

Vermont Country Sampler



N. Cassidy

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2010/11

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The Nature Museum at Grafton's Second Nature gift shop can make holiday shopping special and very economical.

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Besides more traditional gifts, the Museum has some exclusive presents that include a Nature Museum reusable shopping bag in white, tan, or gray for \$10 that holds around 40 pounds, slips comfortably over the shoulder, and folds up and snaps small.

The Museum's Pale Blue Dot T-Shirt at \$15 comes in brown, cream, and navy and celebrates stewardship and Carl Sagan's statement about the Earth with his description on the front and quote on the back: "Preserve and cherish that pale blue dot."

The Museum also has works by local artists on display and for sale.

Order a bush or tree to give as a holiday present but to pick up and plant in the spring.

The Nature Museum has artistic and traditional evergreen wreaths to inspire and delight you. Whichever wreath you choose, you'll have something beautiful to start off the winter season and perk you up.

The Nature Museum at Grafton and shop are located at 186 Townshend Rd. Open on the weekends (Saturday 10-4 and Sunday 1-4), and other during vacation weeks. It's best to call before coming: (802) 843-2111. www.nature-museum.org.



Winter settles over Coburn Covered Bridge in East Montpelier, VT. photo by Nancy Cassidy

Sankta Lucia

Nightly, go heavy hearts
Round farm and steading
On earth, where sun departs,
shadows are spreading.
Then on our darkest night,
Comes with her shining light
Sankta Lucia! Sankta Lucia!

Night-darkling, huge and still.
Hark, something's stirring!
In all our silent rooms,
Wingbeats are whisp'ring!
Stands on our threshold there,
White clad, lights in her hair,
Sankta Lucia! Sankta Lucia!

Darkness shall fly away
Through earthly portals.
She brings such wonderful
words to us mortals!
Daylight, again renewed,
will rise, all rosy-hued!
Sankta Lucia! Sankta Lucia!

—from the Swedish

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*** Winter Solstice Celebration *** At Brattleboro's Fair Winds Farm

Nights stretch longer and colder as our Fifth Annual Winter Solstice Celebration approaches on December 20 & 21. Snuggle down in the horse-drawn sleigh. Listen to voices ringing out in the dark to celebrate light, magic and the change of seasons. Watch stars that seem close enough to touch. Enjoy the beauty of a stream lit by candles and ice lanterns. Ah, the perfect, peaceful antidote to Christmas bustle!

No reservations needed for half-hour rides offered from

4:30-7:30 pm on December 20 & 21. Rides are \$12 for adults and \$6 for kids under 12. Fair Winds Farm is located at 511 Upper Dummerston Rd. across from the country club, off Rt. 30 just two miles from downtown Brattleboro, VT.

For more information call Bekah Murchison at (802) 254-9067. fairwind@sover.net. www.fairwindsfarm.org. Rides are also available New Year's Eve and at other times by reservation.



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The Original

Vermont Country Sampler

December-January 2010/11, Vol. XXVI

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Vermont Country Sampler

P.O. Box 226, Danby, VT 05739 • (802) 293-5752

info@vermontcountrysampler.com

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A Vermont Almanac for Early Winter

by Bill Felker

The world is well kept...Her undertakings are secure and never fail. If I were awakened from a deep sleep, I should know which side of the meridian the sun might be by the aspect of nature, and the chirp of the crickets, and yet no painter can paint this difference. The landscape contains a thousand dials which indicate the natural divisions of time, the shadows of a thousand styles point to the hour.

—Henry David Thoreau

A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers

EPHEMERIS FOR DECEMBER & JANUARY

The Phases of the Orchid Moon & the Jessamine Moon

As the final leaves of Late Autumn have come down and wildflowers have turned to seed, orchids come into bloom in Hawaii and throughout the tropics, promising all the riches of the year ahead. The first moon of 2011 is the Jessamine Moon, presiding over some of the first wild blooming plants of the United States. Deep in the South, this vine announces the start of the journey of spring from the Gulf to the top of the continent. **December 5:** The Orchid Moon is new at 12:36 p.m. **December 13:** The moon enters its 2nd quarter at 8:59 a.m. **December 21:** The moon is full at 3:13 a.m. **December 27:** The moon enters its 4th quarter at 11:18 p.m. **January 4:** The Jessamine Moon is new at 4:03 a.m. **January 12:** The moon enters its second quarter at 6:31 a.m. **January 19:** The moon is full at 4:21 p.m. **January 26:** The moon enters its final quarter at 7:57 p.m.

