

Vermont Country Sampler

March 15 – April 15
2018

Free

- Statewide Calendar of Events through April 15
- Spring, Maple Open House Weekend, Easter
- Inns, B&B's, Dining, Real Estate
- Entertainment, Book Reviews

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M. Cassidy

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March Journal

Watching Starlings (Sturnus Vulgaris)

by Bill Felker

Over the years, I have paid attention to starlings, both as visitors to my yard and also as creators of dramatic murmurations that dive and spin through the winter. Their behavior in and around my village does not always keep a strict schedule, and many of their activities overlap from season to season, but my scattered records reflect something of their periodic movements.

After spending the late autumn and early winter in great flocks that visit and feast in the fields throughout the township (and much of the nation), starlings frequently break into smaller groups early in the year.

Sometimes, as they did on January 4, 2012, the first small flock comes down from the woods to eat suet in my yard.

On January 12 of this year, in the midst of snowbursts, the first starlings joined the cardinals, sparrows, doves, cowbirds, chickadees, tufted titmice and a red-bellied woodpecker at my bird-feeder.

I have notes from the middle of February about clusters of starlings visiting the neighborhood more frequently, even courting then, and it seems that most of the larger flocks have broken up

and pairing has begun by March 1.

On March 4, 1991, I noticed "doves making a nest in a locust tree. Starlings were nesting in holes in the limbs of the same tree." And from that point forward through the years, I have sometimes seen starlings attacking the shiny flashing of my chimney, trying to be sure that not even phantom birds could encroach upon their space.

Starlings complete courtship in March and April, at least along my street t, and by May 15, the first fledglings have emerged to whine and beg for food—which they do, depending on the permissiveness of the parents, throughout June and into July.

Then, by the middle of August, I notice the high wires filling with the sturnus vulgaris and the first murmurations dancing in the sky. Some starling families do remain in the village, clucking, chirping, burbling, and whistling through the autumn and early winter. Usually, however, by the beginning of November, there are fewer small flocks in the trees, and most of the birds gather to soar and feed as one until the sun starts to rise earlier in the morning and the breeding cycle divides and scatters their winter assemblies.



Happy dad and daughter enjoy sugar-on-snow at the Guilford Church Supper. This year's event is March 17. photo by Nanci Leitch

Poultney, VT

Annual Maplefest Coming March 24th & 25th

Producers of Vermont's delicious maple syrup products are at work once again tapping their maple trees to collect sap.

The Poultney Area Chamber of Commerce looks forward to celebrating the season with activities held during its Maplefest 2018!

This year's celebration of the beginning of the spring season in Vermont will be held Saturday, March 24th and Sunday, March 25th, all over Poultney, VT.

March 24th features breakfast with the Easter Bunny, 5K fun run, a big craft fair,

horse & wagon rides, story hour at the Poultney Library, a basket party, sap raffle, special foods, and a Maple Dinner at the Young at Heart Senior Center at 5 p.m. Our own Sugar Bear will be available for pictures and giving out maple seeds. We will also be announcing the Sugar Bear Prince and Princess. Crowns will be awarded at the Official Tree Tapping held on Green Mountain College's lawn. The Poultney Historical Society will be exhibiting at the Meeting House on Bentley Avenue. A map to the Sugar Houses

that are open for tours will be available.

On March 25th area Sugar Houses will be open and welcoming the public.

For more information about the Maplefest and the Poultney Area Chamber of Commerce call (802) 287-2010 or visit www.poultneyvt.com.

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.

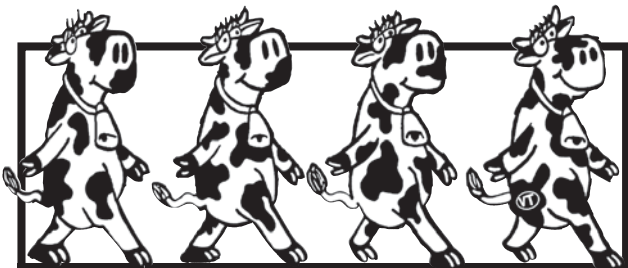


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Orleans, VT 1961

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

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Calendar of Events published free of charge. Mail your information to us by the 15th of the preceding month.

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Visitors enjoy a horse-drawn wagon ride at a sugarhouse on Maple Open House Weekend.

Statewide

Vermont Maple Open House Weekend

Maple Open House Weekend is Vermont's most anticipated spring event, bringing an estimated 30,000 visitors to tour the sugar houses and meet the sugar makers responsible for leading the nation in maple syrup production (nearly 1.8 million gallons averaged over the past 3 seasons).

Whether it's the sight of steam rising from the sugarhouse, the inviting aroma of boiling sap, or the sweetly divine flavor of maple syrup, visitors are treated to an experience for the senses! Maple sap boils away in an evaporator, almost ready to be drawn off as finished syrup.

The weekend celebrates the current season's crop and this year's event has expanded the offerings and activities for visitors by partnering with local businesses who specialize in their own craft and support Vermont's maple industry by including maple in their ingredients, on their menus, and offered for sale at their locations. Vermont Maple Sugar Makers' Association and partnering local breweries, distilleries, restaurants, hard cideries, inns and B&B's feature Maple as the star ingredient for the annual statewide celebration.

When visiting maple sugar houses on March 24th and 25th, visitors can expect warm welcomes from their sugar maker hosts, eager to educate and share with the public the process of making maple syrup from sap—an inside look at the hard work that goes into producing each jug of syrup. Traditional open house activities include:

- Tours of sugarhouses
- Sampling maple syrup
- Tours of the woods
- Pancake breakfasts
- Horse-drawn sleigh or wagon rides
- Sugar-on-snow parties
- Children's activities
- Live music and other entertainment
- Maple donuts, maple cotton candy and maple creemees
- Maple syrup and maple specialty products to purchase.

Have you ever tried a Maple Mojito? Would you like to try a slice of Maple Fennel Sausage pizza? Open house weekend visitors can also expect to be impressed by the diversity of maple as an ingredient as showcased by Vermont food and beverage businesses.

A few of the stops visitors shouldn't miss include Citizen Cider's Tasting Room at 316 Pint St. in Burlington, VT (www.citizencider.com) to try their new limited release Tree Tapper made with maple syrup; Shacksbury Cider's Tasting Room, 11 Main St. in Vergennes, VT (www.shacksbury.com) featuring a cider that is barrel aged in old WhistlePig Whiskey barrels and finished with a kiss of maple syrup; Saxton's River Distillery, 485 West River Rd. in Brattleboro, VT (www.saxtonsrivdistillery.com) featuring samples of their Sapling Maple Liqueur, Maple Bourbon and Maple Rye, all made using local Vermont maple syrup; Switchback Brewing Co., 160 Flynn Ave. in Burlington, VT (switchbackvt.com) featuring their signature Switchback Ale Maple Ice Cream Floats made with Lake Champlain Chocolate's vanilla ice cream and a maple syrup drizzle; and of course 14th Star Brewing Co., 133 N. Main St. in St. Albans, VT (www.14thstarbrewing.com) where visitors can always enjoy craft brews made with maple including their Maple Breakfast Stout.

For a full menu of maple, visitors can dine at partner restaurants like Mary's at Baldwin Creek, 1868 N. 116 Rd. in Bristol, VT (www.baldwincreek.net) who will be featuring special maple appetizers, entrees and desserts alongside other local ingredients as well as unique maple craft cocktails.

Visitors are encouraged to travel the state visiting sugarhouses to see how widely maple is produced and discover how maple has expanded its traditional uses as a breakfast topper to become the natural sweetener and flavor of choice. To ensure visitors make the most of the weekend, the event web page also provides a listing of lodging options.

Whether you're looking for a fun family outing, a couple's get-away, or a weekend experience, there is plenty to see and do!

Come and see for yourself why Maple is the Official Flavor of Vermont!

For more information about the weekend and to see the list of participating sugarhouses and partnering businesses, visit: www.vermontmaple.org/mohw.




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Billings Farm & Museum Baby Farm Animal Celebration

Billings Farm & Museum will feature its annual Baby Farm Animal Celebration on Friday and Saturday, March 30th and 31st, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The Farm's most popular event, the Baby Farm Animal Celebration offers the opportunity to meet the farm's baby animals. We'll also have heirloom seed and children's craft activities.

Our skilled staff will introduce you to the farm's calves, lambs, steers, piglets, chicks, ducklings, and goslings and discuss their care, diet, and growth, while you see them up close.

Start planning your garden! Learn about the importance of heirloom seeds and plant a seed from the Billings Farm garden to take home. Craft your own farm animal plant marker to go with your plantings.

Admission includes all programs and activities plus the farm life exhibits, 1890 Farm House, and working dairy farm.

Billings Farm is an operating Jersey dairy farm that continues 147-year tradition of agricultural excellence and offers farm programs and historical exhibits that explore Vermont's rural heritage and values. The Billings Farm & Museum is owned and operated by The Woodstock Foundation Inc., a charitable non-profit institution.

Billings Farm & Museum is open for Baby Farm Animal Celebration on March 30 & 31 and then open for the season daily, April 2 through October 31, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; weekends November through February, and Christmas & February vacation weeks, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission: adults: \$15; 62 & over: \$14; 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 Vermont Route 12. For information call (802) 457-2355 or visit www.billingsfarm.org.



Lambs in sweaters at Billings Farm & Museum in Woodstock, VT.

photo by Billings Farm & Museum

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.

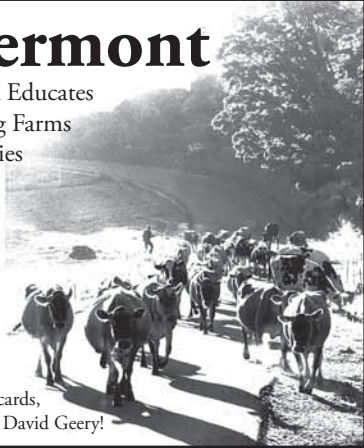
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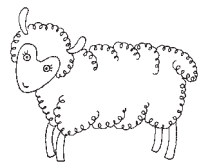
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Comments _____

Mail to:

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Winter's End



Outside the window, dark and still,
Lambs are calling upon the hill
With a bleating, wavering, quavering cry,
Calling and calling, they don't know why.
They are so little, so leggy, so lost,
They hate the dark and they fear the frost;
All of them running, sisters and brothers,
Calling aloud for their milky mothers.
None of them guesses, how could they know,
That a warm wind out of the south will blow
To soften the grass with sun and flowers,
To bring the babies out of their wraps,
Their gaiters and woolies, their mittens and caps,
All the babies, so round and sweet,
Waving their hands and their dimpled feet
To welcome the light and the kind spring weather
When lambs and children can play together.

—EILUNED LEWIS
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Visit a Sugarhouse on Vermont Maple Open House Weekend!

Sugaring season is underway! This spring be sure to visit a Vermont Maple Sugarhouse. Call ahead for their hours or just plan to visit on Maple Open House Weekend. Here are a few of the many sugarhouses that welcome you. For a complete listing go to vermontmaple.org/mohw.

Bennington, VT. The Wing Farm, 599 Town Line Road West, (802) 362-8598. www.wingfarmvermont.com. Small scale sugaring operation in Southwestern Vermont. A family run operation where focus is on a high quality product made on a small arch over a wood fire. Saturday open house hours: 10-5, Sunday 10-4. We pride ourselves in providing a fun and educational experience in the sugarhouse. Sugarhouse and sugar bush tours and a nice Vermont farm experience. We will provide samples of syrup and will have locally produced goodies, honey from our bees, and other delicious items for purchase. Don't miss out on the hot dogs cooked in maple syrup. People come back year after year for those! Directions: Town Line Rd. is diagonally across from the Highland Hall School, off of Rt. 7A in Shaftsbury. We are 1/2 mile up on the left. Look for the big red barns. Please park in the driveway and follow the signs out to the sugar house (a short walk).

Brookfield, VT. Brookfield Bees, 1148 Kibbee Rd. (802) 276-3808. Saturday & Sunday open house hours: 11-3. Tour of the operation, sugar-on-snow, hot mulled cider, syrup sampling, maple treats. Directions: from Exit 4 of I-89 follow Rt. 66 East for about a mile. Turn left onto Ridge Rd. Go 1.3 miles to N. Randolph Rd. and turn right. Go 1.7 miles to Curtis Rd. and turn left. Go 1 mile to Kibbee Rd. and turn right. Go 1.1 miles and look for Brookfield Bees sign. We are on a dirt road, so 4-wheel or all-wheel drive is a necessity.

Fairfield, VT. Branon's West View Maples, 709 West St. (802) 527-2430. www.branonorganicmaple.com. Saturday & Sunday open house hours: 8-4. Sugarhouse tours, sample maple products, sugar-on-snow, and maple breakfast both Saturday and Sunday 8-12! Directions: from I-89 Exit 19 (St Albans): take right at light onto Rt. 104, at next light take right onto Rt. 36, continue on Rt. 36 just over 4 miles, take right onto Bradley Rd., take first right onto West St., the sugarhouse is the second place on the left—you can't miss us!

Huntington, VT. Audubon Vermont and Green Mountain Audubon Center, 255 Sherman Hollow Rd., (802) 434-3068. www.vt.audubon.org. Saturday & Sunday open house hours: 11-4. Sugar-on-snow parties on both Saturday and Sunday. Free maple education programs and demonstrations of the traditional bucket sap collection and wood-fired maple syrup boiling techniques. Our professional teacher-naturalists will lead free tours of the sugarbush and sugarhouse. Directions: Audubon's sugar house is located on the Main Rd. in Huntington, five miles from the traffic light in downtown Richmond. Use the street address 214 Main Rd.. in Huntington to find directions online.

Manchester Center, VT. Dutton Farmstand, 2083 Depot St., (802) 362-3083. www.duttonberryfarm.com. Saturday & Sunday open house hours: 9-7. Complete sugaring demonstrations including sugar lot tours, tours of sugar house, syrup samples and more. Specialty food samples, live music on Saturday. Directions: 2083 Depot St., Manchester Center, VT Rt. 11/30 southeast of Manchester Center about 2-1/2 miles.

Middletown Springs, VT. Mahar Maple Farm, 9 Mountain Rd. (802) 353-9863. www.maharmaple.com. Saturday & Sunday open house hours: 9-3. Combining old-style sugaring techniques with new age technology that allows us to make excellent tasting Vermont maple syrup. See our new state of the art wood fired evaporator process maple sap to maple syrup in an exceptionally clean and spacious sugarhouse. We guarantee you will be very impressed with our family run sugarhouse! Live boiling of maple sap to our award winning maple syrup. Educational talks on everything maple. Free sugar-on-snow. Children's maple scavenger hunt. Directions: follow signs from the center of town in Middletown Springs. 1/2 mile on south St., right hand turn to Coy Hill Rd. 2 miles to intersection of Mountain Rd. Straight on Mountain Rd. with the sugarhouse on your next left!

Mount Holly, VT. Papa John's Sugar Shack LLC, 221 Healdville Rd., (802) 259-7800. www.papajohnssugarshack.com. Saturday open house hours: 10-3, Sunday 10-4. Family owned and operated sugarhouse. We enjoy the outdoors and love teaching others on how maple syrup is made. Welcome to our family run sugar house. We boil with oil and if the weather permits we will be boiling and you will be able to see how sap is turned in to Vermont maple syrup as well as a tour of our sugar house. Samples of waffles with our freshly made maple syrup, maple cotton candy and other maple products. Products for sale, too. We hope you are able to enjoy your time with us and learn about sugaring. Directions: Rt. 7 south, turn left on Rt.103 south for 14.4 miles then turn right on Healdville Road for 0.4 miles on left. From Ludlow, Route 103 North for six miles and turn left onto Healdville Rd. 0.4 miles on left.



photo courtesy of the Vermont Historical Society Library
Sugaring with oxen in Vermont in the early 1900s. 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.

North Chittenden, VT. Baird Farm, 65 West Rd., (802) 483-2963. www.bairdfarm.com. Saturday open house hours: 11-3, Sunday open house hours: 11-4. Free sugarhouse tours, free tastings, and free Rosemary Waffles. Come out for a fun day on the farm!

Orwell, VT. Village Mapleworks, 505 Main St. Saturday open house hours: 10-3, Sunday 10-2. Making maple syrup, sampling maple syrup, maple cream, maple candy, and our Boubon maple syrup. Tasty maple ground beef stew also available to warm up cold visitors. Directions: from Rt. 22A take Rt. 73 into the town of Orwell. Buxtons Store is in the center of town, we are immediately next to the store.

Poultney, VT. Green's Sugarhouse, 1846 Finel Hollow Rd., (802) 287-5745. www.greensugarhouse.com. Saturday & Sunday open house hours: 10-4. A family operated sugarhouse with about 5,000 taps, all on pipeline, but we hang a few buckets for those photo opportunities and a chance to sample some maple sap. We boil with a wood-fired evaporator. Come by, meet the family and find out how some of Vermont's finest maple syrup and other maple products are made. Take one of our guided tours and see the entire process from our trees to the jug of fresh maple syrup you take home to enjoy. Directions: from the four corners in Poultney take Rt. 140 E into East Poultney. Stay on Rt. 140 out of the village with the cemetery on your left and the river on your right. About a 1/2 mile out of the village is an old narrow concrete bridge. Just as soon as you come off the bridge take a left. That's Finel Hollow Rd. We're about two miles up on the right. Watch for our brand new Green's Sugarhouse sign out front. There's easy access with no stairs and plenty of smiles.

Randolph Center, VT. Silloway Maple, 1303 Boudro Rd., (802) 272-6249. www.sillowaymaple.com. Saturday and Sunday 10-6. Hot dogs boiled in sap, Rebecca's raised doughnuts with maple for \$3. Free sugar-on-snow! Tours, we hope to be boiling! Second story viewing platform. Visit with the sugarmakers. Have a sample of new syrup! There will be plenty of maple syrup, candy, cream, sugar and maple almonds to take home. Directions: Exit 4, I-89, take Rt. 66 to Randolph Center. Turn right onto E. Bethel Rd., then left onto South Randolph Rd. between the White Church and the Red Schoolhouse. Continue straight onto Silloway Rd., then left onto Boudro Rd. The sugarhouse is on your right.

Rupert, VT. Merck Forest & Farmland Center, 3270 Rt. 315, (802) 394-7836. www.merckforest.org. Saturday & Sunday open house hours: 9-4. Pancake breakfast, 9-2 Saturday and Sunday with pancakes, our certified organic syrup, sausage from our own pasture-raised pigs, coffee, juice and milk. Adults \$10, children 5+ \$5. Horse-drawn wagon rides up to the sap house, sugaring demonstrations (weather permitting). Directions: located between Rupert and Dorset, at the top of the very large hill at 3270 Rt. 315. Please do not rely solely on your GPS: once you reach the top of the big hill on 315, turn into Merck Forest's Driveway. If you start going downhill, you've missed us!

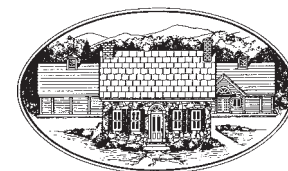
Shrewsbury, VT. Smith Maple Crest Farm LLC, 153 Lottery Rd., (802) 492-2151. www.smithmaplecrestfarm.com. Saturday open house hours: 9-4. Over 200 years of Smiths and their forefathers have farmed these acres of Vermont countryside. You can say that farming is more than just a job for us. Jeff Smith is our 7th generation master sugar-

maker who has a passion for making the best award-winning Vermont maple syrup. Our sugarhouse has been upgraded to meet VT State and VMSMA certification. Maple syrup samples, sugar-on-snow, wagon rides, boiling demonstration (weather permitting). Directions: Just off U.S. Rte. 103, two miles up Lincoln Hill Rd.—roads are paved and well kept so come up to Shrewsbury Center, and enjoy the day!

West Rutland, VT. Charron's Family Maple, 180 Blanchard Ave. (802) 342-7467. Saturday & Sunday open house hours: 10-4. Cotton candy, waffles, hot dogs, maple products. Directions: from Rt. 4A turn south onto Rt. 133 (Clarendon Ave.), then turn right on Blanchard Ave.

Westfield, VT. Couture's Maple Shop and B&B, 560 VT Rt. 100, (802) 744-2733. www.maplesyrupvermont.com. Saturday & Sunday open house hours: 10-4. Enjoy the smell of boiling sap and sample some fresh maple syrup. Our maple shop is a heated building and will be open. We will be serving a meal to those who would like it. Pauline's maple baked bean Chile with sugar-on-snow for desert! Directions: Rt. 100 just north of Westfield village.

Woodstock, VT. Sugarbush Farm Inc, 591 Sugarbush Farm Rd, (802) 457-1757. www.sugarbushfarm.com. Saturday & Sunday open house hours: 8-5. Working maple and cheese farm located five miles outside Woodstock. Sampling maple products every day as well as lots of explanations of how maple syrup is made and ideas for using it. Sugar house with video and displays open year round. Maple walk in the woods to see how trees are tapped with plastic tubing. Maple tasting, sugarhouse tours, farm store. Producer will be on hand to explain the process if there is no sap to boil. Directions: three miles of Rt. 4 in Taftsville. Cross the Historic Taftsville covered bridge and follow the signs to our sugarhouse. Remember to bring your boots as this is mud season.



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Poor Will's Guide To Farming and Gardening

by Bill Felker

March 1: The Ducks-Scouting-for-Nests Moon is full this evening, and full moon today so close to perigee (on February 27) creates lunar conditions that strengthen the first cold front of March, increasing the likelihood of snow in the North and tornadoes in the South. Onions seeds and sets, potatoes, radishes, beets, carrots and turnips can be sown directly in the ground anytime between now and new moon on the 17th. All bedding plants should be started in their flats.

March 2: Complete the spraying of fruit trees. Do late pruning on colder afternoons. Spread fertilizer after testing the soil. Test your soil. Seed and fertilize the lawn.

March 3: The Easter Market begins for lambs and kids. Explore demand for halal meat in your area.

March 4: Graft and repot houseplants. Dig fence post holes while the ground is soft and wet. Put in oats or ryegrass for quick vegetative cover.

March 5: Precipitation and wind typically mark the high-pressure system that usually arrives on or about the 5th. The last or second-last major snowstorm of the first half of the year sometimes strikes today.

March 6: Winter juncos migrate north for breeding. Male red-winged blackbirds sing in the swamps as females join them in their nesting areas.

March 7: Azaleas bloom all across the Deep South. In the East, buds lengthen and brighten on multiflora roses, honeysuckles, mock orange and lilacs.

March 8: Warm-weather crops like tomatoes should be ready to set out in the middle of May if you start them under lights this week. Try cucumbers, peppers, eggplant, squash and all delicate herbs or flowers indoors.

March 9: The March 9 cold front is often the most dangerous and the coldest high-pressure system in the first two-thirds of March.

March 10: In the Northeast, the coats of snowshoe hares begin changing from white to brown. Throughout the North, crows pair off and select nesting sites. Purple martins migrate. Peregrine falcons lay their eggs. Bald eagle chicks hatch.

March 11: Today's lunar apogee will decrease the likelihood of storms after the March 9 weather system (but not before) and stimulate warmer temperatures. Mites, scale and aphid eggs mature quickly on fruit trees if the temperature climbs above 60 degrees. The insects will be more easily controlled by dormant oil spray the closer they are to hatching.

March 12: Set out flats of pansies on milder afternoons

March 13: The front that often arrives near this date is expected to be strengthened by the upcoming new moon on the 17th.

March 14: Foliage of yarrow, lupine, phlox, columbine, coneflower, yarrow, sage, sweet pea, mallow, wild parsnip, goldenrod, snow-on-the mountain, New England aster, Queen Anne's lace, pyrethrum, bleeding heart, lamb's quarters and evening primrose appears in warmer corners of the woods and garden.



photo by Nancy Cassidy

A mother ewe with her lambs. If you count the legs you can see she has another hiding behind her, in Central Vermont.

March 15: Midseason crocus plants bloom beside the earlier snow crocus. Cardinals now sing a quarter of an hour earlier than they did two weeks ago.

March 16: The mass flowering of violets and dandelions now occurs in the South and will arrive in Vermont in four to five weeks.

March 17: Today's new moon not only brings robins into song across most of the nation, it offers some of the very best lunar seed starting of the entire year for flowers and for vegetables that will produce their fruit above the ground. And today is St. Patrick's Day, a traditional time to plant peas and potatoes. In the wetlands, ragwort buds when weeping willows glow yellow-green. In the woods, toad trillium pushes up through the leaves as turkeys start to gobble.

March 18: Clean and disinfect the henhouse as spring turns to summer. Fertilize your pastures several weeks before you let your livestock graze. Keep an eye out for bloat, however, as you let your kids, calves and lambs enjoy the new greenery.

March 19: Beginning today and lasting through the 30th, the second major March storm period increases the threat of tornadoes in the South and surprise blizzards in the North. The season of flowering fruit trees is underway through the South.

March 20: Today is equinox, and the front closest to equinox historically brings freezing temperatures and clear skies to the northern half of the nation.

March 21: Sandhill cranes migrate in the Rocky Mountains.

March 22: When new raspberry leaves are almost ready

for tea, scillas color city lawns blue, and soft touch-me-nots have sprouted in the wetlands.

March 23: Transplant shade and fruit trees, shrubs, grape vines, strawberries, raspberries and roses while the ground temperature remains in the 40s and 50s. Complete field and garden planting preparations.

March 24: The moon enters its second phase at 10:35 a.m., and the March 24 weather system should be relatively mild under this weak lunar period. 25: Chickweed and shepherd's purse are open in the alleys. The first white star magnolia blossoms unravel in town.

March 26: The moon is at perigee this afternoon, strengthening as it continues to wax gibbous.

March 27: In wilderness areas of the Southwest, late March often brings the peak of wildflower season.

March 28: This is the time of year that Early Spring's first butterflies—the question marks, the mourning cloaks, the tortoise shells and the cabbage whites—typically emerge in milder springs. Cardinals now sing 45 minutes earlier than they sang four weeks ago.

March 29: The last front of March (influenced by proximity to lunar perigee and full moon) arrives near this date

March 30: Today through April 7 is the time of Passover. The Jewish market typically is best after religious holidays come to a close. Milk-fed lambs and kids below 60 pounds are favored for the Passover market. Lamb stew is a traditional Seder dish at Passover Seder dinners.

March 31: The moon is full this morning. This is the second full moon of March and the second Blue Moon of 2018.

March in Vermont

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

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

For bitter looks and biting breath
He has no likes nor kind;

The children born when he's around
Will neither grow nor mind;
He drives the well towards Jacksonville
And leaves the sick behind.

He hates to see the bare-back ground
Stick up above the snow;
He hates to see the onions sprout
And autos start to go;
He likes a coalpile best that's gone,
And next best when it's low.

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

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

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

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A Vermont Almanack for Early Spring

by Bill Felker

The earth lies out now like a leopard, drying her lichen and moss spotted skin in the sun, her sleek and variegated hide.

—Henry David Thoreau

The Sun's Progress

Equinox occurs at 11:15 a.m. March 20. The Sun enters the Middle Spring sign of Aries on March 21. Daylight Saving Time begins at 2:00 a.m. on Sunday, March 11.

Phases of the Ducks-Scouting-for Nests Moon And the Golding Goldfinch Moon

When spring advances north from the Gulf of Mexico and ducks and geese are nesting, goldfinches gradually lose their winter color and become gold once again. Daffodils and golden goldfinches go together in the year, complemented by the full flowering of squills, croci, spring iris and early Lenten roses (hellebores) in time for Easter.

March 1: The Ducks-Scouting-for-Nests Moon is full at 8:51 p.m.

March 9: The moon enters its final quarter at 6:19 a.m.

March 11: The moon reaches apogee at 4:13 a.m.

March 17: The Golding Goldfinch Moon is new at 6:11 a.m.

March 24: The moon enters its second phase at 10:35 a.m.

March 26: The moon is at perigee at 12:17 p.m.

March 31: The moon is full at 7:36 a.m. This is the second Blue Moon of 2018

The Stars

On March evenings, the constellation Leo, with its key-stone star, Regulus, lie in the center of the sky. The Pleiades, followed by Taurus and its red eye, lead Orion into his Early Spring position in the far west. The Big Dipper is moving into the sky almost directly above you.

