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April Journal

by Bill Felker

Last night the wind blew hard across the village. I lay awake for a while and worried about the aging Osage orange falling into the shed or crushing Jean's favorite redbud tree, maybe reaching the new porch and taking out the past summer's work.

This morning before sunrise I am sitting on that porch; we all survived the storm unscathed. The sky is clear deep blue, Jupiter still visible in the southwest. The robins have been singing for more than an hour; cardinals and doves just joined in a few minutes ago. Now the shiny grackles come through the high trees, gliding from their secret nests; cackling and clucking, they move down among the black branches.

When I first came outside, I looked for light frost on the grass, but the lawn was wet and dark. Now it reflects the glow in the east behind me. The air is humid and still.

Crows call to the west, and I hear the crows I hunted as a child in Wisconsin. They were wily, untouchable

and they watched me from high cottonwoods until I stepped within maybe a city block of them, and then up they went screaming.

I open the journal of Thomas Merton that I have been reading this past week, captured by his journey toward death. It is still too dark to make out the words.

I think about one of the things Peter Matthiessen learned from the Tibetan Book of the Dead, that "a man's last thoughts will determine the quality of his reincarnation." I am coming to the last year of Merton's life. I want to see what he was like in those last days. I want to read his last thoughts. Of course, my own last days and thoughts are what really concern me.

When it is light enough to read, I am pulled in a different direction. I am captured by the sunlight spreading down the locust trees that line the far edge of the property. I close the journal, and I wait for cabbage butterflies and the first bees.



The Jersey cows are friendly at Billings Farm and Museum in Woodstock, VT.

Grafton, VT

Come to the Earth Day Party at The Nature Museum at Grafton on April 22

Visit The Nature Museum on Friday, April 22 from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. for a special program for youth and families in honor of Earth Day. We're big fans of Earth Day at the Nature Museum. This beautiful planet deserves recognition each day, but we will readily spend this special day celebrating the Earth.

An indoor program, "Pred-

ators and Prey" by Environmental Educator Jamie Maloof-Schilling will run from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and will be followed by a moderate hike in the forest and fields surrounding the Nature Museum. The power and prowess of a predator are amazing, but so are the skills and abilities of their prey. Through stories, games, and touchable artifacts we

will learn how animals find a meal—or avoid being dinner. Hone your natural instincts while playing games that tap into your sense of sight, smell, sound, and touch. There will be plenty of interaction with fur, pelts, and bones to learn how carnivores, omnivores, and herbivores are connected. The web of life will come alive at our Earth Day Party!

The Museum's natural history exhibits, educational mounts, and hands-on activities will be open to explore from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The day's festivities are open to all ages and families are welcome. Admission is by donation. Walk-ins welcome but a RSVP is always appreciated. The Nature Museum is a regional resource for nature, science, and environmental

education in the Vermont and New Hampshire communities of the Connecticut River Valley. The Nature Museum offers a gem of a natural history museum as well as year-round nature programs for adults and children.

The Nature Museum at Grafton is located at 186 Townsend Rd. in Grafton, VT. (802) 843-2111. info@nature-museum.org. www.nature-museum.org.



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Vermont Country Sampler

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photo courtesy of Billings Farm & Museum

Visitors enjoy a horse-drawn wagon ride on a lovely spring day at Billings Farm & Museum in Woodstock, VT.

Woodstock, VT

Billings Farm & Museum 34th Season Opens on Saturday, April 30th

Bring the family and enjoy a great spring day on Saturday, April 30th when Billings Farm & Museum in Woodstock, VT opens for its 34th season.

The festivities will take place from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and the day will feature horse-drawn wagon rides, free ice cream, and farm programs, in addition to the operating dairy farm, restored farmhouse and farm life exhibits.

Billings Farm is a premiere Jersey dairy farm that continues a 144-year tradition of agricultural excellence and offers farm programs and historical exhibits that explore Vermont's rural heritage and values.

Since 1983, Billings Farm & Museum has served as a gateway to Vermont's rural heritage for over a million

visitors. It is owned and operated by The Woodstock Foundation Inc., a charitable non-profit institution founded by Mary French and Laurance Spelman Rockefeller.

The Farm & Museum will be open daily from April 30 through October 31 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; every weekend from November through February, and Christmas and Presidents' weeks, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Admission: adults \$14; 62 & over \$13; children 5-15 \$8; children 3-4 \$4; 2 & under are free. Admission includes all programs and activities.

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



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Frogs and salamanders migrate on warm, rainy nights. The Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department is asking drivers to report 'hotspots' where large numbers of these animals are killed on roads.



The town of Monkton recently completed this highway project that allows amphibians to pass under the road unharmed. This location previously risked thousands of amphibian deaths in a single night.



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Springtime in Vermont

Be On the Lookout for Frogs, Salamanders Along Roads!

One of the great wildlife migrations is happening right now in Vermont, and it is taking place right at our feet.

You may have already heard the spring peepers or wood frogs calling in your backyard. Or perhaps you've noticed salamanders crawling over rocks in a nearby stream. Amphibians are on the move, but their spring breeding migration can too often become deadly.

Amphibians migrate by the thousands each spring in search of breeding pools. This migration frequently takes them across roads and highways where they are killed by cars, which contributes to the species' decline in Vermont, according to biologist Jens Hilke with the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department.

"Frogs and salamanders become active on rainy spring nights, which will likely be happening earlier this year with the warm weather we've been experiencing," said Hilke. "On these nights, drivers should slow down on roads near ponds and wetlands, or try to use an alternate route. These amphibian 'hotspots' can lead to the death of thousands of animals on a single night."

Hilke is asking drivers to report these hotspots, or areas with large numbers of frogs and salamanders that cross the road all at once. They can contact the Vermont Reptile &

Amphibian Atlas by emailing Jim Andrews at jandrews@middlebury.edu.

"We work hard to identify these hotspots and to mitigate the problem whenever possible to help give these animals a better chance of survival," said Hilke.

The Fish & Wildlife Department is working with the Vermont Agency of Transportation to include culverts and wildlife barriers in road construction plans to allow wildlife, from frogs to moose, to more safely cross the road. The town of Monkton has completed a highway project that is aimed at providing amphibians with a safe way to cross under the road.

Conservation officials and volunteers also work together on rainy spring nights to slow traffic and manually move amphibians across the road.

Vermonters who want to contribute to the Fish & Wildlife Department's work to help amphibians and other species can donate to the Nongame Wildlife Fund on line 29a of their state income tax form.

Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department at (802) 377-2628. Visit www.vtfishandwildlife.com.

To watch a video about salamander crossings in Vermont go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b2R7uFOcmIQ>.

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Winterpills and Arc Iris Perform in Bellows Falls April 15th

Popolo, the wonderful restaurant and music venue at the Windham Hotel in Bellows Falls, VT is presenting a concert by Winterpills with Arc Iris on Friday, April 15th from 8:15 to 10:30 p.m. Come enjoy a great meal and hear some sensational music.

Over a decade ago, singer-songwriter Philip Price scrawled the name "Winterpills" on the wall of The Bay State Hotel, a now-dead but fabled Northampton, MA watering hole and music venue. Initially, it was going to be the name for a dreamt-of electronica project, but, somewhere along the line, it blossomed into a critically acclaimed indie band with a deep catalog of elegant, dark chamber pop.

Now, the quintet gives us its seventh album, a provocative entry in its catalog, "Love Songs," which came out March 18th on Signature Sounds. Recorded and co-produced by Justin Pizzoferrato (Dinosaur Jr., The Pixies, Lou Barlow, Speedy

Ortiz), the album showcases an invigorated and raw Winterpills. This new release marks ten years as a band.

To commemorate this career milestone, Winterpills will also reissue its self-titled debut on vinyl. Together, these releases bookend a freewheeling folk-rock continuum. The Northampton, Massachusetts quintet are consummate masters of the slow burn. They've nurtured a singular aesthetic with lush and sometimes gritty instrumentation, emotive and literate lyrics, sublime vocal harmonies, and cinematically structured songs that stealthily pull you in and then destroy you. Their performance will be even more moving in the intimate Windham Ballroom at Popolo.

Arc Iris, who open the show, has garnered much attention and acclaim since the release of their 2014 self-titled debut album on ANTI Records brought them to the Windham Ballroom for that first extraordinary

show. They have toured with St. Vincent, Jeff Tweedy, the Gipsy Kings, Clap Your Hands Say Yeah, among others, and offered a command performance with Tanya Donnelly last summer. A power trio based in Providence, RI, Arc Iris is a mix of everything you love and hate, culminating in something breathtaking and indescribable.

Jocie Adams, Zach Tenorio Miller and Ray Belli will take you on a magic carpet ride through deserts, lush

flower gardens, and rainforest before sending you right back to your living room with ethereal and deliciously dynamic rock music. Arc Iris is their own genre.

Doors open at 8 a.m. and the show starts at 8:30 p.m.

Tickets are \$20 in advance and \$24 at the door as long as supplies last and can be purchased online at popolomeanspeople.com or at Popolo located at 40 The Square in Bellows Falls, VT. www.winterpills.com.

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 meadow 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
From Portaits and Protests, 1917



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Mud Season Hikes

April 15 through Friday of Memorial Day Weekend

Please help protect the fragile alpine tundra and prevent soil erosion by staying off susceptible trails during Mud Season! This will allow the trails to dry out and reduce the amount of maintenance required each year to keep them safe and enjoyable. We know everyone is just itching to get out and enjoy the wonders of spring—we are too!

Rain and melting snow at higher elevations are keeping many of Vermont's hiking trails wet and muddy. When hikers tramp on saturated soils, they cause irreversible erosion and damage to the trail and surrounding vegetation. The Green Mountain Club, Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation, and Green Mountain National Forest advocate responsible use of the state's hiking trails during mud season. Sensitive alpine vegetation on the summits of Mount Mansfield and Camel's Hump are most vulnerable to damage. The State of Vermont closes hiking trails on these mountains from April 15 to the Friday of Memorial Day Weekend.

Some of the Long Trail has been worn down to bedrock by soil erosion over the years. Higher elevation soils take longer to dry out, and their higher content of organic material slows the drying process. A trail may be dry at the trailhead, but it will get muddy if you climb very high this time of year. Trails at lower elevations, dirt roads, and recreation paths provide excellent opportunities for early spring walking.

The GMC thanks hikers for their cooperation to help preserve one of Vermont's finest recreational resources.

Mud Season Hiking Guidelines

- Walk through the mud, not around it! If a trail is so muddy that you need to walk on the vegetation beside it, turn back, and seek an alternative area to hike.
- Hike in the lower-elevation hardwood forest (unless it is muddy!) with southern exposure (south facing slopes dry out first in Spring).
- Avoid the spruce-fir (conifer) forests at higher elevations.
- The State of Vermont closes all trails on state land including those on Camel's Hump and Mount Mansfield from April 15 until the Friday of Memorial Day weekend. Please do not hike in these fragile areas.
- Also avoid: Stratton Mountain, Killington Peak, Lincoln Ridge (Mount Ellen to Appalachian Gap), Jay Peak.

Mud Season Hiking Alternatives

Northern Vermont

- Burlington Bike Path
- Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail
- Stowe Bike Path



White-tail fawn hidden in the grass, a springtime event!

photo by Nancy Cassidy

- Cotton Brook Area—Moscow/Stowe
- Alburg Recreation Trail
- Cambridge Greenway Recreation Path
- Mount Philo

Central Vermont

- The Austin Brook Trail in Warren/Granville
- Thresher Hill & Pine Brook Trails
- The Cross VT Trail - runs west to east across VT.
- Liberty Hill & Contest Trails
- Stage Road in Jonesville to Duck Brook shelter via the LT
- Lefferts Pond
- Robert Frost Interpretive Trail
- Travel Around Middlebury Trail (TAM)

Southern Vermont

- Emerald Lake State Park Trail
- Harriman Trail
- Delaware and Hudson Rail Trail
- Woodford State Park Trails
- West River Trail

- Jamaica State Park Trails
- Equinox Preservation Trust—Manchester Village (behind the Equinox Hotel)

* * *

With the trails in State Parks, you should check in with the VT Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation to see if the park and trails are open, (802) 241-3655.

If you know of other hikes or walks in your region that are suitable for foot traffic during Mud Season, please contact us at the Green Mountain Club at gmc@greenmountainclub.org so that we can add them to this list!

Hiking descriptions for many of these trails can be found in the Day Hikers Guide to Vermont available for sale from the Green Mountain Club at www.greenmountainclub.org.

Descriptions for some of the central Vermont trails can be found at the recreation page for the Green Mountain National Forest. You should contact the Rochester Ranger Station at (802) 767-4261 to make sure these trails are open during mud season.



Maxine Hugon Pottery in Gallery at the VAULT

Maxine Hugon is now displaying her pottery at The Gallery at the Vault in Springfield, VT.

Inspired by nature, the Arts and Crafts movement, 11th century Chinese carved vessels, and the things she sees out her window, Maxine Hugon's designs transform timeless scenes into designs that are whimsical and fresh.

Hugon says, "Today we live with flat, glowing rectangles that connect us to anything and everything, from our work to our dearest friends. It is an amazing time, and we are fortunate for the virtual connection at our fingertips. But we still need a mug for our morning coffee, a bowl to sit on the kitchen counter to cradle our fruit, and a vase for our flowers."

Hugon's pottery is made using the centuries-old decorative process of drawing into the surface of the clay called sgraffito. Slip (liquid clay) is

applied to the pot when it is still damp, at the leather-hard stage, and allowed to set-up. The slipped pot re-dries, and reaches an ideal point between soft and hard, then she draws and carves designs into the surface of the clay. The pot is then bisque fired, and glazed to enhance the carved surface. Finally, the pot is returned to the kiln for firing. At this stage all the careful tending is replaced by an element of chance. It is when the flames and atmosphere in the kiln add a unique magic to the surface of the pots.

The Saturday Evening Girls of the Paul Revere Pottery (1908-1942) in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts was the inspiration for her landscape pottery now showcased in Gallery at the VAULT.

Some interesting background on The Saturday Evening Girls Club—it was

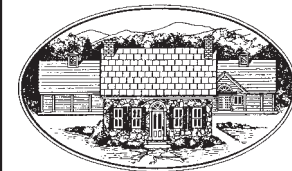
a library reading group developed in Boston's North End by reform-minded local philanthropists to educate and assimilate immigrant girls and to keep them "off the streets." The Paul Revere Pottery was established to offer these girls a healthy and safe environment to earn their wages. The SEGs, as they came to call themselves, decorated the Pottery's bowls, plates, vases, and other forms with stylized imagery of animals, flowers, landscapes, and other designs



in earthy tones of blue, green, yellow and brown.

Stop by The Gallery at the VAULT on 68 Main St. in Springfield, VT to view this evocative pottery from one of our newest artisans. The VAULT is open from Tuesday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. (802) 885-7111. www.galleryvault.org.

The Gallery at the Vault is a nonprofit organization and Vermont State Craft Center.



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Apply Now for Green Mountain Conservation Camp

If you are 12 to 14 years old and want to learn about Vermont's wildlife and gain outdoor skills this summer, consider attending one of the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department's Green Mountain Conservation Camps this summer.

The one-week camp program is held at two locations—Lake Bomoseen in Castleton, VT and Buck Lake in Woodbury, VT. Campers participate in hands-on learning experiences about fish and wildlife conservation, ecology, forestry, orienteering, safe firearm and archery techniques, swimming, canoeing, fishing and more in an attractive outdoor setting. Natural resource professionals come to the camp during the week to share information on their programs and take campers out for field activities.

Vermont's conservation camp program is unique because it is sponsored and directed by Fish & Wildlife Department professionals—the same people who manage Vermont's fish and wildlife resources. Working biologists, foresters, game wardens, and conservation educators teach young people about Vermont's forests,

wetlands and wildlife. The program's greatest strength is connecting young people to the outdoors. The camp program is sponsored in part through a grant from the Wildlife & Sport Fish Restoration Program.

Conservation Camps open June 19 and continue until August 19. "We have many openings during advanced weeks starting July 24 and July 31 for girls 16 and younger who went to Conservation Camp before," said Education Coordinator Alison Thomas. "Advanced week offers more in-depth learning about conservation subjects from the Fish and Wildlife professionals who are actually doing the work."

Tuition is \$250 for the week, including food, lodging and equipment.

Please check the Fish & Wildlife website at www.vtfishandwildlife.com for general information as well as a weekly schedule with listed openings, and scholarship availability.

For more information about Green Mountain Conservation Camps call (802) 828-1460. E-mail fwgmc@state.vt.us. Visit www.vtfishandwildlife.com.



photo by Vermont Fish and Wildlife
Vermont Fish & Wildlife has openings in its Conservation Camp summer camp program for young people interested in learning about Vermont's wildlife and outdoor skills.

Vermont Arbor Day Conference May 6 in Montpelier

Willem Lange, a beloved New England storyteller, will be the keynote speaker for the Vermont Arbor Day Conference, May 6 in Montpelier.

The day-long event, which will be held at the Vermont College of Fine Arts, is sponsored by the Vermont Urban and Community Forestry Program. It will include several tracts of interest to arborists, tree stewards, community tree wardens and others who appreciate trees along with presentation of the Vermont Tree Stewards, Tree City, Tree Line and Tree Campus awards.

The fee, which includes lunch, is \$40. Registrations will be accepted until May 2 at go.uvm.edu/arborday. To

request a disability-related accommodation to participate, please contact Gwen Kozlowski at gwen.kozlowski@uvm.edu or (800) 571-0668 by April 15.

Lange, an East Montpelier resident and host of the award-winning *Windows to the Wild* outdoor television series, will kick off the conference by sharing some of his favorite stories about trees. Participants then will have a choice of concurrent sessions with topics ranging from recreation planning on public lands and the role of a tree warden to tree health assessment and risk tree management, increasing effectiveness of town tree boards and integrating green

infrastructure into community planning, among others.

A panel on urban and community forestry will provide updates on Vermont invasive forest pests, the new watch list of terrestrial plant species and recent legislation on forest fragmentation as well as information on trees, soils and compaction. There also will be an opportunity to take a tree walk with an arborist to learn about tree

health, care and identification or assist the Montpelier Tree Board with a community tree planting project.

The Vermont Urban and Community Forestry Program is a partnership of University of Vermont Extension and the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation.

For more information, go to vtcommunityforestry.org.

Magical Strings to Perform in Bellows Falls on April 16

Magical Strings will entertain you in a concert sponsored by Stone Church Arts on April 16 at 7:30 p.m. at Immanuel Episcopal Church in Bellows Falls, VT. Tickets are \$17 general admission, \$35 premium.

Philip and Pam Boulding from Olalla, WA comprise the duo that centers around the Celtic harp and hammered dulcimer, of at times augmented by violin, cello, pennywhistle, percussion and various instruments from around the world.

Over the years the sound of Magical Strings has drawn a large and loyal following captivated by a combination

of traditional Celtic arrangements, original compositions and subtle world music influences. Their virtuosity and expressive style have been described as "warm, graceful and sonically gorgeous" by the Washington Post. Their music and stories have the effect of holding an audience and opening their hearts to a forgotten world well-veiled by the bustle and trappings of modern life.

Immanuel Episcopal Church is located at 20 Church St. in Bellows Falls, VT. (802) 460-0110. E-mail: sca@sover.net. www.stonechurcharts.org.



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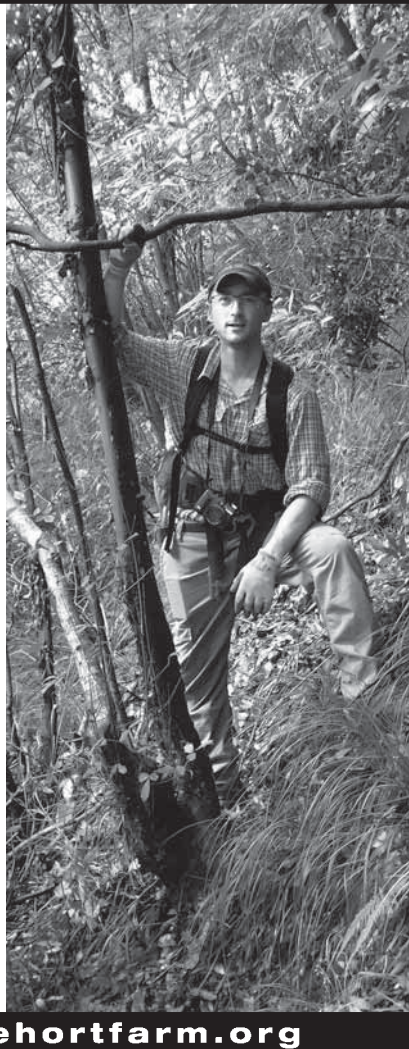
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The topic of "plant exploration" conjures up romantic imagery of Victorian botanists, sedan chairs, and the introduction of new curiosities to grace our gardens and landscapes. While that may indeed depict a bygone era, the need to study plants in the wild and bring them back has never been greater. Listen as the Arnold Arboretum's Michael Dosmann shares examples from his plant expeditions about how plant exploration has changed, and how it has not.



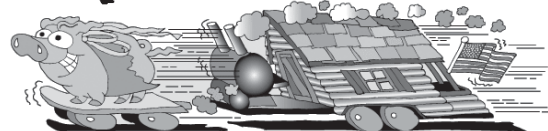
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Rupert, VT

Sheep Shearing School Offered at Merck Forest and Farmland Center

The Vermont Sheep and Goat Breeders Association and UVM Extension is sponsoring a Sheep Shearing School from 8:30 am to 3 pm on April 9th at Shelburne Farms, Shelburne, VT and April 10th at Merck Forest and Farm Center, Rupert, VT.

These are beginner/intermediate level workshops. Participants will shear sheep with the guidance of professional shearers. All aspects of shearing will be discussed including shearing day preparations, equipment setup & maintenance, fitness, the shearing pattern, sheep handling and control, basic wool handling, and techniques for how to crutch and deal with fly strike.

Participants should have their own equipment—Oster Shearmasters or equivalent electric machines are ideal. A limited number of loaners available for the day and a grinding wheel will be available for combs and cutters. We will supply coffee and bagels; participants should bring a bag lunch.

The cost for the complete course at either location is \$150. Students may audit (without actual hands-on shearing) for \$50. Students interested in a career in

shearing or in improving their skills may attend both days for \$275. The VSGBA offers one scholarship a year for young shearers. For information about the scholarship, contact VSGBA president Bay Hammond at bayhammond@gmail.com. Schools start at 8:30 am and usually wind up around 3 pm (or when all the sheep are sheared).

The Merck Forest and Farmland Center is a non-profit educational institution whose mission is to teach and to demonstrate the benefits of innovative, sustainable management of forest and farmland. The Center is open year-round from dawn to dusk and the public is invited to enjoy the property free of charge.

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

Shelburne Farms is located at 1161 Harbor Rd., Shelburne, VT. (802) 985-8686. shelburnefarms.org.

For information about the Sheep Shearing School contact Jim McRae at (802) 483-2463. vtshearer@yahoo.com.

Benjamin Franklin's Advice To Men in Debt

Make a full estimate of all you owe. Reduce the same to note. As fast as you collect, pay over to those you owe; if you can't collect, renew your note every year.