The Sun's Progress

Sun Standing Still: December 5, 2010 through January 8, 2011: during this period, the sun's declination remains at its lowest point of the year. The sun's position will remain within a degree of solstice until January 8, producing a period of solar stability similar to the one between June 4 and July 8. **Winter Solstice:** 6:38 p.m. (EST) on December 21. The Sun enters Capricorn: December 22, 2010. On January 3, the Earth reaches perihelion, its position closest to the sun, at 2:00 PM (EST). On January 20, the sun enters Aquarius.

The Planets

Venus begins the last month of 2010 in the constellation Libra, rising before sunup as the morning star. Coming out of the east an hour or so before Venus, Saturn becomes visible along the eastern horizon in Virgo well before dawn. Venus begins the year as the morning star in Ophiuchus, rising in the east well before dawn. Jupiter is the evening star in January, in the far west in Pisces after sundown. Saturn is in Virgo, rising after midnight.

The Stars

Directly above you in December at 10 p.m., Perseus stands below the North Star. Regulus, the brightest star of spring, will be just starting to rise along the eastern tree line. Since Orion is so easy to find filling the southern sky at bedtime during January, use it as a skymark to locate the constellation Auriga directly above it. Auriga's brightest star is Capella, a star that remains visible throughout the year circling Polaris.

The Shooting Stars

The Ursid meteors will appear late at night deep in the northeast around the Big Dipper and Little Dipper, the Ursid or Bear Constellations, between December 17th and 25th. January's shooting stars are the Quadrantids. Look for them



after midnight in the eastern sky near Arcturus, especially on the mornings of the 3rd through the 5th.

Meteorology

In most states, average high temperatures fluctuate only about two to three degrees between December 21 and the approach of early Spring in the third week of February.

Bill Felker's Poor Will's Almanac for 2011 is now available. Send \$20 (includes s/h) to Poor Will, P.O. Box 431,

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

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We all like to make our treasured recipes this time of year as the holidays, baking, and cold weather go hand-in-hand. Some of our favorites are collected from friends, books, and cookie exchanges and some are hand-me-downs from grandmas, aunts, and mothers, and sometimes brothers and fathers. Wherever they came from, our family recipes, like our families, are loved and cherished.

The recipes or "rules" featured here are from the turn of the century and earlier, and are like those your grandma might have followed. Measurements and methods are simpler. Oven temperatures and time are "till done." Consider what baking delicacies in a wood-fired kitchen stove was like. Regulating the temperature must have been pretty tricky and baking cookies, a slight-of-hand procedure.

Holiday Anise Cakes

Cream a half-pound of butter with a half-pound of sugar, add three well-beaten eggs and enough flour to make a stiff dough, adding to the flour an ounce of anise seed. Roll into a thin sheet, cut into shapes with a cutter and bake.

—Marion Harland's Cookbook, 1903

Old-Style Christmas Plum-Pudding

Stone 1½ lbs. of raisins, wash, pick and dry ½ lb. of currants, mince fine ¾ lb. of suet, cut into slices ½ lb. of mixed peel (orange and lemon), and grate fine ¾ lb. of bread-crumbs. When all these dry ingredients are prepared; mix them well together, then moisten the mixture with 8 eggs, well beaten, and one wine-glass of brandy. Stir well, that everything may be thoroughly blended, and press the pudding into a buttered mould; tie it down tightly with a floured cloth, and boil 6 hours. A wine-glass, at least, of brandy is almost universally put into the hard sauce which accompanies. On Christmas day a sprig of holly is usually placed in the middle of the pudding, and about a wine-glass of brandy poured round it, which, at the moment of serving, is lighted, and the pudding is thus brought to the table encircled in flames.

Remarks.—None need go without a plum pudding on Christmas day, certainly. The only point that seems to me unreasonable is the long boiling which appears to be more than is needed. A circle of three ladies, to whom I referred the matter, gave it as their judgment that 3 hours would be sufficient. Let English people stick to the old custom, but Americans may find that from 3 to 4 hours will cook the puddings perfectly.