The Planets

Now in Sagittarius with Saturn, Mars still lies in the southeast before the sun comes up. Jupiter, traveling along the southern horizon through the night, remains bright in Libra. Venus finally becomes visible for the first time this year as the evening star in Pisces.

Meteorology and Peak Activity Times For Livestock, Fish, Game and Dieters

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

New moon on March 17 and full moon on the 1st and 31st are likely to bring increased chances of storms and deep cold across the North.

Fishing and hunting may be most rewarding and dieting could be most frustrating near these dates at midday when the moon is new, in the afternoon and evening when the moon is in its first quarter, at night when the moon is full and in its third quarter, in the morning when the moon is in its fourth quarter.

Newfane, VT

4th Annual West River Railroad Soup Fest and Silent Auction

The 4th Annual Soup Fest and Silent Auction fund raiser will be held on Sunday, March 25th at the NewBrook Fire Station on Route 30 in Newfane, VT. The event will help raise funds for the final restoration phase of the Historical Society of Windham County's 1880 Newfane Railroad Station and West River Railroad Museum.

You won't have to ride the "36 Miles of Trouble" to sample homemade soups from Brattleboro to South Londonderry. These restaurants all the way up the gauge of the West River Railroad line are catering to you:

The Whetstone Station, Brattleboro; The Top of the Hill Grill, Brattleboro; The Eatery, Williamsville; Rick's Tavern, Newfane; Harmonyville Store, Townshend; The Townshend Country Inn, Townshend; The Dam Diner,

West Townshend; The Bitter Sweet Memories Cafe, Wardsboro; D & K Jamaica Grocery, Jamaica; Fran's Kitchen, Winhall; The New American Grill, South Londonderry.

Doors open at 4 p.m. with a suggested admission donation of \$5 to \$10. Bidding and the 50/50 raffle open at 4 p.m. and end at 5:30 p.m. Soup and bread will be served at 5:30 p.m., with desserts to follow. It will be a great way to shake off the winter blues, support the project, and come home with a great auction find or two.

For more information contact the Historical Society of Windham County for more information at (802) 365-4148. info@historicalsocietyofwindhamcounty.org. www.historicalsofwindhamcounty.org.



A new calf joins the family in the early spring in Central Vermont.

photo by Nancy Cassidy

Maple Syrup Primer

by Dr. Leonard Perry

Extension Professor, University of Vermont

Most know maple syrup comes from the sap of the sugar maple tree, collected and boiled down each spring to make more dense. Whether you make your own maple syrup as a fun family activity, for income, or just enjoy using it, you should know some of the interesting facts about this important agricultural product in our region.

The Cornell University maple research and education website has many interesting facts about maple syrup, such as the most common one that it takes about 43 gallons of sap boiled down to make a gallon of maple syrup. A tree in the forest may produce 10 to 15 gallons of sap in the spring, while roadside trees 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.

Storage a clue

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 where the sap is stored. If sap is collected once buds develop on the trees, it becomes less pleasing. The sugar maple has the longest period before buds develop, so the longest season to collect sap among the maples. The sugar maple primarily grows in the northeastern United States and eastern Canada.

Extracting the sap

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 vacuum tubing one sees throughout maple stands in spring. To avoid stresses to 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 18 inches 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.

Sap flows out


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.

Sweetness varies

The sweetness of the sap, and so of the resulting syrup, may vary yearly depending on factors the previous season. If the tree is too vigorous or is attacked by pests, it may use up more sugars and so result in less sweet sap.

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 about 66 percent sugar (measured as "Brix"). Quality of syrup will be affected by the season, time of season the sap is collected, and how it is processed.

Dr. Leonard P. Perry, Extension Professor, UVM. Check out Perry's Perennial Pages at www.uvm.edu/~pass/perry.



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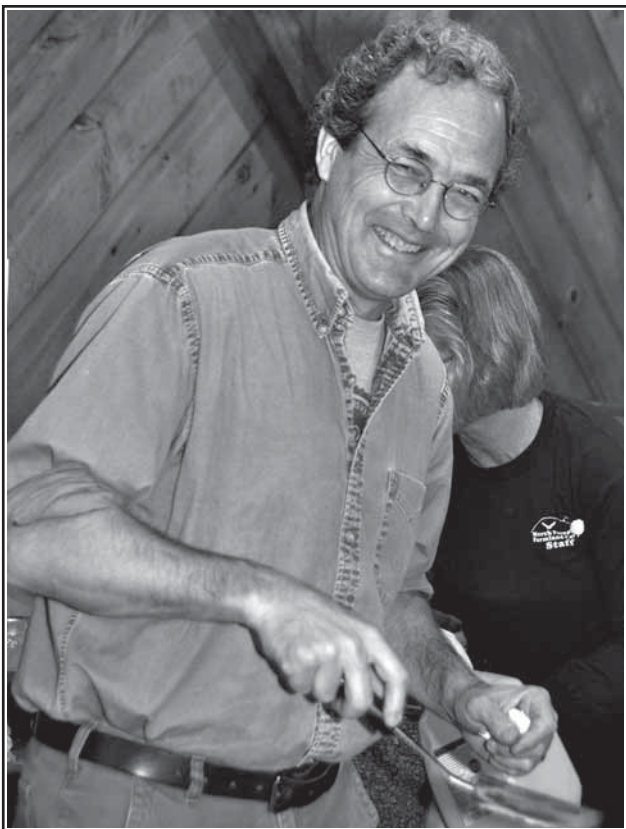


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Flipping pancakes for guests at Merck Forest!



The drip, drip, dripping of the sap at Merck Forest and Farmland Center in Rupert, VT. photo courtesy of Merck Forest and Farmland Center



photo courtesy of Merck Forest and Farmland Center

Visitors enjoy a pancake breakfast on the deck at Merck Forest and Farmland Center's Maple Celebration in Rupert, VT.



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www.merckforest.org

Merck Forest and Farmland Center Hosts Spring Events

Merck Forest and Farmland Center in Rupert, VT invites you to come and enjoy its program of springtime events. Be sure to come for our annual Maple Celebration and Pancake Breakfast!

To learn more about the details of an event which interests you, please call the Joy Green Visitor Center at (802) 394-7836 or stop by. Advance reservations—made on a first-come first-served basis—are necessary for many events due to space limitations or scheduling considerations. Payment in full is due upon registration. Our certified organic pure Vermont maple syrup and other farm and forest products may be purchased at our Visitor Center or our Online Store.

Springtime Event Schedule

Full Worm Moon Walk (or the Crow Moon, or Crust Moon, or Sap Moon, if you prefer). March 3, 6-8 pm. Join us on a staff-guided hike in the evening landscape. This hike will be of moderate difficulty and will take place only if weather conditions permit. Participants must be dressed appropriately for the weather with sturdy footgear, headlamps, water and snacks. Reservations are requested; fee: \$5 per person.

Adirondack Pack Basket Workshop. Saturday, March 10, 9 am to 3 pm. \$75/person plus \$35-\$50 materials fees (price dependent upon accessories). Make your own pack basket with Bliss McIntosh's expert instruction. Bring your lunch, a pair scissors, a flexible tape measure, six or so clothespins, and—optionally—a favorite carving knife and some small Pony clamps. Call (802) 394-7836 to reserve your spot in this class, which is limited to 12 participants.

Maple Celebration and Pancake Breakfast. March 24 & 25, 9 am to 2 pm. Our fabulous Maple Celebration features our own sausage and maple syrup, pancakes, eggs, coffee, juice and hot chocolate. There will be wagon rides, sugaring demonstrations, fun and games for everyone. It's a terrific way to send Old Man Winter packing. Adults: \$10 for 12 years old to adult, \$5 for youngsters 5-12, free for children younger than 5 years old.

Full Pink Moon Walk. March 31, 6-8 pm. The full Pink moon—and what do you know, it's a Blue Moon, too! This staff-guided hike will be of moderate difficulty. Participants must be dressed appropriately for the weather with sturdy footgear, headlamps, water and snacks. Reservations are requested; fee: \$5 per person.

Chicks and Eggs Children's Workshop. April 7, 10 am to noon. Visit the henhouse to learn about what our chickens



photo by Dan Sullivan

Phil Warren takes visitors on a ride with his team of Belgian draft horses at Merck Forest and Farmland Center.

are up to, then back to the Visitor Center to learn how to dye eggs, using natural dyes. \$10 per child or \$25 for three. Children must be accompanied by an adult companion.

Baa, Baa, Black Sheep Children's Workshop. April 7, 1:30 to 3:30. We'll introduce your youngsters to processing wool. We'll card wool from our sheep, felt it, then make a little storage bag to take home. \$10 per child or \$25 for three. Children must be accompanied by an adult companion.

Fairy Houses and Gnome Homes Children's Workshop. April 28, 1 to 3 pm. \$10 per magical dwelling. Tiny houses for wee creatures created by small builders. Construction materials and tools are provided, but your construction crew may bring additional materials from home to embellish their creation. Children must be accompanied by an adult companion.

Full Flower Moon Walk. April 28, 6-8 pm. Of moderate difficulty and will take place only if weather conditions permit. Dress for the weather with sturdy footgear, headlamps, water and snacks. Reservations requested; fee: \$5 per person.

SOLO Wilderness First Aid Workshop. April 28-29, 8:30 am to 5 pm. \$200 (\$240 with optional CPR Module). Pre-registration is required; bring a bag lunch.



Merck Forest and Farmland Center is a non-profit educational organization. It is composed of 3,162 acres and

includes a 3,100 acre managed forest, a certified-organic sugaring operation and a 62-acre farm. We offer on-site demonstrations, apprenticeships, workshops, school programs, and recreational and volunteer opportunities. The property is open free to the public daily, from dawn to dusk, year-round.

Visit the farm, venture into the forest or stay overnight in a rustic cabin or lean-to. With over thirty miles of trails for hiking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and horseback riding, Merck Forest and Farmland Center has a multitude of recreational opportunities. For outdoor events, dress for the weather: sturdy shoes/boots, layered clothing, snow/rain gear, flashlight/headlamp, snacks and water. Outdoor events are held weather-permitting.

Merck Forest and Farmland Center is located at 3270 Rt. 315 in Rupert, VT. (802) 394-7836. merckforest.org. We're located between Rupert and Dorset, at the top of the very large hill at 3270 Rt. 315 (Rupert Mountain Road). Please do not rely solely on your GPS: once you reach the top of the big hill on Rt. 315, turn into Merck Forest's Driveway. If you start going downhill, you've missed us!



Mom and daughter enjoy the pancake breakfast at Merck.

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Three Record-Setting Fish Caught in Vermont in 2017

New records set for cisco, carp and redhorse sucker

Vermont Fish & Wildlife today announced that three fish caught in 2017 have been certified as new state records.

Chase Stokes, 11, of Ferrisburgh caught a new record carp in April while fishing with a nightcrawler on Otter Creek in Panton. The fish weighed an incredible 33.25 pounds, measured 40 inches long and had a girth of 26.5 inches. Chase's carp beat out the previous record, which was caught in Lake Champlain in 2006, by just 4 ounces.

In May, Burlington angler Mike Elwood landed a new Vermont record redhorse sucker while fishing on the Winooski River in Colchester. The sucker, landed on a live worm, weighed 9.9 pounds and measured 29 inches long with an 18-inch girth, and it exceeded the previous record caught in 2015 by nearly a pound.

Finally, in September, Alan Franchot of Richmond caught a record cisco, also known as a lake herring, while trolling on Lake Champlain. Weighing 2 pounds, 4 ounces, the cisco was only the second of its species to be entered into the Vermont Record Fish Program since records started being kept by the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department 49 years ago in 1969.

"We saw some incredible catches in 2017, especially Chase's carp," said Shawn Good, fisheries biologist with Vermont Fish & Wildlife. "It was an impressive looking fish, but what's really exciting to me is that we're starting to see more Vermont anglers fish outside of the box, as I like to call it, by taking advantage of many of the overlooked fishing opportunities we have in our state."

"Vermont has an abundance of waters with a wide diversity of fish species that can be targeted and caught by hook-and-



Anglers caught three new state record fish in Vermont in 2017. Chase Stokes, 11, of Ferrisburgh caught this new record carp that weighed 33.25 pounds and measured 40 inches long.

line, which speaks to both the variety and quality of sport fishing opportunities supported by healthy waters and good aquatic habitat," said Good.

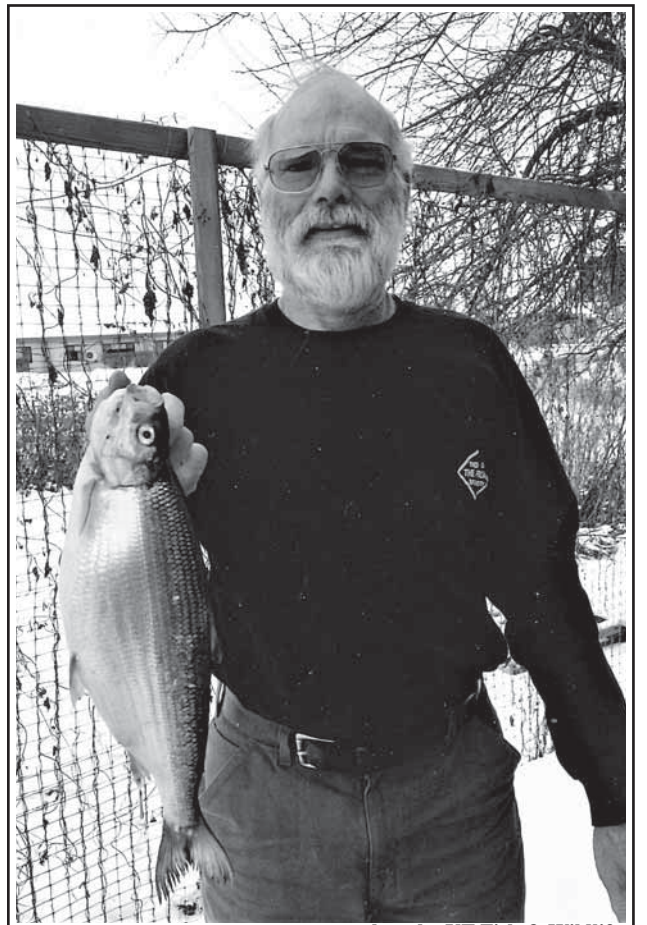
"While fishing remains excellent for more traditional species such as bass, trout, salmon, pike and others, there are so many other species out there that can provide amazing action with real trophy potential. Fish like bowfin, drum, gar,

fallfish, suckers—the opportunities are endless," said Good. "Catches like Mike's redhorse sucker and Alan's cisco just reinforce the notion that Vermont anglers are expanding their fishing pursuits and having a great time while doing it."

With spring just around the corner, be sure to visit vtfishandwildlife.com to buy your fishing license and get in on the exciting action!

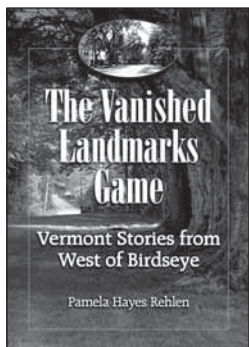


Burlington angler Mike Elwood caught this redhorse sucker last May on the Winooski River in Colchester, VT.



Alan Franchot of Richmond, VT caught this record cisco while trolling on Lake Champlain last September.

Captivating Stories from Castleton



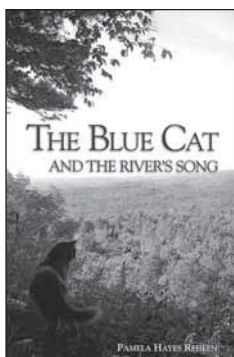
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The Last Leaf on South Street

by Pamela Hayes Rehlen

Betty White Harrington Zahnleiter died January 7th at home in her old-time-austere residence, a family place built by her grandfather in which she'd lived since 1943 and one of the last owner-occupied houses left on what is now Castleton University's often raucous, student-apartment-lined, South Street. She was 92.

Betty had outlived two husbands. She was first married to George Harrington, a Castleton lawyer, and later to Bill Zahnleiter, a widower who operated a machine shop in Whitehall.

Her son with George was a retired IBM executive, long ago moved to Utah—although he returned to Castleton each summer for a month's visit. Her Zahnleiter daughter was in Pittsford, VT, and her two Zahnleiter stepchildren were out West.

Betty lived in a house her grandfather built which she and George bought from Betty's Uncle Dan, an eccentric who afterward moved out to stay in their barn and raise a big Second World War Victory Garden.

Until the last decades of her life, South Street was full of Castletonians Betty had always known. Theodore Roosevelt Holden (Ted) and his wife Elaine—the Harrington's best friends, lived up the street in what had originally been the painter Thomas Hope's home and studio.

Out in a ragged field beyond the Holdens stood the little bare-bones house belonging to Helen Hall and her mother. Martha Towers was nearer, and then there was Castleton University math professor Chris White and his literary mother Dorothy.

The O'Neil family were the neighbors directly across the street. David O'Neil had been Betty's son, George's, best friend, and until Betty's death—although he'd moved to the other end of town—every morning he delivered her paper, her mail, and in the winter shoveled her driveway.

After the O'Neils, there was Edna Brown, Leon Gregory, the Huntleys, and the Burditts. Bob McClure, the town zoning administrator, and his son lived in the little house next door to Betty, and on the other side there was Mike Daniello, a part-time excavator working for the Town Water District.

As the years went by, this neighborhood changed as gradually as water seeping out of a bath. Mike Daniello relocated to South Street where he could maintain a shop behind his house. The father/son McClures moved on.

Neighbors died. Helen Hall had a stroke, and Martha Towers passed away in a Rutland nursing home not long after she'd celebrated her hundredth birthday with a party at the Federated Church.

But Betty's house always stayed the same, and Betty continued to be lively and tart. She'd come into the Village Store to buy a bottle of milk, and if I was there I'd mock- sternly remind her that meager one-off purchases like hers weren't enough to keep our business afloat.

We laughed because Betty knew all about downtown



photo courtesy of George Zahnleiter
Betty White Harrington Zahnleiter at the Castleton Memorial Day parade in 1953 or 1954. Betty (2nd from left) is holding her son George's hand, the little guy holding the flag. She would have been 28 or 29 years old. Her sister Dorothy (18 or 19 years old) is on the left. Her friend Elaine Holden, who also lived on South Street, is on the right.

Castleton businesses. Her father had owned an unsuccessful store, and a garage on Main Street where she'd worked for a time in the nineteen forties after she graduated from Fair Haven High School.

For decades, Betty continued like this, but in her eighties she took a bad fall, and it was announced in the Federated Church News Letter that she was rehabilitating at Indian River Nursing Home in Granville, NY.

When she returned to Castleton, she had a walker, and later, a wheelchair. A lot of people looked out for Betty in her old age. She no longer got to church. She kept her little-house-world neat as a pin and listened to her radio all day.

This last Thanksgiving when she came back from her daughter Kate's, she told Ray Ladd that she was finished with going out. She wouldn't leave her house again.

On one side of her, Mike Daniello's place was now a teeming, college-kids-rental. On the other, new student-tenants strung Tibetan prayer flags across Bob McClure's front porch. She was the last leaf on the tree, and not a house was

left on the street which was lived in by the town's people she'd always known.

In January, Betty took to her bed. A woman always known for her unshakable refusal to do what she didn't want to do, on her final day she rejected a trip to the hospital, dispatched her daughter, her nurse, her home health aid, Lois and Ray Ladd, and during the night she slipped away.

No more wheelchair, no more life-long-friends and neighbors gone. No more raucous-student-parties, no more empty beer cans littering her tidy front lawn. No more Tibetan prayer flags strung along the porch of Bob McClures old house next door.

I don't think it can be much fun being the last old-timer—living alone with memories in the house your grandfather built—left behind on a street where everyone you knew is no longer there.

Sometime in the night, Betty joined the people who had once lived around her and filled her life. She would be buried in Castleton's Hillside Cemetery, crowded snug into the family plot with the Whites, Woodburys, Harringtons and Zahnleiters.

The last leaf on South Street had blown away.

Vermont

Wide and shallow, in the cowslip marshes,
Floods the freshet of the April snow;
Late drifts linger in the hemlock gorges,
Through the brakes and mosses trickling slow;
Where the mayflower,
Where the painted trillium, leaf and blow.

Foliaged deep, the cool midsummer maples
Shade the porches of the long white street.
Trailing wide, Olympian elms lean over
Tiny churches where the cross-roads meet.
Fields of fireflies
Wheel all the night like stars above the wheat.

Blaze the mountains in the windless autumn,
Frost-clear, blue-nooned, apple-ripening days;
Faintly fragrant, in the farther valleys,



Smoke of many bonfires swells the haze:
Fair-bound cattle
Plod with lowing up the meadowy ways.
Roaring snows, down-sweeping from the uplands,
Bury the still valleys, drift them deep.
Low along the mountains, lake-blue shadows,
Sea-blue shadows, in the snow-drifts sleep.
High above them
Blinding crystal is the sunlit steep.

—SARAH NORCLIFFE CLEGHORN
1876-1959, Manchester, VT

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Spring Gardening Tips

by Leonard Perry, UVM Horticulturist and Charlie Nardozi, Garden Consultant

Helping bats by installing a bat house, sowing seeds of arugula and other greens, and choosing and caring for Easter lilies, are some of the gardening activities for this month.

Bats are important to our ecosystems, particularly in catching huge numbers of insects that damage our crops and gardens, as well as those such as mosquitoes that carry diseases. You can help bring them back by proper gardening practices, and by installing a bat house.

Bat houses are flattened wood boxes, open on the bottom, with single or multiple roosting chambers. Height (12 feet or more off the ground), location (on buildings is best, but poles can be used), orientation (generally toward the east, away from prevailing winds), and color (black to absorb heat in cold climates) are all important considerations. You can learn more on where to buy them, or how to build your own, from Bat Conservation International at www.batcon.org.

Sowing arugula and searching for Easter lilies

To get an early harvest of arugula and other greens, dig out a large shallow container and sow some seeds. Grow them indoors until the weather warms enough to put them outside during the day. Keep cutting leaves from the outside of the plants to prolong the harvest. Or you can sow seeds for a mesclun mix and cut off the leaves when still young. They will regrow for another harvest in a few weeks. Look for seeds to sow and grow quickly just for sprouts.

When buying an Easter lily, look for a plant with flowers in various stages of bloom from buds to open or partially opened flowers. Foliage should be dense, rich green in color, and extend all the way down to the soil line (a good indication of a healthy root system). Look for a well-proportioned plant, one that is about two times as high as the pot. You also should check the flowers, foliage, and buds for signs of yellowing (improper culture), insects, or disease.

At home, keep your lily away from drafts and drying heat sources such as wood stoves or heating ducts. Bright, indirect light is best with daytime temperatures of 60 to 65 degrees (F). Water the plant only when the soil feels dry to the touch, but don't overwater. If the pot is in foil, make sure water doesn't collect and remain in the foil.

To prolong the life of the blossoms, remove the yellow anthers (pollen-bearing pods) found in the center of each Easter lily flower.

Starting transplants

Probably the biggest gardening project for March is to start transplants. Cabbage, broccoli, and other cole crops that can be set out early in the spring, as well as slow-growing flower varieties like verbena, pansies, and petunias, can all be started this month. But wait until April to sow seeds for tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, and most flower varieties that cannot be transplanted until the danger of frost has past.

Warm days may tempt you into removing winter mulch but wait a bit longer. We still could have snow and some very cold nights, and plants still need protection.

Other gardening activities for this month include making pruning on a non-freezing day—fruit trees, blueberries, and summer-flowering shrubs.

Leonard Perry is Horticulture Professor Emeritus, Dept. Plant and Soil Sciences, UVM. Visit perrysperennials.info.

Charlie Nardozi is a horticulturist, author, gardening consultant, and garden coach. For more information go to gardeningwithcharlie.com.



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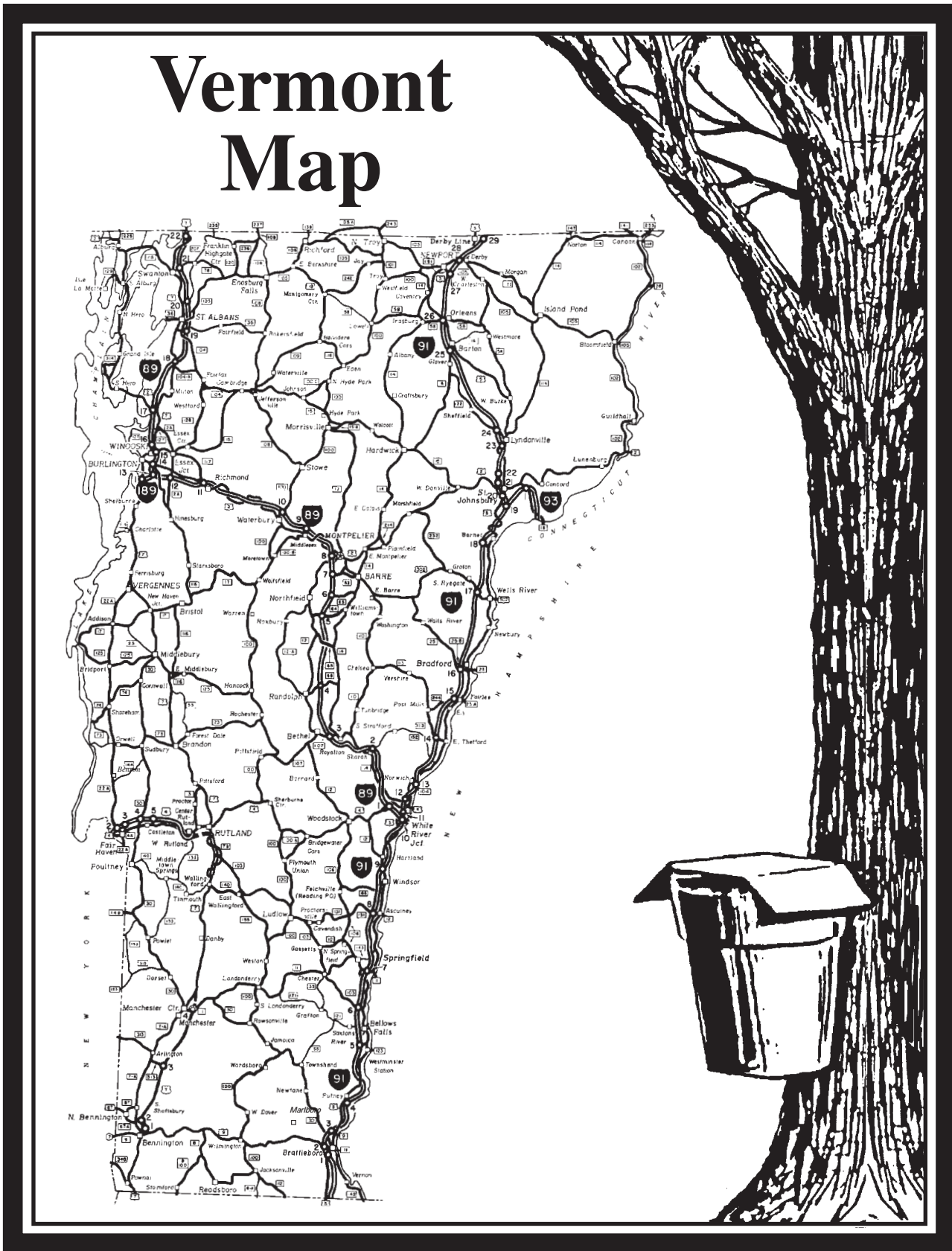
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Way Up In Old Vermont

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 chicadee;

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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Vermont Country Calendar

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

THURSDAY, MARCH 15

BURLINGTON. Burlington Irish Heritage Festival Concert: Sophie & Fiachra. The fiddle playing and singing of Quebecoise Sophie Lavoie, and uilleann piping and banjo playing of Fiachra O'Regan from Ireland. \$20 suggested donation at the door. 6-8:30 pm. Burlington Violin Shop, 23 Church St. mark.sustic@gmail.com. admin@burlingtonirishheritage.org. burlingtonirishheritage.org.