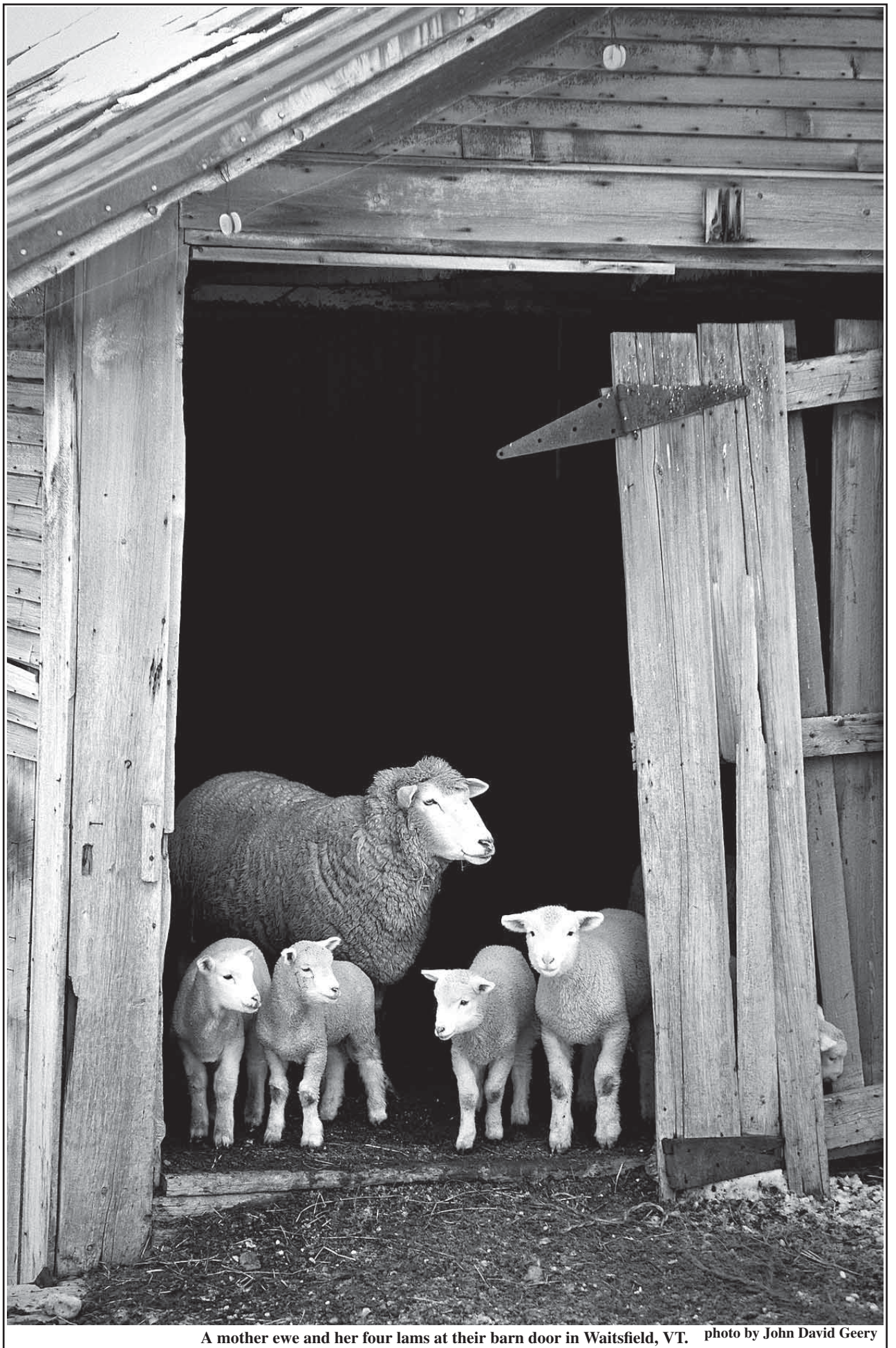
Go to business diligently, and be industrious; lose no time; waste no idle moments; discard all pride but the pride of acting justly and well; be faithful in your duty to God, by regular and hearty prayer, morning and night; attend church and meeting regularly every Sunday, and "do unto

all men as you would they should do unto you."

If you are too needy in your circumstances to give to the poor, do whatever else you have in your power to do for them cheerfully. Always help the unfortunate.

Pursue this course diligently and sincerely for seven years, and if you are not happy, comfortable, and independent in your circumstances, come to me and I will pay your debts.

—Benjamin Franklin



A mother ewe and her four lambs at their barn door in Waitsfield, VT. photo by John David Geery



The Lamb

Little Lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?
Gave thee life and bid thee feed
By the stream and o'er the mead;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing, woolly, bright;
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice?
Little Lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?

Little Lamb, I'll tell thee;
Little Lamb, I'll tell thee;
He is called by thy name,
For He calls Himself a Lamb.
He is meek and He is mild,
He became a little child.
I a child, and thou a lamb,
We are called by His name;
Little Lamb, God bless thee!
Little Lamb, God bless thee!

—WILLIAM BLAKE
1757-1827

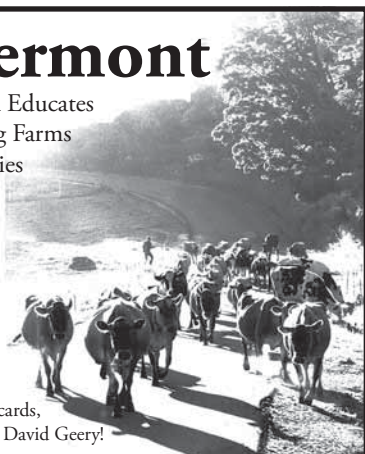
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The Weeks of the Moon For April 2016

by Bill Felker

Week One

The Robin Chorus Moon entered its final quarter on March 31 and becomes the new Sandhill Crane Migration Moon (and reaches perigee) on April 7 at 6:24 a.m. Rising after midnight and setting after lunch, this moon passes overhead (its best location for angling and feeding children) close to sunrise. Lunar position in the morning should be especially powerful as the cold fronts of April 2 and 6 approach. The dark moon in Capricorn on April 1 and in Pisces on April 4 through 6 augur well for almost all spring planting and seeding.

Week Two

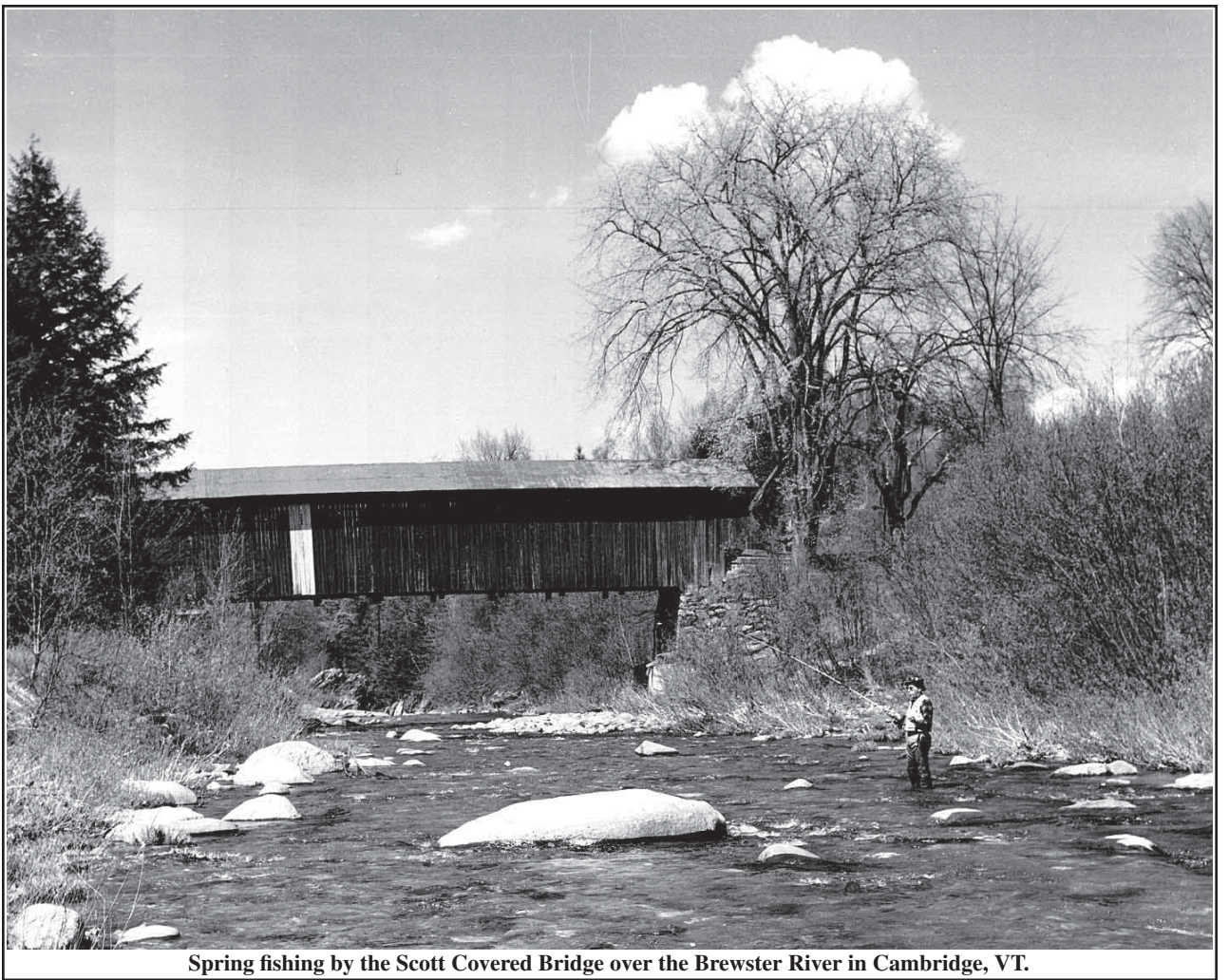
Rising in the morning and setting in the evening, the moon passes overhead in the middle of the day and enters its second quarter on April 13 at 10:59 p.m. Midday lunar force should be enhanced by the sinking barometer at the approach of a cold front around April 11. The moon's position in Taurus on April 8 through 10 offers the most favorable lunar conditions for planting flowers, as well as field and garden crops.

Week Three

The moon waxes through its second phase this week and reaches gentle apogee, its position farthest from Earth on the 21st. Rising in the middle of the day and setting in the middle of the night, this moon passes overhead in the evening. The approach of a cold front due near 16 will intensify the effects of the moon as it waxes. Plant field and garden crops under wet Scorpio, April 21-24.

Week Four

The moon becomes completely full on April 22 at 12:24 a.m. then wanes throughout the remainder of the month, coming into its final quarter on April 29 at 10:29 p.m. Rising in the evening and setting in the morning, this moon passes overhead in the middle of the night. As cold fronts of April 24 and 28 approach the region, the effects of the night moon become more pronounced. Farm and garden planting will be supported by the moon's position in wet Scorpio, April 22-24, and Capricorn, April 26-29.



Spring fishing by the Scott Covered Bridge over the Brewster River in Cambridge, VT.

When-Then Phenology for April

by Bill Felker

When nettles are six inches tall, then middle spring wildflowers are opening all over the woods.

When the American toad gives its shrill mating, that will be the time to plant corn.

Morel mushrooms appear when May apples push out from the ground, when cowslip buds in the swamp, and when leaves come out on skunk cabbage.

Parsnips in bloom announce that deer are growing their new antlers and all the rest of the garden weeds are coming in.

When you see the Lyrid Meteors falling from the eastern sky before dawn (April 21-23), you know the Great Dandelion Bloom will moving up from the south.

When the high canopy is budding and greening, wild turkeys are gobbling.

Tulips blooming in the garden parallel the turkey vocalization, and also announce lawn-mowing season.

Long grass in the lawn is a sign that opossums and raccoons are giving birth in the woodlot and young goslings are hatching in the ponds and rivers.

When the pussy willow bushes start to get their leaves, meadowlarks and scarlet tanagers return for summer.

When tent caterpillars emerge in the trees and the redbuds are starting to turn purple, then tadpoles will be swimming in the ponds.

When winter grains are almost tall enough to ripple in the wind, then it won't be long before dogwoods and the crab apples open.

When chicory is almost a foot high, rhubarb should be just about ready for pie, and hops vines will be crawling all over the garden.

As soon as hummingbird moths seek nectar, allergies often intensify as all the trees and grasses come into bloom.

When piping plovers return to the beaches to establish their nests, then snakehead mushrooms grow in the woods.

When ticks and mosquitoes bite, the morel season is almost over, and the last frost is no more than four weeks away.

When clovers bloom, flea season begins for pets and livestock, and flies take over the barn.

When wisteria comes into flower, the most fragrant time of year is here. Lilacs, mock orange and honeysuckle follow the wisteria. And that means pheasants are nesting, and warblers move north along their flyways.

When admiral butterflies visit the garden, then buckeye trees will soon be coming into bloom.

And when garlic mustard is flowering in the woods, look for cutworms and sod webworms to start taking over the field and garden. Weevils are showing up in the alfalfa, too.



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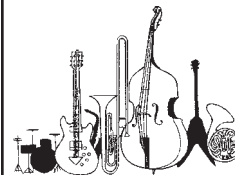
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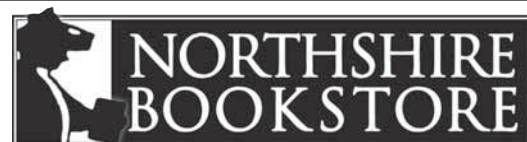
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A Vermont Almanack for Middle Spring

by Bill Felker

April to perfection, such a sentiment of spring everywhere. The sky is partly overcast, the air moist, just enough so to bring out the odors, a sweet perfume of bursting, growing things. One could almost eat the turf like a horse... The soil calls for the plow... the garden calls for the spade, the vineyard calls for the hoe. From all about the farm voices call, Come and do this, or do that. At night, how the 'peepers' pile up the sound!

—John Burroughs

The Sun

On April 21, Cross-Quarter Day (the solar halfway mark between equinox and solstice), the sun reaches a declination of +11 minutes, 56 seconds, and it enters Taurus at the same time.

The Stars

In the far west, Orion is setting. Above him, between Gemini and Cassiopeia, the horizon reveals just a fragment of the Milky Way's winter band, but that band circles around behind the North Star all the way to the rising Summer Triangle, linking April with November.

The Planets

Find Jupiter almost overhead with Leo after dark, not far from bright (and twinkling) Regulus, Leo's keystone star. Venus spends the month in Pisces, competing with the sun to be the earliest light in the eastern horizon, and finally disappearing from view at the end of the month, to reappear as the evening star in July. Mars and Saturn cross the southern sky after midnight in the gangly constellation, Ophiuchus, just above the more easily recognized Scorpio.

Moon Phases

The Sandhill Crane Migration Moon

New moon April 7, 6:24 a.m. 2nd quarter April 13, 10:59 p.m. 3rd quarter April 22, 12:24 a.m. 4th quarter April 29, 10:29 p.m.

The Lyrid Meteors

The Lyrid Meteors move across the sky between April 19 and 25, with the best viewing on Monday, April 22. The meteors will appear near the Summer Triangle, especially in Lyra, across the southeastern sky.



Out for a bike ride in the early spring at Sterling College in Craftsbury Common, VT. photo courtesy of Sterling College

Meteorology

Fish, game, livestock and people tend to feed more and are thought to be more active as the barometer is falling one to three days before the weather systems that arrive near the following dates: April 3, 7, 12, 17, 22, 25, 29.

The Allergy Index

Estimated Pollen Count

Major pollen source: box elders, maples, pussy willows, flowering crabs and cherries. On a scale of 0-700 grains per cubic meter. April 1: 10; April 10: 50; April 15: 100; April 25: 200; April 30: 400.

Estimated Mold Count

On a scale of 0-7,000 grains per cubic meter. April 1: 1300; April 10: 1700; April 20: 1800; April 30: 2100.

Bill Felker has been writing nature almanacs since 1984. His website, with a link to his weekly radio notes on NPR station WYSO, is www.poorwillsalmanack.com.

Spring

To what purpose, April, do you return again?
Beauty is not enough.

You can no longer quiet me with the redness
Of little leaves opening stickily.
I know what I know.

The sun is hot on my neck as I observe
The spikes of the crocus.

The smell of the earth is good.

It is apparent that there is no death.

But what does that signify?

Not only under ground are the brains of men

Eaten by maggots.

Life in itself

Is nothing,

An empty cup, a flight of uncarpeted stairs.

It is not enough that yearly, down this hill,

April

Comes like an idiot, babbling and strewing flowers.

—EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY



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Vermont Trout Season Opens April 9, 2016

Vermont's traditional trout fishing season is set to open on Saturday, April 9, and officials from Vermont Fish & Wildlife say the mild winter could be a boon for early season trout action across the state.

"Snow is either already gone or disappearing from the riverbanks quickly," said Eric Palmer, fisheries director with Vermont Fish & Wildlife. "Anglers should have good access to rivers and streams throughout the state, and water temperatures may warm up enough to get the trout moving and feeding early this year."

Vermont's spring trout season, which is well-known among resident and non-resident anglers alike, can often afford an angler the greatest opportunity to catch trout in rivers and streams.

"Some of the biggest trout caught in Vermont rivers each year are taken during the spring season," said Palmer. "And, given the current conditions, you may see some really nice trout taken starting on April 9."

Vermont is known for its excellent fishing opportunities for wild trout, as well as for stocked trout – including large, two-year old "trophy" trout that will be stocked statewide later in the spring. Early spring fishing is generally supported by wild trout, while much of the stocking in streams and rivers gets underway in early May.

Nearly 20,000 large, "trophy" trout will be stocked throughout Vermont in 2015, and anglers will be able to fish over 18 miles of rivers and 25 lakes and ponds that are designated as trophy water.

"Vermont's strong trout populations are supported by quality, diverse habitats ranging from small mountain brooks to larger rivers and even cold-water ponds that hold numbers of trout," said Palmer. "Ultimately, this makes for great fishing opportunities and a really enjoyable outdoor activity for everyone from the avid angler to families and friends looking to enjoy Vermont's great outdoors. And,



photo courtesy of VT Fish & Wildlife Dept.
Spring trout season opens April 9th. But look what Kelly Brooks of Waterbury caught while ice fishing on Lake Champlain—this 30-inch lake trout! It was one of the largest lake trout entered into the Vermont Master Angler program 2015.

fresh-cooked Vermont trout is truly delicious if you choose to keep your catch."

Anglers who like to fish and release their catch don't need to wait for opening day. There are year-round catch-and-release fishing opportunities for trout and bass in Vermont. See page 58 of the 2016 law digest for a list of rivers open to year-round trout fishing.

Planning a Vermont spring fishing trip is easy. The Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department has a 2016 Vermont Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Laws and Guide that includes maps showing lakes and streams as well as fishing access areas and public lands.

The guide also lists the fish species found in each body of water and includes the state's fishing regulations. Copies are available where fishing licenses are sold, or by calling the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department at (802) 828-1000. You can also download sections of the publication from www.vtfishandwildlife.com.

Additionally, anglers can visit www.vtfishandwildlife.com to purchase a fishing license, view department trout stocking schedules, and learn more about fishing in Vermont.

Evening

The day is done!
 Slow o'er the purpling hill-tops sinks the sun,
 On eastern summits resting for a space
 In fond adieu, sweet as love's parting kiss,
 It lingers for a moment, then is gone.
 The farmers' wives their little tapers light,
 Which faintly glimmer o'er the moor awhile;
 Then, one by one, they flicker and are lost,
 While aching heads seek peace in sweet repose.
 A solemn hush pervades all nature now,
 In heaven, the stars eternal music make;
 Man's day is past, he rules the world no more
 With noisy clamor and unseemly show;
 But peace is over all, and well the watch
 Is kept by frogs and crickets, bats and owls.

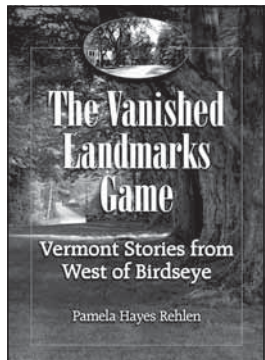


—H. EMERSON HEYER
 1909

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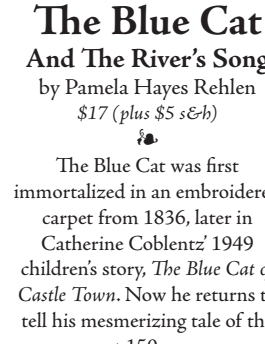
Captivating Stories from Castleton



The Vanished Landmarks Game
 Vermont Stories from West of Birdseye
 Pamela Hayes Rehlen

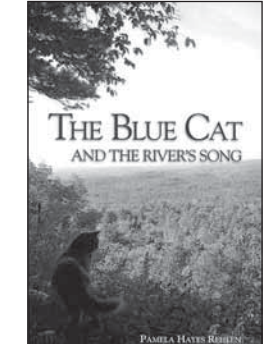
The Vanished Landmarks Game
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Fish & Wildlife Offers Free Introduction to Bass Fishing Clinic

The Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department is hosting a free Introduction to Bass Fishing clinic on Saturday, April 23, at the Kehoe Education Center in Castleton, VT.

Open to people of all ages and levels of experience, including those who are completely new to fishing, the clinic will be led by department staff and instructors from the Let's Go Fishing Program.

"For folks hoping to learn the basics of bass fishing,

particularly how to target and catch bass using artificial lures, this clinic is a great starting place," said Corey Hart, clinic coordinator with Vermont Fish & Wildlife. "We'll cover a range of topics including how bass relate to different types of habitat, what lures and tactics to use in different scenarios, knot tying, and casting techniques."

A Vermont game warden will also lead a fish identification component and a regu-

lations review. The clinic will start at 2 p.m. and run until 6:30 p.m., with the first portion at the Kehoe Education Center. The class will then travel to a nearby pond to try out the fishing skills learned earlier in the day.

Fishing equipment will be available for use, or participants can bring their own. Space is limited and

preregistration is required. Participants will also need to provide their own transportation to the off-site fishing location.

To register for the clinic, email Corey Hart at Corey.Hart@Vermont.gov or call (802) 505-5562.

Visit www.vtfishandwildlife.com.

What an Old Housekeeper Has Learned

That ripe cucumbers make a good sweet pickle.

That a piece of cork is better than cloth for applying brick to knives.

That clabbered milk is better than water for freshening salt fish.

That apples which take a long while to bake, should have a little water in the pan.

That salt pork will be nearly as nice as fresh, if soaked in sweet milk and water, equal parts.

That liver should be thrown into boiling water after being sliced thin and then fried in lard or dripping.

That pie crust will not be soggy if it is brushed over with the white of an egg before the fruit is put in.

That half a cup of vinegar in the water will make an old fowl cook nearly as quick as a young one, and does not injure the flavor in the least.

—*The Farm and Household Cyclopaedia, 1885*

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An Old Place on Old Land

by Pamela Hayes Rehlen

In and around Castleton there are only a tiny handful of really old houses. With exceptions like Bob Gibbs's late 1700s home in Hubbardton which burned down a few weeks ago, as a rule really old houses face a sad and predictable end. After two hundred years, their luck runs out.

Usually, an old, long-time family stays in them until they are no longer habitable; then they're abandoned. The sills rot, the roof goes, water—the house killer—gets in, and the walls start to come down. Up at the Castleton town dump, Joe Root—who would know—says, "There are spots today I could show you that used to be busy places that are just gone."

Castleton's Hooker Hill Farm was built in 1805. It once had extensive fields lying to the north along Hooker Hill Road and east down the valley to Hubbardton Brook. All this is extremely fertile soil, but the farm house itself sits on rock ledge.

Over the years, the Hooker farmstead changed, and its land was sold off in pieces. After the Rt. 4 Interstate through Castleton was built, Hooker Hill Road, which ran close by

"The place was lived in by Virgie McKean, a vigorous eccentric much loved by her neighbors."

the farmhouse front door, became a meandering by-way.

In the 1950s and 60s and 70s the place was lived in by Virgie McKean, a vigorous eccentric much loved by her neighbors. Virgie lived with a man not her husband at a time when that was seldom done. She was poor. She liked to hoard. She enthusiastically picked through discards at the town dump, and had a collection of old automobile carcasses and little ramshackle, falling-down buildings out under the side yard maple trees.

Her neighbors were protective. Doctor Perry, who lived farther down the road, stopped by twice a week to see how she was doing. The many kids she befriended helped her with chores.