—from Dr. A. W. Chase's Receipt Book, 1884

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Aunt Rachel's Bread Pudding

Aunt Rachel, in the Rural New Yorker, says: "A pudding may be made of small pieces of bread, if the family taste does not rebel. (I never see the family taste rebel against so good a pudding.) The bread should be broken fine, covered with milk, and set on the stove where it is not too hot, until it becomes soft. Remove and stir in a tablespoonful of sugar, a tablespoonful of butter, a small teaspoonful of salt, also a pinch of cinnamon, or allspice, and, if liked, ½ cup of chopped or cut raisins, or dried raspberries. When cool enough, stir in an egg, well beaten, and bake 1 hour in a moderate oven. To be eaten with cream and sugar, or pudding-sauce, as preferred."

Remarks.—This is like what my wife used to make, except she used to put the raisins in whole, to which I should never object. Nor did I, as above remarked, "ever see the family taste rebel against it." Aunt Rachel adds: "I know a lady who kept all the broken pieces of bread in a bag, that was hung where they would dry and not mold, and she had the material for a pudding always at hand. The price of flour and cost of living would determine whether such economies would pay." It would pay, unless it may be for farmers, who raise their own wheat and have fowls to feed the broken pieces of bread to.

—from Dr. A. W. Chase's Receipt Book, 1884

Farmhouse Molasses Cookies

1 pint of molasses, 1 cupful of brown sugar, 1 cupful of butter or lard, 1 cupful of sour milk, a small amount of soda dissolved in the milk, 2 large tablespoonfuls of cinnamon, and flour sufficient to roll out thin. Bake in a quick oven. Excellent!

—Old Dr. Carlin's Recipes, 1881

Very Rich Squash Pie

Stew a medium sized Hubbard (or other equally rich) squash, and rub the soft part through a colander, as for pumpkin pie. Mix butter, ½ lb.; cream and milk, each 1 pint, or milk with the cream stirred in, 1 quart; sugar, 2 cups; 1 dozen eggs well beaten; salt, mace, nutmeg and cinnamon, 1 teaspoonful each, or to taste.

Remarks.—Of course the mixture needs baking, the same as for the pumpkin pie. If less of this mixture is needed for the family, keep the ingredients in the same proportions. I think good squash makes a richer pie than pumpkin, while some persons claim the reverse, and call for an egg or two extra. If a poor quality squash is used, this would be so; but since Hubbard are much nicer than pumpkin, both in quality and flavor, I like this pie much the best (but can get along very nicely even with a good rich pumpkin pie!)

—from Dr. A. W. Chase's Receipt Book, 1884

Baked Chestnut-Apple Pudding

Peel off the chestnut shells, cover the kernels with water, and boil till their skins readily peel off. Then pound them in a mortar, and to every cup of chestnuts add 8 cups of chopped apple, 1 cup of chopped raisins, ½ cup of sugar, and 1 quart or less of water. Mix thoroughly, and bake until the apple is tender—about ½ hour. Serve cold with a sweet sauce.

Remarks.—Whoever loves chestnuts (and who does not) will like the flavor of this pudding. Take out a chestnut from the boiling water, and drop it into cold water a moment (which is called blanching) and if the dark skin will rub off with the thumb and finger, they have boiled enough.

—from Dr. A. W. Chase's Receipt Book, 1884

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Vermont Holiday Festival

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27th Annual Woodstock Wassail Weekend

December 10-12 • Woodstock, VT

A festive holiday weekend with a spectacular horse and carriage parade Saturday at 2 p.m. Caroling around the village green, holiday house tour, craft fair, musical events, yule log, luminarias at twilight on the green. Children's Magical Wonderland with Santa, family ice skating, Wassail Feast, Messiah sing-along. Many events are free. From 10 am - 7:30 pm each day. (888) 496-6378. www.woodstockvt.com.

37th Annual Stowe Winter Carnival

January 17-29 • Stowe, VT

A fun-filled, zany winter festival of entertaining events, such as snow-volleyball, snow-golf, ski races, a kids carnival, ice carving, a village night family block party and live music throughout the last two weeks of January. Free for all spectators. (802) 253-7321. www.stowewintercarnival.com.

TD Bank Craftsbury Marathon

January 29 • Craftsbury Common, VT

The premier cross-country ski event of the East. A twenty-five kilometer loop course classic technique event traversing Vermont's spectacular Northeast Kingdom. The marathon features 25 and 50-kilometer races. 9 am - 3 pm. (802) 586-7767. www.craftsbury.com.