PITTSFORD. Book & Author Event. Vermont author, Megan Price will discuss her most recent book, *Vermont Wild—Volume # 5*. This most recent volume features legendary warden Denny Gaiotti of Whiting, VT. Warden Gaiotti passed away earlier this year, but not before Megan met with him to save more of his true, humorous and sometimes harrowing stories. Free. 7 pm. The Maclure Library, 840 Arch St. off Rt. 7. (802) 483-2972. www.maclurelibrary.org.

FRIDAY, MARCH 16

TINMOUTH. Contra Dance. Dugan Murphy calling and music by Cedar and Arthur and Guillaume from Cloud Ten and Nova. Admission \$10, 12 and under free. Refreshments available. 8-11 pm at Tinmouth Community Center, Rt. 140, 5 miles west of Wallingford. (802) 446-2928. tinmouthvt.org. Every third Friday.

SATURDAY, MARCH 17

BENNINGTON. St. Patrick's Day Parade. Floats, marching bands, performers, and candy for kids. Fundraiser kick-off breakfast at JC's Tavern. Parade circles down Main Street, then up North Street to return to JC's for live Irish music, great food and beverage specials. Main Street. (802) 442-5758.

BRADFORD. Penny Sale. Many items to choose from, as well as dollar raffle tickets for gift certificates and for new and like-new items. Drawings start at 1 pm; must be present to win. Refreshments available. 10 am - 1 pm. Orange East Senior Center, 176 Waits River Rd. (802) 429-2163.

BRADFORD. St. Patrick's Day Dinner and Auction. Corned beef and cabbage with all the fixings, cooked by chefs Skip and Carol Metayer. Followed by an auction of all-new items with auctioneer Herb Gray. Price: \$15. 6-9 pm. Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church, 113 Upper Plain. (802) 222-9316. bobbiegallerani@charter.net.

BURLINGTON. Burlington Irish Heritage Festival Concert. Altan—A St. Patrick's Day Celebration. Six-piece band infuses a contemporary sensibility into traditional music, from hard driving jigs and reels to the sweet and sad ballads sung in Gaelic and English. Tickets: \$25-\$70. 8 pm. Flynn Main Stage, 153 Main St. (802) 863-5966. box@flynncenter.org. admin@burlingtonirishheritage.org. burlingtonirishheritage.org.

BURLINGTON. St. Patrick's Day Parade of Trucks and Concrete Mixers. Trucks and concrete mixers from SD Ireland Construction Corporation will be driving through Burlington and Winooski area in celebration of St. Patrick's Day and finding a cure for cancer. Free. 3 pm. 2 Church St. (802) 985-8740. sdicancerresearch.org.

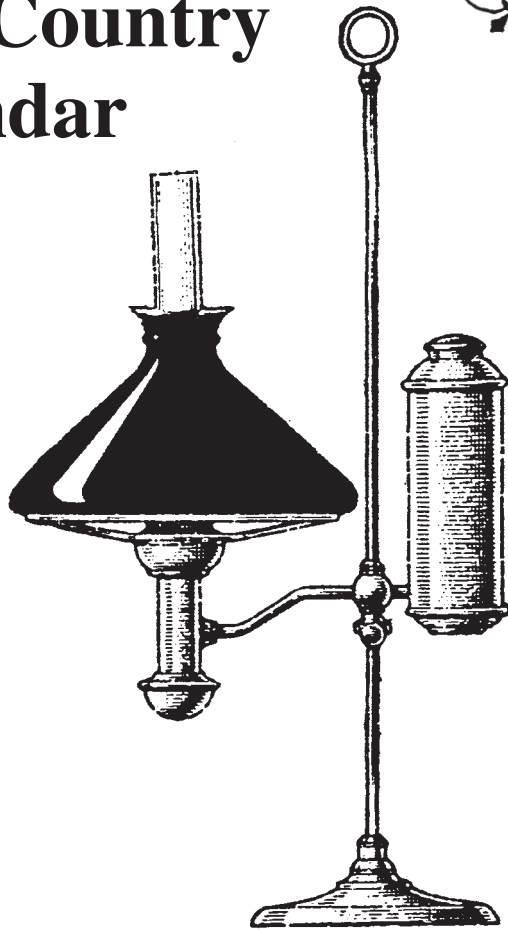
CHESTER. Annual LEGO Contest. LEGOmanciacs Pre-K through Grade 8 and families display their original creations (no kits allowed). Entries should be constructed at home and brought to NewsBank from 9-10 am on contest day. There is also a separate family class, plus a motorized class for original constructions. Refreshments will be on sale. Registration: \$15 by March 9, after then, \$20. 9 am - 1 pm. NewsBank Conference Center, 352 Main St. (802) 875-1340. lbwillisct@comcast.net.

COLCHESTER. Talk: Using Facebook for Genealogy. Maureen O'Brien will show you how Facebook can help in your genealogy research. She will explore genealogy groups and pages, and show you how to connect with friendly people who are willing to help strangers. Fee: \$10. 10:30 and - 12 noon. Vermont Genealogy Library Hegeman Ave, Fort Ethan Allen. (802) 310-9285. vtgenlib.org.

HANOVER, NH. Music and Dance for St. Patrick's Day: Pete's Posse with Sharon Comeau. Pete Sutherland, Oliver Scanlon and Tristan Henderson perform tunes from and about Ireland on fiddle, mandolin, vocals and more. Sharon Comeau will share some simple and sprightly Irish dance steps. Free, no tickets required. 11 am. Alumni Hall, Hopkins Center for the Arts, 4 E. Wheelock St. (603) 646-2422. hop.dartmouth.edu.

HARTFORD. Sugar-on-Snow Supper. Baked ham, mashed potato, green beans, coleslaw, homemade rolls, sugar-on-snow, raised donuts and pickles for dessert. Served family style. Adults \$12, children under 12 \$5, pre-schoolers free. Handicapped accessible. Reservations recommended. Seatings at 5 pm and 6 pm. Greater Hartford United Church of Christ, Rt. 14. (802) 295-2510.

JEFFERSONVILLE. Smuglers' Notch Maplefest. Local sugarhouse tours. Maple themed activities: sugar-on-snow tasting, snowshoe and walking treks, specialty food and beverage sampling. (877) 260-6187. smuggs.com/maple. Through April 1.



GUILFORD. Sugar-on-Snow Supper. Menu: 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. Prices: adults \$12, children age 11 and under \$6, preschoolers \$3. Three seatings: 4:30, 5:45, and 7 pm. Guilford Community Church, 38 Church Dr. (802) 254-9019. guilfordchurchsupper@gmail.com. www.guilfordchurch.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. Cost: \$4-\$6. Seatings every half hour, 11 am - 4 pm. Morse Farm Sugar Works, 1168 County Rd. (800) 242-2740. www.morsefarm.com. Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays through March 25.

PLAINFIELD, NH. March Madness Fabric Frenzy and Tag Sale. 10 am - 3 pm. Early Preview \$5 donation from 9-10 am. Blow-Me-Down Grange No. 234, 1107 Rte. 12A. (603) 448-0773.

RANDOLPH. Concert: Masters of the Celtic Harp. William Jackson and Gráinne Hambly perform Irish and Scottish music on harp, concertina, whistle and bouzouki. Tickets: \$20. 7:30 pm. Chandler Center for the Arts, 71-73 Main St. (802) 728-6464. chandler-arts.org.

RUTLAND. Fourth Annual Shiver Me Shamrocks 5K Fun Run/Walk, to benefit Wonderfeet Kids' Museum. Kids' free Leprechaun Leap Fun Run down Center Street at 1pm. Race prizes for overall first place Men & Women and first place in each age group for both Men & Women. After party at Hop n' Moose. Prizes for Best Costume. Fee: \$30 advance, \$35 race day, kids run free. 12 noon - 4 pm. Heritage Family Credit Union, 50 West St. (888) 252-8932. shannon.poole@hfcvt.com.

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers' Market. Local produce, crafts, prepared foods. Live music. EBT and debit cards. 10 am - 2 pm. Vermont Farmers, Food Center at 251 West St. in downtown Rutland. (802) 342-4727. info@vtfarmersmarket.org. www.vtfarmersmarket.org. Saturdays through May 5th.

SHOREHAM. St. Patrick's Day Breakfast. Pancakes with Vermont maple syrup, sausage, corned beef hash, home fries, egg casseroles, Irish soda bread, and beverages. Cost: adults \$8, children \$4, families \$20. 8-10 am. Shoreham Congregational Church, 28 School Rd.

ST. ALBANS. St. Patrick's Day Parade, from the Court House to City Hall. After the parade, at St. Albans City Hall Auditorium: Irish adult beverages and "green" drinks for the kids. Corned beef & cabbage and St. Pat's treats available for sale. Face painting, Irish dance performances. Free, small charge for food and beverages. 6-7 pm. Main St. (802) 524-1500. stalbansrec.com.

VERGENNES. Concert: Prydein, Celtic rock band, with The Catamount Bagpipe Band. Tickets: \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door. 7:30 pm. Vergennes Opera House, 120 Main St. (802) 877-6737.

WARREN. Sugaring Time Festival. Delicious variety of maple themed activities. Search for maple nips in a resort wide scavenger hunt and win sweet prizes, indulge in maple dining specials, and more. 8 am - 4 pm. Sugarbush Resort, 1840 Sugarbush Access Rd. (802) 583-6300.

WEST FAIRLEE. Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner. Home-cured corned beef, served family style. Adults \$13, kids 5-10 \$6. 5-6:30 pm. West Fairlee Congregational Church, 954 Route 113. (802) 685-3141.

WEST NEWBURY. Pancake Breakfast. Pancakes with strawberries, whipped cream and West Newbury maple syrup; locally-sourced sausages and bacon; coffee, tea, cider, milk and orange juice. By donation. 7-10 am. West Newbury Hall, 219 Tyler Farm Rd. 802-429-2632. westnewburyhall.org.



Vermont Spring Farmers Markets

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

You'll also find all sorts of crafts, jewelry, and knitted goods for that special gift, not to mention Vermont wines and artisan cheeses. At some markets you can enjoy music and entertainment and have a snack while you shop.

Brattleboro Winter Farmers Market at the River Garden, 157 Main St., Brattleboro, VT. Saturdays through 3/31. 10 am - 2 pm. Sherry Maher. samaher@vermontel.net. (802) 869-2141. www.facebook.com/BrattleboroWinterFarmersMarket.

Burlington - UVM Medical Center Farmers Market at the Davis Concourse, UVM Medical Center, 111 Colchester Ave., Burlington, VT. Thursdays through 4/26. 2:30-5 pm. Tanya McDonald, tanya.mcdonald@uvmhealth.org. (802) 847-5823.

Burlington Farmers Market at the Dudley Davis Center (UVM), 590 Main St. Burlington, VT. Saturdays, 3/10, 3/24, 4/7, 4/21. 10 am - 2 pm. Chris Wagner, chriswag31@gmail.com. 802-399-0149. www.burlingtonfarmersmarket.org.

Dorset Farmers Market at the J.K. Adams Kitchen Store, 1430 VT Rt. 30, Dorset, VT. Sundays through 4/29 (no market 4/1). 10 am - 2 pm. Carol Adinolfi, marketmanager@dorsetfarmersmarket.com. (802) 353-9656. www.dorsetfarmersmarket.com.

Montpelier - Capital City Farmers Market at the City Center Building (1st floor), 89 Main St., Montpelier, VT. Saturdays 3/10, 3/24, 4/14, 4/28. 10 am - 2 pm. Ashton Kiral, manager@montpelierfarmersmarket.com. (802) 793-8347. capitalcityfarmersmarket.com.

Middlebury Farmers Market at the VFM Building, 99 Exchange St., Middlebury, VT. Saturdays through 4/28. 9 am - 12:30 pm. Sharon Kerwin, middleburyfarmersmkt@yahoo.com. (802) 462-3486. www.middleburyfarmersmarket.org.

Northfield Farmers Market at Plumley Armory, Norwich University, 158 Harmon Dr., Northfield, VT. Sundays 3/4, 4/8. 11 am - 2 pm. Amanda Brigham, northfieldfarmersmarketvt@gmail.com. (802) 345-0686. northfieldfarmersmarketvt.org/index.html.

Norwich Farmers Market at Tracy Hall, 300 Main St., Norwich, VT. Saturdays 3/10, 3/24, 4/14, 4/28. 9 am - 1 pm. Steve Hoffman, manager@norwichfarmersmarket.org. (802) 384-7447. www.norwichfarmersmarket.org.

St. Johnsbury - Caledonia Farmers Market Association at the St. Johnsbury Welcome Center, 50 Depot Square, St. Johnsbury, VT. Saturdays 3/3, 3/17, 4/7, 4/21. 10 am - 1 pm. Curtis Sjolander, cfmamanager@gmail.com. (802) 626-9471. sites.google.com/site/caledoniafarmersmarket.

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

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Vermont Country Calendar

(Saturday, March 17, continued)

WHITINGHAM. 20th Annual Whitingham Maple Festival. Stop by the Information Booth at Twin Valley Middle High School, Rt. 100 for schedule, 8 am – 4 pm. Pancake breakfast, sugar house tours, craft fair, horse-drawn sleigh rides, lunch at the school, maple cooking contest, sugar-on-snow ham dinner. (802) 368-2405. www.whitingham-maplefest.us. Also March 18.

SUNDAY, MARCH 18

BURLINGTON. Burlington Irish Heritage Festival Ceili. Area musicians are welcome to bring their instruments and join in. Bake sale, display tables with information on Irish language and culture, and other events. Members of the McFadden Academy of Irish Dance will perform and also lead audience participation in Ceili dances. Grand Prize drawing for 'Luck of the Irish' raffle. Admission free, donations welcome. 1-3 pm. Contois Auditorium, City Hall, 149 Church St. admin@burlingtonirishheritage.org. www.burlingtonirishheritage.org.

MIDDLETOWN SPRINGS. 30th Annual Maple Festival. Maple lore and demonstrations, sweet treats from local kitchens, raffle and silent auction. Acoustic music and kids' activities. Museum exhibits on Middletown Springs history. Fun for the whole family. Admission free. 1-4 pm. (802) 235-2376.

MILTON. Maple Pancake Breakfast at Georgia Mountain Maples. Menu: pancakes, eggs, ham, baked beans, home fries, sausage, gravy and biscuits, maple BBQ pulled pork, rag muffins, coffee, tea, hot chocolate, milk and juice. Food, maple syrup samples, sugarhouse tours (weather permitting), sledding, tours of the woods. Pancake breakfast: adult \$12.95, kids 6 and under \$6.95. 8 am – 1 pm. Georgia Mountain Maples, 345 North Rd. (802) 849-6688. shannon@abbeygroup.net. georgiamountainmaples.com. Also March 24 & 25.

NORWICH. English Country Dance. Music by Trip to Norwich—Carol Compton and Thal Aylward with David Millstone calling. Please wear clean soft-soled shoes. Dances taught, no partner needed, and newcomers welcome. Admission: \$10 adults, \$4 age 25 and under. Refreshments provided. Sponsored by Muskeg Music. 3-6 pm. Tracy Hall, 300 Main St. (603) 448-2950. Also April 29.

SAXTONS RIVER. Hands On! Concert Series. Three Quirky Composers: Beethoven, Haydn and Dvorak. Featuring Peggy Spencer, violin, Zon Estes, cello and Hugh Keelan, piano. Tickets: \$15. 3-5 pm. Main Street Arts, 35 Main St. (802) 869-2960. mainstreetarts.org.

WHITINGHAM. 20th Annual Whitingham Maple Festival. Stop by the Information Booth at Twin Valley Middle High School, Rt. 100 for schedule, 10 am – 3 pm. Pancake breakfast, sugar house tours, craft fair, horse-drawn sleigh rides, lunch at the school. (802) 368-2405. www.whitingham-maplefest.us.

TUESDAY, MARCH 20

MONTPELIER. Concert: Montpelier Ukulele group. Celebrate the first day of spring by listening to the joyous sounds of Montpelier's own ukulele group. 6:30-8 pm. Kellogg-Hubbard Library, 135 Main St. (802) 223-3338.

PITTSFORD. Second Workshop on Writing and Publishing Your Own Book. Led by Trish Lewis. Learn the various steps and processes that go from having the idea for a book to the final product: your book. Will cover both fiction and non-fiction genres. Free. 6 pm. Maclure Library, 840 Arch St. (802) 483-2972. maclurelibrary.org.

ST. JOHNSBURY. Concert: The Cleveland Baroque Orchestra—16 Musicians on Stage. "A Night at Bach's Coffeehouse" presents Apollo's Fire and director/harpichordist Jeannette Sorrell in music of J.S. Bach and his most admired colleagues. Fiery strings, colorful recorders and a dizzying harpsichord solo. Tickets: \$54, \$44, \$34, \$24, \$15 (students free). 7 pm. Fuller Hall, St. Johnsbury Academy, 1000 Main St. (802) 748-2600.

THURSDAY, MARCH 22

BURLINGTON. Book & Author Event. Annelise Orleck gives a talk on *We Are All Fast-Food Workers Now: The Global Uprising Against Poverty Wages*. Tickets: \$3, with a coupon for \$5 off a copy of the featured book. Proceeds from ticket sales go to the Vermont Foodbank. 6:30 pm. Phoenix Books Burlington, 191 Bank St. (802) 448-3350. www.phoenixbooks.biz.

FRIDAY, MARCH 23

CHESTER. Vermont Wood Works Council Spring Mixer. Vermont Hardwoods was established in 1979 to provide quality hardwood lumber to local craftsmen & operates out of a 30,000 square foot building. Their forte is straight-line millwork. Listen to updates, tour the shop, enjoy refreshments, and more! Free. 3-6 pm. Vermont Furniture Hardwoods, 386 Depot St. (802) 747-7900. info@vermontwood.com. vermontwood.com.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Concert: Revels Spring Singers. Welcome Spring with an evening of music. Sponsored by Revels North. 7-8:30 pm. Newberry Market, 19 S. Main St. (866) 556-3083. info@revelsnorth.org. revelsnorth.org.

WOODSTOCK. Maple Open House Weekend. Samples of syrup, maple cream, maple butter, maple horseradish mustard, maple apple drizzle. Learn how sap is collected and then boiled with an old-fashioned wood fired evaporator into pure Vermont maple syrup. Call to check times. Walk in the maple woods, stop in the sampling room to taste samples of many local Vermont food producers. 10 am – 4 pm. Sugarbush Cheese and Maple Syrup Farm, 591 Sugarbush Farm Rd. (800) 281-1757. *Through March 25.*

SATURDAY, MARCH 24

BELLOWS FALLS. Concert: Masters of the Celtic Harp, Gráinne Hambly & William Jackson. Two of the foremost harpers of Ireland and Scotland. Tickets: advance \$20, seniors \$15; at door \$25, seniors \$20. 7:30 pm. Stone Church Center, 12 Church St. (802) 460-0110. sca@sover.net. stonechurcharts.org.

BURLINGTON. Vermont Symphony Orchestra Masterworks Concert: Mendelssohn, André Previn, and Tchaikovsky. Tickets: adults \$17, students \$10. 7:30 pm; 6:30 pm Musically Speaking, free pre-concert discussion. 153 Main St. www.vso.org.

CAMBRIDGE. Maple Sugar Festival. Sugar-on-snow. Sample tastings, demonstrations, maple milkshakes, meat pies. Mini-cupcakes. Admission free. 10 am – 5 pm. Boyden Valley Winery and Spirits, 64 Rt. 104. (802) 644-8151. Also March 25.

COLCHESTER. Talk: Tips for Scaling Brick Walls. Experienced researchers will describe how they successfully dealt with their toughest brick walls. They will share the logic, methods and tools they used to finally move on taking their families' story further back into the past. Fee: \$10. 10:30 and 12 noon. Vermont Genealogy Library Hegeman Ave., Fort Ethan Allen. (802) 310-9285. vtgenlib.org.

DUMMERSTON. Pruning and Grafting Workshop For Backyard Fruit Growers. Join Orchardist Zeke Goodband for instruction on pruning a variety of old and young fruit trees from 9-11 and grafting apple trees from 11-12. Zeke will discuss caring for your trees and the proper tools to use, and give you the knowledge, confidence and skills needed to work on your own fruit trees at home. Cost: \$40, reservations required. 9 am – 12 noon. Scott Farm Orchard, 707 Kipling Rd. (802) 254-6868.

EAST CORINTH. Lasagna Supper. Traditional, Mexican and vegetarian lasagnas, salad, bread, butter, beverage and homemade desserts. Takeout available. By donation. 5-7 pm. East Corinth Congregational Church, 645 Village Rd. Call (802) 439-5766 to arrange for local delivery. oliviasarahillman@gmail.com.

Granville, NY

Edward Brydon, Photographic Artist from Northwest Wales, Talks About His Documentary "The Singing Hills"

The Slate Valley area of Western Vermont and Eastern New York was settled in the last two centuries by immigrants from Wales, who came to America, and continued practicing their trade of quarrying slate. They brought a rich Welsh heritage with them.

Please join us Saturday, April 14, 2018, 1 p.m. at the Slate Valley Museum, 17 Water St., in Granville, NY to meet the photographic artist from Northwest

Wales, Edward Brydon. Ed's documentary project "The Singing Hills" is part of The Northern Eye International Photography Festival, Colwyn Bay, North Wales.

"The Singing Hills" uses photography to try and draw a visual link between the people, land and life in the New York and Vermont area and North Wales.

Ed has been photographing extensively the Welsh in the Remsen, NY region, in search of people driven

to leave North Wales due to poverty and lack of work—in spite of the booming industrial revolution—and suppression of the Welsh heritage and language.

"The Singing Hills" draws references from Welsh myths and legends, including the tale of Madog and The Mabinogion. It draws a visual line of connection between the people, land, and life of Remsen and North Wales, their similarities and differences and the relationship of these proud people of Welsh heritage to their home in America and the land of their ancestral home in North Wales.

Ed continues photographing the people, land, and village life in Remsen and the surrounding area whilst doing the same in North Wales, and where possible photographing confirmed relatives of people he has photographed in Remsen.

Ed Brydon was born on the Welsh border in Chester, England, to a father from

York and a mother from Dublin, Ireland. At the age of nine his family settled in Menai Bridge where he grew up and his parents still live. He currently lives in Bedford Hills, in Westchester County, New York, with his wife and two sons. When they moved from Brooklyn they chose Westchester in particular because of the similarity of the landscape to North Wales—it felt like home. This event is sponsored by Poultney Area St. David's Society and hosted by Slate Valley Museum. There will be a free will offering. Tax-deductible donations to benefit the Slate Valley Museum will be greatly appreciated. Light refreshments will be available. All are welcome.

For more information, contact: Poultney Area St. David's Society. E-mail: pasds1988@gmail.com or call to leave a message at (802) 287-5744, or visit its Facebook page.



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Vermont Country Calendar

EAST MONTPELIER. Sugar-on-Snow. Free guided tours. Maple syrup taste testing. Maple walking trail. Gift shop. Ice cream parlor with maple soft serve creamees and maple milk shakes. Free. 12 noon – 5 pm. Bragg Farm Sugarhouse, Rt. 14 North. (802) 223-5757. braggfarm.com. *Friday, Saturday, and Sunday through mid-April.*

ENOSBURG FALLS. A Taste of Maple. Get a taste of this year's maple syrup, free coffee, delicious goodies made with maple syrup. Door prizes, in-store specials. Free face painting for the kids. Free. 10 am – 2 pm. Boston Post Dairy, 2061 Sampsonville Rd. (802) 933-2749. bostonpostdairy.com.

FAIRFIELD. Maple Open House Weekend Breakfast. Scrambled eggs, bacon, spiral cut ham, home fries, buttermilk pancakes, muffin bar, fruit salad, coffee, tea, hot chocolate, milk and juice. 8 am – 12 pm. Sugar-on-snow, sugarhouse tours, sample maple products. Branon's West View Maples, 825 West St. (802) 527-2430. branonvtorganicmaple.com. *Also March 25.*

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 Bob Degree, 12-4 pm. Dakin Farm, Rt. 7. (800) 993-2546. dakinfarm.com. *Also March 25 and 31.*

HANOVER, NH. Bach Marathon. Daylong celebration of J.S. Bach's 333rd birthday. Musicians and vocalists, both groups and solo performers, perform their favorite piece by J.S. Bach. All ages welcome. Free, advance registration suggested. 9 am – 9 pm. Our Savior Lutheran Church, 5 Summer St. mouxgie@gmail.com.

HARTFORD. Sugar-on-Snow Supper. Menu: Baked ham, mashed potato, green beans, coleslaw, homemade rolls and raised donuts. Sugar-on-snow for dessert. Served family style: Adults \$12, children under 12 \$5. Handicapped accessible. Reservations recommended. Servings at 5 pm & 6 pm. Greater Hartford United Church of Christ, Route 14. (802) 295-2510.

HUNTINGTON. Sugar-on-Snow Party. Fun for the whole family. Free admission, food and syrup for sale. 11 am – 4 pm. At Audubon Audubon's Sugarhouse at the Green Mountain Audubon Center, Main Rd. and 255 Sherman Hollow Rd. (802) 434-3068. vermont@audubon.org. www.vt.audubon.org. *Also March 25.*

ISLAND POND. Maple Fool's Fest. Maple Festivities and goodies provided by local maple producers. Maple photo contest, maple baking contest, maple feats of strength, hoop shoot contest and much more. Hosted by Brighton Recreation. 8 am – 3 pm. 49 Mill St. (802) 723-4923.

KILLINGTON. Vermont Brewers Festival. All outdoor festival. 30 Vermont brewers, two sessions to choose from, 12-3 pm and 4-7 pm. Sample beers, meet the brewers, food trucks and fire pits. At the base of the K-1 lodge. Festival ticket: \$42, \$111 with lift ticket and access to the festival. 12 noon – 7 pm. Killington Mountain Lodge, 2617 Killington Rd. (802) 448-3045. vtbrewfest.com.

LUNENBURG. Annual Maple Festival. Pancake breakfast. Rug hooking demo. Maple-flavored pie contest. Tapping demonstration on the Common. Homemade meals, door prizes, scavenger hunt, sugarhouses open for visitors. Photographs, interactive displays, antique sugaring equipment. Photo and quilt square contests, raffles. 8 am – 4 pm. Lunenburg Primary School, 49 Bobbin Mill Rd., above the Common off Route 2. (802) 892-6654. toptothecommon.org.

MANCHESTER. Maple Open House Weekend Festivities. Live Music from 12-2 pm. Specialty foods, vendors, maple creamies and fudge. Sugar house tours. Public welcome to our sugarhouse whenever we are boiling. Free syrup and cider samples. Dutton Farmstand, Rt. 11/30 (up the mountain from center of Manchester Center, on left hand side across from Red Sled Motel.) (802) 362-3083. duttonbf@sover.net. www.duttonberryfarm.com.

MILTON. Maple Pancake Breakfast. Menu: pancakes, eggs, ham, baked beans, home fries, sausage, gravy and biscuits, maple BBQ pulled pork, rag muffins, coffee, tea, hot chocolate, milk and juice. Food, maple syrup samples, sugarhouse tours (weather permitting), sledding, tours of the woods. Pancake breakfast: adult \$12.95, kids 6 and under \$6.95. 8 am – 1 pm. Georgia Mountain Maples, 345 North Rd. (802) 849-6688. shannon@abbeygroup.net. georgiamountainmaples.com. *Also March 25.*

MONTPELIER. Morse Farm Sugar Works Maple Open House Weekend Festivities. 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. Hot dogs boiled in sap. Kids' activities. Cost: \$4-\$6. Also available ala carte. Seatings every half hour, 10 am – 4 pm. Morse Farm Sugar Works, 1168 County Rd. (800) 242-2740. maple@morsefarm.com. www.morsefarm.com. *Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, through March 25.*

NORWICH. Soup and Bread Lunch. A variety of homemade soups, breads from King Arthur Flour, desserts and more. Sponsored by the Friends of the Norwich Library to benefit library programs. Cost: adults \$10, kids age 6-12 \$5, under 5 free. 11:30 am – 1 pm. The Grange, 344 Main St. (802) 299-5351. jkrieg913@comcast.net.