Virgie lived as old country women do. During the day, she sat for hours in a rocking chair in front of her south-facing window. But in old age she began to be confused. She called Dr. Perry to come and deal with an intruder, and when he arrived he saw it was only swirling snow outside her back door.

She died of congestive heart failure in her early 80s, and her dilapidated house went on the market where it sat for a long time. In 1984, my husband and I bought it, although we didn't know what to do with it. We hated driving by and seeing a beautiful old place abandoned and facing a sad end. We rented the property out for years, although we knew this wasn't a good solution. It wasn't a property for renters.

Then twelve years ago, our son, not long out of college,



Virgie McKean's Hooker Hill farmhouse in Castleton, VT

photo by Wenger Rehlen

started to work on Virgie's house, doing basic repairs, and ten years ago he moved into the house. He's drawn to grand places. He's always loved Proctor's Wilson Castle and the two Marble Houses in Fair Haven, but somehow this place seemed special, too.

"I liked the house, he says. "It has a presence, up on the top of the hill like it is, especially now at night when it's lit up. When you first see it, it seems to be right in the middle of the road."

An old house needs a lot of maintenance, and our son said Virgie's over the years hadn't gotten any. Everything was cobbled and patched, but he had an overall vision and saw what needed to be done. He replaced the sills. He redid the roof. He dug out the basement. He stripped the walls and wound up putting plaster veneer over sheet rock over new insulation.

He liked the fireplaces. He liked seeing the early 19th century craftsmanship and the architectural details. It pleased him that this house was built with wood and stones taken from close by.

He says, "Outside, I looked for clues in the land to tell me how things used to be." When he rebuilt the old boundary walls, he admits, "I liked pulling stones back up out of the earth." He felt a connection to place, because this is as much old land as it is an old building. Our son tells me that in the past two hundred and eleven years a lot of people have lived here, but he's never encountered lost or angry spirits. There's always a feeling of peacefulness.

The summer is the best time, when the wind blows across the back fields, and it looks like an ocean of grass. He hears the peepers and sees wild animals that never show their faces in town. At night, he'll hear the eerie scream of foxes.

People who knew her—and there are still many in Castleton—come up to him and say, "Virgie would be so proud of this."

He remembers when he first started coming here, "I really liked this house," he says.

But, most powerfully, he realized, "I wanted it to be saved."

Pamela Hayes Rehlen has written and lived most of her life in Castleton, Vermont. She is the author of many stories, articles, essays and magazine features, and of two books: The Blue Cat and the River's Song (\$17 plus shipping and handling) and The Vanished Landmarks Game—Vermont Stories from West of Birdseye (\$20 plus shipping and handling) available at the Castleton Village Store, P. O. Box 275, Castleton, VT 05735, and at a number of Vermont bookstores. To reach the store call (802) 468-2213.

Vermont Spring Farmers Markets

Start your shopping with a trip to a Farmer's Market and you'll be pleased at how much of your table can be from Vermont, locally-grown and better tasting. Now that spring is here look for a variety of spring greens, new season maple syrup, freshly-dug parsnips, and mint followed by fiddleheads, morels, and garlic scapes!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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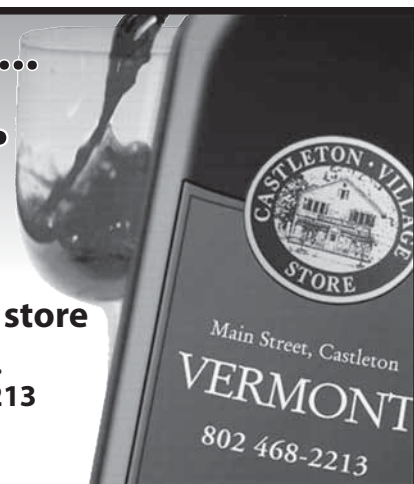
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Eleventh Annual Ole Tyme Maple Sugarhouse Dinner in Wells, VT

It's coming—the one and only Ole Tyme Maple Sugarhouse Dinner on Saturday, April 9th at the Modern Woodmen of America Hall, Rt. 30, Wells, VT.

This fundraising event is presented by The Mission Event and the Ladies Aid of the Wells United Methodist Church—help us help others. There will be seatings from 4:30 to 7 p.m.

Have you ever been to an all maple dinner? No, we're not talking about pancakes and desserts. This is an all maple feast.

We start you off with a massive, over 25-item salad bar with four varieties of lettuce topped by your choice of Sue Clark's six distinct maple dressings which include French, Balsamic, Lemon Basil, Lemon Basil Cream, Garlic and Poppy Seed. There's also Maple

Pepper Vinegar. The main course offers maple glazed baked ham with maple pineapple sauce, mashed potatoes, maple baked beans, and maple brown bread. For dessert there are two flavors of ice cream sundaes. Beverages include maple coffee, tea, and lemonade.

Dinners are \$12 for adults, \$6 for youth ten and under, free for age four and under. Takeouts are available.

Come and enjoy, no reservations needed. There is plenty of food, and plenty of room for everyone. This is a "once a year" event you won't want to miss!

The Modern Woodmen of America Hall is located at 133 VT Rt. 30, just west of the village of Wells, VT in southwestern Vermont. For more information call (802) 325-3203.



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Vermont Map

Prune Your Fruit Trees and Bushes at the Right Time

The following dates are guidelines for home gardeners to use for pruning small and tree fruits. Deviating very far from the suggested periods may increase risks of damage. If the extended weather forecast is calling for temperatures below 0°F, stop pruning any fruit bush, cane, tree or vine for three to four days before to the cold spell. Wait two to three days after the temperature is above 10°F to resume pruning, regardless of type of fruit being pruned.

- Apple**—February to April. Prune before start of growth.
- Peach**—March to late April. Prune before blossoms show color.
- Cherry**—March to April. Prune before start of growth.
- Plum**—March to April. Prune before start of growth.
- Pear**—February to April. Prune before growth begins.
- Blueberry**—March to middle of April. Prune before growth begins.
- Grape**—March to early April. Prune vines before new growth begins. When

grape vines are pruned on warm spring days, excess sap may flow at pruning cuts, which will not harm vines.

Black Raspberry—March to early April. Before new growth begins, prune side shoots to a length of 10 to 12 inches. For a less vigorous bush, prune shoots to a length of 4 to 6 inches. Late May to late June: thin new shoots and pinch back or cut off to a height of 24 to 30 inches from the ground.

July to August: Remove old fruiting canes immediately after crop has been harvested.

Summer Red Raspberry—March to early April. Prune before growth starts; thin canes to 8 to 10 per foot of row by removing the thin weak canes. Also prune any winter-killed tips of the fruiting canes. July to early August: Remove old fruiting canes immediately after the crop has been harvested.

—UNH Extension

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Vermont Country Calendar

See the end of the daily event calendar for ongoing activities; museums, exhibits, and galleries; horseback riding and wagon rides; and spring farmers markets.

FRIDAY, APRIL 1

BURLINGTON. Musical: *Mary Poppins*. Lyric Theatre Company presents Disney and Cameron Mackintosh's production. Tickets \$23-\$38. 7:30 pm. Flynn Center MainStage, 153 Main St. (802) 863-5966. www.flynntix.org. Also April 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10.

STATEWIDE. Maple Open House Weekend. More than 80 Vermont sugar makers invite you to visit their farms and sugarhouses. For participating sugarhouses visit website. (800) 837-6668. www.vermontmaple.org. Through April 3.

SATURDAY, APRIL 2

CORNISH. Pot Roast Dinner. All-you-can-eat meal includes potatoes, red cabbage, rolls and dessert. Tickets \$6 or \$12, preschoolers free. 5-7 pm. United Church, Center Rd. (603) 542-8546.

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

HUNTINGTON. Green Mountain Audubon Annual Sugar-on-Snow Festivities. Free admission, drinks and food for sale. 10 am - 4 pm. Green Mountain Audubon Center, 214 Main Rd. (802) 434-3068. vt.audubon.org. Also April 3.

LUNENBURG. Lunenburg Maple Festival. Pancake breakfast, antique sugaring equipment and other displays, scavenger hunt, sugar-on-snow, maple cotton candy, maple pie baking contest and sale, rug hooking, sugarhouse tours. Homemade soup and bread lunch from noon to 3 pm. 8 am - 4 pm. 49 Bobbin Mill Rd. (802) 892-6654. www.topofthecommon.org.

MIDDLETOWN SPRINGS. Pie for Breakfast. All you can eat pie for breakfast with tea, coffee, or juice. Pies are both sweet (such as pumpkin, apple, berry, chocolate) and savory (such as quiche, spinach, ham). \$7 for adults; \$4 for children 5-12, under 5 free. 8-11 am. Middletown Springs Elementary School, 15 School House Rd. (802) 235-2435.

MONTPELIER. Morse Farm Maple Open House Weekend. Sugar-on-Snow, 12-4 pm; hot dogs boiled in sap 12-3 pm. Treat yourself to "the works" - sugar on snow, a raised donut, dill pickle, and a beverage! Sugar-on-snow is served inside, on the back deck. Fee. 12-4 pm. Morse Farm Sugar Works, 1168 County Rd. (800) 242-2740. www.morsefarm.com. Also April 3.

PAWLET. Pawlet Community Church Roast Pork Dinner. Roast pork dinner with potatoes, stuffing and gravy. Dessert will be maple syrup and ice cream sundaes. The cost is \$12 for adults. Starts at 5 pm. Pawlet Community Church, 38 Rt. 133 just before the intersection with Rt. 30. (802) 325-3022.

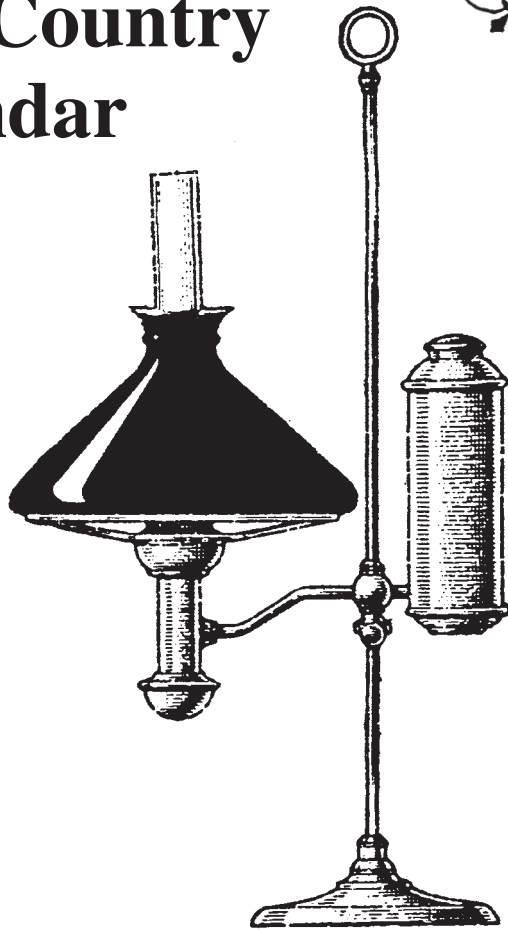
POULTNEY. Poultney MapleFest. Sugarhouse tours. Maple sap fun run, craft fair, pancake breakfast, bag sales, horse-drawn wagon rides, and more. Maplefest dinner. 8 am - 5 pm. (802) 287-2010. www.poultneyvt.com. Also April 3.

POULTNEY. Maple Open House at Green's Sugarhouse. Tours, samples, plenty of maple products for sale. Certified bird-friendly maple habitat. 10 am - 4 pm. Green's Sugarhouse, 1846 Finel Hollow Rd. (802) 287-5745. www.greensugarhouse.com. Also April 3.

PUTNEY. Hidden Springs Maple Open House. Pancake breakfast 9 am - 12, including, bacon and coffee for \$5. Visit our store with many maple products and maple creemees. Free maple syrup tasting, sales table, shipping options, 2016 Farm Breakfast Giveaway Raffle, and see educational video explaining how to make maple syrup. 9 am - 6 pm. Hidden Springs Maple, 162 Westminster d. (802) 387-5200. www.hiddenspringsmaple.com. Also April 3.

RANDOLPH CENTER. Silloway Maple Open House. Our new sugarhouse is powered by 70 solar panels, and we use wood to fire the evaporator, with a second story viewing platform right over the evaporator. Tour the sugarhouse, sample hot syrup with homemade raised doughnuts, sugar-on-snow, and hot dogs boiled in sap. All of our maple products will be on sale. 10 am - 6 pm. Silloway Maple, 1303 Boudro Rd. (802) 272-6249. www.sillowaymaple.com. Also April 3.

RUPERT. Maple Celebration and Pancake Breakfast. Ride in a horse-drawn wagon up to the Sap House for breakfast sausages, local eggs, pancakes with organic syrup, Tall-Cat coffee, Battenkill Creamery products, and juice. Maple-tap demonstrations, self-guided scavenger hunt, new babies in the Small Animal Barn. Hiking and horseback riding, or snowshoeing if there's still snow. Cost: adults \$10, children 4 to 12 \$5, younger than 4 free. 9 am - 2 pm. Merck Forest and Farmland Center, 3270 Rt. 315. (802) 394-7836. www.merckforest.org. Also April 3.



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

RUTLAND. 19th Annual Home & Recreation Show. 9 am - 3 pm. Spartan Arena, 100 Diamond Run Mall Place. (802) 773-0672. cvthomebuilders.com.

STATEWIDE. Maple Open House Weekend. More than 80 Vermont sugar makers invite you to visit their farms and sugarhouses. For participating sugarhouses visit website. (800) 837-6668. www.vermontmaple.org. Also April 3.

STRAFFORD. Birds of Strafford: A Walk and Talk. John Lloyd leads program that uses the eBird app to track birds. Free. 8-11 am. Fire station, 241 Justin Morrill Highway. (802) 333-4303

WHITINGHAM. Whitingham Maple Festival. Eight of the Whitingham sugar makers will open the doors to their sugar houses for tours. Pancake Breakfast 7-10 am. Information Booth at Twin Valley Middle High School, Rt. 100. Craft fair, horse-drawn sleigh rides snow or no snow, luncheon, cooking with maple contest. Sugar on Snow Ham Dinner. (802) 368-2658. whitingham-maplefest.us. Also April 3.

SUNDAY, APRIL 3

BURLINGTON. Concert: Social Band sings of "Rivers, Seas and Dreams." Admission \$15. 3 pm. First Unitarian Universalist Society, 152 Pearl St. www.socialband.org.

EAST MONTPELIER. Maple Open House at Bragg Farm Sugarhouse & Gift Shop. Gift shop and lots of maple. Free admission. 12-5 pm. Bragg Farm, 1005 Rt. 14 North. (802) 223-5757. braggfarm.com. Every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday through mid-April.

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MONTPELIER. Flapjack Fundraiser. Enjoy pancakes, syrup, maple cured bacon, OJ, and coffee while supporting the local Girl Scout troop! \$8/ adults, \$6/children, payable at the door. 8-10 am. Morse Farm Sugar Works, 1168 County Rd. (800) 242-2740. www.morsefarm.com.

NORWICH. International Folk Dance. Traditional music and dance from many cultures. No experience or partners necessary. Bring soft-soled shoes. Admission \$4 or \$8. 3-6 pm. Tracy Hall, 300 Main St. (802) 436-2151.

POULTNEY. Maple Open House at Green's Sugarhouse. Tours, samples, plenty of maple products for sale. Certified bird-friendly maple habitat. 10 am - 4 pm. Green's Sugarhouse, 1846 Finel Hollow Rd. (802) 287-5745. www.greensugarhouse.com.

POULTNEY. Poultney Maple Festival. Sugarhouse tours. 10 am - 4 pm. Visit our website for a listing of participating sugarhouses. (802) 287-2010. www.poultneyvt.com.

PUTNEY. Hidden Springs Maple Open House. Sugar-on-snow from 11 am - 2 pm. Visit our store with many maple products and maple creemees. Free maple syrup tasting, sales table, shipping options, 2016 Farm Breakfast Giveaway Raffle. 9 am - 6 pm. Hidden Springs Maple, 162 Westminster Rd. (802) 387-5200. hiddenspringsmaple.com.

Maple Pie and Lost Mufflers

Spring comes quickly, by and by.
It brings with it
sugar snows and maple pie,
and dandelion greens, not so serene
and lost mufflers on muddy roads.
Did I forget the sounds of peepers and toads?

—RON KRUPP

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Vermont Country Calendar

RUPERT. Maple Celebration and Pancake Breakfast. Ride in a horse-drawn wagon up to the Sap House for breakfast sausages, local eggs, pancakes with organic syrup, Tall-Cat coffee, Battenkill Creamery products, and juice. Adults \$10, children 4 to 12 \$5, younger than 4 free. 9 am – 2 pm. Merck Forest and Farmland Center, 3270 Rt. 315. (802) 394-7836. www.merckforest.org. Also April 3.

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WOODSTOCK. Maple Madness. Activities that celebrate the state's maple sugaring season. Some events free, others cost varies. 11 am – 4 pm. downtown. (802) 457-3555.

THURSDAY, APRIL 7

BURLINGTON. Harlem Globetrotters. The world famous group brings their basketball skills and amazing athletes to Vermont. Don't miss this must see family fun event! Tickets \$22-\$35. 7 pm. Patrick Gymnasium, 1 Spear St. (802) 422-8849. www.harlemglobetrotters.com.

BURLINGTON. PoetryFest! Reading: Vermont Poet Laureate Chard deNiord, reading from his new collection, *Interstate*, followed by a Q&A with the audience. Tickets \$3. 7 pm. Phoenix Books Burlington, 191 Bank St. (802) 448-3350. www.phoenixbooks.biz.

FRIDAY, APRIL 8

BELLOWS FALLS. Wyndham Orchestra Concert: *Carmina Burana*. Carl Orff's masterpiece featuring Kate Saik, soprano; Cailin Manson, tenor. With The Blanche Moyse Chorale and high school choruses from Brattleboro Union High School, Leland & Gray and Bellows Falls Union High School. Tickets: \$5-\$50. 7:30 pm. Bellows Falls Union High School. (802) 257-4523. bmcvt.org.

BURLINGTON. Performance: National Theatre of Scotland—"The Strange Undoing of Prudencia Hart". An evening of anarchic theater, live music, and strange goings-on as Prudencia Hart, an uptight academic, sets off to attend a conference in the Scottish Borders. 8 pm Friday and Saturday, 2 pm Sunday. Tickets \$35 adults, \$31 students. FlynnSpace, Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, 153 Main St. (802) 863-5966. www.flynncenter.org.

HUNTINGTON. Family Amphibian Big Night. Learn what it's like to be one of Vermont's amphibians during the spring migration. Fun for the whole family, so put on your puddle boots and bring a flashlight! \$12 adult/child pair, \$4-\$5 each additional child. 7 pm. Audubon Vermont, 255 Sherman Hollow Rd. (802) 434-3068. vt.audubon.org.

SATURDAY, APRIL 9

BELLOWS FALLS. Spring Book Sale. Rockingham Free Public Library, 65 Westminster St. (802) 463-4270. rockinghamlibrary.org. Through April 30.

BONDVILLE. Spring Fling and Pond Skim. Goggle tans and t-shirts are accessories of choice as we enjoy spring's soft snow, longer days and sunshine with a weekend of celebration. Pond Skim BBQ is from 11 am – 2 pm in the Main Base area. Pond Skim at 2 pm on Lower Suttanner, register 9-11 am at West Wing in the Base Lodge, fee: \$20. Costumes encouraged, helmets mandatory. Stratton Mountain Resort, 5 Village Lodge Rd. (704) 526-9685. www.stratton.com. Also April 10.

BRANDON. Concert: Sarah Blacker with Aaron Katz. Singer-songwriter artfully spans rock, pop, indie-folk, and Americana. Show \$20, dinner & show \$40. Reservations suggested. 7:30 pm. Brandon Music, 62 Country Club Lane. (802) 247-4295. www.brandon-music.net.

BRATTLEBORO. Wyndham Orchestra Concert: *Carmina Burana*. Carl Orff's Masterpiece featuring Kate Saik, soprano; Cailin Manson, tenor. With The Blanche Moyse Chorale and high school choruses from Brattleboro Union High School, Leland & Gray & Bellows Falls Union High School. Tickets \$5-\$50. 7:30 pm. Brattleboro Union High School Gymnasium. (802) 257-4523. www.bmcvt.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Storytellers on a Mission. Southern Vermont-based The Hatch presents the sixth installment of the event, featuring nationally celebrated storytellers who will tell moving and hilarious stories to raise money for a great cause. This year's nonprofit recipient is Youth Services. Tickets are \$60 front orchestra, \$40 rear orchestra, \$25 balcony. 7:30 pm. Latchis Theater, 50 Main St. (802) 748-2600. theater.latchis.com.

BURLINGTON. PoetryFest! Reading: An afternoon of poetry with poets Alison Prine, Karin Gottshall, and Kerrin McCadden. Tickets \$3. 4 pm. Phoenix Books Burlington, 191 Bank St. (802) 448-3350. phoenixbooks.biz.

CHESTER. Workshop: Marvelous Mosaic Mirrors. Let's break China and glue it up and grout to finish. Contact instructor, Laurie Marechoux at lauriem@tds.net or call (802) 228-7144. 11 am to 3 pm. Class will be held at 103 Artisans Marketplace, 7 Pineview Dr. off Rt. 103. (802) 875-7400. www.103artisansmarketplace.com. Also April 16, 11 am – 1 pm.

GROTON. Groton Spring Shopping Bazaar and Raffle. A fundraiser for improvements to the Community Building. 10 am – 3 pm. Groton Community Building, 1304 Scott Highway. (802)588-2013.

HINESBURG. Concert: Social Band sings of "Rivers, Seas and Dreams." Musical reflections on water, featuring a premiere of a new song cycle by Anna Patton. Admission by suggested donation of \$15. 7:30 pm. United Church of Hinesburg, 10570 Rt. 116. www.socialband.org.

MANCHESTER. Bird Walk. The Vermont Bird and Sky Watch and local birders meet to conduct a survey of the wild birds present on the grounds of Hildene. Free. Meet in the Welcome Center parking lot at 8 am. Hildene, off Rt. 7A. (802) 362-1788. randy@thevermontbirdplace.com. www.hildene.org.

MONTPELIER. Climate Summit: Cultivating Climate Resilience. Keynote speech, workshops, panel discussion. For K-12 grades, teachers, environmental educators, representatives of state and local agencies, to share best practices and launch new initiatives. Hosted by Vermont SWEEP (Statewide Environmental Education Programs). Registration: \$75, \$40 for students. 8 am – 4:30 pm. Montpelier High School. bpowers.vermontsweep@gmail.com. vermontsweep.org.

PLYMOUTH. Spring Open House and Talk at the Coolidge Museum & Education Center. Walk through the quiet village where Coolidge grew up, returned to, and was sworn in as our nation's 30th President. Stop in at the award winning Plymouth Cheese Factory. At 2 pm we welcome Carolyn Frisa who will share her expertise in a talk, Preserving Family Archives. Education Director, Diane Kemble is offering a workshop, Expanding History's Ideas with Accordion Books from 10 am – 1 pm, cost \$40. For more information and to preregister, contact education@calvin-coolidge.org. 12 noon – 4 pm. President Calvin Coolidge State Historic Site, 3780 Rt. 100A. www.CoolidgeFoundation.org.

Birding Hot Spots in Rutland County

Rutland County Audubon Society has developed a list of places to bird in our area—places that are special to us and are representative of a variety of habitats.

These birding hotspots are places that are publicly accessible; some large, some small. A few involve hiking and others can be canoed or kayaked.

The spots are selected because they host special birds or habitats. Some are chosen because they are a good place to take kids or a place for a quick break from our everyday lives.

We hope you will visit these places and report sightings to www.ebird.org so we can increase the knowledge of the birds of Rutland County.