Sleigh Ride Week

At Billings Farm & Museum

February 19-27 • Woodstock, VT

Climb aboard the Billings Farm sleigh for a ride through the frosty farm fields and take a turn with a jack jumper sled. Sample the favorite cookies of the Presidents on the weekends. On Feb. 20th at 3 pm, the VT Humanities Council program, "John Quincy Adams: Spirit Unconquerable," by reservation, free admission. Sleigh rides: \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4. 10 am - 3:30 pm. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org.

Vermont Flower Show

March 4-6 • Essex Junction, VT

Vermont's premier "Sweet Dreams" flower show offers three days of Spring in March. Grand display filled with flowering plants, bulbs, water features and stonework. Seminars, workshops, floral competitions, cooking demonstrations, kids' activities. Vermont Certified Horticulturists answer questions. Adults \$15, seniors \$12, students (13-17) \$6, kids (3-12) \$3. Open Fri. 10 am - 8 pm, Sat. 10 am - 6 pm, Sun. 10 am - 4 pm. At the Champlain Valley Exposition, 105 Pearl St. www.greenworksvermont.org. (888) 518-6484.

3rd Annual Middlebury Winter Carnival & Chili Contest

March 5 • Middlebury, VT

Join us downtown on Main Street for chili, live music, dog sled demonstrations and more. Last year, 43 vendors served 76 different kinds of chili! Presented by The Better Middlebury Partnership. 2-4 pm. Free admission. Unlimited chili samples: \$1 kids, \$2 adults. www.bettermiddleburypartnership.org. (802) 388-4126.

9th Annual Mardi Gras

March 7-13 • Jay, VT

A week filled with authentic New Orleans food, music, events for kids and adults. Ice skating at the new rink, and great spring skiing and riding. New Orleans chef Marc Uddo will be back in town, and beads will be flying. Laissez les bons temps rouler! www.jaypeakresort.com. (800) 451-4449.



The Osgood family from Topsham, VT rides their Gypsy Horses in the Woodstock Wassail Parade. In the lead is Joe Osgood on Malacki, a stallion from Ireland. Behind him is daughter Emilie on Haily, with her mother Michelle Osgood (in the fairy wings) on Teagan. These versatile, sweet-natured horses were originally bred by the Romanys in Great Britain and Ireland. Visit the Osgood's website www.vermontgypsyhorses.com to learn more about them. photo by Nancy Cassidy

U.S. Open Snowboarding Championships

March 14-20 • Stratton Mountain, VT

The longest running snowboard event on the planet, attracting the world's best athletes and Vermont's finest riders. The event's open format allows qualifiers the chance to compete against Shaun White, Hannah Teter and Kelly Clark on the same 22-foot pipe. Free admission. www.stratton.com, www.trworldtour.com. (800) 787-2886.

Green Mountain Film Festival

March 18-27 • Montpelier, VT

Feature films, documentaries and short films from around the world are presented in a relaxed and informal atmosphere at numerous venues throughout this Vermont community. One of the best film festivals in the region. Basic admission \$8.50, some events are free. www.greenmountainfilmfestival.org. (802) 262-3423.

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~ Circa 1893 ~

December Stowe Notes

by Edward Martin Taber

This morning clear and beautiful; thermometer about thirty-two degrees, cold steady northwest wind.

In the afternoon to the village. At the blacksmith's shop, waiting for Polly's shoes to be changed and the points sharpened. I took the opportunity to walk up F.'s hill, where I have not been now for over a year. The moment I set foot in the little plateau, its peculiar charm was upon me. I think of all places this must always seem the most beautiful to me. I picked a few white violet leaves half hidden under the snow, where the white violets have never failed me before.

I took off my coat, for it is always warm and balmy in this spot, sheltered from winds (all except the northeast), and sat down at the foot of one of the naked old maples. The view was at once strange and familiar. The bare trees threw open much that was formerly obscure, the course of the river in particular. The only snow visible from this point lies along the pastures on the slopes of Hogback.

Walking around the plateau, I renewed my acquaintance with the trees, the gnarled old apple trees, the majestic group of maples in the center, the white birch, aspens, and cherries that crown the knoll.

I even climbed the crest in search of a beech that I once thought of painting, and so had a view of snow-crowned Mansfield.