NORWICH. Norwich Women's Club Spring Gala. This year's event honors Bill Hammond. Live and silent auctions. Tickets: \$50. 6-10 pm. Tracy Hall, 300 S. Main St. (802) 439-5417. info@norwichwomensclub.org. norwichwomensclub.org.

NORWICH. "Maple Daze." Benefit Breakfast. 8-10 am. Cost: \$5 for a stack of pancakes (+ \$2 for bacon and \$1 for coffee or chocolate milk). Children 6 and under get a free short stack and chocolate milk. Music by the Swing Peepers 12 noon – 2 pm, local maple vendor sampling 10 am – 3 pm. King Arthur Flour, 135 Rt. 5 South. (802) 649-3881. kingarthurfLOUR.com.

NORWICH. Annual Book and Music Sale. Including books and LP's. 8 am – 2 pm. Unitarian Universalist Meetinghouse, 320 Route 5. (802) 649-8828. margo.nutt@gmail.com.

ORFORD, NH. Roast Beef Dinner. Everything has been homemade. Seating in order of arrival. Admission by donation to benefit the mission, ministry and maintenance of the church. 5:30-7 pm. United Congregational Church of Orford, 617 Route 10. (603) 353-4364.

POULTNEY. Annual Townwide Maplefest. Breakfast with the Easter Bunny, 5K fun run, big craft fair, horse & wagon rides, and story hour at the Poultney Library. Basket party, sap raffle, special foods, and a Maple Dinner at the Young at Heart Senior Center at 5 pm. Map available to Sugar Houses open for tours. (802) 287-2010. poultneyvt.com. *Also March 25.*

POULTNEY. Maple Open House Weekend at Green's Sugarhouse. Friendly family operation. Free syrup samples. Maple syrup, maple cream, maple candy, maple fudge, and granulated maple sugar. Guided tours, maple-on-snow, maple cotton candy. Green's Sugar House, 1846 Finel Hollow Rd. (802) 287-5745. www.greensugarhouse.com. *Also March 25.*

POULTNEY. Concert: Champlain Philharmonic, "Lion and Lamb." Program will include Schubert's Symphony No. 8 in B Minor (The Unfinished Symphony), Grieg's Peer Gynt Suite No. 1, and works by Verdi and Sibelius. Tickets: \$15, seniors (60+) \$12, students \$5. 7:30 pm. Green Mountain College, Ackley Hall, 1 Brennan Circle. (802) 782-4385.

PUTNEY. Maple Open House Weekend. Pancake and waffle breakfast, 9 am – 12 pm. Family maple farm where we started making maple syrup over 50 years ago. Our sugar bush spans over 1,000 acres. Maple syrup tasting table, samples, organic pancake mix 50% off, sales table, and gifts. Hidden Springs Maple, 162 Westminster Rd. off Rt. 5. (802) 387-5200. info@hiddenspringsmaple.com. www.hiddenspringsmaple.com. *Also March 25.*

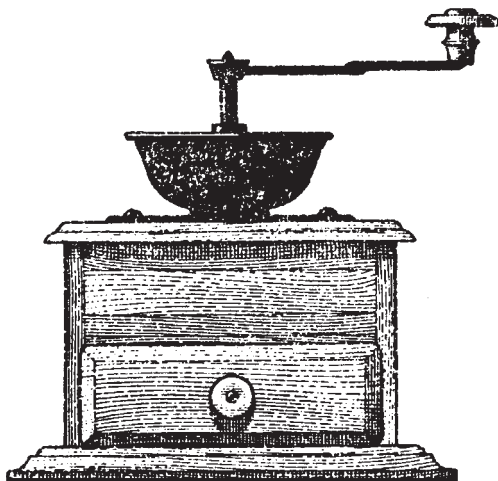
RANDOLPH. Annual Mini Mud Youth Variety Show. Song, dance, theater, and other surprises. Performers range in age from 8 to 18. Tickets: adults \$16, children \$6. 7 pm. Chandler Music Hall, 71 N. Main St. (802) 728-6464. chandler-arts.org.

RANDOLPH CENTER. Silloway's Maple Open House Weekend. Visitors welcome. Hot dogs boiled in sap, raised doughnuts. Free sugar-on-snow! 10 am – 6 pm. Silloway's Sugarhouse, 1303 Boudro Rd. (802) 272-6249. www.sillowaymaple.com. *Also March 25.*

RUPERT. Maple Celebration/Pancake Breakfast. Our own sausage and syrup. Tree-tapping and sap-boiling demonstrations (if the weather cooperates), wagon rides up to the sap-house, and lots and lots of that sweet spring elixir. Visit the farm, see the animals, take in the vistas, and enjoy breakfast with your friends and family. Adults \$10, child 5+ \$5. 9 am – 2 pm. Merck Forest & Farmland Center, 3270 Rte. 315. (802) 394-7836. *Through March 25.*

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. *Saturdays through May 5th.*

SHELBURNE. Maple Open House. Enjoy a taste of maple syrup. Scavenger hunt, sugar-on-snow. Live bird presentations by OFES. Free. 11 am – 2 pm. Shelburne Farms, 1611 Harbor Rd. (802) 985-8686. shelburnefarms.org. *Also March 25 & 31.*



Rutland, VT

Jean Yeager Hosts Ageless Authors Anthology Reading and Open Mic

On Thursday, March 29th at 6:30 p.m., Phoenix Books Rutland will host Jean Yeager for a reading from *The Ageless Authors Anthology* and an open mic featuring writers 65 and older. Come to read, come to listen (all ages welcome), or come for both! Those interested in reading can sign up at the door.

The Ageless Authors Anthology is an extraordinary collection of poetry, essays and short stories from The Ageless Authors Writing Contest exclusively for writers age 65 and older from across the country.

For this book, 52 senior writers contributed work that showcases the experience inherent in this older group. Some of the writers are widely published, while others have been toiling away in relative obscurity, and this is the first time they've published their work.

These writings are entertaining and memorable. From writer and composer Michael Coolen in Corvallis, Oregon comes the opening sentence you can't forget, "Dad was killed by whales." The late John Garzone of Lenox, Massachusetts tells the story of the female pool shark who stole a young man's heart in "Smooth Sheila." And Shirley K. Wright of Coppell, Texas weaves a suspenseful tale of a home invasion in the expanses of the Texas Hill

Country in "No Thanks For the Memory."

Ageless Authors is the brainchild of Dallas writers Ginnie Bivona and Larry Upshaw, who compiled the work for this collection. Bivona is an 86-year-old novelist and poet who started writing in her fifties. Upshaw is a 70-year-old former journalist, ghostwriter, and marketing executive.

"Ageless Authors captures the best offered by seasoned writers," says Vermont essayist Jean Yeager. "I'm grateful to be judged against my peers. We may be the fine aged wines of the writing world."

Jean Yeager won the essay category in last year's Ageless Authors competition. He is a member of the League of Vermont Writers, and other local writing groups. He hopes to use the Ageless Authors connection to help make writers age 65+ more visible in the area. His book: *The 3 Simple Questions: Slice Open Everyday Life* is available at Phoenix Books.

Copies of *The Ageless Authors Anthology* will be available for attendees to purchase and have signed.

This event is free and open to all. Phoenix Books Rutland is located at 2 Center St. in downtown Rutland, VT. Call (802) 855-8078 or visit www.phoenixbooks.biz.

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Vermont Country Calendar

(Saturday, March 24, continued)

SHELBURNE. Open House Weekend. Maple breakfast and lunch all weekend. Horse-drawn rides, weather permitting. Traditional sugar on snow including a doughnut and pickle and other maple goodies. Live music. Bring your skis/snowshoes and trek through the sugarbush. 9 am – 5 pm. Palmer's Sugarhouse, 332 Shelburne Hinesburg Rd. (802) 985-5054. palmersugarhouse.com. *Also March 25.*

SHREWSBURY. Maple Open House. Taste our syrup, hay ride, boiling demo (weather permitting) at our family sugarhouse. Located off Rt. 103, 2 miles up Lincoln Hill Rd. 8 am – 4 pm. Smith Maple Crest Farm, 2450 Lincoln Hill Rd. (802) 492-2151.

SO. BURLINGTON. Workshop: All About Crabapples. Learn best pruning practices and test your skills in our crabapple collection with instructors Tom Shea and Mark Biercevitz. Bring pruners, gloves, loppers; some tools provided. Fee: \$10. 9 am – 1 pm. UVM Horticulture Center, 65 Green Mountain Dr. friendsofthehortfarm.org

SO. HERO. Maple Open House Weekend. Take a tour through the sugaring woods. Sugarhouse tours. Maple samples and maple breads pies, cookies paired with Snow Farm wines. 10 am – 5 pm. Snow Farm Vineyard and Crescent Bay B&B, 190 West Shore Rd. *Also March 25.*

SPRINGFIELD. Class: Introduction to Watercolor Painting, with Christine Mix. Introductory class for teens and adults, with tips on materials and resources, and how to blend colors. Discover your own style of watercolor painting. Materials list provided at registration. Fee: \$45. 10 am – 3 pm. Gallery at the Vault, 68 Main St. (802) 885-7111. galleryvault@vermontel.net. galleryvault.org.

STATEWIDE. Celebrate Vermont Wine. Special events all over the state. Special restaurant tasting menus. Ice cider cocktails. Chocolate, cheese and wine tastings. Wine classes. Suggested pairings. Dinners with the winemakers. Plus glass pours and other specials throughout the week. Kicking off our week is Maple Open House Weekend. diginvt.com. *Through March 31.*

STATEWIDE. Maple Open House Weekend. Sugarhouses all over Vermont are opening their door to visitors. Whether it's the sight of steam rising from the sugarhouse, the inviting aroma of boiling sap, or the sweetly divine flavor of syrup, visitors are treated to an experience for the senses! Some will have special events, sugar-on-snow, pancakes, horse-drawn wagon rides, and music. For a schedule and listing of participating sugarhouses, visit vermontmaple.org. *Also March 25.*

WAITSFIELD. Annual Maple Festival at Hartshorn Farm. Learn about how maple syrup originated and the steps from tapping trees to syrup. Maple candy and cream, maple milk shakes, maple cotton candy, maple drizzled ice cream, maple creemees, maple breads, muffins, and flatbread pizza from our pizza oven. Free admission. 11 am – 4 pm. Hartshorn Farm, 54 Quarry Rd. (802) 496-3081 or (802) 279-8054. www.hartshornfarm.com.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Tenth Annual Mud Ball. To benefit children's programs at the Upper Valley Haven. Food by Piecemeal Pies, cash bar, auctions and dancing with Nick's Other Band. Tickets: \$85 advance, \$95 at the door. 6:30-11 pm. Newberry Market, 5 S. Main St. (802) 295-6500. mudball@uppervalleyhaven.org. uppervalleyhaven.org.

WHITINGHAM. 20th Annual Whitingham Maple Festival. Pancake breakfast, 7-10 am by Lions Club at the Jacksonville Municipal Center, \$8 adults, \$6 for 65+ years and children 5-12, under five free. Sugar House Tours from 8 am – 5 pm, Artisans Tours, Craft Fair at Twin Valley High School. Lunch 11:30 am – 1:30 pm at the Twin Valley High School. Horse-drawn sleigh rides from 10 am – 2 pm, by donation, on Rt. 100 across from Twin Valley Middle School. Sugar-on-Snow Baked Ham Dinner from 5-7 pm at the Municipal Center in Jacksonville, \$12 adults, \$6 children 5-12, under five free. Maps at Whitingham Municipal Center, Rt. 100. (802) 368-2658. whitingham-maplefest.us. *Also March 25.*

WILLISTON. Maple Open House Weekend. In the spring time, they produce Maple Syrup and host an Open House each year in their SugarHouse located on their vista in south Williston. Free. Isham Family Farm, 3515 Oak Hill Rd. (802) 872-1525. ishamfamilyfarm.com. *Through March 25.*

WOODSTOCK. "Maple Madness." Maple butter popcorn, sugar-on-snow, VINS live bird exhibit on the green. Maple foods tasting event at 6 pm at Suicide Six, with live music, cash bar and auction items. Free, admission cost for tasting event. 10 am – 8 pm. Woodstock Village Green, 21 The Green. (802) 457-3555. woodstockvt.com.

WOODSTOCK. Ukrainian Egg Decorating. Learn how to make Ukrainian Easter eggs (also known as psanky). Taught by Danelle Sims. Eggs and supplies provided. Recommended for ages 12 and up. Free. 10:30 am – 1 pm. Norman Williams Public Library, 10 The Green. (802) 457-2295.

WOODSTOCK. Eighth Annual Woodstock Vermont Film Series Screening: *Pop Aye*. On a chance encounter, a disenchanting architect bumps into his long-lost elephant on the streets of Bangkok. Tickets: adults (16 & up) \$11, refreshments included. 3 & 5 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, one-half mile north of the Woodstock village green on Rt. 12. (802) 457-2355. billingsfarm.org/filmfest.

SUNDAY, MARCH 25

CAMBRIDGE. Maple Sugar Festival. Sugar-on-snow. Sample tastings, demonstrations, maple milkshakes made with Boyden maple syrup (for all ages) or Vermont ice maple creme (for 21+ only). Try our meat pies. Mini-cupcakes. Admission is free. 10 am – 5 pm. Boyden Valley Winery and Spirits, 64 Rt. 104. (802) 644-8151.

EAST MONTPELIER. Sugar-on-Snow. Free guided tours. Scenic views with a covered bridge nearby. Maple syrup taste testing. Maple walking trail. Gift shop. Large collection of old sugar-making tools. Ice cream parlor with maple soft serve creemees and maple milk shakes. Free. 12 noon – 5 pm. Bragg Farm Sugarhouse, Rt. 14 North. (802) 223-5757. braggfarmmaple@aol.com. braggfarm.com. *Friday, Saturday, and Sunday through mid-April.*

ESSEX. Swap Thing: Old School Comic Book Swap and Show. Trade, buy and sell comic books with other collectors and fans. Free. 10 am – 4 pm. Memorial Hall. andy@devilsdream.org. devilsdream.org/swap-thing.

FAIRFIELD. Maple Open House Weekend Breakfast. Catered by Lise Gates and the Dairy Center. Menu includes scrambled eggs, bacon, ham, baked beans, caesar salad, potato wedges, pancakes, rag muffins, donut bar, cheese and crackers, fruit salad, coffee, tea, hot chocolate, milk and juice cups. 8 am – 12 pm. Adults \$13.95, children 3-10 \$7.95 plus tax. Sugar-on-snow, sugarhouse tours, sample maple products. Branon's West View Maples, 825 West St. (802) 527-2430. branonvtorganicmaple.com.

FERRISBURGH. Sugar-on-Snow Party. Pancake breakfast with buttermilk pancakes, bacon, and sausage, 7:30-11:30 am, adults \$7.95 (plus tax), kids \$4.95 (plus tax). Sausage hoagie cooked in sap or a bowl of 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. *Also March 31.*

HUNTINGTON. Sugar-on-Snow Party. Fun for the whole family. Free admission, food and syrup for sale. 11 am – 4 pm. At Audubon Audubon's Sugarhouse at the Green Mountain Audubon Center, Main Rd. and 255 Sherman Hollow Rd. (802) 434-3068. vermont@audubon.org. www.vt.audubon.org.

MIDDLEBURY. Concert: Champlain Philharmonic, "Lion and Lamb." Program will include Schubert's Symphony No. 8 in B Minor (The Unfinished Symphony), Grieg's Peer Gynt Suite No. 1, and works by Verdi and Sibelius. Tickets: \$15, seniors (60+) \$12, students \$5. 4 pm. Town Hall Theater. (802) 782-4385.

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Built circa 1820, this beautiful Victorian home was converted in 1982 into a six room B&B, and became the Hugging Bear Inn. Located on Chester's Village Green, the Inn is near shops, galleries, and restaurants. The house is a Queen Anne Victorian with wraparound porch, slate roof, and original interior oak trim.

Victorian Inn/Main House: Seven guest rooms, each with individual baths.
Connected barn: presently the Bear Shop.
Six-vehicle parking lot. Lot size .6 acre, 26,136 sq. ft.
Landscaping: mature black walnut trees and heirloom pinksters, raspberries, garden, lawn.
The Carriage House is a two-story barn, 830 sq. ft.
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Direct inquiries to the Hugging Bear, (802) 875-2412.
For more info and pictures, look on Zillow.com.
Type in the address: 244 Main St, Chester, VT 05143.
Asking price \$470,000.
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Value of Teddy Bear Shop is negotiable



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Vermont Country Calendar



MILTON. Maple Pancake Breakfast at Georgia Mountain Maples. Menu: pancakes, eggs, ham, baked beans, home fries, sausage, gravy and biscuits, maple BBQ pulled pork, rag muffins, coffee, tea, hot chocolate, milk and juice. Food, maple syrup samples, sugarhouse tours (weather permitting), sledding, tours of the woods. Pancake breakfast: adults \$12.95, kids 6 and under \$6.95. 8 am – 1 pm. Georgia Mountain Maples, 345 North Rd. (802) 849-6688. shannon@abbeygroup.net. www.georgiamountainmaples.com.

MONTPELIER. Morse Farm Sugar Works Maple Open House Weekend Festivities. 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. Hot dogs boiled in sap. Kids’ craft activities. Cost: \$4-\$6. Also available ala carte. Seatings every half hour, 10 am – 4 pm. Tour our gift shop. Morse Farm Sugar Works, 1168 County Rd. (800) 242-2740. maple@morsefarm.com. www.morsefarm.com.

NEWFANE. Fourth Annual Soup Fest and Silent Auction. Fundraiser for the final restoration phase of the 1880 Newfane Railroad Station and West River Railroad Museum. Sample homemade soups from Brattleboro to South Londonderry. Suggested admission donation: \$5-\$10. Doors open at 4 pm, Bidding and 50/50 raffle 4-5:30 pm. Soup and bread served at 5:30, desserts to follow. NewBrook Fire Station, Route 30. (802) 348-7891. historicalsoctyofwindhamcounty.org.

POULTNEY. Maple Open House Weekend. Friendly family operation. Free syrup samples. Maple syrup, maple cream, maple candy, maple fudge, and granulated maple sugar. Guided tours, maple-on-snow, maple cotton candy. Green’s Sugar House, 1846 Finel Hollow Rd. (802) 287-5745. www.greensugarhouse.com.

POULTNEY. Annual Maplefest. Map to Sugar Houses open for tours is available. (802) 287-2010. poultneyvt.com.

PUTNEY. Maple Open House Weekend. Sugar-on-snow 12-3 pm. Family maple farm where we started making maple syrup over 50 years ago. Our sugar bush spans over 1,000 acres. Maple syrup tasting table, samples, organic pancake mix 50% off, sales table, gifts. Hidden Springs Maple, 162 Westminster Rd. (802) 387-5200. www.hiddenspringsmaple.com.

RANDOLPH CENTER. Silloway’s Maple Open House Weekend. Visitors welcome. Hot dogs welcomed in sap, raised doughnuts. Free sugar-on-snow! 10 am – 6 pm. Silloway’s Sugarhouse, 1303 Boudro Rd. (802) 272-6249. www.sillowaymaple.com.

RUPERT. Maple Celebration/Pancake Breakfast. Our own sausage and syrup. Tree-tapping and boiling demonstrations (if the weather cooperates), wagon rides up to the sap-house, and lots and lots of that sweet spring elixir. Visit the farm, take in the vistas, and enjoy breakfast with your friends and family. Adults \$10, child 5+ \$5. 9 am – 2 pm. Merck Forest & Farmland Center, 3270 Rt. 315. (802) 394-7836.

SHELBURNE. Burlington Irish Heritage Festival Concert: Masters of the Celtic Harp. William Jackson & Grainne Hambly, two of the foremost harpers of Ireland and Scotland. Admission: \$20 (all money for Treewild concerts goes to the musicians). Potluck Supper at 6 pm, concert at 7 pm. Wine, chai and dessert at intermission. 338 Thompson Rd. Contact alisonjamesvt@gmail.com for an invitation. burlingtonirishheritage.org.

SHELBURNE. Maple Open House Weekend. Maple breakfast and lunch all weekend. Live music. Bring your skis or snowshoes and trek through the sugarbush. 9 am – 5 pm. Palmer’s Sugarhouse, 332 Shelburne Hinesburg Rd. (802) 985-5054. michelendavid@yahoo.com. palmersugarhouse.com. Also March 24 & 25.

SHELBURNE. Maple Open House. See the sugarhouse in action. Enjoy a taste of maple syrup as you learn about the journey of sap to syrup. Explore a sugarmaker’s tools, tap a sugar maple, add sap from collection buckets to bulk tank. Scavenger hunt, sugar-on-snow. Live bird presentations by OFES. Free. 11 am – 2 pm. Shelburne Farms, 1611 Harbor Rd. (802) 985-8686. ssmith@shelburnefarms.org. shelburnefarms.org.

SO. HERO. Maple Open House Weekend. Take a tour through the sugaring woods. Sugarhouse tours. Maple samples and maple breads pies, cookies paired with Snow Farm wines. 10 am – 5 pm. Snow Farm Vineyard and Crescent Bay B&B, 190 West Shore Rd.

STATEWIDE. Celebrate Vermont Wine. Special events all over the state. Special restaurant tasting menus. Ice cider cocktails. Chocolate, cheese and wine tastings. Wine classes. Suggested pairings. Dinners with the winemakers. Plus glass pours and other specials throughout the week. Kicking off our week is Maple Open House Weekend. diginvt.com. Through March 31.

STATEWIDE. Maple Open House Weekend. Sugarhouses all over Vermont are opening their door to visitors. Whether it’s the sight of steam rising from the sugarhouse, the inviting aroma of boiling sap, or the sweetly divine flavor of syrup, visitors are treated to an experience for the senses! Some will have special events, sugar-on-snow, pancakes, horse-drawn wagon rides, and music. For a schedule and listing of participating sugarhouses, visit vermontmaple.org.

WEST DOVER. Duct Tape Derby. Build a craft of only cardboard, duct tape, zip ties and paint. Awards for best slider, most creative, best kids only sled, judges’ choice. 10 am. Mount Snow Resort, 39 Mount Snow Rd. (802) 464-4203.

WHITINGHAM. 20th Annual Whitingham Maple Festival. Pancake Breakfast from 7-10 am by Lions Club at the Jacksonville Municipal Center, \$8 adults, \$6 65+ years, under five free. Self-guided Sugar House Tours from 8 am – 5 pm, Craft Fair at Twin Valley High School. Lunch 11:30 am – 1:30 pm at Twin Valley H.S. Horse-drawn sleigh rides 10 am – 2 pm, by donation, on Rt. 100 across from Twin Valley M.S. Maps at info booth at Twin Valley High School, Rt. 100. (802) 368-2658. whitingham-maplefest.us.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 28

BARRE. Concert: One Night of Queen with Gary Mullen and the Works, the world’s preeminent Queen tribute act. Tickets: \$26-\$42. 7:30 pm. Barre Opera House, 6 North Main St. (City Hall). (802) 476-8188. www.barreoperahouse.org.

MONTPELIER. Talk by Civil War expert Howard Coffin: Vermont’s Remarkable Sharpshooters. Free. 7-8:30 pm. Kellogg-Hubbard Library, 135 Main St. (802) 223-3338.

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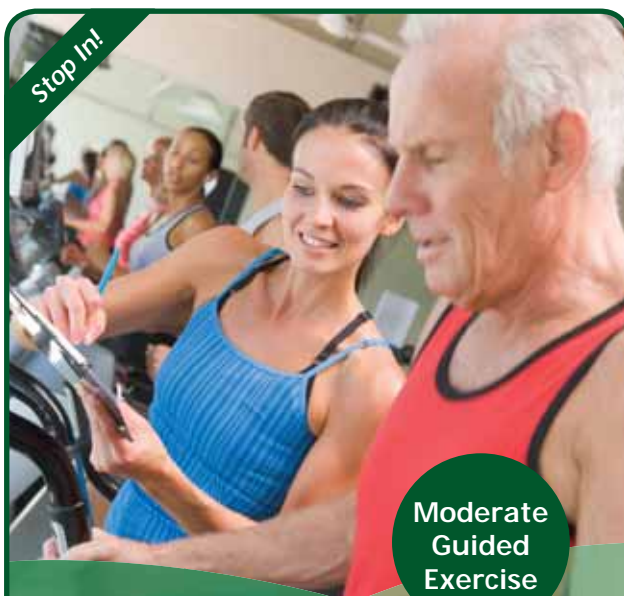


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Vermont Country Calendar

THURSDAY, MARCH 29

BELLOWS FALLS. Performance: *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Tickets: \$10-\$40. 7:30 pm. Bellows Falls Opera House. (802) 869-2960. evgeniaab@gmail.com. mainstreetarts.org. Also March 30, 31 and April 5, 6 & 7.

RUTLAND. Author Reading and Open Mic. Join Jean Yeager for a reading from *The Ageless Authors Anthology* and an open mic featuring writers 65 and older. Free. 6:30 pm. Phoenix Books Rutland, 2 Center St. (802) 855-8078. www.phoenixbooks.biz.

WOODSTOCK. Concert: The Huntertones, a high energy horn-driven group. Tickets: \$20, 17 and under \$10. 7:30 pm. Woodstock Town Hall Theatre, 31 The Green. (802) 457-3981. pentanglearts.org.

FRIDAY, MARCH 30

BARNARD. Contra Dance. Music by Old Sam Peabody. Caller, Delia Clark. Potluck and BYOB, \$5, families \$10. 5:30 pm. Music and dancing 6-9 pm. Free admission, donations welcome. Barnard Town Hall, 115 North Rd. (802) 234-1645. info@barnarts.org. barnarts.org.

BARRE. Concert: Red Molly. An Americana powerhouse trio known for their gorgeous harmonies, infectious songwriting, and captivating stage presence. Tickets are \$25-\$29.50. 8 pm, doors open at 7:30. Barre Opera House, 6 North Main St. (City Hall). (802) 476-8188. www.barreoperahouse.org.

BELLOWS FALLS. Performance: *Jesus Christ Superstar*. The greatest rock opera of the 20th century explores the passion of Christ through the eyes of Judas Iscariot. Tickets: \$10-\$40. 7:30 pm. Bellows Falls Opera House. (802) 869-2960. mainstreetarts.org. Also March 31 and April 5, 6 & 7.

BURLINGTON. Burlington Irish Heritage Festival Showcase. The Celtic Cats (UVM Irish Step Dance Club) will perform recent and varied pieces, followed by a Ceili. Irish themed refreshments. Admission: \$7. Time tbd. Dance Studio, Patrick Gym, 97 Spear St., UVM Campus. uvmcelticcats@gmail.com. burlingtonirishheritage.org.

EAST MONTPELIER. Sugar-on-Snow. Free guided tours. Scenic views with a covered bridge nearby. Maple syrup taste testing. Maple walking trail. Gift shop. Large collection of old sugar-making tools. Ice cream parlor with maple soft serve creemees and maple milk shakes. Free. 12 noon - 5 pm. Bragg Farm Sugarhouse, Rt. 14 North. (802) 223-5757. braggfarmmaple@aol.com. braggfarm.com. Also Friday, Saturday, and Sunday through mid-April.

HANOVER, NH. Dance Performance: Giselle. South African choreographer Dada Masilo's searing reinterpretation of classical ballet about betrayal, heartbreak and revenge. Tickets: \$22.50-\$50. 8 pm. Hopkins Center for the Arts. (603) 646-2422. hop.dartmouth.edu. Also March 31.

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. Cost: \$4-\$6. Seatings every half hour, 10 am - 4 pm. Morse Farm Sugar Works, 1168 County Rd. (800) 242-2740. www.morsefarm.com. Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays through March.

NEWPORT. Glow-in-the-Dark Easter Egg Hunt. Guided by flashlight, over 1,000 glowing and non-glowing eggs are hidden around Prouty Beach park. From the upper pines to the waterfront, the Glow Hunt covers almost an acre of darkness. Some eggs contain candy and trinkets but twenty special eggs carry prize tickets for awesome glow-in-the-dark gear like lava lamps, frisbees, puzzles and star packs! Participants should come prepared with a flashlight or head lamp and weather-appropriate footwear. Tickets \$12 per child. Advance tickets required. Prouty Beach, 386 Prouty Beach Rd. (802) 334-6858. www.newportrecreation.org.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Musical: "1776." Tickets: \$25; up to 18 free when accompanied by an adult. Friday & Saturday 7:30 pm, Sunday 3 pm. Briggs Opera House, 5 S. Main St. (978) 621-1982. Through April 6.