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

Rutland Community Garden

The Rutland Community Garden is a great spot for a quick birding trip as it is easily accessible and fairly level walking. It is an ideal spot to bring a child or to practice your own birding skills.

As the name implies, the garden is a twenty-five acre parcel of land within Rutland City where residents may cultivate their own vegetables for a small annual fee. The city also, while not in the business of growing vegetables, has a well-managed tree nursery. These cultivated areas take up no more than an acre.

The balance of the land supports approximately one mile of well-tended walking trails that pass through woods, besides a small meadow, and overlooking a beaver induced wetland.

It is not surprising that the diversity of habitat, extent, minimal disturbance and accessibility makes this former "Poor Farm" an inviting place to bird.

Over a period of two years, eighty-eight species of birds have been documented in this urban "hotspot". The species range from ducks to warblers, from the expected to the highly unusual, whether it is a Tufted Titmouse or a Great Egret, a Warbling Vireo or a Green Heron.

A small kiosk provides information about the garden as well as a bird list of the species seen.

Directions: The Rutland



Community Garden is located on Woodstock Ave. (Rt. 4) in Rutland, VT behind McDonalds. The preferred access is from the Big Lots parking area on Rt. 4 east of McDonalds. Park to the south facing the grove of white pines. The gently rising footpath ahead is the immediate access.

For more info visit rutlandcountyaudubon.org.

Dare

The wood's-edge thicket holds a path
Twisty enough for any seeker
Of thorny ways, and hides a thrush,
And offers shelter to the bleaker
Crow-calls. But it is a dare,
And if you're one whom brambles shake
To fright, best go the long way round
Or find another road to take.

—FRANCES M. FROST, 1929

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— From Winter to Summer Schedule —

Winter Market
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Wed. 3-6 pm & Sat. 10-2 • November thru April

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Vermont Country Calendar

RANDOLPH CENTER. Vermont Woodlands Association Annual Meeting. Presentations and awards. Breaks for networking with exhibitors and attendees. \$50 per person. 8:30 am – 3 pm. Judd Hall at the Vermont Technical College. (802) 747-7900. www.vermontwoodlands.org.

RUTLAND. 28th Festival of Quilts: "Bountiful Baskets." Sponsored by the Maple Leaf Quilters Guild. Spectacular quilts, a guild challenge exhibit, an antique quilt exhibit, vendors, a basket auction and a consignment boutique. One day admission: \$6. Saturday 9 am – 5 pm, Sunday 10 am – 4 pm. Holiday Inn, Rt. 7 South. (802) 747-7145. toutefolle@yahoo.com. www.mapleleafquilters.org. Also April 10.

RUTLAND. Rutland Winter Farmers' Market. 10 am – 2 pm. Food Center Building at 251 West St. (802) 342-4727. info@vtfarmersmarket.org. www.vtfarmersmarket.org.

RUTLAND. Rutland Regional Racecar Show. Sponsored by Devil's Bowl Speedway. Free admission. 10 am – 9 pm. Diamond Run Mall, off Rt. 7. (802) 265-3112. www.devilsbowlsspeedwayvt.com. Also April 10.

SO. BURLINGTON. Workshop: The Art of Evergreen Shrubs and Hedges. Master Gardener Jeff Young will tell you how to build and maintain a healthy hedge and keep it under control. Fee: \$15. 9 am – 12 noon. UVM Horticulture Farm, 65 Green Mountain Dr. (802) 864-3073. info@friendsofthehortfarm.org. friendsofthehortfarm.org.

STATEWIDE. Vermont Trout Season Opens. Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department: (802) 828-1000. Visit vtfishandwildlife.com to purchase a fishing license, view trout stocking schedules, and learn more about fishing in Vermont.

SWANTON. Big Rig Day. Climb into a rig and see how the drivers do their jobs. Then follow the Storywalk to Swanton Central School for activities, games, and more! 9 am – 12 pm. 120 1st St. (802) 868-5077. fnwsu.org.

WEYBRIDGE. Annual Weybridge Tag Sale. Come check out the huge selection of household items, clothing toys, and more! Proceeds to benefit Friends of Weybridge Elementary School in support of field trips, the lunch program and the library. 8 am – 2 pm. Weybridge Elementary School, Quaker Village Rd. (802) 545-2113.

WINDSOR. Mt. Spring Outing. Climb Mt. Ascutney (3150') by unplowed mountain road by snowshoe, spikes, or boots. 7.4 mi, 2250' elev. gain, views. Moderate climb. Optional summit adds 1.4 mi and 400' ascent. Free, newcomers and non-members welcome. Sponsored by the Green Mountain Club. For meeting time and place contact leader Dick Andrews at (802) 885-3201. www.greenmountainclub.org.

SUNDAY, APRIL 10

BARRE. Concert: The Heart of Sound. Evelyn Glennie, marimba and percussion, with the The Community Engagement Lab Festival Orchestra, Paul Gambill, conductor. Tickets \$15 student, \$25 adult, \$40 VIP, includes reserved seats plus the "Very Open Rehearsal," 6:30-7:30 pm on April 8. 4 pm. Barre Opera House, 6 N. Main St. (802) 476-8188. www.barreoperahouse.org.

BARRE. 10th Annual Montpelier Antiques Market. Up to 24 Dealers in a relaxed setting offering primitives, furniture, art, toys, books, photos, and ephemera from the New England area. Admission: early buyers \$5 (8 am), general public \$2 (9 am). Open 8 am – 1:30 pm. Canadian Club, 414 E. Montpelier Rd., Rt. 14. (802) 751-6138. www.montpelierantiquesmarket.com.

BRISTOL. Hike to Bristol Plane Wreck. Trek to the remote location of a plane wreck in the mountains. Moderate to difficult six-mile climb, with some bushwhacking. Free. Non-members and newcomers welcome. Sponsored by the Green Mountain Club, Killington Section. For meeting time and place, contact leader Jerry Parker at (802) 775-6208. www.greenmountainclub.org.

BURLINGTON. Musical: *Mary Poppins*. Lyric Theatre Company presents Disney and Cameron Mackintosh's production. Tickets \$23-\$38. 1 pm. Flynn Center MainStage, 153 Main St. (802) 863-5966. www.flynntix.org.

CHARLOTTE. Concert: Social Band sings of "Rivers, Seas and Dreams." Musical reflections on water, featuring a premiere of a new song cycle by Anna Patton. Admission by suggested donation of \$15. 3 pm. Charlotte Congregational Church, 403 Church Hill Rd. info@socialband.org. www.socialband.org.

CHESTER. Poetry Reading. Poet Leland Kinsey reads from his new collection of poetry, *Galvanized, New & Selected Poems*. Free, public welcome. 4 pm. Misty Valley Books, 58 the Common. (802) 875-3400. www.mvbooks.com.

RUTLAND. Concert: Mozart's Requiem. Rutland Area Chorus, Orchestra and soloists, under the direction of Dr. Sherrill Blodgett, will perform. The Requiem was not only one of Mozart's most inspired works, it was one of his last. Freewill offering. 4 pm. Grace Church, 8 Court St. (802) 775-4301. www.gracechurchvt.org.

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

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

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. 15th Annual Flavors of the Valley. Sample foods from more than 50 unique local farms, restaurants, and food businesses. Purchase meats, baked goods, sauces, and more directly from vendors, and sign up for Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) shares for the summer. Kids' local-food activities with Upper Valley Farm to School. Bring shopping bags/coolers for purchases, and your own plates, utensils, and napkins to help reduce waste. Sponsored by Vital Communities. Admission: \$10, 6 and under free, family maximum \$30. 1 am – 3 pm. At Hartford High School, 37 Highland Ave. (802) 291-9100. vitalcommunities.org.

MONDAY, APRIL 11

BURLINGTON. Concert: Evelyn Glennie & the CEL Orchestra. An astounding live performer, Glennie is master of more than 1,000 percussion instruments from around the world. Profoundly deaf since the age of 12, she identifies notes by vibrations she feels through her feet and body. Tickets \$15-\$40. 7:30 pm. Flynn MainStage, Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, 153 Main St. (802) 863-5966. www.flynncenter.org.

SO. BURLINGTON. Lecture: "Tales from The Plant Explorer: Why Plant Collection is as Important as Ever." Dr. Michael S. Dosmann, Curator of Living Collections at the Arnold Arboretum, will talk on the importance of living plant collections for research, conservation and education. Fee: \$15. 7-9 pm. UVM Horticulture Farm, 65 Green Mountain Dr. (802) 864-3073. info@friendsofthehortfarm.org. friendsofthehortfarm.org.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13

BURLINGTON. Author Appearance. Discover the history of Winooski with Al Blondin and Anastasia Pratt, authors of the *Images of America: Winooski*. Tickets: \$3. 4 pm. Phoenix Books Burlington, 191 Bank St. (802) 448-3350. www.phoenixbooks.biz.

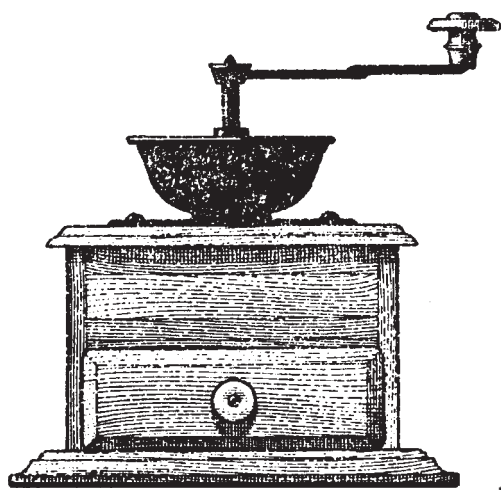
KILLINGTON. 33rd Annual Vermont Tourism Summit. Keynote presentations & panel discussions. Full-conference and one-day registration options: \$50-\$275. Wednesday 9 am to late night and Thursday 8 am – 3 pm. Killington Grand Resort, 228 E. Mountain Rd. (802) 865-5202. info@delaneymeetingevent.com. www.vttourismsummit.org. Through April 14.

RUTLAND. Rutland Winter Farmers' Market. 3-6 pm. Food Center Building at 251 West St. (802) 342-4727. info@vtfarmersmarket.org. www.vtfarmersmarket.org.

SHELBURNE. All-Souls Interfaith Community, Conversation Series, "Lighten Up!" Fran Stoddard, former VPR and Vermont Public Television host moderates. Three speakers: artist Rae Harrell, sound healer Melinda Kinzie, and Ernie Pomerleau. Free. Donations accepted. 6:30-8 pm. Doors open at 6 pm. Reservations encouraged; open seating. 291 Bostwick Farm Rd. (802) 985-3819. www.shelburnefarms.org.

THURSDAY, APRIL 14

BURLINGTON. PoetryFest! Readings and Q&As with local poets. Poetry Society of Vermont. 7 pm. Phoenix Books Burlington, 191 Bank St. (802) 448-3350. www.phoenixbooks.biz.



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Vermont Country Calendar

BURLINGTON. Performance: Companhia Urbana de Dança. Featuring eight incredible dancers from Rio de Janeiro. Hip-hop, samba, capoeira, and contemporary music are mixed in a boldly imaginative show. Tickets \$15-\$44. 7:30 pm. Flynn MainStage, Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, 153 Main St. (802) 863-5966. www.flynncenter.org.

MIDDLEBURY. Presentation: "The Writer and the Movies." Writer Jay Parini will discuss his experience with Hollywood. Free. 7 pm. Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society Church, 2 Duane Court. (802) 388-2117. www.henrysheldonmuseum.org.

FRIDAY, APRIL 15

BARRE. Freedom Train Matinee. A series of highly theatrical scenes that use dance, dialogue, and music of the period to tell the story of Harriet Tubman. Tickets: \$7.50. 10 am. Barre Opera House, 6 N. Main St. (802) 476-8188. www.barreoperahouse.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Chamber Music Concert: Musicians from Marlboro perform music of Haydn, Berg, and Dvorak. Tickets: preferred \$30, general \$20. 7:30 pm. Centre Congregational Church, 193 Main St. (802) 257-4523. www.bmcvt.org.

BURLINGTON. Performance. Peking Acrobats. China's most gifted tumblers, contortionists, jugglers, cyclists, and gymnasts will astonish the audience with their skilled and daring feats. Tickets. \$15-\$45. 7 pm. Flynn MainStage, Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, 153 Main St. (802) 863-5966. www.flynncenter.org.

EAST MONTPELIER. Sugar-on-Snow at Bragg Farm. Ice cream parlor with maple soft serve and maple milkshakes. Maple tasting, 20-minute video, walking trail. Watch sap boiling in our big wood-fired evaporator and taste the new crop of maple syrup. Gift shop and lots of maple. Free admission. 12-5 pm. Bragg Farm, 1005 Rt. 14 North. (802) 223-5757. braggfarm.com. Also April 16 & 17.

SWANTON. Vernal Pool Walk at Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge. Join Park Ranger, David Frisque for a look at the life and activity in a vernal pool early in the spring. Vernal pools are important breeding areas for some of the more reclusive and seldom seen amphibians such as wood frogs, and salamanders. Bring waterproof knee or hip boots and a headlamp or small flashlight. 6-8 pm. Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge, at the Stephen Young Marsh Trail located on Tabor Rd. about one mile past (south) of the Headquarters Bldg. To register call (802) 868-4781. www.fws.gov.

TINMOUTH. Contra Dance. With Red Ace and The Garden Flyers and Mary Wesley calling. Admission \$10, 12 and under free. Refreshments available. 8-11 pm at Tinmouth Community Center, Rt. 140, 5 miles west of Wallingford. For info or directions call (802) 446-2928. Tinmouthvt.org. Third Friday of most months.

SATURDAY, APRIL 16

ADAMANT. Spring Walk. Around Sodom Pond. Easy, five miles. Free, newcomers and non-members welcome. Sponsored by the Green Mountain Club, Montpelier Section. For meeting time and place contact leaders Mary Smith or Mary Garcia at (802) 505-0603 or (802) 622-0585. www.greenmountainclub.org.

BARNARD. Performance: Bald Mountain Theater presents *Hansel and Gretel*. A new adaptation of the classic fairytale, with story, song, and dance. Tickets: adults \$12, under 16 \$8. 4 pm and 7 pm. Performances at the Town Hall. (802) 234-1645. barnarts.org. www.baldmountaintheater.org.

BELLOWS FALLS. Concert: Magical Strings. Celtic harp and hammered dulcimer of Philip and Pam Boulding, at times augmented by violin, cello, pennywhistle, percussion and various instruments from around the world. Tickets \$35/\$17/\$13. 7:30 pm. Immanuel Episcopal Church, 12 Church St. (802) 460-0110. sca@sover.net. www.stonechurcharts.org

BENNINGTON. The Bennington Battle Monument will be open for the season. A brand new elevator takes visitors to the observation floor for a spectacular view of three states. Events through the season include the 125th anniversary celebration in August. \$5 adult admission, \$1 for youth, five and under free. The Monument and gift shop are open seven days a week from 9 am - 5 pm. Bennington Battle Monument, 15 Monument Circle, (802) 447-0550. marylou.chicote@vermont.gov. www.historicsites.vermont.gov. Visit us on facebook at Vermont State Historic Sites.

BERLIN. Apple Tree Pruning and Maintenance Workshop. With Dave Wilcox, tree farmer and State Lands Forester. Hands-on demonstration of how to properly prune and care for wild apple trees. Bring pruning tools and snowshoes if necessary. Easy walking. Free; pre-registration requested by April 12. 8:30 am - 12 noon. (802) 747-7900. Directions available at info@vermontwoodlands.org or www.vermontwoodlands.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Jazz Concert: Renee Rosnes Quartet, with vibraphonist Steve Nelson, bassist Peter Washington and drummer Lewis Nash. Tickets: \$20-\$40, \$15 for students w/valid ID. Vermont Jazz Center, 72 Cotton Mill Hill, Suite 222. (802) 254-9088. vtjazz.org.

COOKEVILLE. Corinth Coffeehouse. Enjoy live music by Brian Carroll & Friends Buzzkill Abby followed by open mic. Refreshments available. A benefit for one of our many local organizations. Suggested donation: \$5-\$10 per person. 7-8:30 pm, then open mike from 8:30-10 pm. At the Corinth Town Hall, 1387 Cookeville Rd. (802) 439-5980. darichard@tops-tele.com.

EAST MONTPELIER. Sugar-on-Snow at Bragg Farm. Ice cream parlor with maple soft serve and maple milkshakes. Maple tasting, 20-minute video, walking trail. Watch sap boiling in our big wood-fired evaporator and taste the new crop of maple syrup. Gift shop and lots of maple. Free admission. 12-5 pm. Bragg Farm, 1005 Rt. 14 North. (802) 223-5757. braggfarm.com. Also April 17.

HARTLAND. Country Dance. Adam Boyce and square dances of the '30s & '40s. All dances are taught, as needed, and all ages and abilities are welcome. Sponsored by Hartland Community Arts. Admission \$8, kids under 12 free with an adult. 7:30 pm. At Damon Hall, 3 Corners intersection, where Rt. 12 and Rt. 5 divide. (802) 484-7719. hartlandcommunityarts.org.

LEBANON, NH. 54th Annual Five-Colleges Book Sale. One of New England's largest sales of old books hosted by Mt. Holyoke, Simmons, Smith, Vassar and Wellesley to benefit scholarships for VT and NH students. 35-40,000 books in all fields, in good condition and carefully sorted. Also maps, prints, computer materials, CDs, videos, DVDs, books-on-tape, ephemera. 9 am - 5 pm. Lebanon High School Gym (handicap accessible). (603) 428-3311. priscilla@whitemnkettlecorn.com. www.five-collegesbooksale.org. Also April 17.

PUTNEY. Performance. Moth Radio Hosts and Storytellers Peter Aguero & Ophira Eisenburg will entertain you. Peter has been popular at past Storyteller events and Ophira is a comedian, writer, and host of NPR's trivia show Ask Me Another. Tickets \$15. 7:30 pm. Next Stage Arts, 15 Kimball Hill Rd. (802) 387-0102. nextstagearts@gmail.com. www.nextstagearts.org.

RANDOLPH. Soup-a-thon & Pie-Pourri. Adults \$8, children under 6 free. 5-7 pm. United Church of Christ, 36 N. Main St. (802) 728-4999.

RUTLAND. Rutland Winter Farmers' Market. 10 am - 2 pm. Food Center Building at 251 West St. (802) 342-4727. info@vtfarmersmarket.org. www.vtfarmersmarket.org.

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



Rutland Winter Market

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Vermont Country Calendar

SHELBURNE. Family Program: Sheep and Shear Delights. Sheep shearing demonstration, opportunities to spin, skirt, wash, and card from the fleeces, making the wool ready to be turned into clothing and blankets. Mother sheep and their lambs will be visiting also. 10 am – 1 pm. Admission: \$6. McClure Center for School Programs, Farm Barn, Shelburne Farms, 1611 Harbor Rd. (802) 985-8686. www.shelburnefarms.org.

SPRINGFIELD. Storm Water Expo. Vendors and exhibitors. \$15 registration fee covers all Expo materials plus refreshments and a shot at a door prize. 9 am – 11:30. At Health Care and Rehabilitation Services, 390 River St. (802) 738-0456. blackrivercleanup@yahoo.com. www.blackriveractionteam.org.

TUNBRIDGE. Concert: Barika. A soundscape of funk soaked in psychedelic, West African resonance. Tickets \$20. 7:30 pm. Tunbridge Town Hall, Rt. 110. www.mtnfolk.org.

VERGENNES. Bike Trip from Vergennes to Middlebury. We start at the green in Vergennes, then bike back over hilly roads to Middlebury for lunch. Free, newcomers and non-members welcome. Sponsored by the Green Mountain Club, Burlington Section. For meeting time and place contact leader Mary Lou Record at (802) 660-2834 or mlrecor@myfairpoint.net. www.greenmountainclub.org.

SUNDAY, APRIL 17

LEBANON, NH. 54th Annual Five-Colleges Book Sale. One of New England's largest sales of old books hosted by Mt. Holyoke, Simmons, Smith, Vassar and Wellesley. All items half-price. 9 am – 3 pm. Lebanon High School Gym. (603) 428-3311. priscilla@whitemtnkettle.com. www.five-collegesbooksale.org.

MIDDLEBURY. Antiques Appraisal Day. For \$7 per item or \$25 for four, receive professional information about family heirlooms and collectibles. Photographs of large objects will be accepted. 10 am – 2 pm. Courtyard Marriott, 309 Court St. (802) 388-2117. mmanley@henrysheldonmuseum.org. www.henrysheldonmuseum.org.

POULTNEY. Community Poetry Reading. Come and enjoy. 2 pm at The Meeting House, 348 Bentley Ave.

WINDSOR. Spring Walk to Ascutney Picnic Pavilion. Afternoon walk up an unplowed mountain road, to a CCC-era picnic pavilion. Nice views. Steady grade, not steep. 3.9 mi, 1220' elevation gain. Free, newcomers and non-members welcome. Sponsored by the Green Mountain Club. For details contact leader Dick Andrews at (802) 885-3201. www.greenmountainclub.org.

TUESDAY, APRIL 19

CASTLETON. Performance: Castleton Jazz Ensemble. Admission fee. 7 pm. Casella Theater, Castleton State College. (866) 272-5888. castleton.edu.

HANOVER, NH. Concert: Maria Schneider Orchestra. Big band jazz composer and Grammy award winner. Tickets: \$17-\$50. 7 pm. Spaulding Auditorium, Hopkins Center, Dartmouth College. (603) 646-2010. hop.dartmouth.edu.

RUTLAND. Gordon Lightfoot in Concert: The Legend Lives On. Tickets: \$49.50, \$59.50 & \$69.50. 8 pm. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. paramountvt.org.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 20

BURLINGTON. Concert. Maria Schneider Orchestra. Big-band jazz, poetry, and chamber music. 7:30 pm. Tickets \$15-\$48. Flynn MainStage, Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, 153 Main St. (802) 863-5966. www.flynncenter.org.

CASTLETON. Performance: Bobby Gosh: Confessions of a Marijuana Eater. Seated at the University's beautiful grand piano Bobby will perform some of his hit songs and speak of his charmed musical life and the role marijuana has played in it. Admission fee. 7 pm. Casella Theater, Castleton State College. (866) 272-5888. castleton.edu.

MONTPELIER. Woodcock Watch. Listen and watch for the dramatic courtship flight of the American Woodcock, a sandpiper which nests along the North Branch. Fee: \$10. 7:30 pm. North Branch Nature Center, 713 Elm St. (802) 229-6206. northbranchnaturecenter.org.

RUTLAND. Rutland Winter Farmers' Market. Fresh local produce, winter vegetables, spring greens, meat, eggs, bakery products. Prepared meals, entertainment. 3-6 pm. Food Center Building at 251 West St. (802) 342-4727. info@vtfarmersmarket.org. www.vtfarmersmarket.org.

THURSDAY, APRIL 21

LEBANON, NH. Performance: *Peter Rabbit Tales*. Using fantastic masks, whimsical puppets, gorgeous scenery and original music, the magical, marvelous world of Beatrix Potter comes alive on stage. Recommended for pre-K – grade 4. Tickets: \$4, \$6, \$10. 10 am. Lebanon Opera House, 51 N. Park St. (603) 448-0400. lebanonoperahouse.org.

FRIDAY, APRIL 22

BURLINGTON. University of Vermont Lane Series Concert: Dover Quartet. Tickets: \$35/\$10 advance student. 7:30 pm. UVM Recital Hall, 460 South Prospect St. (802) 656-4455. lane.series@uvm.edu. uvm.edu/laneseries.



GRAFTON. Celebrate Earth Day at the Nature Museum! The party kicks off at 10 am with an hour-long indoor program titled "Predators and Prey" led by Environmental Educator Jamie Maloof-Schilling; a group hike will follow. 10:30 am – 1 pm. The Nature Museum at Grafton, 186 Townshend Rd. (802) 843-2111. info@nature-museum.org. www.nature-museum.org.