What lends an added charm to this solitary nook and makes its repose doubly appreciable is that although it is so cozily hidden, and seems to lie lonely, belted with hill and wood and open only to the sky, yet the sounds of the village penetrate its quiet; they rise to it softened by distance—the crowing of cocks, the rattle of wagons, the ringing of forges.

Coming out from the wood on the meadow east of the farm buildings, elevated much above them, a perfect picture of Winter—the sky a uniform leaden gray, the mountains slaty-blue against it, the snowy outline of Mansfield, that from this point holds the

center of the picture with an effect of towering grandeur, faintly indicated. The sun must already have set; there is no light in the southwest, but directly south there is a faint gleam. The thin smoke from the farm rises against the Mountain; the picture is rapidly dissolved into the wintry dusk.

It was at sunset when I drove up the hill, and suddenly, startled by the sound of sleigh-bells, a large flock of birds left the ground, springing up from the snowy undulations of a pasture, and by the sudden display of white wings I knew them for snow buntings. They flew vigorously, some fluttering, dropping down the air, and dashing on again like flakes on a wild northwest wind.



I learn that it was twelve degrees this morning in the village.

Every day I am delighted at the appearance of the cranberry bush in the dooryard. Every leaf has left long ago, but the clustering crimson cranberries remain, defying frost and thaw, unwithered, and of as bright a color as when they first ripened in the autumn.

No blue jays. To exemplify the rarity of birds just now, I may mention that my horse shied at a chickadee that darted down from a barn roof abutting on the side of the road.

A sudden change to extreme cold. Last night the south wind made a great deal of noise in the trees outside of my window and under the eaves. The air was soft, and not cold. The rain pattered on the glass. The moonlight that filtered through the clouds, by reflection from the melting snow, gave considerable brightness to the night. Windless, still, absolutely clear.

How colorless are these winter skies! The mountains bathe in a cold glory. It falls upon them breathlessly cold. They are frozen, as completely tranced in it as the sapless trees.

The horizon sparkles in a flood of sunshine, cold, cold as the streamers of the northern lights.



Deer pauses in the woods—hunting season is over. photo by Nancy Cassidy

~ INTO THE WINTER WOODS ~

Long-johns top and bottom, heavy socks, flannel shirt, overalls steel-toed work boots, sweater, canvas coat, toque, mittens: on.

Out past the grape arbor and garden shed, into the woods. The sun just coming up through the trees. There really is

such a thing as Homer's rosy-fingered dawn. And here it is, this morning. Down the hill, across the brook, up the hill and

into the stand of white pine and red maple where I'm cutting firewood. Open up my workbox, take out chainsaw, gas, bar oil,

kneel down, gas up saw, add bar oil to the reservoir, stand up, mittens off, strap on and buckle my chaps from waist to toe,

hard-hat helmet: on. Ear protectors: down, face screen: down, push in compression release, pull out the choke, pull on the

starter cord, once, twice, go. Stall. Pull out the choke, pull on the starter cord, once, twice, go. Push in the choke. Mittens: back on.

Cloud of two-cycle exhaust smoke wafting up into the morning air and I, looking like a medieval Japanese warrior, wade through

blue smoke, knee-deep snow, revving the chainsaw as I go, headed for that doomed, unknowing maple tree.

—DAVID BUDBILL



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Banjo Dan and the Mid-Night Plowboys

Local Bluegrass Favorites Bring Back Their Classic Albums

Since the 1970s, Banjo Dan and the Mid-nite Plowboys have consistently delivered some of the finest, most dynamic and most original bluegrass music in this corner of the country.

Based in Montpelier, VT, the popular group has built a loyal fan-base and a continuing demand for the many recordings they've produced over the years.

Independent artists without a record deal, Banjo Dan and his various groups have been quite successful self-releasing their CDs and distributing them through a homegrown distribution channel of local stores in Vermont and New England in addition to mail order through their website and at their live shows.

Are you a "Banjo Dan completist"—someone who wants to own everything they've ever recorded? In response to the many inquiries Banjo Dan has been receiving about the "missing" albums, they have gone the extra mile and brought back everything. For the first time their entire back catalog is now available. You can view and order the CDs on their website at www.banjodan.com (click on "Discography"). You want it—you got it!