WOODSTOCK. Baby Farm Animal Celebration at Billings Farm. Meet the farm's newest additions during family-centered programs with our lambs, chicks, piglets, and calves; heirloom seed activity. 1890 Farm House, farm life exhibits and dairy bar will be open. Admission: adults \$15, 62 & up \$14, ages 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, under 3 free. 10 am - 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. billingsfarm.org. Also March 31.

SATURDAY, MARCH 31

BELLOWS FALLS. Performance: *Jesus Christ Superstar*. The greatest rock opera of the 20th century explores the passion of Christ through the eyes of Judas Iscariot. Tickets: \$10-\$40. 2 & 7:30 pm. Bellows Falls Opera House. (802) 869-2960. evgeniaab@gmail.com. mainstreetarts.org. Also April 5, 6 & 7.

BOLTON. Pond Skimming. Our man-made pond is extra hungry for ambitious skiers and riders. Can you make it across in dryish fashion? The biggest party of the season is back, folks. 10 am - 3:30 pm. Bolton Valley Resort, 4302 Bolton Valley Access Rd. (802) 434-3444.

EAST MONTPELIER. Sugar-on-Snow. Free guided tours. Scenic views with a covered bridge nearby. Maple syrup taste testing. Maple walking trail. Peruse our Gift Shop. Large collection of old sugar-making tools. Ice cream parlor with maple soft serve creemees and maple milk shakes. Free. 12 noon - 5 pm. Bragg Farm Sugarhouse, Rt. 14 North. (802) 223-5757. braggfarmmaple@aol.com. braggfarm.com. Friday, Saturday, and Sunday through mid-April.

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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. Cost: \$4-\$6. Seatings every half hour, 10 am - 4 pm. Visit our large Gift Shop. Morse Farm Sugar Works, 1168 County Rd. (800) 242-2740. maple@morsefarm.com. www.morsefarm.com. Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays through March.

NEWPORT. Annual Plant Sale. Orders due by March 31; pickup on Saturday, May 5, in front of the USDA office in Newport. (802) 334-6090, ext. 7008. sarah.damsell@vt.nacdn.net. For the full online catalog and order form, visit vacd.org/conservation-districts/orleans-county.

NEWPORT. Easter Egg Hunt. Grab your basket and hop over to Prouty Beach for a springtime party to beat the mud-season melt down! Visit with the Easter Bunny, make festive crafts, play games and win EGGcellent prizes. Over 2,000 eggs filled with treats, toys and a few extra special prizes hidden inside. Parent-Child Egg Toss, the grand finale and a family favorite at our party. Pairs are comprised of one adult (16+) and one child, first-come, first-serve. Bonnet Contest—just find a festive Easter hat to wear, or better yet, create your own masterpiece! 10:45 - 12 pm. At 11 o'clock sharp, the Easter Bunny opens the egg yard for the big hunt! Admission \$3 per child. Prouty Beach, 386 Prouty Beach Rd. (802) 334-6858. www.newportrecreation.org.



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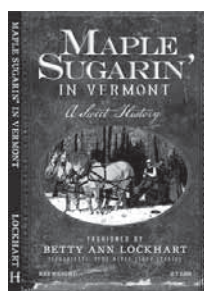
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Way Back Then

Memories of a Special Kindergarten

by Charles Sutton

I started my formal education in a kindergarten in one of New York City's "PS" schools on the upper east side of Manhattan. It was a large, foreboding structure, poorly maintained because the year, being 1936, was not too long after The Great Depression when funds for education were skimpy.

My memories of the place are dim. We sat in bolted down wooden desks with ink wells in the upper right-hand corner—but we weren't using them yet.

I will always remember the boys' toilet area in the basement which had a dirt floor. One day a teacher pulled a distraught boy about my age into the rest room and washed his mouth out with soap. Such was the discipline of those days, and probably if the parents complained, the teacher would have been exonerated. One wonders what the child had said.

In wasn't too long after that that one morning when Mother took me to school we were greeted by a policeman on the front steps saying there had been a bad fire in the school that night—it was closed and to go home. School authorities would inform us later where we were reassigned to an alternate school.

Some parents speculated the fire could have been set by "one of them" because they felt it was such a terrible place for their kids to learn in.

It was my good fortune that I was reassigned to Hunter College, then a highly respected teacher training facility for women founded in 1869. It was named the Female Normal and High School and was the first free teacher's college in the nation. Its name was changed to Normal College of the City of New York in 1870 and to Hunter College in 1914 (after Thomas Hunter its founder). It became part of the City University of New York system in 1961 and coeducational in 1964.

Its kindergarten area where I ended up was a large playroom with lots of equipment to spark our interest—building blocks, art supplies, pencils, crayons, paper, picture books, even some simple musical instruments. There were glass windows bordering the room so the teachers-in-training could observe us. I remember seeing them there often.

This was a Montessori-based education program based on self-directed activity, hands-on learning and collaborative play. (This educational method, built on the way children naturally learn, was founded by Maria Montessori, an Ital-

ian physician, educator and innovator who opened her first school—the Casa dei Bambini, or Children's House—in Rome on January 6, 1907.) Hunter College today still offers training in Montessori methods.

Early-on we were taught to read by the phonetics rather than the "look and say" whole word method as popularized by the *Dick n' Jane* books that came out in the 1930s.

I don't recall the reading lessons at all, maybe because my mother and father, being avid readers, had started teaching me at home. But when my family moved permanently to Fairfield, CT in the fall of 1938, where I was enrolled an eight-grade country school, I skipped first grade because I already knew how to read. This almost always made me the youngest in my class for the rest of my elementary and high school years.

"I don't recall the reading lessons at all, maybe because my mother and father had started teaching me at home."

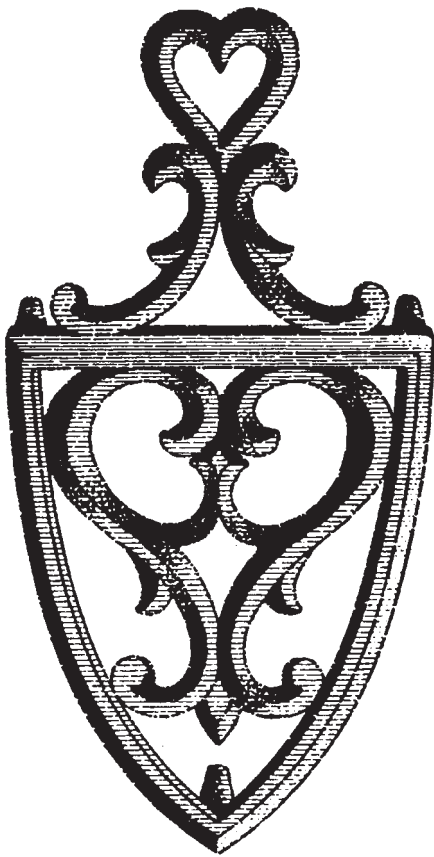
Vermont offers excellent teacher training. There are 15 colleges and universities with teacher degree programs. 11 colleges and universities

offer a bachelor's degree in education; and 13 colleges and universities offer a master's or advanced degree in education. The University of Vermont's College of Education goes back over 150 years and has nearly 100 full-time faculty members. Castleton State College, now Castleton University, offers a master's in Special Education. And Lyndon College in Vermont's Northeast Kingdom has been training teachers for over 100 years. And there are several Montessori teacher training facilities in Vermont. The choices here in Vermont are many.

But if you've set your sights on leaving the state to acquire your education, based on my humble experience at such a young age and even so long ago, I certainly would recommend teachers-to-be to apply to Hunter College in New York City. The college currently enrolls 21,000 students in over 20 specialized college facilities. Its undergraduate division offers early childhood education, childhood education 1-6 grades, adolescent education, including teaching languages other than English, dance education, and music education, as well as many specialized programs, especially one in anthropology.

For many years when I sent out resumes seeking a job I never thought to put down Hunter College as part of my education. But being a student there was quite an experience!

Vermont Country Calendar



NORWICH. Easter Egg Hunt. Kids through sixth grade are invited to play games, toss eggs and join in an Easter egg hunt. Proceeds benefit Child and Family Services programs. Bring a basket, or decorate a bag at the event. Dress for the weather. Cost: \$10, pre-registration requested. 1 pm, Norwich Green, Main St. debbiecarter22@gmail.com.

RUPERT. Guided Full Moon Hike. Staff-guided hike in the evening landscape under the Pink Moon (simultaneously a Blue Moon). Moderate difficulty, and only if weather conditions permit. Dress appropriately for the weather with sturdy footwear, headlamps, water and snacks. Reservations requested. Fee: \$5. 6-8 pm. Merck Forest & Farmland Center, 3270 Rte. 315. (802) 394-7836.

RUTLAND. Concert: America, perennial classic-rock favorite. Tickets: \$75-\$85. 8 pm. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. www.paramountvt.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.*

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers' Market. Local produce, crafts, prepared foods. Live music. EBT and debit cards. 10 am - 2 pm. Vermont Farmers, Food Center at 251 West St. in downtown Rutland. (802) 342-4727. info@vtfarmersmarket.org. www.vtfarmersmarket.org. *Saturdays through May 5th.*

SHELBURNE. Sugar-on-Snow. Watch maple sap being boiled. Horse-drawn rides, weather permitting. Traditional sugar on snow including a doughnut and pickle and other maple goodies. Live music. Bring your skis/snowshoes and trek through the sugarbush. 12 noon - 4 pm, Eggstravaganza Egg Hunt begins at 1 pm. Palmer's Sugarhouse, 332 Shelburne Hinesburg Rd. (802) 985-5054. michelendavid@yahoo.com. palmersugarhouse.com.

ST. ALBANS. Third Annual Egg-S-Uberance Easter Egg Hunt. Three age-divided egg hunts with over 5,000 eggs, games, lunch, door prizes and more. Free. 11 am - 12:30 pm. Northside Baptist Church, 1321 Fairfax Rd. (802) 524-3636. northsidevt.com.

STRATTON. Sixth Annual Marchdi Gras Village Winterfest. Specialty food and drinks in our dining establishments to celebrate our sixth annual Marchdi Gras! Stratton Mountain Resort, 5 Village Lodge Rd. (800) 787-2886.

WATERBURY CENTER. Eighth Annual Mud Season Celebration and Egg Hunt. Take a walk on the Short Trail. Children turn in the eggs for chocolate and other goodies from Laughing Moon Chocolates. Come dressed for the outdoors and BYOB (bring your own basket). After the hunt, meet the Easter Bunny at Laughing Moon Chocolates in Stowe. Free. 10 am - 12 noon. Green Mountain Club Visitor Center, 4711 Waterbury-Stowe Rd. (802) 785-2129.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Musical: "1776." Features Upper Valley performers and includes additional programming to spur discussion about its relevance to governance and democracy today. Tickets: \$25; up to 18 free when accompanied by an adult. Friday & Saturday 7:30 pm, Sunday 3 pm. Briggs Opera House, 5 S. Main St. (978) 621-1982. *Friday, Saturday, and Sunday through April 6.*

WOODSTOCK. Baby Farm Animal Celebration at Billings Farm. Meet the farm's newest additions during family-centered programs with our lambs, chicks, piglets, and calves; heirloom seed activity. 1890 Farm House, farm life exhibits and dairy bar will be open. Admission: adults \$15, 62 & up \$14, ages 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, under 3 free. 10 am - 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. billingsfarm.org.

SUNDAY, APRIL 1

EAST BURKE. Annual Burke Mountain Easter Egg Hunt. We'll be hiding Easter eggs all over the Upper Mountain, and inside those eggs will be some awesome prizes, including the two golden eggs, which will contain a free weekend getaway package for two and a 2018-19 season's pass! 11 am. Burke Mountain Easter Brunch—buffet includes everything from smoked salmon platter to asparagus Swiss Florentine to honey glazed ham to a carving station, adults \$25, kids under 12 years old \$12, kids 5 and under free. 10:30 am - 1 pm. Ballroom at the Burke Hotel, Burke Mountain Resort, 223 Sherburne Lodge Rd. Call (802) 626-7460 for reservations.

EAST MONTPELIER. Sugar-on-Snow. Free guided tours. Scenic views with a covered bridge nearby. Maple syrup taste testing. Maple walking trail. Gift shop. Ice cream parlor with maple soft serve creemees and maple milk shakes. Free. 12 noon - 5 pm. Bragg Farm Sugarhouse, Rt. 14 North. (802) 223-5757. braggfarm.com. *Friday, Saturday, and Sunday through mid-April.*

HANOVER, NH. Performance: "Made in China." The puppet troupe Wakka Wakka addresses human rights, consumerism and American-Chinese relations in this satirical comic puppet musical. Baby pandas, dancing appliances and romping middle-aged lovers populate Wakka's universe of tiny-to-huge puppets, belting out original songs. Tickets: \$17-\$35. 8 pm. Hopkins Center For The Arts. (603) 646-2422.

KILLINGTON. Easter Sunrise Service and Easter Egg Hunt. Easter Sunrise Service begins at 6:30 am at the Killington Peak Lodge. Take the K-1 Express Gondola at approximately 5:30-6:15 am. Service is free and open to all, space limited to 275 guests. Adults and children will need a ticket to the event (complimentary). Join us after for a community breakfast. Bring your skis and snowboards up the gondola, but no skiers or riders may descend until 8 am when trails open. After the service, starting at 8:30 am join us at K-1 Base Lodge for an Easter egg hunt for all ages. At 9:30 am, a toddler-friendly Easter egg hunt will follow, maximum 15 eggs collected by each person. Some eggs will be filled with lift tickets and a season pass to Killington Resort or Pico Mountain! Killington Resort. (802) 422-6201. killington.com.

SHELBURNE. Sugar-on-Snow. Watch maple sap being boiled. Horse-drawn rides, weather permitting. Traditional sugar on snow including a doughnut and pickle and other maple goodies. Live music. Bring your skis/snowshoes and trek through the sugarbush. 12-4 pm, Eggstravaganza Egg Hunt begins at 1 pm. Palmer's Sugarhouse, 332 Shelburne Hinesburg Rd. (802) 985-5054. michelendavid@yahoo.com. palmersugarhouse.com.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Musical: "1776." Tickets: \$25; up to 18 free when accompanied by an adult. Friday & Saturday 7:30 pm, Sunday 3 pm. Briggs Opera House, 5 S. Main St. (978) 621-1982. *Friday, Saturday, and Sunday through April 6.*

WARREN. Easter Morning Service. Beautiful service at Allyn's Lodge followed by an Easter Egg Hunt at Lincoln Peak, and an Easter Brunch at Rumble's Kitchen. 7:30-10:45 am. Sugarbush Resort, 1840 Sugarbush Access Rd. (802) 583-6300.

MONDAY, APRIL 2

BRANDON. Learn to Swing Dance. Instructor: David Allan. Beginner and intermediate 4-week courses. Partner recommended but not necessary. \$45 for one 4-week series; \$75 per couple per series. Beginner class 6:30-7:30 pm, intermediate class 8-9 pm. Compass Music and Arts Center, 333 Jones Dr. (802) 247-4295. cmactv.org. *Also April 9, 16, and 23.*

WOODSTOCK. 36th Season Opening Day at Billings Farm & Museum. Visit our award-winning Jersey herd, draft horses, and sheep and tour the restored 1890 Farm House. Admission: adults \$15, 62 & up \$14, ages 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, 2 and under free. 10 am - 5 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. billingsfarm.org. *Open daily through October 31.*

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4

HANOVER, NH. Montgomery Fellowship Lecture by Yo-Yo Ma: Culture, Understanding, and Survival. Free, no tickets required. 4 pm. Spaulding Auditorium Hopkins Center for the Arts, 4 E. Wheelock St. (603) 646-2422. hop.dartmouth.edu.

RUTLAND. Concert: Hot Tuna. Tickets: \$30-\$40. 7:30 pm. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. www.paramountvt.org.

FRIDAY, APRIL 6

BELLOWS FALLS. Performance: *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Tickets: \$10-\$40. 7:30 pm. Bellows Falls Opera House. (802) 869-2960. evgeniaab@gmail.com. mainstreetarts.org. *Also April 7.*

BRANDON. Opening reception for Exhibit: 'Barn Art.' A collection of works from 31 different artists. 5-7 pm. Compass Music and Arts Center, in Park Village at 333 Jones Dr. (802) 247-4295. cmactv.org. *Exhibit runs through June 16.*

Brandon, VT

Learn to Swing Dance in Brandon

Take swing dance lessons with instructor and 'Dancing with the Rutland Stars' instructor, David Allan.

Allan will teach beginner and intermediate level courses at Brandon Music, in association with the Compass Music and Arts Center. Classes will be held on Mondays, April 2, 9, 16, and 23rd. The beginner class is from 6:30-7:30 pm, the intermediate class from 8-9 pm.

The beginner class is for those who have not taken a class before and for those who wish to refresh or continue to master the basics.

In the intermediate class,

participants will progress to advanced six-count moves, plus some Lindy Hop.

David Allan runs Green Mountain Stomp Swing Dancing. He has taught for more than ten years throughout the Champlain Valley.

Bringing a partner is recommended but not necessary. \$45 for one four-week series; \$75 per couple per series. Pre-registration appreciated.

Compass Music and Arts Center is located at 333 Jones Dr. in Brandon, VT.

To register contact (802) 247-4295 or info@cmactv.org. Visit www.cmactv.org.

Brandon, VT

Jazz Classics with Cooie's Jazz Ensemble at Brandon Music

Drawing from the vast catalog of jazz classics of the 20th century, Cooie's Jazz Ensemble lures you deep into the music. Experience her beautiful and full voice and her passion for a song's meaning and spirit at Brandon Music on March 24.

Accompanied by veteran musicians Robert Gagnon (guitar), Andy Smith (bass), and Rob Zollman (drums), Cooie will take you on a musical journey.

Guitarist Bob Gagnon was raised not far from the Canadian border, began playing and studying the guitar at the age of six, and learned Quebecois fiddle tunes and songs from the American songbook.

Along with a successful teaching career, Andy Smith has had an extensive performing career spanning

fourteen countries, seventeen states and three continents.

A performer for over 40 years, Rob Zollman plays jazz, blues, rock, classical, and Brazilian and other ethnic music including klezmer and Chassidic rock. He currently plays with EnerJazz, Chuck Miller's Seven Project, The Keating Five, Left Eye Jump, and John Fischer's Interface.

The concert begins at 7:30 p.m. Concert tickets are \$20. A pre-concert dinner is available for \$25. Reservations are required for dinner and recommended for the show. Venue is BYOB.

Call (802) 247-4295 or e-mail info@brandon-music.net for reservations. Brandon Music is located at 62 Country Club Rd. Brandon, VT. www.brandon-music.net.

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Vermont Country Calendar

(Friday, April 6, continued)

EAST MONTPELIER. Sugar-on-Snow. Free guided tours. Scenic views with a covered bridge nearby. Maple syrup taste testing. Maple walking trail. Gift shop. Ice cream parlor with maple soft serve creemees and maple milkshakes. Free. 12 noon – 5 pm. Bragg Farm Sugarhouse, Rt. 14 North. (802) 223-5757. braggfarm.com. *Friday, Saturday, and Sunday through mid-April.*

HANOVER, NH. Performance. Gob Squad Collective: War and Peace. European theater renegades mash up song, talk, and fashion for a gleeful, heady experience. Tickets: \$20-\$35. 8 pm. The Moore Theater, Hopkins Center for the Arts, 4 E. Wheelock St. (603) 646-2422. hop.dartmouth.edu. *Also April 7.*

RANDOLPH. Concert: De Temps Antan. Traditional music of Quebec. Fiddle, accordion, harmonica, guitar, bouzouki, and other instruments. Tickets: \$25 advance, \$27 day of. 8 pm. Chandler Music Hall, 71 N. Main St. (802) 728-6464. www.chandler-arts.org.

RUTLAND. Friends of the Library April Book Sale. Thousands of organized, gently-used books, CDs, DVDs and puzzles for all ages. Most items \$.25 - \$3.00. This month: special offering of well-illustrated antique books. All diet, nutrition, and fitness books: BOGO (buy one, get one free)! Highlight: gardening books. 10 am – 4 pm. Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St. (802) 773-1860. rutlandfree.org. *Also April 7.*

RUTLAND. Concert: Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes, raucous, roots-tinged rock and bluesy reverie. Tickets: \$39-\$49. 8 pm. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. www.paramountvt.org.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Musical: "1776." Tickets: \$25; up to 18 free accompanied by an adult. Friday & Saturday 7:30 pm, Sunday 3 pm. Briggs Opera House, 5 S. Main St. (978) 621-1982. *Friday, Saturday, and Sunday through April 6.*

SATURDAY, APRIL 7

BELLOWS FALLS. Performance: *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Tickets: \$10-\$40. 2 & 7:30 pm. Bellows Falls Opera House. (802) 869-2960. mainstreetarts.org.

BELMONT. Mount Holly Spring Mud Fling. Old style roadhouse dance hall jamboree. Time to shake of those winter blues! BYOB. 8 pm Mount Holly Folk Club. 9 pm Tony Lee Thomas & Jenny Porter. \$12 at the door. Odd Fellows Hall, Lake St. (802) 259-9130.

EAST MONTPELIER. Sugar-on-Snow. Free guided tours. Scenic views with a covered bridge nearby. Maple syrup taste testing. Maple walking trail. Gift shop. Large collection of old sugar-making tools. Ice cream parlor with maple soft serve creemees and maple milk shakes. Free. 12 noon – 5 pm. Bragg Farm Sugarhouse, Rt. 14 North. (802) 223-5757. braggfarmmaple@aol.com. braggfarm.com. *Friday, Saturday, and Sunday through mid-April.*

FAIRLEE. "Mega Spring Meltdown" Game Day. Green Mountain Gamers, a social network for game enthusiasts in Vermont, hosts 15 hours of tabletop gaming. Door prizes. Admission at the door: adults \$20, ages 13-21 \$15, 12 and under free, discount for pre-registration. 9 am – 11:59 pm. Lake Morey Resort, 1 Clubhouse Rd. www.greenmountaingamers.com.

RIPTON. The Ripton Community Coffee House: Robinson and Rohe, singer-songwriters. General admission \$10, generous admission \$15, kids under 12 \$3. 7:30 pm open mic followed by featured performers. Doors open at 7 pm. Rt. 125. (802) 388-9782. rcch.org.

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers' Market. Local produce, crafts, prepared foods. Live music. EBT and debit cards. 10 am – 2 pm. Vermont Farmers, Food Center at 251 West St. in downtown Rutland. (802) 342-4727. info@vtfarmersmarket.org. www.vtfarmersmarket.org. *Saturdays through May 5th.*

RUTLAND. Concert: Clay Walker, country music artist. Tickets: \$45/\$55. 8 pm. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. www.paramountvt.org.

RUTLAND. Friends of the Library Book April Sale. Thousands of organized, gently-used books, CDs, DVDs and puzzles for all ages. Most items \$.25 - \$3.00. This month: special offering of well-illustrated antique books. All diet, nutrition, and fitness books: BOGO (buy one, get one free)! Highlight: gardening books. 10 am – 2 pm. Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St. (802) 773-1860. www.rutlandfree.org.

WOODSTOCK. Eighth Annual Woodstock Vermont Film Series Screening. *Marathon: The Patriot's Day Bombing*. Proving that the worst of times can bring out the best, is one of the things this strong documentary is all about. Free, refreshments included. 3 pm & 5:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, one-half mile north of the Woodstock village green on Rt. 12. (802) 457-2355. billingsfarm.org/filmfest.

SUNDAY, APRIL 8

BARRE. Concert: Green Mountain Youth Symphony. Music from West Side Story, Hamilton, Indiana Jones,

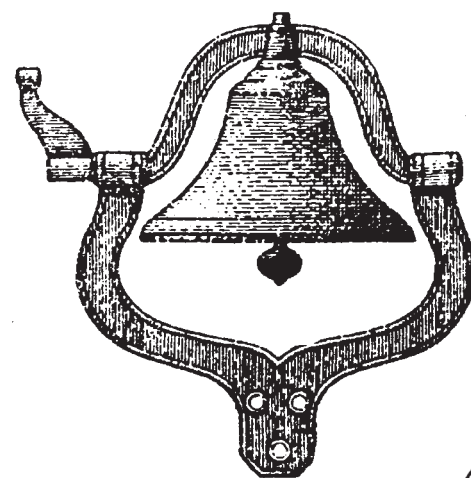
Charlie & the Chocolate Factory. Donation at the door: adults \$15, seniors \$12, Students (K-12) \$5, under 5 free. 2 pm. Barre Opera House, 6 N. Main St. (802) 775-0903. barreoperahouse.org.

BARRE. Concert: Concert: George Winston. Best known for his solo piano recordings; several of his albums have sold millions of copies each. Tickets: \$31.45-\$41.95. 7:30 pm. Barre Opera House, 6 N. Main St. (802) 775-0903. barreoperahouse.org.

BURLINGTON. 2018 Vermont Spring Books, Postcard and Ephemera Fair. Sponsored by the Vermont Antiquarian Bookseller's Association. Admission is free. 10 am – 4 pm. Hilton Hotel, 60 Battery St. (802) 527-7243. vermontisbookcountry.com.

EAST MONTPELIER. Sugar-on-Snow. Free guided tours. Scenic views with a covered bridge nearby. Maple syrup taste testing. Maple walking trail. Gift shop. Large collection of old sugar-making tools. Ice cream parlor with maple soft serve creemees and maple milk shakes. Free. 12 noon – 5 pm. Bragg Farm Sugarhouse, Rt. 14 North. (802) 223-5757. braggfarmmaple@aol.com. braggfarm.com. *Friday, Saturday, and Sunday through mid-April.*

HANOVER, NH. Concert: ChamberWorks: Dark Horses. Stellaria Trio (violinist Letitia Quante, pianist Claire Black and cellist and Dartmouth music instructor John Dunlop) play Beethoven's Piano Trio No. 6 in E-flat major and Dvorák's Piano Trio No. 3 in F minor. Free. 1 pm. Rollins Chapel, Hopkins Center for the Arts, 4 E. Wheelock St. (603) 646-2422. hop.dartmouth.edu.



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Vergennes, VT

Workshop Series: Secrets of Publishing Explained

April 5, 12, 19, and 26

How do you go from writer to author? How do authors find publishers? What is a hybrid publisher? Should writers consider self-publishing their work? What about ebooks? What are the potential pitfalls, costs and benefits of each approach? How do you spot a scam? How do books get distributed to stores? How much do authors make? Do you need an agent? Where do you start?

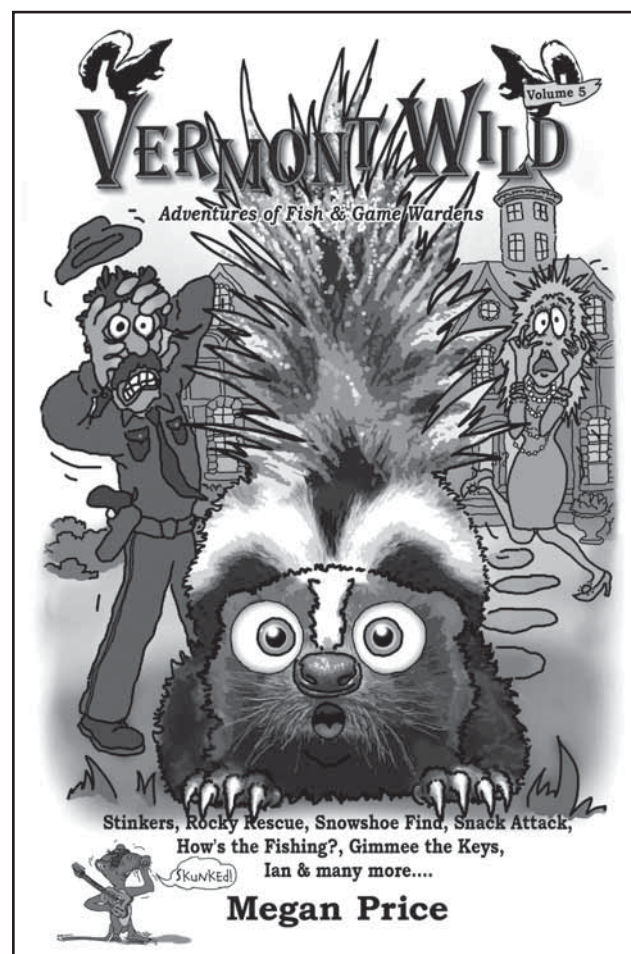
Join best-selling Green Mountain author Megan Price in the Bixby Memorial Free Library's Otter Creek Room in Vergennes, VT, every Thursday in April, from 6 to 8 p.m. (April 5, 12, 19 and 26) to learn about the revolution underway in the world of book publishing and how you can become an author. This four-part series is designed to help writers and poets better understand the terminology, steps and choices involved in becoming an author and perhaps, even a publisher. It is not a writing class.