MONTPELIER. Spring Migration Bird Walk. Learn birding basics, expand your birding ear and discover more about the birds that inhabit the fields and forests. Fee: \$10. 7-8:30 am. North Branch Nature Center, 713 Elm St. (802) 229-6206. northbranchnaturecenter.org. Also April 29, May 6, 13, 20, 27.

PUTNEY. Concert. Rhythm Village. World fusion composers Tona Vacca, Eugene Uman, Derrik Jordan and Jim Matus. Tickets \$20. 8 pm. Next Stage Arts, 15 Kimball Hill Rd. (802) 387-0102. nextstagearts@gmail.com. www.nextstagearts.org.

ST. ALBANS. 50th Annual Vermont Maple Festival. Three days of festivities for all ages. Main Street Stage, maple exhibits, craft show, Youth Talent Show, carnival, pony rides, maple treats. Lots free! In Taylor Park and other downtown venues. (802) 524-5800. www.vtmaplefestival.org. Also April 23 & 24.



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Vermont Country Calendar

TINMOUTH. Concert with Hilton Park. Americana, Folk & Blues. Suggested donation \$10. Refreshments for sale. 7:30 pm. Tinmouth Old Firehouse on Mountain View Rd. just south of the intersection of Rt. 140. tinmouthvt.org.

SATURDAY, APRIL 23

BURLINGTON. PoetryFest! Readings and Q&As with local poets. Julia Shipley & Andrew Merton. 2-4 pm. Phoenix Books Burlington, 191 Bank St. (802) 448-3350. www.phoenixbooks.biz.

CHESTER. 3D Printing Demo. Come see a hi tech printing demo. 103 Artisans Marketplace, 7 Pineview Dr. off Rt. 103. (802) 875-7400. www.103artisansmarketplace.com.

FERRISBURGH. Calling New Volunteers. Rokeby Museum celebrates National Volunteer Month with an orientation session for new recruits. For more information e-mail Jane Williamson at rokeby@comcast.net. 11 am. Rokeby Museum, 4334 Rt. 7. rokeby.org.

PUTNEY. Concert: Cantrip & Low Lily. Tickets \$20. 7:30 pm. Next Stage Arts, 15 Kimball Hill Rd. (802) 387-0102. nextstagearts@gmail.com. www.nextstagearts.org.

RUTLAND. Concert: Aaron Tippin. Country music. Tickets: \$24.75-\$54.75. 8 pm. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. www.paramountvt.org.

RUTLAND. Rutland Winter Farmers' Market. 10 am - 2 pm. Food Center Building at 251 West St. (802) 342-4727. info@vtfarmersmarket.org. www.vtfarmersmarket.org.

SHELBURNE. Family Program: What Do Owls Eat for Lunch? Admission: \$5 children, \$6 adults. 10 am - 12 pm. McClure Education Center in the Farm Barn, Shelburne Farms, 1611 Harbor Rd. (802) 985-8686.

SHELBURNE. Green Mountain Draft Horse Association Spring Driving Clinic. Learn the basic of draft horses, how to harness, ground drive, and safely hook to a cart, focusing on safety working around large horses. Fee. 9 am - 5 pm. Shelburne Farms Breeding Barn, 1611 Harbor Rd. (802) 877-6802. jean@greenmountaindraft.org. www.greenmountaindraft.org. Also April 24.

ST. ALBANS. 50th Annual Vermont Maple Festival. Three days of festivities for all ages. Main Street Stage, maple exhibits, craft show, Youth Talent Show, carnival, pony rides, maple treats. Lots free! In Taylor Park and other downtown venues. (802) 524-5800. info@vtmaplefestival.org. www.vtmaplefestival.org. Also April 24.

SUNDAY, APRIL 24

BARRE. Concert: Paul Huang, violin. Tickets: \$16-\$28. 2 pm. Barre Opera House, 6 N. Main St. (802) 476-8188. www.barreoperahouse.org. www.paulhuangviolin.com.

HANOVER, NH. Concert: ChamberWorks. From the Old World and New—flute, guitar and viola. Free. 1 pm. Rollins Chapel, Dartmouth College. (603) 646-2010. www.hop.dartmouth.edu.

NORWICH. English Country Dance. Calling by Chris Levey, with music by Carol Compton (keyboard, accordion, and recorders), and Thal Aylward (violin and viola). All dances taught, no partner needed, all are welcome. Admission \$8, \$4 age 25 and under. 3 pm. Tracy Hall, Main St. (802) 785-4121. davidmillstonedance.com.

ORWELL. Spring Wildflower Walk. Wildflower expert Amy Olmsted leads a walk to discover the delicate flowers of spring. Wear sturdy shoes and dress for the weather. Meet in front of the Museum. Co-sponsored by Mount Independence Coalition. Fee: \$5 adults, children under 15 free. 1-3 pm. Mount Independence State Historic Site, 497 Mount Independence Rd. (802) 948-2000. www.historicsites.vermont.gov/MountIndependence.

PUTNEY. Green Writers Press Second Anniversary. The evening will be hosted by celebrated Vermont author Howard Frank Mosher. We invite you to enjoy wine, cheese, and a book signing immediately following the short presentations. Tickets \$10. 5 pm. Next Stage Arts, 15 Kimball Hill Rd. (802) 387-0102. nextstagearts@gmail.com. www.nextstagearts.org.

RANDOLPH. Staged Reading: Jeanne Beckwith's play *Shot in Baghdad*. A young Iraqi-American actor is hired by a company making a film about a tragic incident which occurred in Baghdad. Tickets: adults \$12, full-series adult passes \$25. Students \$5. 7 pm. Chandler Center for the Arts, 71-73 Main St. (802) 728-6464. chandler-arts.org.

SHELBURNE. Green Mountain Draft Horse Association Spring Driving Clinic. This day will be spent in the carts and the wagons working with an obstacle course and driving around the farm. Fee. 9 am - 5 pm. Shelburne Farms Breeding Barn, 1611 Harbor Rd. (802) 877-6802. jean@greenmountaindraft.org. www.greenmountaindraft.org.

ST. ALBANS. 50th Annual Vermont Maple Festival. Three days of festivities for all ages. Main Street Stage, maple exhibits, craft show, Youth Talent Show, carnival, pony rides, maple treats. Lots free! In Taylor Park and other downtown venues. (802) 524-5800. info@vtmaplefestival.org. www.vtmaplefestival.org.

THURSDAY, APRIL 28

BARRE. Concert: Big Daddy Weave with Special Guests Plumb & Jordan Feliz. Tickets: \$20-\$30. 7 pm. Barre Municipal Auditorium, 16 Auditorium Hill. (802) 476-8188. www.barreoperahouse.org. bigdaddyweave.com.

BURLINGTON. PoetryFest! Readings and Q&As with local poets. Leland Kinsey & Daniel Lusk. 7 pm. Phoenix Books Burlington, 191 Bank St. (802) 448-3350. www.phoenixbooks.biz.

CASTLETON. Concert: Castleton Wind Ensemble. Admission fee. 7 pm. Casella Theater, Castleton State College. (866) 272-5888. castleton.edu.

HANOVER, NH. Concert: Sequentia. International singers and instrumentalists. Tickets: \$17-\$20. 7 pm. Rollins Chapel, Dartmouth College. (603) 646-2010. www.hop.dartmouth.edu.

RUTLAND. Performance: The Rabbit Hole. An Actor's Rep Production. David Lindsey-Abair takes us on an emotional journey. Tickets: \$20. 7:30 pm. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. paramountvt.org.

RUTLAND. Concert: 802 Music Series—Bow Thayer. Tickets: \$25. 7 pm. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. www.paramountvt.org.

FRIDAY, APRIL 29

BURLINGTON. Concert. Ana Moura's voice strolls luxuriously in the Portuguese fado tradition. Tickets \$15-\$40. 8 pm. Flynn MainStage, Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, 153 Main St. (802) 863-5966. www.flynncenter.org.

BURLINGTON. University of Vermont Lane Series Concert: Sequentia. Medieval music directed by musician and scholar Benjamin Bagby. Tickets: \$35/\$10 advance student. 7:30 pm. UVM Recital Hall, 460 South Prospect St. (802) 656-4455. uvm.edu/laneseries.

CASTLETON. Vermont Dance Festival Showcase Concert. Admission fee. 7 pm. Casella Theater, Castleton State College. (866) 272-5888. castleton.edu.

MONTPELIER. Spring Migration Bird Walk. Learn birding basics, expand your birding ear and discover more about the birds that inhabit the fields and forests. Led by teacher naturalist staff. A great way to meet other local birders! Fee: \$10. 7-8:30 am. North Branch Nature Center, 713 Elm St. (802) 229-6206. northbranchnaturecenter.org. May 6, 13, 20, 27.



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Gas Rationing, Mr. Flack, and Little Orphan Annie

by Charles Sutton

With gasoline prices these days plunging down to as low as \$1.71 a gallon, those of us who grew up during the World War II era can remember gasoline that was price controlled at around 18 cents a gallon and rationed, too.

I recall that one of our neighbors, a Mr. Robert Flack became head of the local Office of Price Administration (OPA) in charge of allotting coupons for gasoline. He was well-to-do and owned a large home with tennis courts, an in-ground pool, and employed servants.

My parents occasionally saw "Rob" as he was called and his wife Elizabeth at social gatherings, but my brother Fred and I felt he was mean-spirited. Mother told us he seemed that way because he didn't like children nor family pet dogs and cats.

If those in his social and economic circle thought they could get extra favorable treatment for gasoline coupons, they were soon mistaken. Mr. Flack went by the book and showed no favoritism. In our case we were allowed enough gas for my father to get to the railroad station to take the commuter train into New York and then back home every day, and not much more.

One person who took issue with Mr. Flack was Harold Gray, the artist and creator of the very popular comic strip Little Orphan Annie which was syndicated throughout the country. Its plot followed the adventures of Annie, her dog Sandy, and benefactor Oliver "Daddy Warbucks."

Adult readers were attracted to the column for its political overtones targeting organized labor, the New Deal, communism, and big government.

Gray requested extra gas coupons, saying he needed the gasoline to drive about the countryside collecting material for his comic strip. Mr. Flack refused him the extra coupons saying the cartoons were not vital to the war effort. Gray requested a hearing and Flack's decision was upheld.

Shortly after that a series of Annie cartoons appeared about a dictatorial OPA official named "Flask" who repeatedly turned down requests for gasoline needed for family emergencies. In one strip people wanting to visit a dying family member in a hospital were denied coupons.

Gray immediately got into trouble as some newspapers dropped the strip in protest, saying it was a vehicle of protest against gasoline rationing which was needed for the war effort. Gray said he was exercising freedom of the press and that the name "Mr. Flask" was pure coincidence. As the pros and cons took sides, Mr. Flack threatened a libel suit. But pressure from the syndicate having the strip dropped by several newspapers probably was the main reason Gray discontinued the sequence. With his talented imagination, he figured Annie could have other adventures.

Annie lived on, having been adapted for the Broadway musical, *Annie*, in 1977 and separately into a trio of films of the same name, one in 1999, one in 1982, and another in 2014. *Little Orphan Annie* the cartoon strip made its debut in 1924, and after Gray's death in 1968 it was continued by other artists, but not with his flair, until June, 2010.

During World War II in addition to gasoline, other items rationed were cars and bicycles, tires, fuel oil and kerosene, solid fuels, rubber footwear, shoes, typewriters, and among foods: sugar, coffee, some processed foods, cheese, canned milk and canned fish. There was no need to ration vegetables as so many of us grew them in our Victory Gardens.

For 44 years Harold Gray helped us keep our spirits up by keeping Annie's up. We all know Annie's song, "Tomorrow", from the musical: *The sun will come out tomorrow, bet your bottom dollar that tomorrow, there'll be sun...just thinkin' about tomorrow, clears away the cobwebs and the sorrow, 'til there's none.*

Good thoughts for these times when we face climate change, floods of refugees, and mad dog elections, but our (unrationed) gas is only \$1.71 a gallon!



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Vermont Country Calendar

PUTNEY. Concert: Nomad vs Settler. Tickets \$10. 7:30 pm. Next Stage Arts, 15 Kimball Hill Rd. (802) 387-0102. nextstagearts@gmail.com. www.nextstagearts.org.

RUTLAND. Brew Ha Ha. Your ticket gets you four, four ounce samples, a souvenir pint glass and a whole lot of laughs! Tickets: \$35. 7:30 pm. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. www.paramountvt.org.

SWANTON. "Skamon: The Abenaki Staff of Life." Explore the evidence of maize (corn) cultivation in the Champlain valley especially in the Missisquoi river basin and how the grain was raised, stored and served. 8 pm. Missisquoi Refuge HQ, 29 Tabor Rd. (802) 868-4781. dave_frisque@fws.gov. www.fws.gov/refuge/missisquoi.

WOODSTOCK. *Cats* the Musical. Amazing set designs, stunning costumes, and breathtaking choreography. Ken Prymus will reprise his role as Old Deuteronomy, the wise leader of a tribe of cats. Ken played this role 2,672 times at the Winter Garden Theater in New York City, making him the longest running actor to play a single role in the theater. A Pentangle Arts production in collaboration with ArtisTree. Tickets: adults \$30, seniors \$28, youth 5-17 \$17. 7:30 pm. Town Hall Theatre, 31 The Green. For tickets or more information go to Pentanglearts.org or call (802) 457-3981. Also April 30, May 1, 6, 7, 8.

SATURDAY, APRIL 30

BRANDON. Jazz Concert: Casey Berman Quartet. Performing new original music. Concert tickets are \$20. A pre-concert dinner is also available for \$20. Reservations are recommended for the show and required for dinner. Venue is BYOB. 7:30 pm. Brandon Music, 62 Country Club Dr. (802) 247-4295. www.brandon-music.net.

BURLINGTON. Vermont Symphony Orchestra Masterworks Concert. Mozart's Overture to The Impresario, Grieg's Piano Concerto, Brahms' Symphony No. 1. Tickets: \$61/\$48/\$32/\$16/\$9. Concert 8 pm, pre-performance discussion at 7 pm. Flynn MainStage, 153 Main Street. (802) 863-5966. www.vso.org.

HANOVER, NH. Concert: Dartmouth College Gospel Choir. Tickets: \$13.50-\$15. 2 pm. Spaulding Auditorium, Hopkins Center, Dartmouth College. (603) 646-2010. www.hop.dartmouth.edu.

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

NORWICH. Contra Dance. Music by Daved Van Houten, David Carpenter, and Franklin Heyburn. Contrás, squares, waltzes to suit your fancy! Everyone welcome. Sponsored by the Norwich Dance Committee of Muskeg Music. Admission \$9, under 16 free, students \$5, seniors by donation. Instruction at 7:30, dance at 8! More info: (802) 765-4662. davidmillstonedance.com. *Continues on fourth Saturdays.*

PITTSFORD. Pittsford Trail Run. Join us on the beautiful Pittsford trails at the recreation area for a 5k and 1 mile run/walk to benefit the Pittsford Recreation Department. Water stations at one mile intervals. Rain or shine event, all ages and abilities welcome! Prizes awarded for finishers in age groups. Entry fees: \$10 for pre-registered 5K, \$5 for pre-registered one mile, \$15 for Race day 5k, \$10 for Race day one mile. 9 am. Pittsford Recreation Area Pavilion. (802) 483-6500. recreation@pittsfordvermont.com.

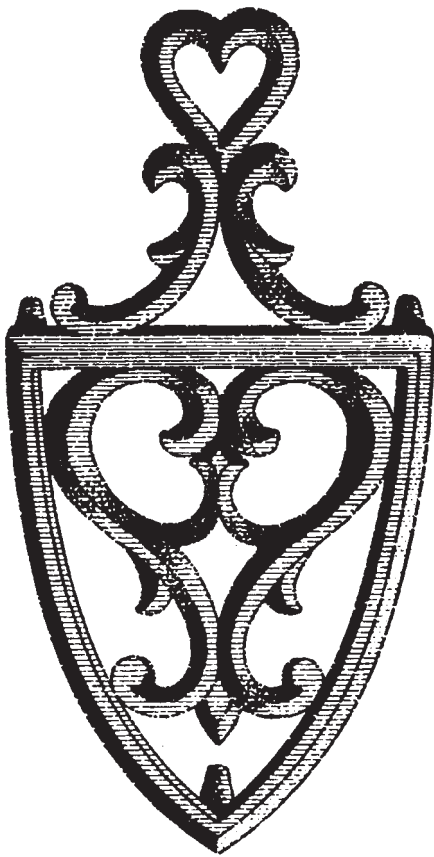
RANDOLPH. Concert: The Vermont Philharmonic Orchestra. Program includes Carl Maria von Weber's Jubel Overture, the B-flat Cello Concerto by Luigi Boccherini, Dance Rhythms by Wallingford Riegger, and Charles Ives' Symphony #1 in d minor. The soloist of the cello concerto will be 11-year old Mia Kim Bernard. Tickets \$15, seniors \$12, students \$5. 7:30 pm. Chandler Music Hall, 71-73 Main St. (802) 728-6464. vermontphilharmonic.ticketleap.com. www.chandler-arts.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. Rutland Winter Farmers' Market. 10 am - 2 pm. Food Center Building at 251 West St. (802) 342-4727. info@vtfarmersmarket.org. www.vtfarmersmarket.org.

SO. BURLINGTON. Rustic Cedar Workshop with Brian Gluck. Build a tall obelisk for garden use. Bring loppers, hand pruners, pruning saw, cordless drill, work gloves, and a bag lunch. Class limit is 16. Fee: \$80 (all materials included). Prepayment required by 4/20. 8 am - 4 pm. UVM Horticulture Farm, 65 Green Mountain Dr. (802) 864-3073. info@friendsofthehortfarm.org. www.friendsofthehortfarm.org.

ST. JOHNSBURY. St. Johnsbury Maple Festival. Maple related festivities and events including a street festival with entertainment. Snack stand. Pancake breakfast, 8:30 am. Free admission. 394 Railroad St. (802) 274-0201. www.worldmaplefestival.org.



VICTORY. A Walk at Conservation Collaboratives. Conservation Collaboratives (managed by Coverts Cooperator Laury Saligman and her husband John McGill) owns nearly 1,100 acres on and below the southern flank of Umpire Mountain, the peak just east of Burke Mountain. 10 am - 12 pm. We'll meet at the property at the end of Victory Hill Road. RSVP: Tim McKay, (802) 592-3366.

WEST GLOVER. Sixth Annual Mud Season Groove. Join us to celebrate the arrival of spring and its requisite mud! We guarantee foot-stomping dance music with raffle prizes, food and libation. Sponsored by the NorthWoods Stewardship Center. Admission: \$10. 7-9 pm. Parker Pie Co., 161 County Rd. (802) 723-6551.

WOODSTOCK. Opening Day of the 34th season at Billings Farm & Museum. Horse-drawn wagon rides, free ice cream and hands-on programs. Admission (includes all programs and activities): adults \$14, 62 & over \$13, children 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, 2 & under free. 10 am - 5 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, one-half mile north of the Woodstock village green on Rt. 12. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org.

WOODSTOCK. *Cats* the Musical. Amazing set designs, stunning costumes, and breathtaking choreography. Ken Prymus will reprise his role as Old Deuteronomy, the wise leader of a tribe of cats. Tickets: adults \$30, seniors \$28, youth 5-17 \$17. 7:30 pm. Town Hall Theatre, 31 The Green. For tickets or more information go to Pentanglearts.org or call (802) 457-3981. Also May 1, 6, 7, 8.

SUNDAY, MAY 1

BELLOWS FALLS. Herrick's Cove Annual Wildlife Festival. Join us for a special celebration of wildlife: live animals, crafts, workshops, vendors, food, & more! Admission: suggested donation, \$2/person, \$5/family. Handicapped accessible, no pets. Herrick's Cove, off Rt. 5. 10 am - 4 pm. On Facebook.

CASTLETON. Bike the Delaware-Hudson Rail Trail. Bike on a crushed gravel surface along the old rail route, with the option of lunch in beautiful downtown Poultney. 14.45 miles round trip. Free. Non-members and newcomers welcome. Sponsored by the Green Mountain Club, Killington Section. 9 am - 2 pm. Call leader with questions about equipment, Cindy Taylor-Miller. (802) 446-2288. www.greenmountainclub.org.

HANOVER, NH. Concert: Dartmouth College Glee Club. Performing Rachmaninoff's 15-movement Vigil, universally loved. Tickets: \$9-\$10. 2 pm. Rollins Chapel, Dartmouth College. (603) 646-2010. hop.dartmouth.edu.

HUNTINGTON. Exhibit Opening: In Layers—The Art of the Egg. Admission: adult \$7, senior \$6, child 3-17 \$3.50. 10 am - 4 pm. Birds of Vermont Museum, 900 Sherman Hollow Rd. (802) 434-2167. museum@birdsofvermont.org. www.birdsofvermont.org.

HUNTINGTON. Open Daily for the Season. 10 am - 4 pm. Birds of Vermont Museum, 900 Sherman Hollow Rd. (802) 434-2167. museum@birdsofvermont.org. www.birdsofvermont.org. *Through October 31.*

SHELBURNE. Family Program: Dairy Day at Shelburne Farms. Meet our spring calves and their moms in our Brown Swiss herd! Take a wagon ride to see the pastures and watch the calves get their afternoon milk. Explore the barns and buildings at the dairy and see how we get the milk that makes our award-winning cheddar cheese. Our cows will come down the lane for afternoon milking in "cow parade" style and can be viewed in our parlor while they are machine milked. Fee: \$5 per carload. Walkers are free! 1-4 pm. Shelburne Farms Dairy Barn, Shelburne Farms, 1611 Harbor Rd. (802) 985-8686. www.shelburnefarms.org.



Branch Out Burlington's Annual Tree Sale—Order by April 15th

Our best selection ever!! This year we are offering eight different beautiful specimens. Including fruiting trees, flowering trees, specimen tree and shade trees. All 4-6 ft. and only \$53 each. These trees always sell out. Order by April 15th. All orders must be picked up Saturday, May 7, 2016 between 9-11 a.m. at the UVM Horticulture Farm located on 65 Green Mountain Dr. in So. Burlington, VT.

Each order will receive a coupon for a free bag of Green Mountain Compost. All profits go toward buying future trees for the Branch Out Burlington nursery, where they grow till they become ready to be moved into Burlington city streets and parks.

This year trees available to order include: American Hop-Horn Beam 5 ft. (zone 3) \$53; Autumn Splendor Buckeye 4 ft. (zone 4) \$53; English Walnut 6 ft. (zone 4) \$53;

Heritage River Birch 5 ft. (zone 4) \$53; Lapin Cherry 6 ft. (zone 4) \$53; Nannyberry 5 ft. (zone 2) \$53; Paul's Scarlett Hawthorn 5 ft. (zone 4) \$53; Polly Peach 6 ft. (zone 4) \$53.

Tree descriptions, photos and order form are provided at branchoutburlington.org.

For tree descriptions, photos and order form go to branchoutburlington.org. For questions call Kyle Albee, weekdays at (802) 860-3574 or evenings and weekends at (802) 825-4505.

The Casey Berman Quartet Performs at Brandon Music

Jazz saxophonist Casey Berman will be joined by a band of New York musicians to perform new original music on April 30 at 7:30 p.m. at Brandon Music in Brandon, VT.

Berman is quickly rising in the ranks of the New York scene. Having played at such prestigious venues as the Blue Note, the Kennedy Center, the Jazz Gallery, Cornelia Street Café, and Dizzy's Club in Lincoln Center, Berman has become well-known as a relevant and active voice as a tenor saxophonist and composer.

A jazz musician first and foremost, Berman is writing pieces influenced by many of the genre's most dynamic composers, including Paul Motian, Eric Dolphy, and Thelonious Monk. Due to a budding interest in both electronic music and classical music, and the recent acquisition of a bass clarinet, his music has become more diverse in nature. Sometimes it is more structured and sometimes more open-ended,

but as Berman explains, "the music is committed to keeping an open dialogue on stage, with the focus of the music shifting from band member to band member."