The New Bremen Town Musicians

The latest release from Banjo Dan Central is "When Time Was Young," from The New Bremen Town Musicians, Dan's and Willy's family band. The "Bremens," now disbanded, featured three truly excellent female vocalists, and this two-disc release offers a remarkable collection of country, folk, and international songs, along with a healthy dose of familiar and obscure gospel quartets. Central Vermont's Times Argus newspaper calls it "one of the best vocal albums released in a long time by Vermonters."

From Fire in the Sugarhouse to Songs of Vermont

Of the five current CDs, *Fire in the Sugarhouse* is their latest, with some outstanding original and traditional material and the exciting fiddling of Phil Bloch. *Like a River*, assembles some of the band's best material from the early years and includes a booklet telling the story of the Plowboys in photos and words. *Music in the Air* features wonderful old country and folk songs by The Sky Blue Boys—Banjo Dan and Willy Lindner. *Mystery and Memories* is Dan's third and final volume of *Banjo Dan's Songs of Vermont*, with guest appearances by Willem Lange, The Russian Duo and about 20 other great musicians.

Nine Early Albums Plus New Bonus Tracks

With the addition of *Some Rust...Runs Good* and *Banjo Dan and the Mid-nite Plowboys* Banjo Dan can now offer all nine of the early albums on CD. The music's all there, sounding great, and several of the re-releases include bonus tracks released for the first time. Banjo Dan comments in his newsletter:

"*Rust* is actually pretty recent (recorded in 2000), and we're still doing some of the great songs on that one, like Cold Wind, Logging Man, Elizabeth, C'est la Vie and Big Al's Black Ice, Brass Moon, Blue Heart. It's the first full album featuring vocals by Jon Henry Drake, so it's a winner. The self-titled album, *Banjo Dan and the Mid-nite Plowboys*, was our first release on compact disc, back in 1990, and it's been out of print way too long. Recorded on a single mic in an old meeting house in East Montpelier with great acoustics, it's the last Banjo Dan recording featuring the excellent vocals of Peter Riley, along with David Gusakov on fiddle. It includes some Plowboy classics that I still love to hear—songs like Old Devils Dream, along with some pretty special instrumentals such as Karelia, a slow air featuring muted banjo and some beautiful violin."

Special holiday pricing is offered on the CDs at www.banjodan.com where you can view track listings and listen to some samples, too.



Banjo Dan and the Mid-Night Plowboys. Pictured here are (left to right) Willy Lindner, Phil Bloch, Dan Lindner, Alan Davis, and Jon Henry Drake. photo by Stefan Hard

The Sky Blue Boys

In between Banjo Dan live performances, The Sky Blue Boys—Banjo Dan members Dan Lindner and brother, Willy Lindner—play as a duo. They are proud to be a throwback to the early days of country music, when a "band" consisted of two guys—usually brothers—harmonizing on the ballads, heart songs, gospel and novelty numbers popular with radio audiences throughout the country.

Performing Live at a Theater Near You!

You can catch Banjo Dan and the Mid-nite Plowboys and the Sky Blue Boys live at the following upcoming performances this winter. Check their website for more dates as the 2011 season unfolds.

December 31: Banjo Dan and the Mid-nite Plowboys, 4 & 6 p.m. at the Unitarian Church, First Night Burlington, VT.

February 9: Sky Blue Boys (Banjo Dan and Willy Lindner), 7:30 p.m. at "Farmer's Night" at the Vermont State House, Montpelier, VT. Free to the public.

March 19: Banjo Dan and the Mid-nite Plowboys, 7:30 p.m. at Green Mountain Festival Series, Green Mountain Union High School, Chester, VT.

March 26: Sky Blue Boys with the Michele Faye Band, 7:30 p.m. at Burnham Hall, Lincoln, VT.

You can place an order directly to Banjo Dan for the CDs you want by sending a check (US funds only; Canadians add \$2 postage for any order) to: Banjo Dan, 242 Main St., Montpelier, VT 05602. For more information call (802) 223-6965, e-mail: banjodan@pshift.com or visit www.banjodan.com.

Banjo Dan CDs are also available across Vermont at independent book and music stores and at country stores.

Impeccable Limbic Vision

If we are to live in the present, being truly alive, then everything recedes except these simple things that we observe, these particular movements that we make: the color of a leaf, the walk in the garden. But if we drift away into the past or future, pretend to exist in two places at once like some model for Einstein's Theory of Relativity, then we become prey to self-deception, unbridled dreams or deep regret.