Price's "Vermont Wild" consists of six volumes of retired game wardens' adventures. Told as if the reader is listening around a campfire, the focus is on action and danger laced with a healthy dose of humor. A huge hit with so-called "reluctant readers," the books are relished by men at hunting camp, read out loud as bedtime stories to pre-schoolers and taught in middle and high school to encourage students to record their own adventures.

"Phenomenal sales," is how Michael DeSanto, co-owner of Phoenix Books in Essex, Burlington, Rutland and Chester, describes the "Vermont Wild" book series. Price released her latest tome, featuring a startled skunk on the cover, just a few months ago.

The author worked as a news reporter and editor as well as in marketing, design and advertising for more than 35 years. More recently, Price created the "Vermont Wild, Adventures of Fish & Game Wardens" series. Her latest book was released in December. "Vermont Wild" can be found at all Vermont bookstores, Kinney Drugs and general stores statewide.

"I'm often asked for advice from people wanting to publish," Price said. "But there is no one way. There are decisions each writer must make. These four seminars are designed



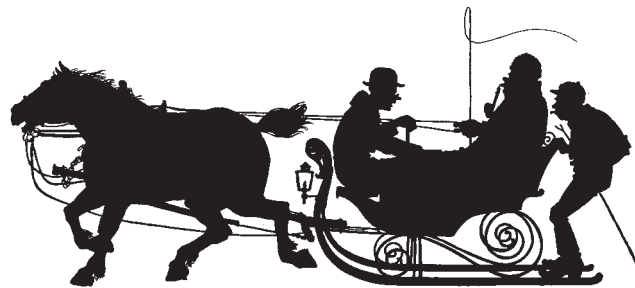
to give anyone who wants to publish a book the tools they need to get through the process a bit easier and to avoid being scammed," Price said. "Sadly, there are predatory publishers and printers out there."

Class size is limited to 20 and open to any adult whose goal is to be an author, to become published. There is no fee, but participants should plan on attending all four classes.

Please register no later than April 2nd by e-mailing maddy.willwerth@bixbylibrary.org or calling (802) 877-2211 x 205. Early registration is appreciated. Bixby Memorial Free Library is located in the heart of Vergennes, VT at 258 Main St. along Rt. 7 with plenty of free parking. Bixby Library's Otter Creek Room is handicapped accessible from the rear of the library. www.bixbylibrary.org.

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Vermont Country Calendar



WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. "Flavors of the Valley." Annual local food-tasting expo. Samples from over 45 farm- and food-related local producers. Bring a plate, cup and utensil to help make this a zero-waste event. Vendors accept only cash or checks. No smoking or alcohol permitted. Only service dogs allowed. Admission: \$12, \$35 per family (maximum). 11 am – 3 pm. Hartford High School, 37 Highland Ave. (802) 291-9100.

TUESDAY, APRIL 10

BRATTLEBORO. Program: Bobcats in Vermont. With Kim Royar, Dept. of Fish & Wildlife. Sponsored by the Windham Regional Woodlands Association. 7 pm. Wilson-Prouty Center, 130 Austine Dr., Holton Hall, 4th floor. www.windhamwoodlands.org.

HANOVER, NH. Concert: Sally Pinkas, pianist in residence. Solo works reflecting on losses of World War I and modern-day Syria, plus buoyant Filipino "salon" music. Tickets: \$17-\$27. 7 pm. Spaulding Auditorium, Hopkins Center for the Arts, 4 E. Wheelock St. (603) 646-2422. hop.dartmouth.edu.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11

HANOVER, NH. Artist Talk: Using Your Voice. Arocena talks with Taylor Ho Bynum, director of the Barbary Coast Jazz Ensemble, about finding her voice in the unstoppable lineage of Cuban music. Free. 5 pm. Faulkner Recital Hall, Hopkins Center for the Arts, 4 E. Wheelock St. (603) 646-2422. hop.dartmouth.edu.

MANCHESTER. 35th Annual Vermont Tourism Summit. One of the largest gatherings of tourism professionals in the state including owners, managers and employees. Full-conference, student, and one-day only registration options available. Equinox Resort. info@delancymeetingevent.com. www.vttourismsummit.org. Also April 12.

THURSDAY, APRIL 12

HANOVER, NH. Concert: Daymé Arocena. Dazzling young Havanan sings Afro-Cuban music suffused with jazz, soul and funk. Tickets: \$17-\$30. 7 pm. Spaulding Auditorium, Hopkins Center for the Arts, 4 E. Wheelock St. (603) 646-2422. hop.dartmouth.edu.

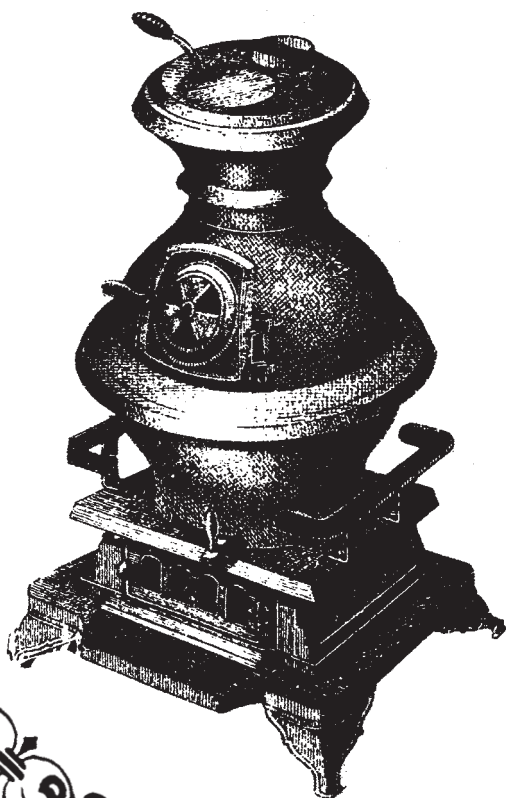
FRIDAY, APRIL 13

BRATTLEBORO. Solo Jazz Piano Fest. A festival celebrating the VJC's refurbished Steinway D, nine-foot concert grand piano. Performances by jazz legends and regional favorites. Vermont Jazz Center, 72 Cotton Mill Hill. For tickets call (802) 254-9088. www.vtjazz.org. Through April 15.

EAST MONTPELIER. Sugar-on-Snow. Free guided tours. Scenic views with a covered bridge nearby. Maple syrup taste testing. Maple walking trail. Gift shop. Large collection of old sugar-making tools. Ice cream parlor with maple soft serve creemees and maple milk shakes. Free. 12 noon – 5 pm. Bragg Farm Sugarhouse, Rt. 14 North. (802) 223-5757. braggfarmmaple@aol.com. braggfarm.com. Friday, Saturday, and Sunday through mid-April.

MIDDLEBURY. Concert: Jeremy Kittel Trio. American fiddler, violinist, and composer Jeremy Kittel's music draws from traditional roots, jazz, Celtic, classical, electronic, and more. Tickets: \$22. 8 pm. Mahaney Center for the Arts, Robison Hall, Middlebury College. (802) 443-5221. middlebury.edu.

RANDOLPH. Concert: The Texas Troubadours. Ruthie Foster, Jimmie Dale Gilmore, and Carrie Rodriguez—Texas-based artists known worldwide for their powerful songs and distinctive voices. Tickets: \$35, \$45, \$55. 7:30 pm. Chandler Music Hall, 71 N. Main St. (802) 728-6464. www.chandler-arts.org.



RUTLAND. Performance: Nick Di Paolo's: Nick Is Right Tour. Adult humor, rated "R." Tickets: \$25 advance, \$30 day of show. 8 pm. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. www.paramountvt.org.

SATURDAY, APRIL 14

EAST MONTPELIER. Sugar-on-Snow. Free guided tours. Scenic views with a covered bridge nearby. Maple syrup taste testing. Maple walking trail. Gift shop. Large collection of old sugar-making tools. Ice cream parlor with maple soft serve creemees and maple milk shakes. Free. 12 noon – 5 pm. Bragg Farm Sugarhouse, Rt. 14 North. (802) 223-5757. braggfarmmaple@aol.com. braggfarm.com. Friday, Saturday, and Sunday through mid-April.

GRANVILLE, NY. Documentary: "The Singing Hills." Edward Brydon, photographic artist from Northwest Wales, uses photography to draw a visual link between the people, land and life in the New York and Vermont area and North Wales. Light refreshments available. Donations greatly appreciated. 1 pm. Slate Valley Museum, 17 Water St. (802) 287-5744. pasds1988@gmail.com.

HUNTINGTON. Bud-Break Bird Monitoring Walk. Early birds will be making their way back to Vermont just as the buds are bursting open on the trees. Donation appreciated. 8-10 am. Green Mountain Audubon Center, 255 Sherman Hollow Rd. (802) 434-3068. vermont@audubon.org. www.vt.audubon.org. Also May 19 in Derby, VT.

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. Saturdays through May 5th.

SWANTON. Annual Big Rig Day. Kids and families will be invited to come on the trucks, talk to the drivers and explore to their heart's content. Parking available at Swanton Elementary School, with additional indoor activities set up by Franklin County Early Childhood Programs for Month of the Young Child. Ages: 0-12. Free. 9 am – 12 noon. Swanton Village Municipal Complex, 120 1st St. olivia.fgbookmobile@gmail.com. fnwsu.org/bookmobile.

SUNDAY, APRIL 15

BRATTLEBORO. Solo Jazz Piano Fest. A festival celebrating the VJC's refurbished Steinway D, nine-foot concert grand piano. Performances by jazz legends and regional favorites. Vermont Jazz Center, 72 Cotton Mill Hill. For tickets call (802) 254-9088. www.vtjazz.org.

EAST MONTPELIER. Sugar-on-Snow. Free guided tours. Maple syrup taste testing. Maple walking trail. Gift shop. Large collection of old sugar-making tools. Ice cream parlor with maple soft serve creemees and maple milk shakes. Free. 12 noon – 5 pm. Bragg Farm Sugarhouse, Rt. 14 North. (802) 223-5757. braggfarm.com. Friday, Saturday, and Sunday through mid-April.

WEST TOWNSHEND. Gerda's Equine Rescue: Spring Clean Up Day. We rely on volunteers like you to help us keep our rescue in tip top shape for our rescue horses while they wait for their forever homes. Lunch will be served for all volunteers. Free. 10 am – 3 pm. Gerda's Equine Rescue. (802) 874-7213. gerdasequinerescue.org.

ONGOING ACTIVITIES 2018

BARTON. Community Seed Exchange (CSE) is open for the 2018 gardening season, at the Barton Public Library. A variety of open-pollinated and heirloom seeds are available for home gardeners and homesteaders. Free and open during library hours: Monday 1-7 pm, Wednesday 9 am – noon and 1-7 pm, Friday 1-7 pm. For more information, visit the Facebook page or e-mail nekseeds@gmail.com.

BRATTLEBORO. The Cotton Mill. Housed in a 3-story, 145,000 square foot renovated mill building dating back to 1910, The Cotton Mill is home to over 60 small businesses and artists' studios. Painters, dancers, jewelry makers, circus performers, jam and granola makers, filmmakers, bodyworkers, woodworkers, jazz musicians, toymakers and many others form a vibrant & bustling community. 74 Cotton Mill Hill. thecottonmill.org.

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.

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.

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

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

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Maple Open House Weekend

— March 23rd, 24th & 25th —

Friday, Saturday & Sunday, 11 am to 4 pm

Come for The Works! — Sugar-on-Snow with donut, pickle, and hot beverage

Also available ala carte
Kids' craft activities!

Visit us on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays through March for Sugar-on-Snow

Vermont Country Calendar

(Ongoing activities 2018, continued)

QUECHEE. Vermont Institute of Natural Science. Wildlife exhibits, workshops, and special events. Wildlife rehabilitation. Adults: \$14.50, seniors (62 plus) \$13.50, youth (4-17): \$12.50, children 3 and under free. Open April 9-October 31: 10 am – 5 pm. Vermont Institute of Natural Science, 6565 Woodstock Rd. (802) 359-5000. vinsweb.org.

RANDOLPH. Fifth Annual PoemTown Randolph. Posters of 100 selected poems will be displayed in the main windows and doors of businesses and churches. Special poetry events. poemtown.org. *Through April.*

RUPERT. Merck Forest and Farmland. Camping, cabins, trails, farm, workshops and seasonal events. Visitor's Center and store. Open year round, dawn to dusk. 3270 Rt. 315, west of Manchester. (802) 394-7836. merckforest.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.*

STATEWIDE. Calvin Coolidge Presidential Foundation's 2018 Calvin Essay Contest: What Speech Would You Give as President to Advance Civil Rights? Open to all Vermont students age 13-19, due May 11, 2018. (802) 672-3389. coolidgefoundation.org/the-calvin-writing-prize.

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

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

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

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm & Museum. Visit our award-winning Jersey herd, draft horses, and sheep and tour the restored 1890 Farm House. *A Place in the Land* our Academy Award®-nominee film will be shown every hour in the theater. Admission: adults \$15, 62 & up \$14, ages 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, under 3 free. Open April 2 through October 31 for the season, 10 am – 5 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org.

WOODSTOCK. Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historic Park. 20 miles of trails and carriage roads are open year-round. Gardens and mansion. Vermont's only national park. Guided tours \$4/\$8, under 15 free. Walk the grounds free. Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historic Park, 54 Elm St. (802) 457-3368 x 22. nps.gov/mabi.

MUSEUMS, EXHIBITS & GALLERIES

BARRE. Exhibit: "The Feast of Fools" by Hannah Morris. Painted collages and soft sculpture installations exploring the intersection of the sublime, the absurd, and the mundane in recognizable moments and places. Free admission. 11 am – 5 pm. Studio Place Arts, 201 North Main St. (802) 479-7069. studioplacarts.com. *March 27 through May 12.*

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. One admission fee for both the Vermont Heritage Galleries in Barre and the Vermont History Museum in Montpelier. 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. info@vermonthistory.org. www.vermonthistory.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. Adults \$9, seniors & students \$8, families \$20, under 12 are free. Wed-Mon, 10 am – 5 pm. Bennington Center for the Arts, 44 Gypsy Lane. (802) 442-7158. 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. 10 am – 5 pm every day except Wednesdays. Bennington Museum, 75 Main St. (802) 447-1571. www.benningtonmuseum.org.

BRANDON. Art Exhibit: "Art from Farm To Table." Pastel works by Middlebury artists Judy Albright and Cristine Kossow. Brandon Artists Guild, 7 Center St. (802) 247-4956. brandonartistsguild.org. *Through April 30.*

BRANDON. Exhibit: Opera at-a-Glance. Listening room where visitors can relax and sample different operas. Phonograph Rooms devoted to how recording helped to popularize opera for all to enjoy. Art Exhibit: "Barn Art." A collection of works from 31 different artists in celebration of these functional, yet stunning, architectural gems, *April 6 through June 16.* Compass Music and Arts Center, 333 Jones Dr. (802) 247-4295. cmacvt.org.

BATTLEBORO. Art Exhibits. Open daily 11am – 5pm, closed Tues. Admission: \$8 adults, \$6 seniors, \$4 students, free for youth 18 and under. Battleboro Museum & Art Center, 10 Vernon St. (802) 257-0124. www.battleboromuseum.org.

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

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

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Useful Vermont Websites

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

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Spring Call

Though it is only March, the sun
Was warm as June today.
Down by the pond I watched some boys
Sail little ships away.
And at the noon far roosters crowed
Away beyond the hill,
The cattle scratched
And stretched their necks
As all the cattle will
When they are feeling a warm sun
Beat in a kindly way
Upon their winter-coated backs.
Oh, everything today
Seemed calling, calling, calling me
To where the fragrant loam
Lies open to the warming sun
Around my valley home!

— NELLIE RICHARDSON
Springfield, VT, circa 1944

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

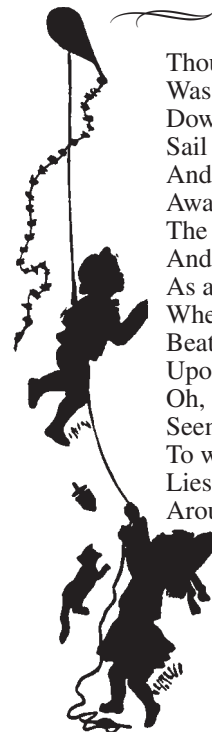
It takes four maple trees, at least forty years old, growing in the mountain "sugar-bush" to yield enough sap in six weeks to produce one gallon of maple syrup.

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

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

CHESTER. Photography Contest: Chester Trails Experience. Entries must be taken of or from one of Chester's hiking trails: information at meetchestervermont.com/maps-resources. Maximum of three submissions per person. Winning entries will be professionally matted and displayed in Chester's Whiting Library in April 2018. (802) 875-4309. chestertrails05143@gmail.com.

CHESTER. 103 Artisans Marketplace. Owned by artists Elise & Payne Junker, exclusive showroom of Junker Studio metalwork. Open Thursday through Sunday 10 am – 5 pm, Tuesday and Wednesday by chance. Located at 7 Pineview Dr. and Rt. 103, south of town—look for the life-size moose! (802) 875-7400. 103artisansmarketplace.com.

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. www.svac.org.

MANCHESTER. Hildene House Tours of Robert and Mary Lincoln's home. The museum store in our 100-year-old carriage barn welcomes visitors for distinctive gifts. Tours daily at 2 pm with a prior reservation, not recommended for children under 10. Admission \$20 adults; children 6 to 14, \$5; under 6, free. A fee of \$7.50 for the tour is added to the general admission. No admission charged for Welcome Center and Museum Store. Open daily year round 9:30 am to 4:30 pm. Hildene, The Lincoln Family Home, Rt. 7A, south of the village. (802) 362-1788. info@hildene.org. 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. Adults \$5, seniors \$3, children 5-12 \$2, kids 4 and under are free. Open 10 am – 4 pm weekdays, 10 am – 5 pm weekends. Rt. 9, Hogback Mountain. (802) 464-0048. 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. 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. Exhibit: "Our Town: Love, Joy, Sadness, and Baseball—100 years of photographs from the Sheldon Museum", March 20 through July 8. Adults \$5, youth 6-18 \$3, senior \$4.50, family \$12, under 6 free. Tues-Sat 10 am – 5 pm. Henry Sheldon Museum of Vermont History, One Park St. (803) 388-2117. 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. vermontfolklifecenter.org.

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

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

ROCHESTER. Exhibit: Nancy Taplin, painter. A select retrospective. BigTown Gallery, 99 North Main St. info@bigtowngallery.com. bigtowngallery.com. Through March 31.

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. chaffeeartcenter.org.

RUTLAND. Castleton Downtown Gallery. Free admission. Open Wed through Sat 1-6 pm. Center Street Alley. For info call Bill Ramage at (802) 468-1266. castletoncollegealleries@gmail.com.

RUTLAND. Art Exhibits. Gallery hours: Thursday & Friday noon – 5 pm, Saturday 11 am – 3 pm. The Alley Gallery, Center St. vtalleygallery@gmail.com.

RUTLAND. Inaugural Exhibition: 34 local artists from all over Rutland County with work ranging from landscape paintings to conceptual sculptures to collage work and even performance art. 77 Gallery, 77 Grove St. (603) 732-8606. the77gallery@gmail.com. vitalsparknorth.com. facebook.com/vtvalleygallery. Through March 30.

SAXTONS RIVER. River Artisans Cooperative. 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, 26B Main St. (802) 869-2099. www.riverartisans.com.

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

SHELBURNE. Shelburne Museum. Renowned for its collection of American folk art and quilts. Home to holdings of decorative arts, design, decoys, and carriages. The paintings collection includes French Impressionists as well as over 400 18th-20th century American works. Over 20 gardens. Historic houses and community buildings. Admission through April 30: adult \$10, ages 5-17 \$5, under 5 free. Wednesday – Sunday, 10 am – 5 pm. Shelburne Museum, 6000 Shelburne Rd. (802) 985-3346. shelburnemuseum.org.

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

SO. POMFRET. Exhibits, workshops, classes, events. Artistree Community Arts Center, 2095 Pomfret Rd. (802) 457-3500. artistreevt.org.

SPRINGFIELD. Wildlands Exhibition. Celebrating our public lands and national parks, and the beauty and experiences we enjoy in our publicly owned wild spaces. The 10 artists in Wildlands share a deep love of the land. 9 am – 5 pm. The Great Hall, 100 River St. (802) 258-3992. www.vermontartsliving.com. Through March 30.

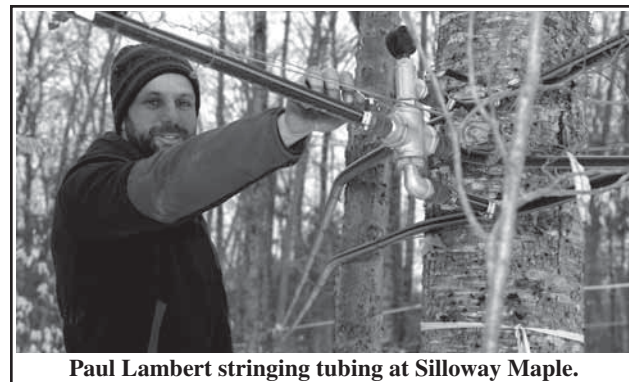
SPRINGFIELD. Gallery at the VAULT. A Vermont State Craft Center featuring fine art and hand-crafted gifts from over 125 local and regional artists and craftsmen. Photograph exhibit: a collection of Joe Tantillo's photographs, Springfield's Machine Tool Shops and Countryside. Classes, workshops. Tuesday – Saturday 11 am – 5 pm. Gallery at the VAULT, 68 Main St. (802) 885-7111. galleryvault.org.

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

ST. JOHNSBURY. The Stephen Huneck Gallery at Dog Mountain and Dog Chapel. Free. Gallery open Mon. & Wed. 11 am – 4 pm; Fri., Sat. & Sun. 10 am – 5 pm. Closed Tues. & Thurs. After November call the Gallery at (800) 449-2580 to find out about winter/spring hours. Dog Chapel open seven days a week from dawn to dusk. Dog Mountain, 143 Parks Rd. off Spaulding Rd. (800) 449-2580. contact@dogmt.com. www.dogmt.com.

WEST RUTLAND. Carving Studio and Sculpture Center Gallery. Annual Members' Exhibition, June 10 through July 9. Hours are Monday-Friday, 10 am-1 pm, or by appointment. 636 Marble St. (802) 438-2097. info@carvingstudio.org. carvingstudio.org.

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm & Museum. Visit the Jersey herd, draft horses, oxen, and sheep and tour the restored and furnished 1890 Farm House. Admission: adults \$15, 62 & up \$14, ages 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, under 3 free. Open Saturday and Sunday, November through February from 10 am – 4 pm. Also open February vacation week from 10 am – 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org.



Paul Lambert stringing tubing at Silloway Maple.

Randolph Center, VT

The Eighth Wonder of the World! Gathering Sap by Tubing at Silloway Maple

by Bette Lambert

Why is the stream of maple sap on the right so much sweeter than the one on the left?

Because it is being pumped up over the hill! 402 feet up, or the height of eight of the farm silos stacked sky high, a mile and a quarter, through the sugar woods.

Some thought this venture might be called "Lambert's Folly," but the sap is pouring into the tank at the sugarhouse as we speak.

What did this feat involve? A lot of planning and conferring with the "experts," a lot of pipe and wire to hang it on, half of the family on a Sunday wire-tying every eighteen inches (why do snowshoes come off when crossing the brook?) much of the day and well after dark.

And then Integrity Energy, LLP coming to wire the first pump, and then another when the first was too small!

How's it work? The sap from hundreds of trees runs through the tubing to a tank at the foot of the woods, and then back up through the woods over the hill it comes!

My Dad, Paul Silloway, was always inventing improvements around the farm. He wanted to build a waterwheel in the brook below his house, to make some power, but didn't quite get to it. How he would have loved to have been a part of this marvel!

Bette Lambert helps run the family sugaring operation at Silloway Maple, 1303 Boudro Rd., Randolph Center, VT. For more information or to order maple call (802) 272-6249. sillowaymaple@hotmail.com. www.sillowaymaple.com.

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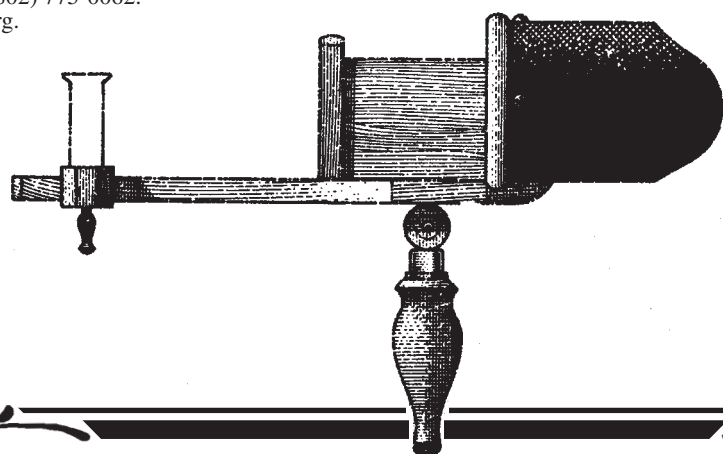


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Burlington Irish Heritage Festival

Greetings! Did you know... It's been 1,557 years since St. Patrick died in Ireland, 256 years since the first St. Patrick's Day parade in New York City, 115 years since St. Patrick's Day became a national holiday in Ireland—and 23 years since the first Burlington Irish Heritage Festival! We're proud to announce this special season of celebration once again in 2018, with festivities extending through March 30. Throughout the month of March, you can learn about Irish-American history or your own Irish roots. You can listen to beautiful musical performances in an intimate setting, join in the Ceili dancing, or introduce your little ones to traditional Irish crafts and musical instruments.

Once again, we thank our partners and sponsors who are making the 2018 Festival possible: Young Tradition Vermont, Vermont Gatherings, Fletcher Free Library, the Vermont Genealogy Library, Michael O'Dowd (KW Realty), Hill Attorney, Bob's Awesome Books, Rí Rá Irish Pub and Restaurant, and Wild West Irish Tours.

The Burlington Irish Heritage Festival will not dye the Winooski River green. We can't promise a marching band down Church Street or a float parade around City Hall Park. But we can invite you to share this joyful season with some of the most gifted ambassadors of Irish heritage that you'll find anywhere St. Patrick's Day is celebrated.

Festival Schedule

Ongoing on all Wednesdays – Gypsy Reel, 7-10 p.m. Rí Rá Irish Pub and Restaurant, 123 Church St., Burlington, VT. Gypsy Reel plays high energy stirring music rooted in the Celtic tradition but garnered from the whole world. Their music is an exciting synthesis of world rhythms and influences from 3 continents. Their newest studio album, 'Red Red Rose,' features music from the tradition and original material from the band.

Ongoing on all Wednesdays – Irish Music Open Session, 7-9 p.m. Radio Bean, 8 North Winooski Ave., Burlington, VT. Come to play or to listen. The session is open to musicians & singers. Fine local musicians bring their best Irish tunes. This is not a slow session, so sit down and strap yourself in. Come ready to play, sing, dance or tap your toes, and try to keep up. Admission is free! Donations welcome.