During his time at NYU, Berman has studied with some of the most important improvisers on the scene, including Mark Turner, Lee Konitz, Bill McHenry and Ben Street. He is a part of an active group of improvising musicians, and hosts a concert series out of his apartment in Brooklyn.

Concert begins at 7:30 p.m. Concert tickets are \$20. A pre-concert dinner is also available for \$20 (view the menu online). Reservations are recommended for the show and required for dinner. Venue is BYOB.

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

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Vermont Country Calendar

WOODSTOCK. *Cats* the Musical. Amazing set designs, stunning costumes, and breathtaking choreography. Tickets: adults \$30, seniors \$28, youth 5-17 \$17. 2 pm. Town Hall Theatre, 31 The Green. For tickets or more information go to Pentanglearts.org or call (802) 457-3981. *Also May 6, 7, and 8.*

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4

BENNINGTON. Children's Program: Wetland Wonders. Find out about life cycles, interesting characteristics and adaptations of the animals in this habitat. 1-3 pm. One World Conservation Center, 413 Rt. 7S. (802) 447-7419. www.oneworldconservationcenter.org.

FAIRLEE. Scottish Country Dance. Beginners are welcome, no experience necessary. Bring soft soled shoes. Admission: \$3 per session, and the first time is free. 7 pm. Fairlee Town Hall, 75 Common Rd. For info call (802) 439-3459 or e-mail fairleeclass@rscdsboston.org. *Every Wednesday, September through June.*

RUTLAND. Rutland Winter Farmers' Market. 3-6 pm. Food Center Building at 251 West St. (802) 342-4727. info@vtfarmersmarket.org. www.vtfarmersmarket.org.

THURSDAY, MAY 5

MONTPELIER. Wood Turtles in Vermont: Ecology and Conservation. Spend an evening with River Conservation Specialist, Lydia Menendez Parker, and Herpetologist, Chris Jenkins to learn more about the ecology and conservation of wood turtles and the rivers they call home. Free. \$10. 7 pm. North Branch Nature Center, 713 Elm St. (802) 229-6206. www.northbranchnaturecenter.org.

FRIDAY, MAY 6

BURLINGTON. University of Vermont Lane Series Concert: David Kaplan, piano and Caroline Shaw, soprano/violin/composer. Tickets: \$30/\$10 advance student. 7:30 pm. UVM Recital Hall, 460 South Prospect St. (802) 656-4455. lane.series@uvm.edu. uvm.edu/laneseries.

ESSEX JUNCTION. Northeast Loggers 2016 Expo. 9 am - 5 pm. Champlain Valley Exposition, 105 Pearl St. www.nefpexpo.net. *Also May 7.*

MONTPELIER. Vermont Arbor Day Conference. Hosted by Vermont Urban & Community Forestry Program. Tree Stories with Willem Lange, panels, speakers, workshops, a walk with an arborist, tree planting, ice cream social. Fee: \$40. 8:30 am - 4 pm. Vermont College of Fine Arts, 36 College St. (802) 747-7900. gwen.kozlowski@uvm.edu. VermontArborDay.eventbrite.com.

MONTPELIER. Spring Migration Bird Walk. Learn birding basics, expand your birding ear and discover more about the birds that inhabit the fields and forests. Fee: \$10. 7-8:30 am. North Branch Nature Center, 713 Elm St. (802) 229-6206. northbranchnaturecenter.org. *Also May 13, 20, 27.*

PUTNEY. Concert: Naomi Shelton & the Gospel Queens. Tickets \$25. 7:30 pm. Next Stage Arts, 15 Kimball Hill Rd. (802) 387-0102. nextstagearts@gmail.com. www.nextstagearts.org.

WOODSTOCK. Foodways Fridays. Learn the importance of heirloom vegetables, while seeing them used in historic recipes prepared in our 1890 Farm House. Each Friday will feature a different menu, including such traditional New England favorites as Ladies Cabbage, Flemish Carrots, Cymlyng Pudding, and Pink Velvet Soup. Admission: adults \$14, 62 & up \$13, ages 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, under 3 free. 10 am - 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12N. & Old River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. *Fridays through October 28.*

WOODSTOCK. *Cats* the Musical. Amazing set designs, stunning costumes, and breathtaking choreography. Ken Prymus will reprise his role as Old Deuteronomy, the wise leader of a tribe of cats. Tickets: adults \$30, seniors \$28, youth 5-17 \$17. 7:30 pm. Town Hall Theatre, 31 The Green. For tickets or more information go to pentanglearts.org or call (802) 457-3981. *Also May 7 and 8.*

SATURDAY, MAY 7

ESSEX JUNCTION. Northeast Loggers 2016 Expo. 9 am - 4 pm. Champlain Valley Exposition, 105 Pearl St. www.nefpexpo.net.

HANOVER, NH. Concert: Dartmouth College Wind Ensemble—The Great Spirit. Tickets: \$9-\$10. 8 pm. Spaulding Auditorium, Hopkins Center, Dartmouth College. (603) 646-2010. www.hop.dartmouth.edu.

LEBANON, NH. Concert: Chris Isaak—First Comes the Night Tour. Tickets \$98.50/\$78.50/\$59.50. 7:30 pm. Lebanon Opera House, 51 N. Park St. (603) 448-0400. lebanonoperahouse.org.

NEW HAVEN. Friends of the Library Spring Book Sale. Many varieties of books to choose from: fiction, non-fiction, how-to's, children's books, and more. New Haven Community Library, 78 North St. (802) 453-4015. nhcl.org.

MANCHESTER CENTER. Booktopia 2016. A celebration of authors. Admission. 6 pm. Northshire Bookstore, 4869 Main St. (802) 362-2200. www.northshire.com.

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.*

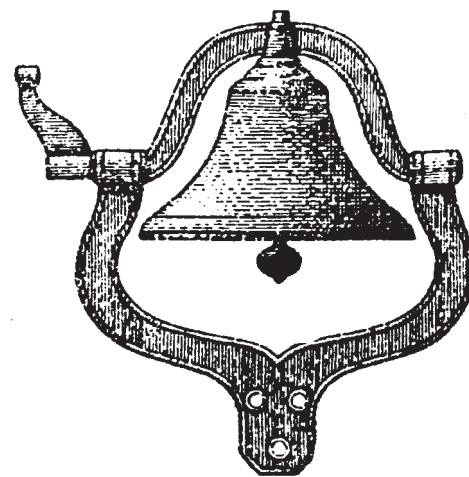
RUTLAND. Comedy: Artie Lange. Tickets: \$39.75. 8 pm. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. www.paramountvt.org.

RUTLAND. Rutland Winter Farmers' Market. 10 am - 2 pm. Food Center Building at 251 West St. (802) 342-4727. info@vtfarmersmarket.org. www.vtfarmersmarket.org.

SO. BURLINGTON. Workshop: All About Lilacs. Our Lilac Curator, Jeff Young, will teach you the techniques of pruning your favorite lilac bushes. Fee: \$15. 9 am - 12 pm. UVM Horticulture Farm, 65 Green Mountain Dr. (802) 864-3073. friendsofthhortfarm.org.

STATEWIDE. Green Up Vermont! Join in the activities all around Vermont. Free bags and refreshments for all volunteers. Visit www.greenupvermont.org to see what's going on in your area.

TINMOUTH. Annual Plant Sale. Some of the best gardeners in the state share their plants. Many varieties to choose from, and Tinmouth gardeners on site to help you make the best decisions for your garden. All proceeds go to the Tinmouth Community Scholarship Fund to benefit children in town. 8-10 am. At the Tinmouth Old Firehouse. (802) 446-2928. Tinmouthvt.org.



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Green Mountain Gardener

Raised Beds And Other April Gardening Tips

Leonard Perry, UVM Horticulturist
and Charlie Nardozi, Garden Consultant

Building raised beds, checking fruit trees for fireblight disease, and proper care of bare-root roses are some of the gardening activities for this month.

Raised beds dry out faster and warm up more quickly in spring than regular garden beds, so include at least a few in your landscape for early planting. They're good if you have poor or shallow topsoil. They can be as simple as a flat-topped mound of soil, or as elaborate as decorative stone- and wood-framed beds. Fill them with soil that has been amended with lots of compost (make sure that it is weed-free).

Many that make raised beds may use pressure-treated lumber from a local home supply store. This may be okay for flower crops, but some gardeners are concerned about possible leaching of the preservative chemicals into beds with food crops.

Also, most don't realize that there are different grades of pressure-treated lumber. Most less expensive such lumber is not rated for ground contact, where it may only last 3 to 7 years. Longer lasting and often no more expensive is untreated hemlock, lasting 5 to 10 years, or cedar lasting 15 to 20 years with ground contact. You'll likely need to visit a lumberyard for these woods.

If new shoots of your pear, apple, or hawthorn are blackened as though they were burned, that's a sign of fire blight disease. This bacterial disease, if severe, eventually can kill your trees. To control it, prune off infected areas several

inches below the damage. Dip your pruners in a weak bleach solution between pruning cuts.

If you ordered roses through the mail or online, they'll most likely arrive "bare root" with no soil. Prepare bare-root roses by pruning away any damaged roots, then soak the roots in water for several hours. Dig a hole 18 inches deep and wide, and create a mound of soil in the center. Place the roots in the hole, arranging them around the mound and adjusting the height so the graft (the swollen part near the base) is at or just below ground level. Fill in around the roots, firming

soil gently, and water well. Mound mulch over the tops to protect the canes while the roots take hold.

After a long winter it's tempting to buy those first

seedlings, flowers, and vegetable transplants you see on sale. Just remember these are tender and can be killed easily by freezing temperatures and frosts. If you do buy some now, make sure to not plant out until the last average frost date for your area (mid-May to mid-June in our northern climate). Bring indoors on cold or frosty nights. If you plant in window boxes and containers, make sure you can carry indoors if needed.

Other gardening activities for this month include cutting back ornamental grasses and perennials; checking perennials for "frost heaving" and resetting if so; pruning summer-flowering shrubs and hedges now, but wait until after bloom on spring-bloomers such as forsythia.

Leonard Perry is an Extension Professor at University of Vermont. (802) 656-0479. www.perrysperennials.info.

Charlie Nardozi is horticulturist, author, and gardening consultant. charlienardozi.com.

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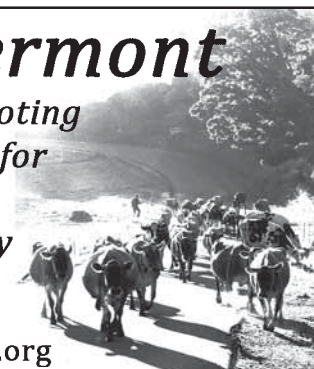
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Vermont Country Calendar

WEST RUTLAND. Green-Up Day. Annual cleanup of West Rutland Marsh. Work or rubber gloves essential, waterproof boots helpful! Bags provided. Meet at the West Rutland Town Hall at 9 am. For more information visitrutlandcountyaudubon.org.

WOODSTOCK. Sheep Shearing and Herding with Border Collies. Spring shearing of the farm's Southdown ewes by Craig Marcotte at 10:30 am and 12:30, 2:30 and 4:30 pm along with spinning and carding demonstrations. Watch herdsman, Steve Wetmore, as his team of Border Collies herd sheep in the farm fields during narrated programs at 11:30 am and 1:30 and 3:30 pm. Wool crafts in the activity barn. Admission: adults \$14, 62 & up \$13, ages 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, under 3 free. 10 am - 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12N. & Old River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. Also May 8.

WOODSTOCK. Cats the Musical. Amazing set designs, stunning costumes, and breathtaking choreography. Ken Prymus will reprise his role as Old Deuteronomy, the wise leader of a tribe of cats. Tickets: adults \$30, seniors \$28, youth 5-17 \$17. 2 & 7:30 pm. Town Hall Theatre, 31 The Green. For tickets or more information go to pentanglearts.org or call (802) 457-3981. Also May 8.

SUNDAY, MAY 8

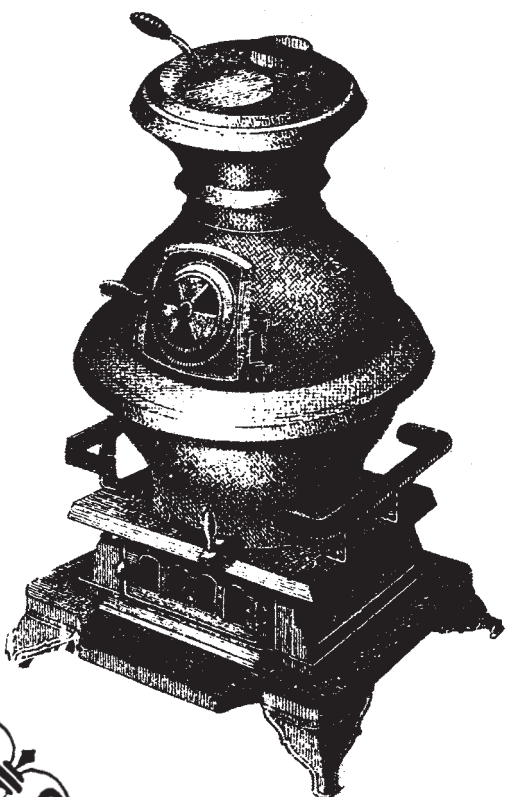
HUNTINGTON. Early Birders Morning Walk. Join us for an early morning ramble in the Birds of Vermont Museum forest and meadows. Enjoy the start of the day, birds, and other woodland inhabitants. Walks led by experienced birders. Come to several walks to hear the changes in who calls and when! Finish the walk with bird-friendly coffee at the viewing window inside the Museum. 7-8 am. Birds of Vermont Museum, 900 Sherman Hollow Rd. (802) 434-2167. birdsofvermont.org.

MONTPELIER. Mother's Day Wildflower Walk. A wonderful walk for all ages with Everett Marshall of the Fish & Wildlife Department Diversity Program through the meadows and woods along the North Branch to view our spring flora and learn the folklore behind the names of these beautiful, ephemeral, wildflowers. Moms, families, plant lovers, and dads too, are invited to join us on this easy and enjoyable walk. Free. \$10/\$5. 1-3 pm. North Branch Nature Center, 713 Elm St. (802) 229-6206. www.northbranchnaturecenter.org.

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

WOODSTOCK. Sheep Shearing and Herding with Border Collies. Spring shearing of the farm's Southdown ewes by Craig Marcotte at 10:30 am and 12:30, 2:30 and 4:30 pm along with spinning and carding demonstrations. Watch herdsman, Steve Wetmore, as his team of Border Collies herd sheep in the farm fields during narrated programs at 11:30 am and 1:30 and 3:30 pm. Wool crafts in the activity barn. Admission: adults \$14, 62 & up \$13, ages 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, under 3 free. 10 am - 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12N. & Old River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org.

WOODSTOCK. Cats the Musical. Amazing set designs, stunning costumes, and breathtaking choreography. Ken Prymus will reprise his role as Old Deuteronomy, the wise leader of a tribe of cats. Tickets: adults \$30, seniors \$28, youth 5-17 \$17. 2 pm. Town Hall Theatre, 31 The Green. For tickets or more information go to pentanglearts.org or call (802) 457-3981.



ONGOING ACTIVITIES

BELLOWS FALLS. Annual Book Sale. Hosted by the Rockingham Free Library. Items 50% off. Rockingham Free Public Library, 65 Westminster St. (802) 463-4270. rockinghamlibrary.org. Through April 9-30.

BENNINGTON. The Bennington Battle Monument will be open for the season. A brand new elevator takes visitors to the observation floor for a spectacular view of three states. Events through the season include the 125th anniversary celebration in August. \$5 adult admission, \$1 for youth, five and under free. The Monument and gift shop are open seven days a week from 9 am - 5 pm. Bennington Battle Monument, 15 Monument Circle, 802) 447-0550. marylou.chicote@vermont.gov. www.historicsites.vermont.gov. Visit us on facebook at Vermont State Historic Sites. Opening April 16.

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

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.

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

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

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

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

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

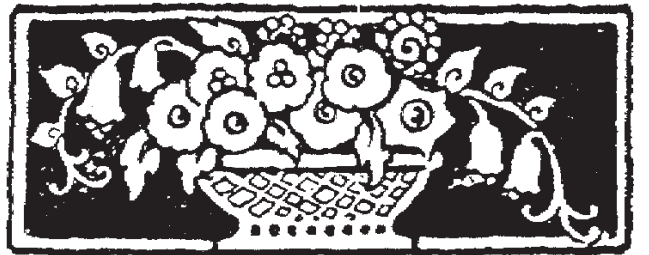
WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Upper Valley Seed Savers meet on the second Thursday of the month at 5 pm at Upper Valley Food Coop through the winter. Our mission is to further knowledge about seed saving and to work on projects that will help develop a body of locally-adapted open-pollinated vegetable seeds.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

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

MUSEUMS, EXHIBITS & GALLERIES

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

BARRE. Vermont History Center and Leahy Library. Thousands of books, manuscripts, photographs, maps, audio, video and film recordings, and many other items which shed light on the lives and times of past Vermonters. 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. www.vermonthistory.org.



Middlebury, VT

The Hawthorne Club and The Henry Sheldon Museum Present Jay Parini on April 14

The Hawthorne Club and the Henry Sheldon Museum of Vermont History in Middlebury, VT are sponsoring a presentation on "The Writer and the Movies" by Jay Parini on Thursday, April 14, 2016, 7 p.m.. The event takes place at the Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society Church, 2 Duane Court, Middlebury, VT. Admission is free. Parking is available at the nearby Middlebury High School.

Jay Parini resides in Weybridge, VT and has been on the faculty at Middlebury College since 1982. Internationally recognized as a prolific and widely published poet, novelist, biographer, and critic, he will discuss his experience with Hollywood. His novel *The Last Station*, set in the final tumultuous years of Leo Tolstoy's life, was made into an Academy Award-nominated film starring Helen Mirren and Christopher Plummer.

Film adaptations currently underway are of Parini's historical novel *Benjamin's Crossing*, a fictional account of the celebrated German critic Walter Benjamin (1892-1940) and his flight from the Nazis, and Parini's recent biography of Gore Vidal, *Empire of Self: A Life of Gore Vidal*.

Born in 1948 in Pittston, PA, and raised in Scranton, PA, Parini graduated from both Lafayette College and the University of St. Andrews in Scotland, where he received a Ph.D. in 1975. He has received honorary degrees from Lafayette College and the University of Scranton, and won various fellowships and awards, including a Guggenheim Fellowship (1993-1994) and, for his Frost biography, the Chicago Tribune-Heartland Award in 2000. He was the

Fowler Hamilton Fellow at Christ Church College, Oxford University, in 1993-1994 and a Fellow of the Institute for Advanced Studies at the University of London in 2005-2006.

The Hawthorne Club was founded in 1877 to establish closer relations between members of the Middlebury College community and citizens of the town. It is named for Nathaniel Hawthorne, a national literary hero whose talks at the College made him a local celebrity as well.

Traditionally Hawthorne Club meetings have featured presentations by members on literary subjects and on relevant topics of interest to speakers and members.

The Henry Sheldon Museum of Vermont History was chartered in 1882 as an art museum, archeological and historical society and continues to fulfill roles associated with those fields. Amongst its holdings are the archives of the Hawthorne Club.

The Henry Sheldon Museum and The Hawthorne Club formed a partnership in 2015 to offer annual talks by a recognized specialist. Last year Judge William K. Sessions III spoke on his judicial career and philosophy. Jay Parini, as this year's speaker, will reflect on his wide-ranging experience in the literary and visual arts.

The Henry Sheldon Museum is located at 1 Park St., Middlebury, VT across from the Ilsley Library. Museum hours: Tues.-Sat. 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Research Center hours: Thurs. and Fri. 1-5 p.m. or by appointment.

For more information call (802) 388-2117. E-mail: mmanley@HenrySheldonMuseum.org. Visit our website at www.HenrySheldonMuseum.org.

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Vermont Country Calendar

BELMONT. Stephanie Stouffer Studio and Gallery Gift Shop. Call for appointment. Stephanie Stouffer Studio and Gallery Gift Shop, 250 Maple Hill Rd. (802) 259-2686. stouffer@vermontel.net. www.stephaniestouffer.com.

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

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

BENNINGTON. Bennington Museum. Exhibit—3D Digital: Here and Now, *through June 15*. 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. Adults \$10, seniors and students over 18 \$9, children under 18 free. Free admission to the Gift Shop. Open 10 am - 5 pm every day except Wednesdays. Bennington Museum, 75 Main St. (802) 447-1571. www.benningtonmuseum.org.

BRANDON. Compass Music and Arts Center. Exhibit: Judith Reilly "The Girl with the Purple Hair"—A Retrospective. Opening Reception: Friday, April 1, 5-7:30 pm. Gallery Talk on Sunday, May 1 at 3 pm. Arts businesses and studios, workshops & classes, exhibits, concerts, and community events. A gift shop features art and music related books, collectibles, and the music of the classical recording company, Divine Art Records. Onsite café. Open daily 10 am - 5 pm. Compass Music and Arts Center, 333 Jones Drive, Park Village. (802) 247-4295. www.cmavt.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Brattleboro Museum & Art Center. Five Exhibits: Contemporary Artists vs. The Masters: Homage, Battle, Reclamation. Visions from the Edge: An Exploration of Outsider Art. Photographer Michael Sacca: *flow-MOTION*. Wishing for the Moon: scratchboard drawings by Karen Gaudette, *through June 13*. Open daily 11-5, closed Tues. Admission \$8 adults, \$6 seniors, \$4 students, free for youth 18 and under. 10 Vernon St. (802) 257-0124. www.brattleboromuseum.org.

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

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

BURLINGTON. Fleming Museum of Art. More than 20,000 objects that span the history of civilization. Admission: 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. fleming@uvm.edu. www.flemingmuseum.org.

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

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

HUNTINGTON. Birds of Vermont Museum. Features over 500 carved wooden birds, representing 259 species. Museum, special events and bird walks, exhibits, children's programs, gift shop, video, restrooms and trails with maps available. Admission: adult \$7, senior \$6, child 3-17 \$3.50. Open daily for the season starting May 1, 10 am - 4 pm. The Birds of Vermont Museum, 900 Sherman Hollow Rd. (802) 434-2167. birdsofvermont.org. *Through October 31.*

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

MARLBORO. Southern Vermont Natural History Museum. 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, 10 am - 5 pm weekends. Rt. 9. (802) 464-0048. vermontmuseum.org.

MIDDLEBURY. Henry Sheldon Museum of Vermont. The oldest chartered community history museum in the United States, welcoming visitors since 1882. Three Exhibits: The Curious Cousins of Vermont Outsider Artist Gayleen Aiken; Out of the Forest: The Woodcarvings of Chuck Herrmann; Addison County in Profile: Silhouettes from the Henry Sheldon Museum Archives, *all through May 21*. Exhibits, research center, and museum shop. Adults \$5, youth 6-18 \$3, senior \$4.50, family \$12, under 6 free. Open Tues-Sat 10 am - 5 pm. Henry Sheldon Museum of Vermont History, One Park St. (803) 388-2117. henrysheldonmuseum.org.

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

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

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

Free Calendar Listings

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

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Vermont Country Calendar

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

RANDOLPH. Chandler Gallery. Open Friday 3-6 pm, Saturday and Sunday 12-3 pm. At Chandler Center for the Arts, 71-73 Main St. (802) 431-0204. chandler-arts.org.

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

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. castletoncollegegalleries@gmail.com.

