornings, Beyond Breakfast and Maple Sweets. For those of us who can't make up our mind what recipes to choose, beautiful full-page color photographs will help us decide. We were taken with his appetite-pleasing maple walnut oat muffins, buttermilk-maple spice cake, maple-glazed Brussels sprouts, crisp maple spareribs, and dreamy almond bars. You are encouraged to "taste what maple can do!"

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A team of horses pulls the gathering tank through a maple sugar orchard in Moretown, VT.

Green Mountain Gardener

Maple Syrup: from Leaf to Tree to Sap to Table

Dr. Leonard Perry

Horticulture Professor, University of Vermont

Many know that maple syrup comes from the sap of the sugar maple tree, collected and boiled down each spring to make it denser. In fact, native Americans were making it when the first European colonists arrived. Whether you make your own maple syrup as a fun family activity, for income, or just enjoy using it, here are some things you can learn about this important agricultural product in our region.

The Cornell University maple research and education website (maple.dnr.cornell.edu) has many interesting facts about maple syrup, including the one that it takes 43 gallons of sap (with 2 percent sugar content) boiled down to make a gallon of maple syrup. Since sugar content of the sap can vary by tree, and previous season growing conditions, this can range from 40 to 50 gallons or more for a gallon of syrup. On average, sugar content of sap is about 2.5 percent. If the tree is too vigorous, it may use up more sugars and so result in less sweet sap. Or if the tree is attacked by pests, or grows poorly, it may produce fewer sugars.

A tree in the forest with gravity lines or buckets may produce 10 to 14 gallons of sap in the spring, while roadside trees (or those in a maple stand with vacuum tubing) may produce 15 to 20 gallons. So, in a good season, it would take at least two roadside trees to produce enough sap for about a gallon of syrup. The amount of sap will vary with the tree, weather, length of the sap season, and method of collecting the sap.

From leaf to syrup

The maple syrup we find in containers begins its life as sugar in the leaves of maples, produced by the process of photosynthesis. The sugars are transported into the wood for winter storage in the form of carbohydrates. In spring they are converted to sucrose and dissolved in the sap to flow through the tree.

Sugarmakers drill holes in sugar maple trees each spring, just under a half inch wide and about two to three inches deep, at an upward angle. Bits are inserted on which to hang buckets or similar containers (home sugarmakers may use plastic containers), or to insert the colorful plastic tubing one sees crisscrossing maple stands in spring.

To avoid stressing trees, only those 10 inches or more across should be tapped. This is measured at a standard four and one half feet above the ground (which may be seen as DBH or diameter at breast height). A tree 10 to 17 inches wide should have one tap, one 18 to 24 inches two taps, and one larger across three taps. Proper tapping of sugar maples should cause no injury or stress to them, and they may remain productive for 100 years or more.

Sugaring season

With warm temperatures above freezing in spring, pressure develops in the tree and causes the sap to flow out these openings or taps. Then, with colder temperatures below freezing, suction within the tree pulls in more water to make more sap. When the fluctuations in temperature lessen, the sap stops flowing. This period of sap flow usually falls within early March to mid-April, depending on the season.

The sap is boiled to evaporate water and concentrate the sugar. The end product will boil at about 219 degrees, seven degrees above the boiling point of the sap. This can be checked with a candy thermometer. The top quality syrup will contain no less than 66 percent sugar (measured as "Brix").

Grades and flavor

When buying maple syrup you will be confronted with some choices in grades, all based on U.S.D.A. color standards but with words that may vary with region. Generally the darker amber the color, the stronger the maple flavor. Make

sure when buying maple syrup to read the label to make sure it is pure, if that is what you are seeking, and of the flavor you desire. Contrary to some claims you may hear about better syrup from one region or state, quality of syrup will be affected instead by the season's weather, time of season the sap is collected, and how it is processed.

What may vary with the location or "provenance" are the many other flavor components in maple syrup. Around 300 different compounds have been identified, not all being present in the same syrup. In addition to the maple flavor in all syrups, there may be caramel, vanilla, nutty, buttery, honey, chocolate, or coffee flavors detectable.

Why the sugar maple has sweeter sap with better flavor than other maples is not really known. The reason may lie in the structure of the wood. If sap is collected once buds develop on the trees, it becomes less pleasing. The sugar maple has the longest period before buds develop, hence the longest season to collect sap among the maples.

The sugar maple primarily grows in the northeastern United States and eastern Canada, so this is where maple syrup is produced. A less sweet syrup with different flavor is made in Alaska and Siberia from the sap of birch trees. Another species of maple is tapped in Korea, but only to drink the sap.

What to do when you get it home

Once you have maple syrup in a properly filled and sealed container, it can last up to a year, or up to six months in the refrigerator if opened. When cooking, use maple sugar similarly to how you use white sugar. There is no evidence it is healthier except that, being unrefined, it may contain compounds with some health benefits. If using maple syrup in cooking, you can use one cup instead of one cup white sugar. Reduce the liquid in recipes, though, by three tablespoons for each cup of syrup used.

Leonard Perry is Horticulture Professor, UVM. Have you visited Perry's Perennial Pages lately? perrysperennials.info.



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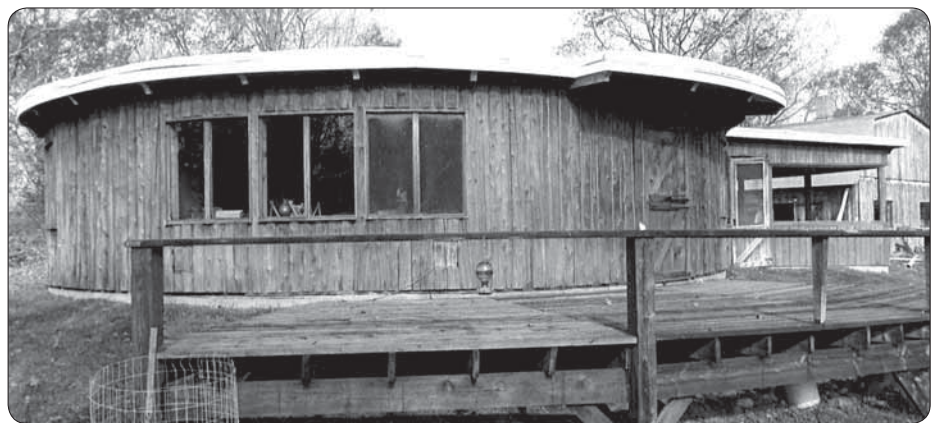
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