Saturday, March 17 – Irish Music, an Introduction – Dominique Dodge, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Fletcher Room, Fletcher Free Library, 235 College St., Burlington, VT. An informative exploration of Irish traditional music and song on the harp. Dominique will begin with music from the time of the blind 18th Century harper Turlough O'Carolan, moving forward in time to trace the lineage of modern day dance forms Irish musicians know and love, visiting a song or two along the way. Dominique Dodge is a harper and singer who grew up in Jackson, NH and now makes her home in Vermont and Cape Breton. She is deeply grounded in traditional music and song. A former Fulbright Scholar and a 2012 graduate of the University of Limerick with an MA in Irish Music Performance, she has been performing, recording, and teaching traditional music on both sides of the Atlantic for over a decade. Admission: \$8 suggested donation.

Saturday, March 17 – Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh Irish Fiddle Workshop, 3-4 p.m. Burlington Violin Shop, 23 Church Street Burlington, VT. A one-time, one-hour Irish Fiddle Workshop with Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh, renowned



Grainne Hambly and William Jackson will be performing at the Burlington Irish Heritage Festival on March 25.

Donegal fiddler with Altan, who will be performing the same evening at the Flynn Center for the Performing Arts in Burlington. The workshop is presented as part of the Fiddleheads program through Young Tradition Vermont and the Burlington Violin Shop. Admission: \$5 suggested donation for children and youth, \$20 for others. Reservations expected at mark.sustic@gmail.com. More info: youngtraditionvermont.org/events.

Saturday, March 17 – Concert: Altan – A St. Patrick's Day Celebration, 8 p.m. Flynn Main Stage, 153 Main St., Burlington, VT. For 30 years, County Donegal's Altan has been the gold standard of Irish bands. Led by the spectacular two-fiddle frontline of Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh and Ciaran Tourish, Altan performs a special St. Patrick's Day celebration on the MainStage. Armed with fiddles, guitars, a bouzouki, and accordion, the six-piece band infuses a contemporary sensibility into traditional music—all of it sweetened by Mairéad's beautiful voice (the quintessential pure Irish soprano). From hard driving jigs and reels to the sweet and sad ballads sung in Gaelic and English, Altan displays a mastery of form and a freshness of vision. Sláinte! Admission: \$25-\$70 Call 802-86-FLYNN or email box@flynncenter.org

Sunday, March 18 – Burlington Irish Heritage Festival Ceili, 1-3 p.m. Contois Auditorium, City Hall, 149 Church St., Burlington, VT. "Ceili" is the Irish word for a music, dancing, hand-clapping good time! The annual Festival Ceili, co-sponsored with Young Tradition Vermont, is fun for the whole family with Irish step dancing and some fine traditional musicians. Hear fiddles and flutes, Irish pipes and pennywhistles; and the bodhrán, an Irish frame drum.

This music session will be hosted by Sarah King and Yasi Zeichner (from Young Tradition Vermont) with others. Area musicians are welcome to bring their instruments and join in for a lively seisun. Bake sale; display tables with information on Irish language, culture and other events. Members of the McFadden Academy of Irish Dance will perform and also lead audience participation in Ceili dances. Grand Prize drawing for 'Luck of the Irish' raffle at the end of the Ceili. Admission is free, donations welcome.

Sunday, March 25 – Concert: Masters of the Celtic Harp: William Jackson & Grainne Hambly, 7-9:30 p.m. 338 Thompson Rd., Shelburne, VT. William Jackson and Grainne Hambly are two of the foremost harpers of Ireland and Scotland. Combining their extraordinary talents on harp, as well as concertina, tinwhistle, and bouzouki, The Masters of the Celtic Harp perform all over the world and dazzle audiences with their artistry. With demanding solo careers that often have them performing on different continents, their combined show is a special treat. Presented by TreeWild with Young Tradition Vermont and the Burlington Irish Heritage Festival. Potluck Supper at 6 p.m. Concert at 7 p.m. Wine, chai and dessert at intermission. Admission: \$20 (all money for Treewild concerts goes to the musicians). Contact AlisonJamesVT@gmail.com for an invitation.

Friday, March 30 – UVM Celtic Cats Showcase & Ceili, Time tbd. At the Dance Studio, Patrick Gym, 97 Spear St., UVM Campus, Burlington, VT. The Celtic Cats St. Patrick's Ceili is UVM's premier Irish cultural event. It is the only strictly Irish event on campus each year. There will be performances by the UVM Celtic Cats and guests, as well as participatory Ceili dances where we will teach you everything you need to know! Irish themed refreshments will also be provided so bring your appetite. Parking at Gutterson Garage (free). For information, visit Facebook or contact uvmcelticcats@gmail.com. Admission: \$7.

For more information e-mail admin@burlingtonirishheritage.org. Visit www.burlingtonirishheritage.org.

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North Country Reflections

A Garden for All Seasons

by Judith Irven

It is the dream of gardeners everywhere: a garden that will be beautiful in every season—and indeed in every month—of the year. While this may seem to be a somewhat unreachable aspiration, I can assure you it is not at all out of the question.

Winter-weary Vermonters are already anticipating the flowers that will grace their gardens throughout the coming season. And many are also eagerly making plans for the new plants they hope to add to their gardens in 2018.

The beauty of our ever-changing seasons

For me, the glorious cycle of the seasons, both in our gardens and in the wider landscape, is one of the really special aspects about life in the North Country.

In a few weeks' time winter will draw to a close and by mid-April those cherished harbingers of spring—snowdrops, daffodils, bluebells and crocuses—start to push up through the cold earth to welcome the new growing season.

Out in the forest ephemeral wildflowers will carpet the ground and the serviceberry trees will burst into boom. Then in mid-May the woods become clothed in pale green leaves and the ephemeral flowers of spring retreat underground.

And, as the last daffodils bloom in our gardens, the crab apple trees cover themselves in delicate pink and white flowers.

Then the lilacs, peonies and roses, with sumptuous blossoms and intoxicating fragrance, all burst on the scene, and early perennials like catmint, salvia and veronica start to flower.

July and August is high summer in Vermont. This is when many garden favorites—coneflowers, false sunflowers, Shasta daisies, blazing stars, daylilies, helenium, smooth hydrangeas to name a few—put on their show.

In September we know that fall is just around the corner. This is when the black-eyed Susans and panicle hydrangeas flower, soon to be followed by the purple fall asters. These classic flowers of autumn, together with Vermont's brilliant fall foliage, combine to create a truly memorable 'grande finale' to the growing season.

It will not be long before an early snowstorm transforms everything. And, as winter settles in, it is time to enjoy the world outside from the warmth of our homes.

The winter scene is primarily monochromatic, with a simple beauty all its own. Fresh snow in the garden highlights the shapes of trees and shrubs, and a metal bench becomes a ghost of summer.

But even in winter we can observe patches of color as the stems of blueberry and dogwood bushes glow red in the low-angled sun and some tall parchment-colored grasses sway in the wind.

Of course, whatever the season, not all days are bright and sunny; there will also be gray days and rainy days. But for me the dreary times only serve to highlight those days when the sun is shining and the sky is blue—when I have a smile on my face and a song in my heart.

Planning ahead for flowers from spring to fall

One of the best parts of planning a garden of any size is selecting a medley of plants that will give us flowers from spring until fall.

But, as we know, most flowering trees, shrubs and perennials only bloom for a few weeks each season, making it tricky to know which plants will actually be in flower together.

Photographs of your garden, as well as of those you have visited, can be invaluable reminders of when different plants bloom. Look through all your pictures to find ones showing flowers that you especially like. Copy these to a new album on your computer and organize them according to the day and month when each photograph was taken. This will quickly give you a sense of the flow of flowers as the season progresses.

Make a bloom sequence chart

You can also take this idea one step further and make your own 'seasonal bloom chart' which displays the names of all the plants you like and when they bloom.

Take a large piece of paper and mark the weeks from May till October along the top and bottom of the page. Now, start-



Judith's garden in full summer bloom, in Goshen, VT.

photo by Dick Conrad

ing in early spring and continuing throughout the season, list the plants of interest down the left side. Then, for each plant, draw a colored block showing the weeks it is in bloom and its approximate color.

Jane Sorenson and her husband David Marchant grow and sell a wide range of hardy pollinator-friendly plants and seeds at their farm in Fairfax (VT) and through their website. And, to help gardeners choose plants that will also flower together, Jane has developed several great bloom sequence charts for various plant types—perennials, annuals, shrubs, trees, vines, etc.—all hardy in Vermont, that you can see at <http://www.riverberryfarm.com/pollinator-plants-at-riverberry-farm/>.

Choosing plant companions

Once you know how to combine plants that bloom at the same time, now plan how best to position them so that their individual colors, shapes and textures blend harmoniously together.

When mixing flowers of various colors most gardeners just follow their intuitions and get great results. Think of yourself as an artist who paints pictures with plants and you cannot go wrong.

In this picture taken in my garden I combined the purple candles of Blazing Star (*Liatris spicata*), some Shasta Daisies (*Leucanthemum superbum*) with white daisy-like flowers and yellow centers, along with some yellow daylilies. In addition to a great color combination the contrast is delightfully enhanced by their complementary shapes.

If you want to delve further, there are plenty of good books on the subject. My personal favorite is 'The Gardener's Palette' by Sydney Eddison, a talented artist who lives and gardens in Connecticut. She provides an easy introduction to the 'artist's color wheel'—a device that has been long used by artists to describe the varied emotional responses people have to different colors and color combinations. And she illustrates each of her points with plenty of great photographs from her own garden.

You can also purchase her stand-alone 'Color-wheel for Gardeners' and use it to explore your own reactions to different color combinations.

More than flowers

As we have seen, our favorite flowers tend to come and go as the season unfolds. So, to create a calm and lasting backdrop, be sure to include plants with beautiful leaves in your garden plans.

For shady corners barrenwort (*Epimedium rubrum*) and big-rooted geranium (*Geranium maculatum*) together with a mix of ferns will create a constant presence from May onwards.

For damp spaces either the Umbrella Plant (*Darmera peltata*) or Rodger's Flower (*Rodgersia aesculifolia*) will make a grand statement.

And, for sunny spaces, prairie grasses like Blue Oat Grass (*Helictotrichon sempervirens*), Switch Grass (*Panicum sp*)

and Little Bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*) all combine beautifully with our favorite summer flowers.

And what about winter?

Wise gardeners will also include plenty of woody plants, both deciduous and evergreen, as well as some beautiful garden structures, in their garden plans. They will also position these year-round elements so that, in addition to gracing their gardens from May till October, they will also stand out in the snow during those other six months of the year when we mostly look at our gardens from our kitchen windows.

Judith Irven and her husband Dick Conrad live in Goshen, VT where together they nurture a large garden.

For more about creating beauty during the winter months check out these articles on my blog at <http://northcountryreflections.com/writings/the-winter-garden/>

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

An April Morning

Once more in misted April
The world is growing green.
Along the winding river
The plume willows lean.

Beyond the sweeping meadows
The looming mountains rise,
Like battlements of dreamland
Against the brooding skies.

In every wooded valley
The buds are breaking through,
As though the heart of all things
No languor ever knew.

The golden-wings and bluebirds
Call to their heavenly choirs.
The pines are blued and drifted
With smoke of brushwood fires.

And in my sister's garden
Where little breezes run,
The golden daffodillies
Are blowing in the sun.



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Lunenburg, VT

The Lunenburg Annual Maple Festival Celebrated March 24!

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

On Saturday, March 24th, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., the Lunenburg Primary School, located above the Common off Rt. 2 on 49 Bobbin Mill Rd., will serve as the hub for the Festival. There, visitors can enjoy homemade meals, sign up for a free door prize, pick up a scavenger hunt, and a map and directions to the local sugarhouses that are open for visitors. Photographs, interactive displays, and local antique sugaring equipment chronicle all that goes into the sugaring process and the local families as they have carried on the tradition over generations.

As in past years, visitors will have the opportunity to cast their vote for the People’s Choice awards in the photo and quilt square contests, take chances on raffles, and purchase maple and Lunenburg theme products, including copies of A Wicked Good Run, Lunenburg T-shirts, and the Lunenburg Historical Society 2018 calendar.

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

- From 8 to 10:30 a.m. – a pancake breakfast, including sausage, eggs, home fries, beverages and real maple syrup, will be offered by The Top of the Common Committee. \$7 adults, \$3.50 ages 12-4, under age 4 free (take-out available)
- 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. – rug hooking demo with the opportunity to try it yourself
- 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. – visit the Lunenburg student-run sugaring operation in the school parking lot
- 10:30 a.m. – the judging of the Maple-flavored Pie Contest will begin at the Pie Contest table. Whole pies and pieces will be available for purchase throughout the day, after the winners have been announced. (\$2/piece, \$8-\$12/whole pies)
- 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. – visitors, with maps in hand, can take self-guided tours through the participating local sugarhouses to visit with sugarmakers, purchase maple syrup and, weather permitting, watch syrup being made. All within 3 miles of the school. The sugarhouses provide a representation of the diverse methods of sap collection, fuel, and product sales.
- Noon to 3 p.m. – enjoy a luncheon offered by the Old Home Day Committee with choice of homemade soups, breads, beverage, and a dessert for \$5
- 11 a.m. – at a tapping demonstration on the Common, you can learn about backyard sugaring by seeing how to tap a tree and what makes the sap run

Check out the rules and find up-to-date Festival information at www.topofthecommon.org or by calling Chris at (802) 892-6654.

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Old maples tapped in the spring in Lunenburg, VT.

photo by Marguerite Bruno

Secrets of New England Cooking

Old-Time Maple Recipes to Please the Family

by Ella Shannon Bowles and Dorothy S. Towle

These recipes were published in New Hampshire in 1946, collected from favorites from the previous 100 years.

Sugar-on-Snow

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

Old-Fashioned Maple Sugar Cream Cake

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

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

Flo's Maple Custard Pie

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

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

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Maple Pinwheel Rolls

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

Maple Panocha

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1½ cups white sugar | Pinch of salt |
| 1 cup maple sugar | ½ teaspoon almond flavoring |
| 1 cup milk | ¾ cup chopped butternuts |
| 1 tablespoons butter | |

Cook the sugar, milk, butter, and salt to the soft ball stage. Set the saucepan in a dish of cold water, being careful not to jar the contents. When it begins to cool, add the flavoring and nuts. Beat until creamy.

Maple Fondant

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 quart maple syrup | ½ teaspoon butter |
|---------------------|-------------------|

Pour the maple syrup into a saucepan and add the butter. Bring to a boil as quickly as possible. Boil rapidly without stirring until the temperature is between 234 and 238°F. Cover the tines of a fork with cheesecloth and clean off any crystals that have accumulated on the sides of the pan. Skim off any impurities that rise to the surface. Do this as the syrup boils. As soon as the syrup reaches the right temperature, pour into a large dripping pan. Cool gradually to avoid the formation of crystals at the bottom of the pan. Do not move the pan while the mixture is cooling. When the mass has cooled, collect it in the center of the pan with a wooden paddle, being careful not to stir but to use a lifting and beating movement. It will take twenty to forty minutes to work air into the fondant. When no more heat can be felt when the hand is held over the fondant, it may be stirred. Work until the mass is honey-colored and creamy, and continue until it loses its glossy appearance and again becomes hard. Store in tightly covered glass jars. To use the stored fondant, place in the top of a double boiler and melt over hot water until it becomes like a thin batter. Pour into fancy rubber molds. When completely cooled and firmly set, unmold by bending back the molds. If you do not want to store the fondant, when it is no longer warm, turn it onto a marble slab and knead until it is creamy and will hold its shape. Mold into desired shapes and garnish with halved nut meats, candied cherries, raisins, or citron.

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They Just Don't Make 'em Like They Used To!

by Burr Morse

I just returned from having my car inspected and, whew, it passed. Sure brings back memories of sweating out test scores back in my school days! I've always driven "elderly" cars which, due to all of our salty, winter roads here in Vermont, age a bit out of proportion. That's never been a huge problem for this old guy. It's kind of fun, in fact, to age right along with your trusty motor vehicle and finally win... graveyard trumps scrapyards, yea!

We've all seen the quintessential "bucket o' bolts" pull up beside us at the convenience store or the gas station. Usually the person is driving it because he or she simply can't afford anything better. It seems, though, our state leaders, in their infinite wisdom, have made a giant move to place these beaters on the endangered species list or condemn them as fodder for the scrap yard.

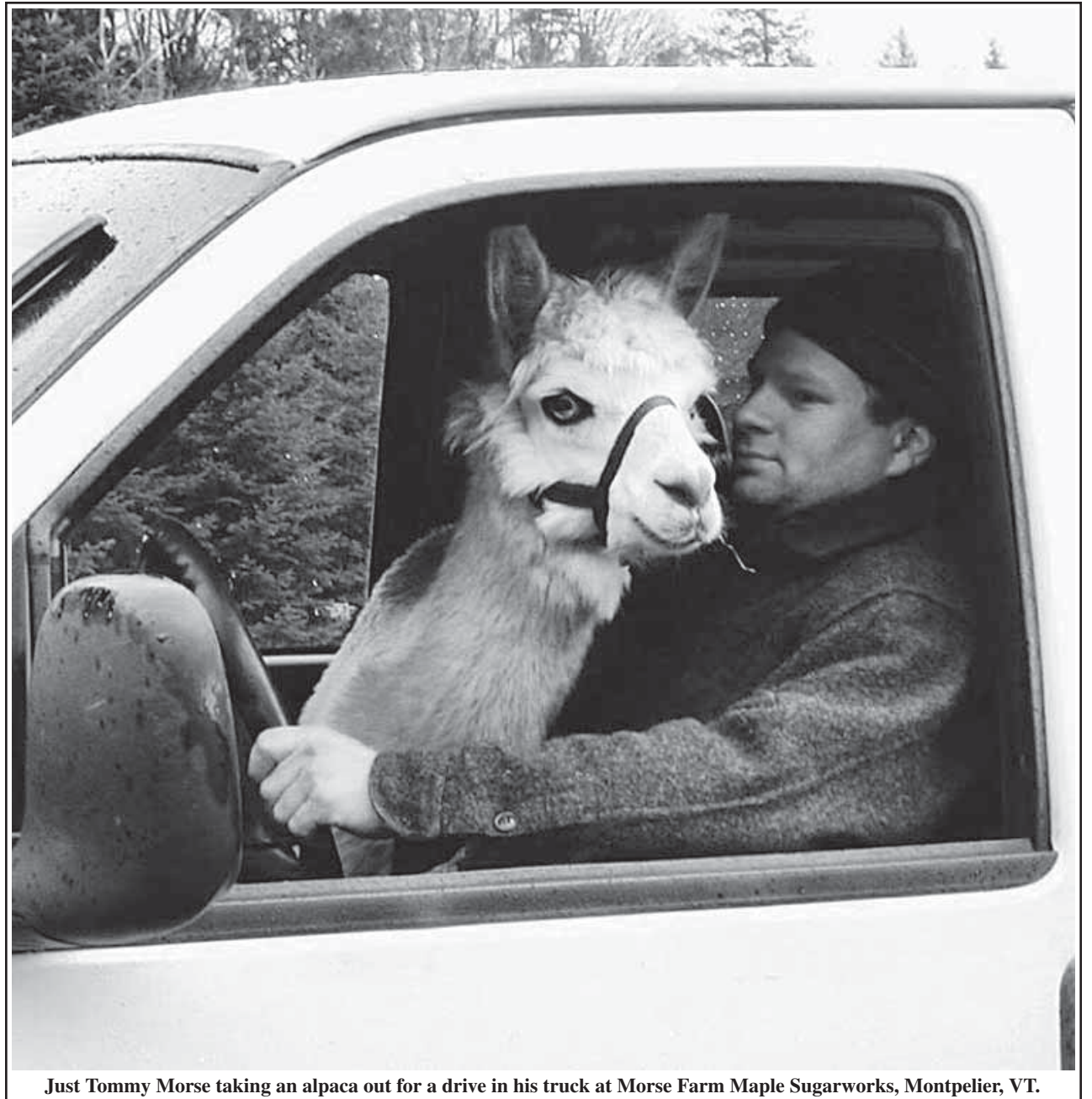
We've been accepting tougher inspection standards like strict emissions tests for years. In fact "check engine" lights, aka "idiot lights" now come on at the drop of a hat. Very few trouble-free miles are ever driven in any modern vehicle before one of those cussed things lights up. They are truly mosquitos of the auto world. Used to be, a well-tuned car

"Used to be a well-tuned car was our friend...we'd rive and drive, feeling free as a bird."

was our friend...we'd drive and drive, feeling free as a bird. But now, just about the time that euphoric feeling settles in, bang, there goes an idiot light and it's off to the repair shop once again!

Proof of insurance is always another source of aggravation. Those little perforated cards sent annually by our insurance company have a habit of getting lost, ignored, or immediately round-filed but on inspection day, they become the Holy Grail of requirements. Once again, proof positive that in this day and age, one's word cannot be trusted. When all that stands between the inspection's triumph passage or embarrassing failure is that tiny piece of paper, it usually can be magically produced via fax between insurance agent and sticker-holding mechanic.

And now rust has become the true deal breaker. A tad of surface rust is still allowed but beware; one single place where rust has eaten a hole through your car draws a loud and clear "you flunk!" This determination, I found on a recent fact finding trip to my friendly neighborhood mechanic, is still at the inspector's discretion but when it comes to an active idiot light, the inspector's hands are tied; the vehicle's computer sends this information directly to DMV computers



Just Tommy Morse taking an alpaca out for a drive in his truck at Morse Farm Maple Sugarworks, Montpelier, VT.

for an automatic failure. Big Brother's alive and well right here in Vermont!

Sometimes it seems the most reasonable answer to modern car inspection is to treat vehicles as disposable, like razor blades or dirty Pampers. Simply walk to the nearest dealer and sign up for a new one—but what do we do with the growing collection of rejects? I once witnessed an old Vermonter who filled a '53 GMC truck cab with rocks, buried it, and used it as his leach field. As far as I know, it's still functioning 50 years later (however illegal it is!) and, by golly, maybe

that's the answer; after all, there are two things none of us can live without: cars and leach fields.

Morse Farm Maple Sugarworks is located at 1168 County Rd., Montpelier, VT and is open year-round. Visitors welcome! Come see the Country Store with Vermont products and gifts, maple, and pasture-raised local beef and bacon. Tour the Sugarhouse, Woodshed Theater, Outdoor Farmhouse Museum and more. Order Cabot cheddar cheese and maple products at (800) 242-2740 or morsefarm.com.

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 tossels shakin' out upon the trees,
I seem to smell the perfume of the May-flowers in the breeze,
I seem to feel the summer a-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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North Country Book News

Children's Book Reviews by Charles Sutton

Springtime is Almost Upon Us Here are Some Tales to Enjoy While We Wait

Each year we await the harbingers of Spring with great anticipation as the cascading events come tumbling in upon us—maple sugaring, Salamander crossings, first picnics, and furry friends coming out of hibernation. Baby animals and Spring wildflowers are everywhere. Here are some stories to enjoy as we wait for this seasonal carnival to arrive during the last days of late winter.

Shortly, those of us who live in the Northeast as well as a few other locations around the U.S. will be seeing bellows of steam coming out of those wooden sugarhouses on many farms. The maple sugaring season is underway! This is a family enterprise and is well illustrated in this handsome picture book, *Maple Syrup from the Sugarhouse* by Laurie Lazzaro Knowlton and illustrated by Kathryn Mitter (\$16.99. Albert Whitman & Co. www.albertwhitman.com).

Readers will be introduced to the little girl Kelsey as she accompanies her daddy into the sugarbush to tap trees. The cold nights coupled with warmer days has made the sap ready to move up the trees to be collected in buckets.

See Kelsey admiring the first sap droplets drip, drip and ting-a-ling! All day and the next the group of sugar bush sap gatherers grows with the arrival of mother, grandparents, uncles, cousins and friends who bring food-filled coolers and helping hands. Sap is hauled in a holding tank to the sugarhouse to be boiled into syrup.

This turns out to be an all-night task as little by little the sap changes from clear to golden amber. The kids bundle up in sleeping bags and the adults help Daddy keep the fire hot. When ready everyone helps fill the bottles with a reward of an outdoors breakfast of pancakes, sausage, biscuits, coffee and ice cream... all smothered in the new liquid-gold maple syrup. The colorful drawings of night and day in the sugarbush will make you feel you are right there during this magical time.

Some will say springtime should-be the easiest time to fall in love. Just follow this love-sick Hedgehog who falls hopelessly in love on sighting a lady hedgehog in *It's Springtime, Mr. Squirrel* by Sebastian Meschenmoser (\$18.95. North-South. www.northsouth.com).

The Hedgehog, who is inexperienced in the affairs of heart, calls on his best friend Mr. Squirrel for advice who tells him that to win his lady's love he must be a hero and show how brave and strong he is. This become a humorous trip for you, the reader, but not so much for the love-struck hedgehog. Squirrel tells his friend he must look dangerous and he dresses him in some of the weirdest costumes you have ever seen. In one he looks like a snail perched on a large red mushroom. In another his head is whale-shaped. The two friends also dress the same with fangs and giant ears... enough to send a bunch of field mice, some nesting birds and two rabbits running. Squirrel finally decides they need an opponent that is the most dangerous animal in the whole forest—a giant bear who is actually their friend. They run up and down on him packing for a fight. But the bear could care less and falls asleep. With none of those antics working, Squirrel sends Hedgehog off to meet his love alone and in no costume. There's a trick ending...you will just have to wait and be surprised!

Once again the German author-artist Sebastian Meschenmoser has enchanted us with his hilarious drawings that brings the reader right into the story. You may remember him for his wonderful drawings in *Pug Man's 3 Wishes*, and *Gordon and Tapir*.

We know birds of a feather stick together, even geese. But suppose one goose's friend is a pig? How do they get along? What do they do? Find out in this amusing story, *Pig & Goose and the First Day of Spring* by Rebecca Bond (\$12.99. Charlesbridge. www.charlesbridge.com). Told in three chapters: *A Spring Morning*, *A Picnic Lunch*, and *The Party*, we see a new friendship form between a lady pig and a goose guy who flies in one fine Spring day. They take a walk on a country lane bordered by pink blossoming trees. Pig tries to please her friend Goose by flying. No go. The exhausted well-grounded Pig and the Goose then enjoy a delicious picnic under an oak tree.

Pig goes home to cook for her First-Day-of-Spring party to which Goose is invited. Others guests are Cat, Rabbit, Hen, Turtle and Frog for whom she prepares a meal of roasted squash, new potatoes, snap peas and green lettuce, sweet tea with mint and her famous dessert oatmeal cake with ginger. Afterwards there is dancing and star gazing. Goose tells Pig that she is really wonderful and they plan to spend tomorrow on another picnic. Spring is such a grand time for new friendships!

The watercolor and ink drawings are detailed and lovely. See more at the author's website, www.rebeccabondart.com.

Don't be surprised if you are driving around the back roads of Vermont on a rainy spring night, and see groups of people including children with flashlights signaling you to slow down. They are there helping with the annual migration of salamanders who have left their winter quarters in the woods and are now on the move to ponds and pools where they will mate and have offspring. Crossing the road is perilous as they are slow-moving and no match for even slowest-moving cars.

In *Salamander Sky* by Katy Farber and illustrated by Meg Sodano (\$17.95. Green Writers Press. www.greenwriterspress.com) you will join a mother and daughter as they go out on a Spring night to help salamanders cross the road safely. This full-color picture book captures their eco-friendly adventure. You will be enchanted, too. The young girl makes her first save holding a tiny long black creature with bright yellow spots in her hand.

Check with your local nature club or organization as some sponsor salamander nights. The author Katy Farber is a Vermont environmental writer and blogger; artist Meg Sodano studied biology and animal sciences at the University of Vermont and illustration at Rhode Island School of Design.

We may all know who the Easter Bunny is, but what about our poor little bunny who wakes alone one day with no Easter companions? He asks an owl "where are the bunnies?" The owl says there are always rabbits at Easter. "Where's that?" our bunny asks. "Some place to the East," the owl replies. So bunny heads off to the East in search of Easter and hoping to find some bunnies.