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

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

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

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

SPRINGFIELD. Exhibit: On The Wings of Spring. Hand drawn and painted silk scarves and shawls featuring beautiful butterflies, dragonflies, handsome honey bees and luscious ladybugs from silk artist Teresa Hillary. Opening times: Tues – Sat, 11 am – 5 pm. The Gallery at the Vault, 68 Main St. (802) 885-7111. www.galleryvault.org. *March 19 through May 5.*

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

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

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

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

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

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Main Street Museum. A small, public collection of curiosities and artifacts, each one significant and telling a story about human beings and the universe we are part of—an alternative experiment in material culture studies. Open Thurs-Sun 1-6 pm. Parking adjacent to the rear of the building. Located at 58 Bridge St., Studio 6, near the underpass. (802) 356-2776. info@mainstreetmuseum.org. mainstreetmuseum.org.

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

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm & Museum. Visit the Jersey herd, draft horses, oxen, and sheep and tour the restored and furnished 1890 Farm House. Civil War 150 on exhibit January 1-18. Sleigh ride weekend January 16-18. Admission: adults \$14, age 62 & up \$13, children ages 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, under 3 free. Open weekends November through February and Christmas and vacation weeks, 10 am – 4 pm. Open May 1 through October 31, 10 am – 5 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org.

HORSEBACK RIDING & WAGON RIDES

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

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

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

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

VERMONT FARMERS MARKETS WINTER 2016

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Mia Kim Bernard

Randolph, VT

The Vermont Philharmonic Orchestra Spring Concert

The Vermont Philharmonic Orchestra brings its annual spring concert to the Chandler Music Hall stage in Randolph, VT on Saturday, April 30, at 7:30 p.m.

On the program will be Carl Maria von Weber's Jubel Overture, Op. 59; the B-flat Cello Concerto by Luigi Boccherini; Dance Rhythms Op. 58a by 20th century American composer Wallingford Riegger; and the Charles Ives' Symphony #1 in d minor. Music director and conductor Lou Kosma will be on the podium.

The soloist of the cello concerto will be 11-year old cellist, Mia Kim Bernard, a 6th-grader from Hoboken, New Jersey. Perhaps the Philharmonic's proudest achievement has been in its support of music in young people. The Philharmonic annually awards, through audition, a scholarship to an outstanding student of music, who is then the featured soloist in a regular concert.

Mia has studied her instrument since age four and is currently attending Manhattan School of Music's Pre-college Division. She has already won numerous awards, including Grand Prize winner of National Young Artists Chamber Music and Ensemble Competition, and has performed at Weill Recital

Hall of Carnegie Hall as first prize winner of Vivo International Music Competition.

The Vermont Philharmonic Orchestra is Vermont's oldest community orchestra. Jon Borowicz, emeritus professor of music at Norwich University, had a dream of bringing together local musicians to perform classical symphonic works was fulfilled in December 1959 when the Vermont Philharmonic played its first public concert, Handel's Messiah in Plumley Armory in Northfield, Vermont. The orchestra has had but four directors in its 58 year history. In the fall of 1999 Louis Kosma stepped up to the podium as Music Director and proudly brought it into the 21st Century.

Tickets to the VPO concert are available at the door, and may also be ordered through the Chandler box office at (802) 728-6464, 3-6 p.m. weekdays or through the VPO'S ticketing site at vermontphilharmonic.ticketleap.com.

Chandler Center for the Arts is located at 71-73 Main St., Randolph, VT. Chandler's Main Hall and galleries are handicapped accessible and equipped for the hearing impaired. For information call (802) 728-9878. chandler-arts.org.



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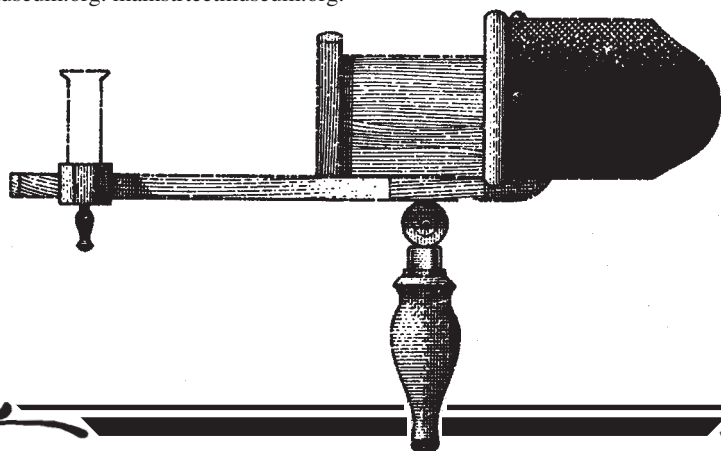


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Molly Mason and Jay Ungar to Perform at Chandler on May 8th

Molly Mason and Jay Ungar will be performing at Chandler Music Hall in Randolph, VT on May 8, 2016 in a concert at 4 p.m. Reserved seating: adults \$30, students \$5 with an adult.

Jay was a Bronx kid. Molly grew up in Washington State. Since joining forces—both artistically and romantically (the two married in 1991), Jay Ungar and Molly Mason have become one of the most celebrated duos on the American acoustic music scene.

After signing with Angel Records in 1991, Jay and Molly—in collaboration with baritone Thomas Hampson and pianist David Alpher—released *American Dreamer*, a collection of the songs of Stephen Foster. They followed with *Waltzing with You*, an elaboration on their score for the film *Brother's Keeper*, a Sundance Film Festival prizewinner. Perhaps the duo's best-known composition is the title track of *The Lovers' Waltz*, an album of romantic fiddle music. *Harvest Home*, Jay and Molly's 1999 release, culminates in their 20-minute orchestral work, *The Harvest Home Suite*, in which they are joined by the Nashville Chamber Orchestra.

In 2002, Jay and Molly produced, arranged and performed on *A Song of Home*. Now, with *Relax your Mind*, Jay and Molly take a slightly different direction with their band Swingology.

On radio and television, Jay and Molly have appeared on *CBS Good Morning*, *The Rosie O'Donnell Show*, *All Things Considered*, *A Prairie Home Companion*, and the *BBC's Transatlantic Sessions*. They continue to broadcast their own live-performance radio show, *Dancing on the Air*.

Prior to the concert, Jay and Molly will host a workshop from 12-2 p.m. Jay and Molly will teach and arrange a beautiful waltz and a couple of lovely reels. The workshop is co-presented by the Summit School of Traditional Music and Culture, and the Vermont Fiddle Orchestra.

Chandler Center for the Arts is located at 71-73 Main St., Randolph, VT. Chandler's Main Hall and galleries are handicapped accessible. For information call (802) 728-9878. To reach the box office call (802) 431-0204, 3-6 p.m. weekdays. chandler-arts.org. www.jayandmolly.com



Molly Mason and Jay Ungar slated to perform at Chandler Music Hall in Randolph, VT on May 8th.

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Myself

I knew the tree where slept the crows,
And on the water's brim
I climbed among the hemlock boughs
To watch the fishes swim.

I knew beside the swollen rill
What flowers to bloom would burst,
And where, upon the south-sloped hill,
The berries ripened first.

Each violet tuft, each cowslip green,
Each daisy in the lea
I counted one by one, for they
Were kith and kin to me.

I knew the moles that dared to claim
The banished beaver's huts,
And sat on mossy logs to watch
The squirrels crack their nuts.

And they winked slyly at me, too,
But never fled away,
For in their little hearts they knew
That I was wild as they.

—HARRIET E. G. AREY
Buffalo, NY, 1811-1901

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The Lowly Dandelion

by Burr Morse

I love this time of year! Our sugarin' verdict is in and yes, it was a fair season. The world outside is turning a wonderful shade of pea-green, the peepers serenade us at night, and there's a fragrance of "freshness" in the air. In fact when nature rules sans the white, shovelable stuff, I ask, how could it get any better than this?

Yesterday, another of nature's dimensions, taste, called me right past our well-stocked pantry to the great outdoors. I went to a place where dandelions grow (which here on our farm is everywhere). Dandelions, the bane of all lawn purists and rather unpalatable to the average human taste buds, do have a certain medicinal value.

My dad used to cite an old country doc from the southern Vermont town of Putney. He said on one of Doc Bugbee's house calls, the mother of the house was cooking up a pot of dandelions. "B'Gory," Doc said, sidling over to take a whiff from the boiling pot, "I'll look at your ailing daughter but

"Even though Dad had been raised to believe that dandelions are good for you, he also claimed to like them."

there's more dern medicinal value in that pot o' greens than in my whole medicine bag. No doubt they're just the 'pill' she needs t'swaller."

Even though Dad had been raised to believe that dandelions are good for you, he also claimed to like them. And being a chip off the old block, y'know, I kind of like them too! As I headed out on our lawn (note, I'm no 'lawn purist') with a kitchen knife and a bowl, I thought about a fellow trombone playing buddy who is repulsed by anything green. "I refuse to eat my food's food," Bill says—translation: cows eat green stuff and then we eat cows! Knowing that Bill can't even stand lettuce, peas, or anything similarly colored, I chuckled to myself over how he'd view my present mission! And, I might add, Bill is healthy as a horse.

As expected, I immediately found the "Garden of Eden" of *Taraxacum officinale* within a few feet of my house. I bent down and went to work with the long kitchen knife severing each clump where a thick, white stem attaches to the root system. My dad said the white stem is important to include with the greens—"it's where the goodness is," he said. I quickly filled the bowl to overflowing with nature's goodness and headed back to the kitchen where Betsy sternly refused to clean them. Her "you want 'em, you clean 'em" attitude harkened back to my mother's own aversion to the bugs and the dirt in dandelion greens!



Sheep graze in a field bordered by dandelions in Vermont's Northeast Kingdom. photo by Jeff Gold

I cleaned them as best as I could, suspecting that a few of the bugs and a little of the dirt are all part of the goodness, and Betsy finally steamed them up for me. The next part, the eating, has to be done just right because on their own, dandelion greens are bitter, severely bitter! I personally defy any member of the human race to choke them down without the liberal addition of vinegar

Once Betsy placed the steaming bowl in front of me and the vinegar was liberally added, I dug right into the treat. "They're great," I said to my disbelieving wife, cleaning the bowl and going for more. My dad used to make dandelion greens an annual ritual but I had to admit the passage of years since I had tasted them. "We're too reliant on fast food places and huge supermarkets," I complained, thinking that my recent meal had cost me nothing and been good for me to boot.

Another characteristic of dandelions is their different "personalities." They go from green and tender to yellow mats in the countryside to ugly puffs of white almost in the blink

of an eye. As Andrew Wyeth once said, "It's a moment that I'm after, a fleeting moment, but not a frozen moment." I've had my "fleeting moment" of dandelion greens for this year and, yes, found them a very easy pill to "swaller."

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Some Tasty Ways to Dress Up Your Dandelions

Fatica's Dandelion Salad

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| 4 cups fresh dandelion greens | 2 tbsp. wine vinegar |
| 1/3 cup chick peas | salt |
| 1/4 cup shredded sharp cheese, such as fontinella or fontina | freshly ground black pepper |
| 1/3 cup julienned mozzarella, | garlic |
| 1/3 cup ham | oregano |
| 1/3 cup salami | basil |
| 1/4 cup thinly sliced red onion | dried parsley |
| 1 sliced tomato | fresh grated Romano cheese |
| 3 tablespoons olive oil | |

Mix the ingredients (except Romano cheese) in a large salad bowl, season to taste with salt, pepper, garlic, oregano, basil and dried parsley, and toss thoroughly. Lay all ingredients on a platter, sprinkle grated Romano cheese on top, and serve with Italian bread. One of Fatica's secrets is to add a little of each seasoning, toss it to mix it thoroughly, then add some more, until the flavor is the way he wants it.

Fried Dandelion

Pina Scattaglia makes this as one of her favorite dishes. The Scattaglias are originally from Adelphia, Italy.

- | | |
|------------------|--------------|
| dandelion greens | garlic salt |
| 2-3 eggs | chopped mint |
| flour | |

Boil the dandelion greens for 10 minutes and drain well. Make a batter with the eggs, flour, garlic salt, and chopped mint which is thick enough to stick to the greens. Heat any light vegetable oil in a frying pan. Dip each piece of dandelion in batter. Fry one side and then the other. After frying, sprinkle with Romano or Parmesan cheese. Serve hot.

Baked Dandelion Casserole

Dr. Tom Squier, a naturopath and wilderness survival instructor for the U.S. Army, shares this "southern fare."

- | | |
|--|--|
| 2 cups chopped cooked dandelion greens | 4 cups water |
| 1 cup uncooked grits | 1/3 teaspoon salt |
| 2 eggs, beaten | 8 oz. shredded cheese, Cheddar, Swiss or blend |
| 2 cups diced ham chunks | 1 tablespoon mustard |
| 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese | |

Add grits to boiling, salted water in a large saucepan and stir to prevent sticking. Cover, reduce heat, and simmer five minutes. Add well-drained dandelion greens, Swiss or cheddar cheese, and ham chunks. Stir until cheese melts. Fold in eggs and mustard and pour into greased baking dish. Sprinkle the grated Parmesan cheese on top and bake at 325° for 45 to 50 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean.

Dandelion Fritters

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 36 dandelion blossoms | 1 cup unbleached, all-purpose flour |
| 1 cup ice water | oil for deep frying |
| 1/2 teaspoon salt | |
| 1 egg, beaten | |

Rinse the dandelion blossoms in cool water and drain thoroughly. Snip off as much of the stem and greenery as possible while leaving the blossom intact. Preheat the oil for deep frying. Prepare the batter just before frying. Stir the ice water, flour, and salt together. Beat in the egg. The ice water helps create a crisp lacy effect when the blossoms are fried. Dip the blossoms in batter and deep fry until golden. Drain on paper towels and serve immediately.

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North Country Reflections

A Celebration of Azaleas

by Judith Irven

Spring is not complete until the azaleas and rhododendrons have bloomed. Their huge frilled flowers—red, pink, purple, white or even yellow and often fragrant—grow in dramatic clusters, giving each shrub a star-studded look.

Some, like the familiar PJMs (bright purple flowers) bloom with the daffodils. But most, including the azaleas in my garden, make us wait until the end of May or early June, and a few into July and early August.

Botanically speaking, azaleas and rhododendrons are closely related and go by the same family name or genus, *Rhododendron*. But, here in New England, the plants we know as ‘azaleas’ drop their leaves each fall, whereas the plants we call ‘rhododendrons’ keep their large leathery leaves throughout the winter.

Species of rhododendrons and azaleas can be found across the globe. This has led to extensive hybridization and an amazing number of cultivars. Indeed, for your gardening pleasure, Rockydale Gardens in Bristol VT lists forty-six varieties in their catalog—all hardy in New England!

An azalea extravaganza

If, like me, you are smitten with these lovely shrubs, you may want to plan a visit to Maine’s Mount Desert Island in late May and early June to experience the magnificent Asticou Azalea Garden and its nearby sister garden, Thuya.

Fifty years has passed since Charles Savage, a gifted landscape designer, created both gardens in a single year.

At Asticou he conceived a serene ‘stroll garden’ based on Japanese design ideals where a new discovery awaits you around every corner. In contrast in Thuya he drew upon the English vernacular, with several small ‘pavilions’ from where one can enjoy long expanses of color laid out before you.

My remembrance of Asticou can be summarized in two words: meticulous and serene. We entered through the formal Japanese gateway to see magnificent carpets of pincushion moss on either side of a raked gravel pathway. Then we watched, almost in disbelief, as an attendant gently brushed the mossy carpets to remove any stray pine needles that might have dropped the previous night!

We wandered the flowing sandy paths edged with azaleas, following a small brook strewn with weathered Maine boulders. We paused at the perfectly-raked sand garden with carefully positioned rocks, symbolizing coastal islands in a shimmering sea.

Finally we arrived at the Great Pond, complete with a grand collection of elegantly pruned evergreens and yet more azaleas. And, as we made our way back to the entrance via a different path, we reflected on the peacefulness of our entire experience.

Perennials in many colors

Thuya Garden is set high on an enclosed hilltop, surrounding Thuya Lodge, the longtime home of Joseph Curtis, a Victorian landscape architect.

Visitors approach on foot, climbing the spectacular rocky staircase known as the Asticou Terraces. Eventually a pair of grand carved gates announce your arrival at Thuya Garden. (For people unable to make the climb, there is handicap parking available at the Lodge).

At the north end, formal beds filled with colorful perennials are reminiscent of the preeminent English designer, Gertrude



The White Lights azalea has a beautiful form and a lovely fragrance. And it is easy to grow in Vermont too!

photo by Dick Conrad

Jekyll. As you stroll south raised beds, edged in massive blocks of local pink granite, are home to more flowers, while a small pond evokes the wilder landscape of Arcadia.

At the southern tip of the garden, look for the rustic mountain path up to a spectacular view over sea.

Drawing back the curtain of time

Sometimes the story surrounding the creation of a garden adds immeasurably to our enjoyment of the garden itself. This is certainly the case with Asticou and Thuya Gardens. It is the story of Charles Savage and his three special friends, and the incredible events that surrounded them.

Charles Savage was a life-long native of Northeast Harbor and innkeeper of the family-owned Asticou Inn. By all accounts he was a dapper man who mingled comfortably with the well-heeled visitors to Northeast Harbor—people who resided in Boston for most of the year but, during summer’s heat, retreated to Mount Desert Island.

Among his very special summer friends he counted two respected landscape architects, Joseph Curtis and Beatrix Farrand, and the philanthropist, John D. Rockefeller Jr..

Back in 1880 Joseph Curtis purchased the steep rocky hillside across from Northeast Harbor known as the Asticou Terraces. Soon he created the Asticou Terrace Trail, a beautiful stone staircase interspersed with scenic pavilions, running from sea level to the upper reaches of his property where he built a rustic retreat called Thuya Lodge (for *Thuya occidentalis*, his beloved native white cedars).

And In 1905 as a gift for future generations, he bequeathed his entire property “as a public preserve for the quiet recreation of the people of Northeast Harbor and their summer guests.”

Finally, to ensure his wishes would be honored, he created an endowment trust and named his great friend, Charles Savage, as sole trustee.

Beatrix Farrand was a pioneering woman landscape architect who, during her long career, designed an array of noteworthy properties, including the famous Dumbarton Oaks in Washington D.C..

When Beatrix was eight years old her parents purchased a large estate on Mount Desert Island known as Reef Point, where later she would design the extensive gardens.

Early on Beatrix was greatly helped by her teacher and mentor, Charles Sargent, director and plant breeder at Boston’s famous Arnold Arboretum, who also gave her many unique and special plantings for Reef Point. And later in life, after inheriting the entire estate, she continued to expand her extensive Reef Point gardens.

John D. Rockefeller Jr., the only son of Standard Oil founder J.D. Rockefeller Sr. had a successful business career. However, at heart, he was a philanthropist who supported a vast array of social, scientific and artistic causes.

JDR Jr. and his wife Abby were also true garden lovers, commissioning Beatrix Farrand to design a beautiful garden (which still exists today) for their Mount Desert Island property.

Soon JDR Jr. became one of Charles Savage’s special summer friends. And, as we shall see, he also financed the creation of Asticou and Thuya Gardens.

Two gardens are born

In 1955, out of the blue, everything changed. A disastrous wildfire on the island resulted in a sudden increase in taxes. Beatrix, realizing she no longer had the means to properly maintain her home, decided to sell Reef Point.

She also knew she could not bear to witness her beloved gardens descend into decline. So, in a single determined move, she resolved to destroy everything, including all the rare trees and shrubs that had been given to her by Charles Sargent.

After hearing about Beatrix’s precipitous decision to destroy all her beautiful plants, Charles Savage was utterly devastated.

Then his thinking side took over. He approached his good friend, JDR Jr., asking him to purchase the entire Reef Point plant collection. Furthermore Charles proposed transforming the swampy land he owned at the head of the Northeast Harbor inlet into a brand new garden. Amazingly JDR Jr. agreed to finance everything.

For almost a year Charles worked obsessively on the mammoth undertaking that resulted in Asticou Azalea Garden. First he oversaw the extensive site preparation—draining the swampy land, creating rocky waterways and finally excavating what would become the Great Pond. Then he supervised as hundreds of full size trees and shrubs—evergreens, azaleas and more—were dug at the Farrand property and replanted at Asticou.

As the year wore on Charles realized that, with Farrand’s extensive perennial collection, he would need additional land. So he turned to the Curtis estate (where he was the trustee), developed the design and oversaw the remaining planting of what was to become the new Thuya Garden.

Thus fifty years ago a strange turn of events, with Beatrix Farrand’s impulse to destroy her entire historic plant collection, resulted in the creation of two beautiful gardens that we still enjoy today.

Today these gardens are open to the public and lovingly maintained by the Garden and Land Preserve. You can see lots of picture of both gardens on their website at www.gardenpreserve.org/index.html, as well as on my blog at www.northcountryreflections.com/roving-gardener.

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

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





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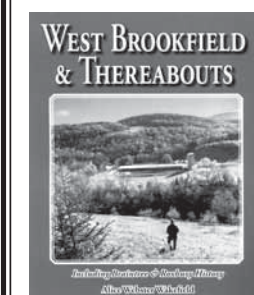
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Two Jerseys graze in a Spring field in Central Vermont.

photo by Nancy Cassidy

Memories from the Pasture Hills

by Norman C. Tice, circa 1917

Who has not climbed some pasture hill, looked abroad upon the surrounding country, and wondered if there could possibly be another more charming spot. What reminiscences are associated and recalled as a businessman returns to his boyhood haunts in some quaint old pasture after a sojourn in a distant city since early youth.

A city bred summer visitor finds the pasture an attractive place no doubt but he has not the wealth of memories associated with what he discovers as has the country born.

The spring was hailed with delight by the farmer boy for then there were the returning birds and insects and the varied store of wild flowers to be found.

From the slopes of the pasture hills he obtained the

arbutus half buried beneath a covering of brown leaves. The spring beauty and the hepatica were found in the leaf strewn hollows and upon the mossy slate stone ledges. The adder tongue crept in spotted ranks through the grass grown hollows and the purple lady's slipper fringed many a marshy nook.

Upon the pasture hill was a sandy knoll where the first wild strawberries could be found while in a clearing in the woodlot corner of the pasture large raspberries ripened early in the season.

Blueberries blurred the southern slope of the hill and a wild thorn apple, rosy cheeked and delicious, was heavily fruited in the autumn.

A sluggish stream wandered the lower corner of the pasture. Here sweet flag grew

in profusion and arrowroot dotted the coves. The meadowsweet and the clematis waved in summer winds until the slopes of the pasture hills were yellow with goldenrod or blazing in fence corners along stone walls with scarlet bunches of fireweed. The Canadian thistle grew in sandy

spots and yarrow whitened the hilltops.

Such are the memories awakened from viewing the pasture hills as one climbs the grassy slopes and drinks from the hillside spring or wanders among the fern shaded aisles of the sugar orchard.



Pied Beauty

Glory be to God for dappled things—

For skies of couple-color as a brindled cow;
 For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;
 Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;
 Landscapes plotted and pieced—fold, fallow, and plow;
 And all trades, their gear and tackle and trim.
 All things counter, original, spare, strange;
 Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)
 With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;
 He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change;
 Praise Him.

—GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

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North Country Book News

Book Review by Charles Sutton

The Story of Seeds

by Nancy F. Castaldo

For gardeners this Spring there will be seeds aplenty with many new varieties and choices, but don't take this bounty for granted.

In the very thoughtful, informative and timely *The Story of Seeds—From Mendel's Garden to Your Plate, and How There's More or Less to Eat Around The World* by Nancy F. Castaldo (\$17.99, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, www.hmhco.com) we learn that the world's seeds are in crisis and that of the 12,000 plant species used for human food, only about 150 are being grown for sale and that half of our calories come from only three grains: rice, wheat and maize.

Food diversity is diminishing at an accelerating rate due to disruptive wars, damaged habitats, climate change and other environmental factors like droughts, pollution, forest and land management abuses. The use of chemical pesticides, herbicides and genetically modified seeds coupled with the trend toward one-crop factory farming also is destroying the diverse foods grown on smaller family farms. This is particularly true in countries like India that have huge populations to feed.

Fortunately there are people and organizations world-wide making an effort to save and protect our seeds. This book is all about them—the heroes protecting our future food supplies.

We learn first about Gregor Mendel, an Austrian monk who did original research of hybrids working with over 10,000 pea plants for eight years in the mid-19th century.

Next about Luther Burbank known as the 'plant wizard' of Santa Rosa, California, who by crossing and recombining plants, known as novelties, created 800 new vegetables, fruits and flowers, many of them quite common today, such as the Satsuma plum, elephant garlic, the Shasta daisy, the plumcot and a variety of walnuts. He is most famous for growing giant cacti and creating the Burbank russet potato of which McDonald's buys more than 3.4 million pounds from American farmers each year.

There's fascinating story about Nikolai Vavilov (1887–1943) the Russian botanist, explorer and founding father of seed collection. The rye, wheat, lentil and other seeds he collected at great risk became the start of the seed bank known as the N. J. Vavilov Research Institute of Plant Industry in St. Petersburg, formerly Leningrad, in Russia. Like so many other visionaries, he was considered an enemy of the state, imprisoned by Stalin and died in a prison. This book includes a remarkable story of the seed savers at his Institute, who

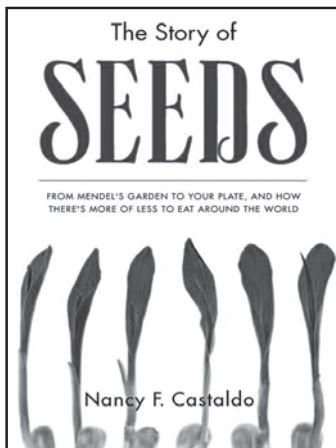
during the German siege of Leningrad during World War II, hid what seeds they could. Some seed savers starved to death rather than eating their prized seeds when there was no food. Hitler sent a special SS force to get the Russian seeds, knowing that who controls food supplies would control the world, but failed.

On a more positive note we learn that there are about 1,000 seed banks worldwide today (although down about 400), the most famous being the Svalbard Global Seed Vault (named Doomsday Vault) in Norway caved 400 feet into a mountain. Countries worldwide have stored 268,000 seeds there including varieties of rice from 104 countries. The vault can store 4.5 million seed samples which will comprise a variety of the world most important crop seed.

More than 80 percent of the world's largest collection of barley, fava beans and lentils along with ancient varieties of durum and bread wheat and wild crops from the 'fertile crescent' had been kept in the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Area (Icarda) gene bank in the Syrian city of Aleppo—now caught in the cross fires of a terrible civil war. Thanks to the dedicated staff there, 116,484 of their seeds were safely sent to the Norwegian vault to be retrieved at a later date with a new facility in either Jordan or Morocco.

Here at home we now see 'seed libraries' in most states where growers can share and swap seeds at town or city public libraries. There is one in at the Windsor, VT Public Library (windsorlibrary.org/services/seed-library). Also in Vermont a good source of open-pollinated seeds is from Solstice Seeds in Hartland, VT, (802) 436-3262 or SDAV@valley.net.

We can't thank the author Nancy F. Cataldo enough for this definitive work on cherishing and saving seeds. She visited many foreign countries to collect information firsthand for her story.



Children's Book Reviews

Poetry for Children of All Ages

April is Poetry Month, a good reminder of the value of poetry in our lives. Here are some new poetry books for children that will appeal to adults as well.

A good place to begin for readers of all ages is *The Death of The Hat—A Brief History of Poetry in 50 Objects* selected by Paul B. Janeczko and illustrated by Chris Raschka (\$17.99, Candlewick Press, www.candlewick.com). Poems in this book are surrounded by the most ingenious drawings reflecting and counter-balancing the verses.

The author explains that early poets, especially in the West, composed philosophical and spiritual meditations on life and death and rarely wrote about objects. This volume of 50 'object' poems is unusual because the poems weren't that easy to compile. However, the author drew from his collection of 1,500 poetry books and four file cabinets stuffed with single poems.

Objects highlighted include grass and grainfields, a wild goose, a flickering candle, a burnt ship, a red rose, the moon, a mouse's nest, an eagle, snow, and much more.

The book's title is from an amusing poem by Billy Collins whose opening line is "Once every man wore a hat." Some of us remember those days, as when my father, a businessman in New York, wore a fedora in winter and a straw hat in summer. The poet notes: "But today we go bareheaded into the winter streets."

Newly elected President J. F. Kennedy was hatless during his inaugural parade, to the dismay of hat makers in Danbury, CT where my father purchased his hats. Perhaps this was an early signal to the death of hats.

The book includes poems from nine cultural and historic times: Early and Middle Ages, The Renaissance, The Enlightenment, Romantic, Victorian, Modern, and Postmodern Periods and Contemporary. You will meet interesting poets unknown to you as well as many familiar ones like Shakespeare, Blake, Longfellow, Poe, Whitman, Dickerson, Yeats, Frost and Updike. A worthwhile volume for anyone to own.

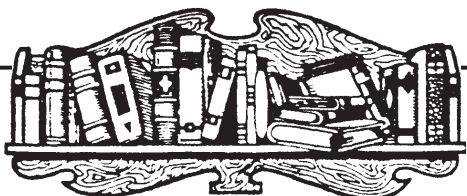
Those of us who appreciate poetry—and cats—will be delighted with *The Maine Coon's Haiku and Other Poems for Cat Lovers* by Michael J. Rosen and illustrated by Lee White (\$17.99, Candlewick Press, www.candlewick.com).

Featured are 20 popular cats including some surprises like the Maine Coon Cat, Bombay, Scottish Fold and Bengal. Included are facts about each breed's origin, body features, colors, hair, and a few anecdotes—for instance, the American Shorthair comes in 34 different colors and patterns.

Each cat is featured in a beautiful two-page color drawing highlighting the cat's unique behavior. The drawings surround a mostly three line haiku poem that also captures of cat's personality and behavior.

Young children who have been growing up on nursery rhymes will be thrilled with this new boardbook, *Snuggle Up with Mother Goose*, edited by Iona Opie and illustrated by Rosemary Wells (\$8.99, Candlewick Press, www.candlewick.com). The illustrator's animals—one donkey and lots of rabbits and cats add an eye-catching charm to the verses, many of which are embedded in our early childhood. There are familiar verses like Wee Willie Winkie and Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star but the real gems in this book are the less familiar ones. This is an enchanting addition to your library whether you have little ones or just want to make yourself happy.

Rosemary Wells is the well-known writer and illustrator of the popular *Max and Ruby* series.



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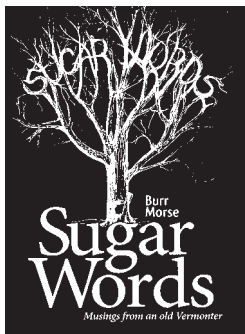
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Children's Book Review

Peter Rabbit—P is for Peter

2016 marks 150 years since the birth of Beatrix Potter, one of the world's best-loved children's authors, who has captured our imagination for over 100 years with her beautifully illustrated tales.

When *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* by Beatrix Potter was published in October, 1902 it became an immediate success. Peter Rabbit was named after a pet rabbit Beatrix has as a child called Peter Piper. To this day her lively pictures of rabbits in a rural countryside setting are familiar to most of us and continue to please children the world over.

Beatrix Potter's famous Peter Rabbit is now available in a beautiful new board book entitled *Peter Rabbit—P is*

for Peter by Beatrix Potter (\$9.99, Penguin, www.peter-rabbit.com).

Although rabbits introduce us to more than half of the alphabet letters, her other animal drawings include mice, ducks, geese, cats and kittens, frogs and squirrels. How does she handle letters like XYZ? We see X is for a Goodnight XX; Y is for You, Always and Forever; and Z is for ZZZZZ, Snoozing Little Bunnies Everywhere. What a great way to learn the alphabet!

Over the years, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* has sold more than 40 million copies worldwide and as of 2008, the Peter Rabbit series has sold more than 151 million copies in 35 languages.



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Open Year Round

Blue Ribbon Vegetable Gardening

The Secrets of Growing the Biggest and Best Prizewinning Produce

by Jodi Torpey

Now is when farm and garden outlets, hardware stores and even supermarkets start displaying racks of colorful vegetable and flower seed packets. The enticing drawings of harvested vegetables surely make them look good enough to compete at county and state agricultural fairs. Well, shouldn't we be able to grow a vegetable in size, shape and flavor to garner a prize?

Easier said than done but with the help and encouragement of *Blue Ribbon Vegetable Gardening—The Secrets of Growing the Biggest and Best Prizewinning Produce* by Jodi Torpey (\$16.95, Storey Publishing, www.storey.com) you may be well on your way for some ribbons, too.

Always an attraction at the fair are the "vegetable" displays. Fair-goers usually head straight to the well-shaped and colorful giant pumpkins. We can thank writer and naturalist Henry David Thoreau, who around the mid-19th century, initiated big pumpkin competitions by winning a prize at the Middlesex Fair in Massachusetts for his 123-pound pumpkin, a variety from France known as 'Jaune Gros de Paris.' Since then pumpkins have been grown into giants, some over 2,000 pounds (usually from Dills' Atlantic Giant or Goliath Giant seeds). But at most fair winners are usually in the hundreds of pounds bracket. The author warns that giant pumpkins can put on 30 to 40 pounds a day. But if they grow too quickly they can explode and scatter their seeds six feet away!

Along with pumpkins we are introduced to other vegetables that do well earning ribbons: beans, beets, cabbage, cucumbers, eggplant, onions, peppers, winter and summer squash and tomatoes.

The author's advice includes soil preparation and management, watering, mulch and

fertilizers, needed sunlight, pest and disease control, storage practices, and even tips on transporting giant pumpkins.

For each vegetable, readers will learn what seeds to get to produce prizewinners. For pumpkins, she recommends Autumn Gold, Baby Bear, Cinderella's Carriage, Hijinks, Jack Be Little, Strange Smoothie, Sorcerer and Spirit.

This fascinating book includes feature stories with photos of farmers located all over the United States whose produce consistently wins prizes. For instance meet the Jere Gettle family of Mansfield, Missouri, who grow 75 varieties of eggplant.

"I love to eat it because there is a lot of variation in the flavor depending on the variety," Jere says. "I eat 100 to 150 pounds of eggplant a year; and in the summer I eat it maybe two or three times a day in some form or other." He credits his expanded vision of eggplants to a trip to Thailand in 2002 where among others he discovered a variety called

Book Review by Charles Sutton

'Thai Lavender Frog Egg.' Other favorites include Malaysian Dark Red and Rosita from Puerto Rica.

He tells us that in many Asian countries eggplant is served raw in salad bars, steamed, baked, pickled, jellied, blended into chutneys and made into candies and sweet cakes.

The author's advice on growing peppers is to look for new, unusual, and unfamiliar varieties. We learn that chili peppers originated in South and Central America where they grew in the wild. In a short time they spread to Europe, Africa, Asia and then back again. Among her top choices for hot chile peppers are Cayenne, Hungarian Paprika, Tabasco, Royal Black, NuMex Heritage 6-4, and NuMex Joe E. Parker. The New Mexican-type chili peppers were developed at New Mexico State University over the

Book News

A Thinking Person's Guide to America's National Parks Discussed at Phoenix Books

On Thursday, April 21st at 7 p.m., Phoenix Books Burlington will host co-author Robert Manning for a discussion of the new book, *A Thinking Person's Guide to America's National Parks* (\$24.95, published by George Braziller Inc.).

On the centennial of the National Park Service, this richly illustrated book offers invaluable advice on exploring America's national park system.

The book delves into issues affecting an array of parks: the iconic western national parks like Yellowstone, the urban parks such as Golden Gate National Recreation Area, historic sites including the Statue of Liberty National Monument and Gettysburg National Military Park, and cultural areas like Mesa Verde National Park that are among America's over 400 national parks.

Twenty-three essays from contributing authors with

deep personal and professional connections to the national parks serve as expert guides to places in the park system where:

- much of the nation's biological and cultural diversity is represented;
- ideas such as freedom, civil rights, and conservation were conceived;
- vast wilderness offers solitude and reflection;
- the balance between recreation and preservation is tested;
- research and learning engage the next generation;
- the dynamics of nature are being shaped by a changing climate; and
- innovations in technology, sustainability, and stewardship provide a sense of purpose and hope.

Robert E. Manning, Ph.D., is Steven Rubenstein Professor of Environment and Natural Resources at University of Vermont. He is also the co-author of *Walking*

Distance: Extraordinary Hikes for Ordinary People.

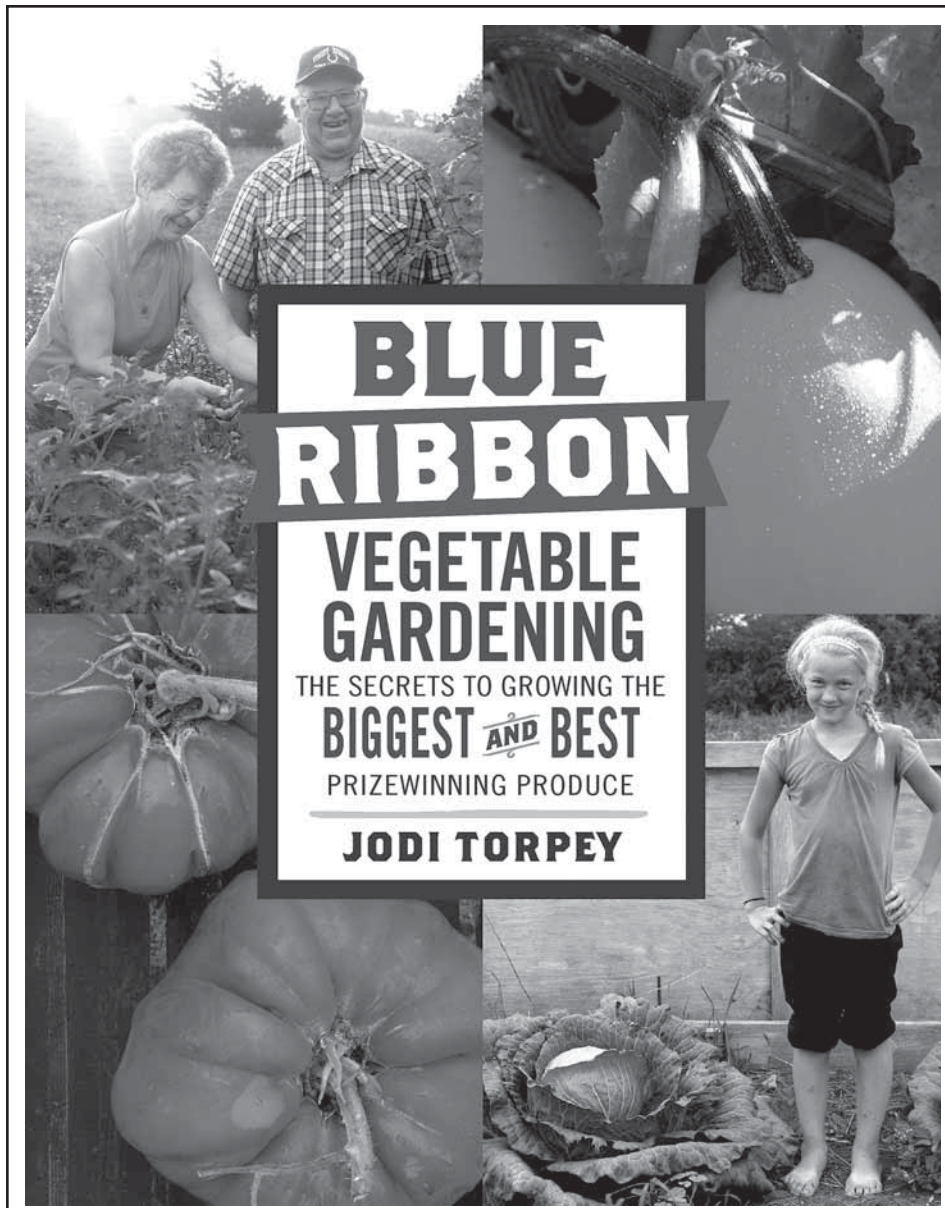
Rolf Diamant is a former national park superintendent and is now adjunct associate professor at the University of Vermont.

Nora J. Mitchell, Ph.D. is former Director, National Park Service Stewardship Institute and is now adjunct associate professor at the University of Vermont.

Explore the significance of America's National Parks. This book is great for outdoor enthusiasts, conservationists, and anyone interested in America's relationship with the great outdoors.

Tickets are \$3 per person, and include a coupon for \$5 off the featured book expiring at close of the evening of the event. Seating is limited.

Phoenix Books Burlington is located at 191 Bank St. in Burlington, VT. (802) 448-3350. phoenixbooks.biz.



last 100 years. The university's chili pepper breeding program has led to dozens of new cultivars with improved flavor, more constant heat, better disease resistance and bigger yields. Regarding heat we learn that the hottest pepper is Habanero—a dangerously hot orange pepper—"A little goes a long way for flavoring sauces." Runner-up are Chile de Arbor, Jalapeno and Anaheim.

For sweet peppers she recommends Gemini, King Arthur, Lipstick, Miniature Red Bell and Mohawk.

Here's some anecdotes about the other vegetables in this fascinating book:

ONIONS: Northern England is famous for its giant onion competitions where a world record was set by grower Tint Glover with an 18.11-pounder just last year.

BEETS: England also has record setters with unique beetroots that are grown in long drain pipes, suspended at an angle above ground and filed with a special homemade compost. The record in 2008 were beets that were 21 feet long! For potential prizewinning beets the author likes 10 varieties including Boro, Crosby Egyptian, Detroit Dark Red, Perfected Detroit, Early Wonder and Melin.

TOMATOES: Thirty varieties of tomatoes are listed including medium to large fruited tomatoes; small and cherry tomatoes; and most flavorful. Familiar names to many of us are Big Beef, Brandywine, Kellogg's Breakfast and Mortgage Lifter; Sun Gold, Sun Sugar, Super Snow; Anna Russian, Black Krim, Black Prince, German Queen, Lemon Boy and Speckled Roman.

How big can a tomato grow? There's a full-page photograph of two tomatoes weighing 2.3 and 2.43 pounds each. But a 2014 record 8.41 pound Big Zac was grown by Dan MacCoy in Ely, MN in 2014.

CABBAGE: We always knew fruit, flowers and vegetables grow large in Alaska, but what about a 10-year boy named Keevan Dinkel winning \$2,000 for a 92.5 pound cabbage named Bob at the Alaska State Fair in 2013!

Cabbages can't always be prize winners as they are known to 'blow up' with the flower stalk exploding through the surface of the cabbage. The cabbage may still be edible, but never fair ready. There are beautiful photographs of cabbages, some called Stonehead, Famosa, Ruby Ball, Tropic Giant Flat, Late Flat Dutch, Deacon Red Savoy, Ruby Perfection, Megaton Round, as well as Chinese cabbages.

Veteran vegetable growers may be ready to compete, but the author also encourages young people to join the competition as many do already through 4-H clubs. You will meet Jacy McAlexander of Iowa who at 13 has won many ribbons for his champion cucumbers, kohlrabi, tomatoes, peppers and chives. He is most proud of producing a six-pound jumbo zucchini.

Like other gardening books, we see plenty of stunning color photographs, but many that are featured have both beauty and size.

Author Jodi Torpey is a garden writer, master gardener and founding editor-in-chief of WesternGardens.com. She lives and gardens in Denver, CO.

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Opening Day of the 34th season at Billings Farm & Museum in Woodstock, VT on Saturday, April 30th, will feature visitor plowing, horse-drawn field work, and wagon rides. photo courtesy of Billings Farm & Museum

Celebrate Local Farms & Food at the 15th Annual Flavors of the Valley

Mark your calendar for April 10 and bring your appetite to the 15th annual Flavors of the Valley—the region’s premier local-foods tasting expo hosted by Vital Communities. The family event offers a chance for consumers to meet the people behind the Upper Valley’s local farms and foods, try new products, and make meal-times more delicious while

supporting a vibrant local food system and economy.

“So many dedicated local farmers and producers are creating delicious foods right here in the Upper Valley. Flavors is our way to celebrate those people, and to help build connections between their local farms and food businesses and the consumers who are hungry to support—and enjoy—their

work,” said Tom Roberts, executive director of Vital Communities. “Flavors of the Valley is a wonderful way to launch into spring and summer with more local foods on your menu.”

In addition to sampling foods from more than 50 unique local farms, restaurants, and food businesses, visitors can purchase meats, baked goods, sauces, and more directly from vendors, and even sign up for Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) shares for the summer. A great day for the whole

family, kids can enjoy fun local-food activities with Upper Valley Farm to School. Those who attend are encouraged to bring shopping bags/coolers for purchases, along with their own plates, utensils, and napkins to help reduce waste at the event.

Everyone is welcome at Flavors of the Valley. Admission is \$10 per person, with children 6 and under free, and a family maximum of \$30. Proceeds help support the Valley Food & Farm program at Vital Communities. Vital Communities, a non-

profit organization based in White River Junction, Vt., brings together citizens, organizations, and municipalities to take on issues where an independent voice and regional approach are essential. Working together,

we make our region a better place to live, work, and play.

Vital Communities is located at 195 N. Main St., White River Junction, VT. (802) 291-9100. www.vitalcommunities.org.

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There is a death that comes to all of us in life, as it came to me when was taken from me the sight of my eyes, as it came to you when the Welshman from Claregalway entered your sleeping-room—and we sit a little while by ourselves in an apart dark place, and we learn truths, of how certain things one believes to be good are but vulgar selfish things, and how certain things the small think evil are but futile accidents.

And we learn to be kind: such wisdom comes when we are dead. And those who have never died in life, Hilaria, are pleasant shallow people, soulless as seals. O Hilaria, open your blind eyes!”

—Donn Byrne, 1928
From *Blind Raftery and His Wife, Hilaria*

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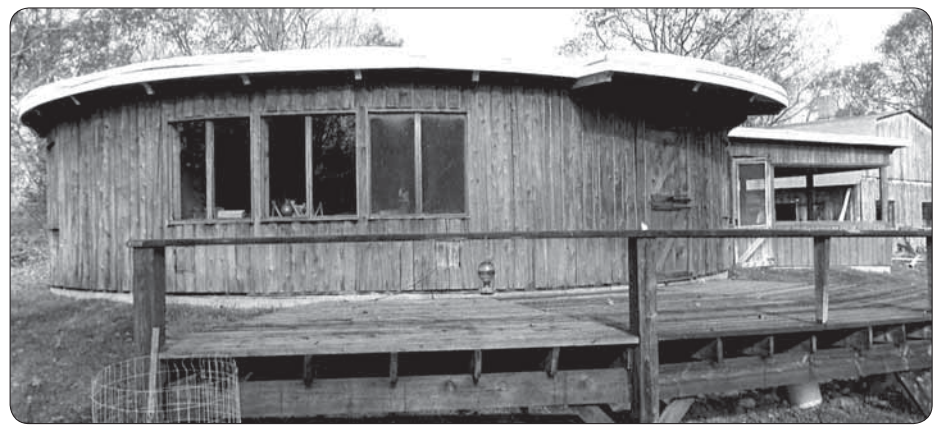
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Azalea

Today the dogwood bloomed and took my breath away,
 The azalea flamed from pink to blood-red,
 The sun brushed emerald on the new young leaves,
 And my grandson ran laughing through the woods.
 Some say we'll visit grand new worlds, and live again,
 And yet again. It may well be.
 But when I take flight, there's one thing only I would
 choose—
 The memory of one ordinary day
 In this,
 My own extraordinary world.

—ELISABETH DOREN O'KANE
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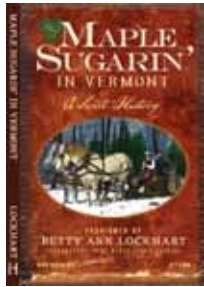
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