In *The Bunny Who Found Easter* by Charlotte Zolotow and illustrated by Helen Craig (\$8.99. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. www.hmhc.com) you will follow our bunny's journey though some beautiful countryside. The bunny must go through a whole summer, fall and winter before he meets another bunny. She has brown fur, long ears like himself, and eager bright eyes. He is so happy about her that he forgets all about Easter. The two of them share a life and have a family of bunnies so that at "Eastertime there are always rabbits."

Charlotte Zolotow (1915-2013) was a distinguished book editor and author of 70 children's books. Helen Craig, 83, is a British children's book illustrator and author.



Children's Book Review by Charles Sutton

Rosie and the Little Folks

by Alec Hastings and

Illustrated by Barbara Carter

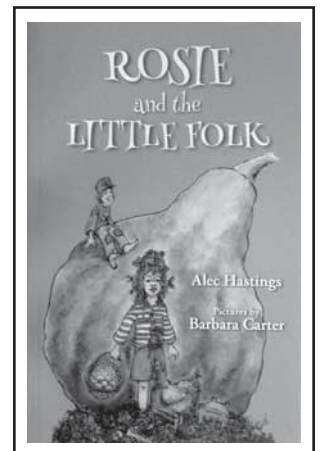
(\$11.99. Full Court Press. alecwhastings@hotmail.com)

One usually goes to Scandinavia or Ireland to find "little folk" called leprechauns, elves, gnomes, trolls, sprites, and nisses. Yet here in Vermont we learn about the existence of the magical "little folk" named Backfire Bob who appears one day atop a great Blue Hubbard squash being readied for the Tunbridge Fair.

You will savor Backfire Bob's saving-the-day ways in this charming storybook by schoolteacher Alex Hastings of Randolph Center, VT. Hastings also is the author of the engaging story, *Otter St. Onge and the Bootleggers*.

In this his latest book, readers will instantly take to its heroine Rosie, a foster child living with a demanding foster parent, Mrs. Millicent Churchill, a chain-smoker but a good cook. She is also a mean task-master, treating Rosie as the all-too-willing house servant while her own son Tug and another foster child, Alex, have it easy. Alex has a mean streak and is constantly playing tricks on Rosie until one day a friendly "little folk" decides to come to her aid. Rosie has a lot of spunk considering the circumstances but even so her life soon improves, and with a lot of adventures with the timely arrival of little folk Backfire Bob.

"His hair was almost as orange as a ripe pumpkin, his checks were freckled, and his bright, green eyes twinkled with delight. He wore a Boston Red Sox cap, a green tee-shirt with a shamrock that said 'Go Celtics,' and a pair of green, but neatly patched, canvas pants. His feet were



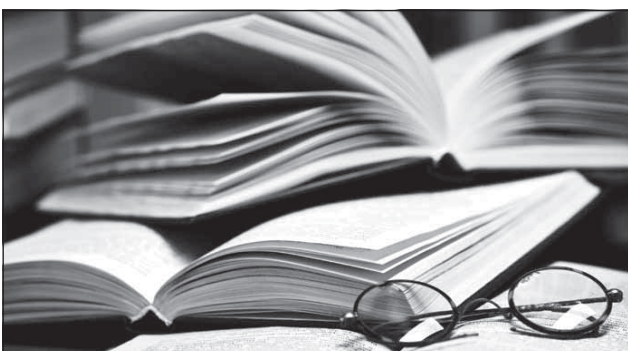
bare and very tan." His real name was Robert Meriweather Ticklefits Crinkums.

In the course of four adventure stories Backfire Bob (who is 363 years old), goes to the rescue of Rosie in life-threatening incidents. She just has to remember to say "I Wish, I Wish, I Wish," and he is there to help.

In the first incident mean Alex with helper Tug try to splash Rose in the face with tomatoes. With a little magic from Backfire Bob the tomatoes turn around in mid-air and the mean boys get splashed instead.

Other adventures include dealing with an evil ogre, the kidnapping of the foster mom, and Rosie and her best friend being rescued from a gang of cattle rustlers on a visit to Idaho. Yes, Backfire Bob does travel across the country.

Author Hastings, always the teacher, has worked some less than ordinary vocabulary words into his humorous story: decorum, malevolent, imperious, composure, and fortitude. Your children will enjoy this book.



The Eloquent Page

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Veggie Garden Remix

224 New Plants to Shake Up Your Garden and Add Variety, Flavor, and Fun

by Niki Jabbour

(\$19.95. Storey Publishing. www.storey.com)

Most vegetable gardeners by now have planned this year's garden, ordered seeds, and are just waiting for spring to arrive. Some of us may be feeling sorry already that garden space won't permit us to add some different varieties of vegetables this year. But with the help of this fascinating and tempting book we'll find a way to fit in a few new, perhaps exotic varieties.

If you have children who are gardeners give them the first look at this book and one can bet they will want to plant watermelon radishes (also called Red Meat or Beauty Heart) which are rounded with a bright green exterior and neon pink flesh. This variety grows big—4 inches across and has a slightly peppery sweet flavor.

They will also want to plant those 'yard-long' Red Noodle beans. They will have fun measuring their growth each day with a ruler! The author Niki says these beans have "a whisper of legume flavor, with layers of the earthier flavors of asparagus, mushroom, and their cowpea cousins."

Many cucumber offerings will also tempt your kids (and you, too). Your whole family may want to try the 10-inch Asia cucumber called Palace King whose thin skin has little bumps and white spines or the crisp, crunchy little Mexican cu-

amelons called Mexican sour gherkins or "mouse melons." And Niki writes, "All three of my nieces have birthdays with a two-week span in the late summer, and every year, they all ask for the same gift—a big container of cucamelons."

Niki offers other cukes including Dragon's egg, Boothby's Blonde, Mini White, Hmong Red, Suyo Long, Crystal Apple, and Lemon.

Many gardeners will be watching their asparagus patches for that tasty vegetable that breaks through the ground in early spring. Niki says if you love asparagus you must try Japanese hosta which offers a range of edible parts (hostons or shoots, leaves and leaf stalks, and flowers. She says, "The flavor is green, similar to asparagus, but also with hints of spinach—very good. And I can tell you that hosta is far easier to grow than asparagus!"

As usual with books about vegetables there is the afterthought about how nice and pretty the photographs were. In this book the photographs are so spectacular the praise should be a forethought. They make even unpopular vegetables look edible! The photographs were taken by local photographers as the vegetables grew in the author's garden or in a pop-up photography studio created in her garage.

With all her recommendations, including vegetables grown in foreign countries, the author gives instructions along with helpful hints on gardening in northern climates like Nova Scotia, where she lives.

Don't be discouraged if you have only a sun porch or limited garden space. Many of her suggestions can be grown in pots or window-boxes on your porch if it's sunny, especially some nine global herbs. Among her favorite herb is Syrian oregano which she mixes with sesame seeds, sumac, salt,

olive oil to create the aromatic za'atar which she often spreads over homemade Lebanese flatbread for breakfast. Her in-laws, Kamal and Noha, from Lebanon, started the author on global gardening so readers will meet vegetables and herbs grown in the Middle East, Africa, South American and many Asian countries.

If you like take-out Chinese, you may want to try growing Asian vegetables and herbs, some of which may be familiar already, like lemongrass, Daikon radishes and Chinese cabbage. She introduces Chinese chives, Huan or Asia wing beans, nine types of Chinese cabbage, Thai Long Green eggplant, Japanese bunching onions, Chinese Five Color peppers, Chinese artichokes (tiny odd-shaped tubers with a water chestnut flavor), Tokyo Bekana lettuce, Japanese Kabocha squash, and much more.

The author makes exploring her garden easy for us. Under the headings of each traditional vegetable, Niki suggests her own unusual ones with a "Try This!" section. Here's what tempted us from each category:

Arugula: Garnet Stem Dandelion, Catalogna Special Dandelion and Green Wave Mustard.

Asparagus: Japanese Hosta Shoots and Asparagus Peas.

Beans: Envy and Midori Giant (Edamame), Chickpeas, Red Swan and New Mexico Cave Bean (snap beans).

Beets: Red Crapaudine (called oldest beet in cultivation), Sugar Beets (make your own syrup), White and Golden Beets.

Broccoli: Romanesco, Brazilian Piracaba and Italian Spigariello.

Cabbage: Green Seoul Chinese cabbage, Komatsuna and Yukina Savoy.

Carrots: Lunat White, Yellowstone, Red Sumuri and Cosmic Purple.

Eggplant: Casper (milky tear-shaped), Turkish Orange (an African heirloom looks like pumpkin) and non bitter Asia eggplants Millionaire, Ma-Zu and Ichiban.

Edible Gourds: Long Opo Calabash, Cucuzze from Sicily, Snake and Luffa.

Herbs: Syrian Oregano, Perilla (a type of mint), Mitsuba (an Italian parsley), Thai Basil, Papalo (a cilantro type herb), edible Chrysanthemum and Vietnamese Coriander.

Kale: Rainbow Lacinato, Bear Necessities, Netherlands-bred Cosmic and British Kalettes.



NIKI JABBOUR'S VEGGIE GARDEN REMIX

224 New Plants to Shake Up Your Garden and Add Variety, Flavor, and Fun



Lettuce: Mache, Zelte, Minutina.

Onions: Japanese bunching onions and Egyptian walking onions.

Peas: King Tut and Opal Creek (snap peas) and Blue Pod Capucijner and Sugar Magnolia and Magnolia Blossom.

Potatoes: Jesuleum artichoke (sunchoke), Chinese artichoke, Groundnut and Dahlia tuber.

Tomatoes: Ground cherries, Cape gooseberries and Mexican tomatillos.

Turnips: Orange Jelly, Japanese Hakurie (with Ping-Pong ball sized roots).

Radishes: Watermelon, Green Luobo, Daikon and Long Black Spanish (very hot).

Spinach: Sweet Potato Leaf, Tricolor Amaranth, Orach and New Zealand Spinach.

Summer Squash: Costata Romanesca, Golden Dawn, Bennings Green Tint and Sunburst.

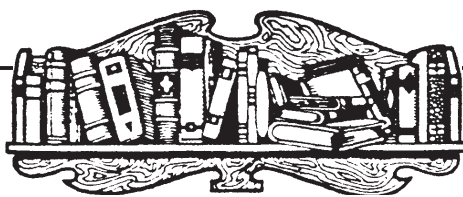
Sweet & Hot Peppers: Sweet Chocolate,

Sweet Banana, Cornito Green, Green Bulgarian Carrot, Brazilian Starfish and Japanese Shisto.

Winter Squash: Sweet Dumpling, Butterscotch, Bush Delicata and Japanese Red Kuri and Yokohama.

Author Niki Jabbour obtained many of her seeds for diverse global and unique edibles from these companies: Johnny's Selected Seeds, Halifax Seed Co., Annapolis Seeds, Kitazawa Seed Co., Richters Herbs, Baker Creek Heirloom Seed Co., Maple Farm, Salt Spring Seeds, Heritage Harvest Seed, Aster Lane Edibles and Irish Eyes Garden Seeds.

Niki Jabbour is the award-winning author of *The Year-Round Vegetable Gardener* and *Groundbreaking Food Gardens*. She lives in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and is online at nikijabbour.com. She is the host and creator of the radio show, "The Weekend Gardener."



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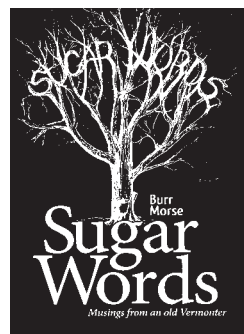
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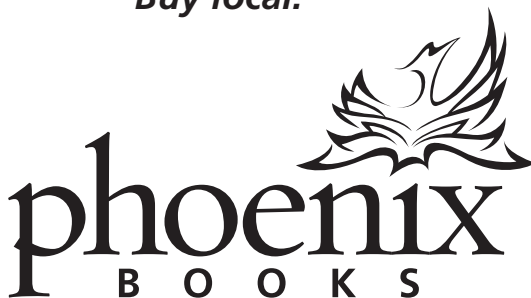
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Vermont Maple Sugar Makers Association Celebrates 125 Years

by Bill Clark

The Vermont Maple Sugar Makers Association (VMSMA) was created on January 12th, 1893 in Johnson, VT. It's the world's oldest maple organization. What a story it has to tell. How did it happen?

As the story goes, the Vermont maple industry heard about someone in Wisconsin who crated a new cheap version of maple syrup by blending in other cheaper sugars and he was selling it in Chicago at a low price. I've always wondered how Vermont found about it way back then.

However, producers around the state felt it was time to organize and so they did. At this same time the Carey Maple Sugar Company was operating in St. Johnsbury, VT. They were the world's largest, even tapping 20,000 to 30,000 trees of their own in St. Johnsbury and Danville. St. Johnsbury was truly then the maple center of the world.

In the early 1900's VMSMA usually held a single annual meeting once per year lasting two or three days.

Disasters hit maples

The 1920's and 1930's brought natural and man-made disasters to the Vermont maple industry—the 1927 Great Flood, the 1929 Stock Market crash and depression, and the 1938 Category four hurricane that destroyed 40 percent of all the maples in Vermont in one night.

1941 brought World War II. Sugar became scarce, and sugaring boomed. The government froze sugar prices (the price of syrup was \$3.39 a gallon from 1942-1946). After the war the price rose to \$5 a gallon.

In 1947, the UVM Extension Service started maple schools every January in Vermont's 12 counties. VMSMA became involved in that. Also, in 1947 S. Allen Soule created the first ever lithographed maple syrup can. In 1953, VMSMA came out with its own "State of Vermont" brand. Power tree tappers were invented. And the first tree-to-tree plastic tubing showed up along with the first oil-fired evaporators. In spite of all this the maple industry was in decline. The packer prices were bad and other types of agriculture looked more lucrative. In 1959 VMSMA became part of the effort to create a national Maple Syrup Council. Two years later the council created a publication, the National Maple Syrup Digest.

Maple research in Vermont

Back in 1947, UVM acquired a 150-acre sugarbush upon the slopes of Mt. Mansfield. A couple of rookie botany professors, Drs. Jim Marvin and Fred Taylor, convinced UVM to let them set up a maple research center there. Thus began the Proctor Maple Research Center—a world renowned maple lab today.

Around 1930, Vermont opened its new Vermont building at the "Big E" Expo in West Springfield, MA. VMSMA established a booth there to sell and teach folks about Vermont maple. Now, 85 years later, it's the only entity that has been there since the beginning.

In 1961, VMSMA elected Eric Nye of Georgia, VT, its president and soon after, Carolyn Perley, as secretary. She was also given the job of managing the "Big E" Vermont booth, a job she did for about 10 years.

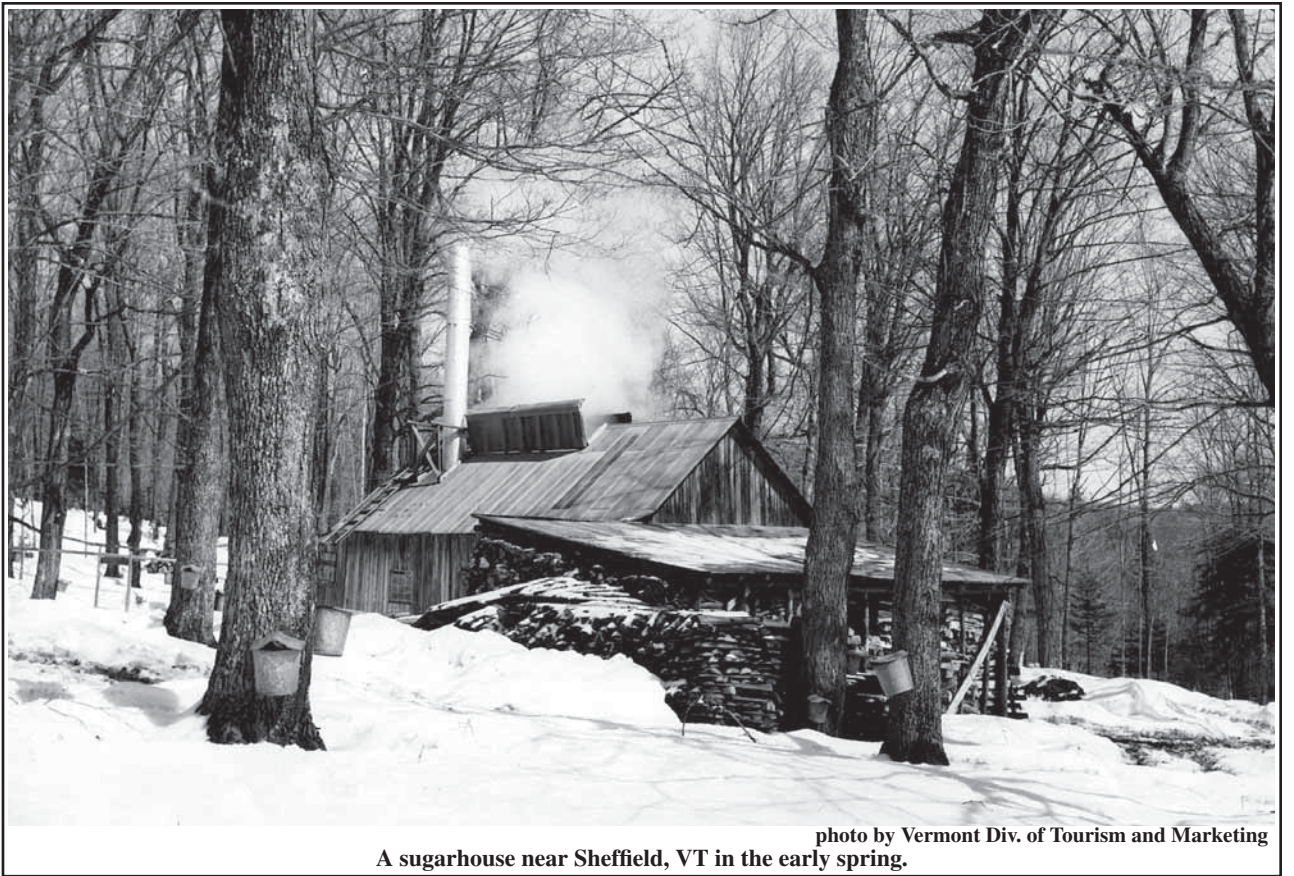
In 1966, Rutland County Maple Producers created the first ever state maple tour. In 1967 VMSMA took over the continuing sponsorship of that. In 1967, Donna Smith of Shrewsbury created the world's first "Spun Maple Gold" (maple cotton candy). Eric Nye took this idea to the "Big E" where it became a great VMSMA money-maker.

Myself (Bill Clark) got involved with Rutland County Maple Producers when I was elected its president in 1961, a job I held for eight years. In 1967, I was elected to the VMSMA Board of Directors representing Rutland County. This was a whole new experience, a chance to see VMSMA firsthand and meet maple leaders from all over the state. At the Vermont Farm Show that met in late January in Barre, VT, there was always a "Maple Day" with their annual meeting and a great banquet.

Canada becomes maple leader

Around the time of World War II time the United States produced about 2/3 of the world's maple crop and Canada about 1/3. But in the 1950s and 1960s, the U.S. crop continued to decline. Canada's production grew rapidly, especially in Quebec. By 1970 Canada was producing 2/3 of the world's crop at cheaper prices. Vermont packers were buying heavily in Canada, further hurting U.S. production. In 1971 Vermont produced its smallest crop in history of only 241,000 gals.

At VMSMA's annual meeting in 1969, Eric Nye decided to step down as president. Vice President Claire Lovell didn't want the job either. I had made a few comments at the meeting on several matters I thought VMSMA could do to help the industry to move forward. At the business meeting that followed, I was really surprised at being nominated and elected VMSMA's new president. This was going to be quite a challenge. It was about that time that Everett Willard became market's director for the VT. Dept. of Agriculture. Everett had a lot of good marketing ideas. It was now my job to represent VMSMA at the annual National Maple Council meeting each fall, that year to be in Burton, OH. Everett went with me. This was great experience to meet "Maple's Best"



A sugarhouse near Sheffield, VT in the early spring. photo by Vermont Div. of Tourism and Marketing

from every maple state. Among them, we met Adin Reynolds, owner of Reynolds Sugarbush in Wisconsin, the world's largest at that time with 125,000 taps. The Vermont packers weren't telling us about the pros and cons of syrup buying.

Drum prices .70/lb.!

Three years later after two short crops, Reynolds Sugarbush came East looking for syrup in the spring of 1972. We rounded up three tractor-trailer loads of syrup, one in Rutland County, and two in Orleans County for a total of 120,000 lbs. Reynolds paid the highest prices ever heard of at 70¢/lb. Lesson learned: It was time producers owned their own drums and not use packers' drums. Hence by 1974, VMSMA found a drum maker in New Jersey, who produced light weight, epoxy-lined, lead-free drums for about \$8 per drum. Over the next three years VMSMA had produced and sold to its members 5,000 of these drums.

In the meantime back in 1972, with Everett Willard leading the way VMSMA and the Vermont Maple Industry Council (VMIC) came up with money to produce a new maple film, "The Flavor of Vermont." Also in 1972, the Vermont building at the "Big E" got turned over to the VT Dept. of Agriculture which established a new group to manage the Vermont building. VMSMA and other commodity groups put up some money and "Vermont Ag Enterprises" was formed. I was elected its first president. Ag Enterprises was a great success and ran the building for the next 20 years, most of the time directed by Everett Willard. The building needed major renovations.

The Shorty Danforth family of Tunbridge would be taking over management of our new expanded maple booth (Shorty was a wizened up little fellow who stood 6' 6" tall). Shorty and I worked on the booth till 11 p.m. a couple of nights.

International Maple Syrup Institute

Even though after 1972, some good things seemed to be happening in the maple industry, the prices in the world maple industry continued to decline. Major corporations that used pure maple in their blend syrups continued to use a smaller percentage of pure maple causing prices to drop.

In 1967 Vermont's U.S. Senator George Aiken had acquired money to build a new maple research lab in South Burlington. Its new director was Dr. David Garrett. By 1974, he became concerned over the plight of the maple industry, and convened a conference on Aug. 14, 1974 at the Aiken lab of all interested parties. VMSMA, Vermont packers, Canadian packers, both English and French-speaking. Canada even had language interpreters there. Some 30 folks showed up. After an hour of discussion, no solutions.

Dr. Garrett made a crazy suggestion to create a new international maple marketing organization. The room fell silent, then everyone was talking at once. How could it possibly work? Producers and packers never worked together. We're dealing with two different countries. Two different languages. OK, Dr. Garrett said then let's hear "Plan B." Again silence. OK, then let's give "Plan A" a try. That day the concept was born for the world's largest and maple organization.

For the next six months some of us met every two weeks alternating between South Burlington and Montreal. Canada was willing to put up some investment money, but what about the United States? That required trips to Washington, D.C. and Detroit, MI. It was decided to name this new organization The International Maple Syrup Institute (IMSI). There were three charterers: Gilles Crotoque, manager of the 4,600 member Quebec Maple Co-Op, Adin Reynolds of Reynolds Sugarbush, WI. and Bill Clark, president of the VMSMA. At a final meeting in Plattsburg, NY, on Feb 25, 1975, IMSI was born and is an outstanding maple organization today.

Producing maple syrup cans

In the 1950s VMSMA hired Empire Can of Brooklyn, NY to produce their maple syrup cans until they went out of business in 1974. For the next 30 years three different companies produced cans for VMSMA. In the 1960s plastic jugs were developed. In the late 1970s VMSMA bought Vermont jugs from Charlie Bacon Jug Co. of New Hampshire. A few years later the Hass family developed their Sugarhill brand of jugs.

and they designed a VMSMA jug. These were special and millions of them were made over the next 25 years.

In 1981, Everett Willard came up with the idea that it would be good to organize a special promotional group. The maple industry liked the idea and so the Maple Promotion Board was born with four members of VMSMA, four members of Vermont Maple Industry Council, one from UVM Extension Service and one from the VT Dept. of Agriculture.

Governor's tree tapping day

One of their first ideas was to develop a governor's tree tapping event to take place in early March. The first two were at the Proctor Research Center with Gov. Snelling. It became a two-day event with press attending and traveled around the state county to county.

About 1984 a couple of retired teachers Don and Betty Ann Lockhart, who were in the video business, worked with the Promotion Board to produce Vermont's first maple video *The Proud Tradition*. It was a big success. In 1989 they produced a 30-minute *Maple Sugaring Story*. They also produced print information that could be used in schools. In the early 2000's they produced *Voices from the Sugar Woods*. Over the past 50 years Franklin County Maple Sugarmakers Association has created the "Vermont Maple Festival" one of the world's largest with over 30,000 folks attending.

VMSMA's 100th Anniversary

Then came 1993—VMSMA's 100th anniversary. We planned a gala celebration to take place at the Vermont Farm Show in Barre. Tuesday was always Maple Day. There were 24 folks just at the head table alone including Gov. Howard Dean and the Lieutenant Governor plus 200 members.

In 1994 the maple industry was struck with a lead crisis. Someone had used maple pan to boil cider in. Cider drew out lead and a child became very sick. For awhile it looked like it might take the industry down. A massive effort was launched to eliminate lead solder and other lead from equipment. The VT Dept. of Agriculture began running lead tests on syrup. VMSMA set up "Project Maple" and did private product sampling for several years. This brought Vermont maple into a lead free zone.

In 1997 VMSMA did a complete booth overhaul at the Big E. In 1999 VMSMA made a deal with a Montreal producer to create 1,000 stainless steel drums and we sold them to members for about \$70 each. In 1999 The VT Dept. of Agriculture helped VMSMA create its first web site, vermontmaple.org.

In 2000 VMSMA hosted the combined international meetings of IMSI and NAMSC at the Sheraton Hotel in Burlington with much help from Extension. It was the largest meeting ever held with over 500 attendees from 12 maple states and four Canadian provinces.

At the January Farm Show in 2001 I retired as president of VMSMA after serving 32 years. At that time I represented VMSMA at 381 UVM Extension maple schools, presided over 150 board and community meetings and probably drove 200,000 miles on behalf of VMSMA. Bill Clark Day turned out to be quiet a celebration.

Now here we are in 2018 and it's time for the VMSMA to celebrate its grand 125th! Since 2001 it has undergone many changes. They have had three presidents since 2001. In 2012 VMSMA, the Vermont Maple Industry Council and the Maple Promotion Board have become one organization. They no longer have Maple Day, annual meetings or banquets at the Vermont Farm Show. I like to believe that some time this year there will be a gala 125th anniversary celebration. There certainly should be. Their 53rd Maple Rama should be coming up in late July. That would be a great time to have it.

The Vermont Maple Sugar Makers Association has done a lot for the Vermont maple industry. It has much to be proud of. A celebration is much deserved.

Editor's Note: From 1972 until 2001, Bill Clark, of Wells, VT, served as president of the Vermont Maple Sugar Makers Association (VMSMA). He has compiled here a series of that organization's highlights and maple sugaring history since its founding, along with personal comments.



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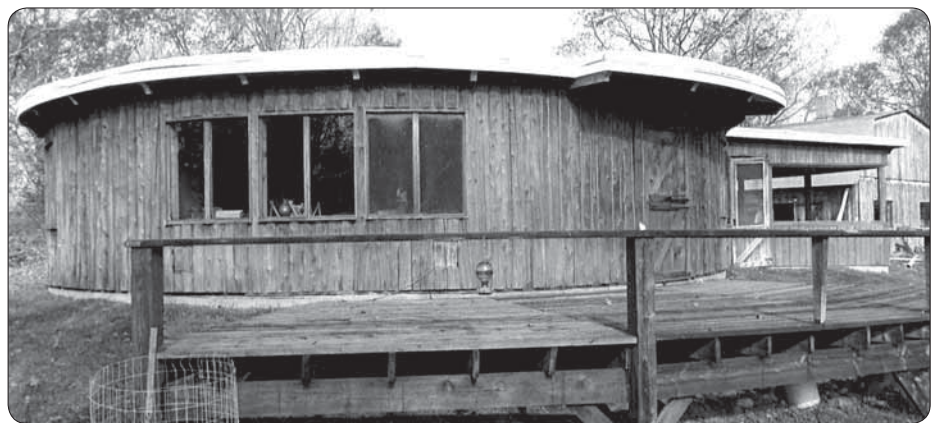
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