—Robert Orwell, O.S.B.

Although I had been warned to be good countless times throughout my Catholic childhood, I would never have believed the terrible truth of those ancient admonitions. And had I had the chance to be born again, I would have sought the strictest and most unassailable virtue, choosing ascetic solitude, if necessary, to preserve myself from the guilt that was surging through me.

Or so I thought in a powerful wave of winter depression, the aftermath of a week of cabin fever and a night of bad dreams. Such regret and pain and then the dreariness of the gray day for a moment overpowered me so that I felt sick at heart. Lost and disoriented, I stopped by the woods with Bella, the family border collie.

Bella cared nothing for dreams or gloom. Her limbic brain was far wiser than my less balanced cerebrum. We wandered deep into the forest along the frozen river, and with her good example and the endorphins spawned by walking, my illness lifted like a fog in the sun.

As for virtue and the past, Bella's lack of guile, her trust and focus, were my best guides. Even though no part of the night's residual images might ever be erased or even forgiven, resolution was waiting as I followed the dog along the path, and the magnitude of my morning terror was transformed by a simple therapy.

Phantoms, cold, clouds and chemistry might have sickened me, but health was only on the other side of this maple or that birch. The mind was as fickle as the sky and the weather. It did not require eternal spring, unchanging purity or a perfect, transcendent glade.

Knowing my tendency toward poor judgment, I recognized once again that a second or third life would simply offer me the chance to commit different, not fewer errors. How many times had I come to that conclusion? Each time the haunting dreams occurred, the question was the same. Each time, the answer was the same.

On this particular day, regret was easily dissolved by Bella's focus on the present. The impeccable limbic vision of my border collie reassured me that life still held seductive secrets. Everything was, indeed, in front of me if I would only use my time well. All that I could ever ask for lay within the borders of the bottomland.

—W. L. Felker



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With chilly December and the holidays upon us, it's time to think about curling up with a soft Vermont-made mohair, wool, or alpaca blanket. Find out about the hand-made, homegrown gifts that our friends and neighbors are creating for us—throws, comforters, blankets, mittens, scarves, yarn, sheepskins! You can order directly from the farm, sometimes with a visit, or you can find these goods at a holiday fair or winter farmers market. Here are some of the many places you can explore. Be sure to call ahead.

Alpacas of Windmill Hill Farm

Laura M. Solomon, 842 Grassy Brook Rd., Brookline, VT 05345. (802) 348-9300. trelex88@gmail.com. www.windmillhillartisans.etsy.com. We use hand-spun yarn from our organically-raised alpacas to hand-knit and hand-crochet blankets. Available year-round in all sizes in natural colors including grey, white, fawn, black, or a combination. One-of-a-kind alpaca designer creations—hats, headbands, mittens, scarves, neck warmers, dolls, and afghans. Handspun alpaca yarns for sale. Kits available. Shipping available or pick-up at the farm by appointment.

Broadbrook Mountain Farm

Holly Nash Wolff, 260 Nash Rd., Royalton, VT 05068. (802) 763-7282. bmfoc-tavia@valley.net. Natural-colored blankets made from premium, silky fleece from our 100% purebred Romney Sheep. Our flock is naturally raised on grass and organic hay; no pesticides or chemicals used. Very strong fiber from a calm, healthy flock. Queen-sized blankets are \$325 each; single-sized are \$200.

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trial 18-harness looms in intricate patterns in natural shades of brown, chestnut, and gray. Available year-round in throw and queen-size. Call for details.

Maple Ridge Sheep Farm

Linda Doane, 1187 Connecticut Corners, Braintree, VT 05060. (802) 728-3081. mrsf@mrsf.com. mrsf.com. We have the oldest flock of Shetland Sheep in the USA, raised with grass-based, organic and humane guidelines. The Maple Ridge Coverlet is made exclusively of Shetland wool grown on our farm. They come in traditional coverlet weave (white with a natural color) or in checkerboard twill weave (white with red, green, blue, black, or gray). We offer hand spinners' fleeces, yarn, rovings, quilting and felting batts, and finished wool products.

Stonethrow Farm

Katherine Smith, 136 Jack Perry Rd., Wallingford, VT 05773-9350. (802) 446-3325. katsmith@vermontel.net. I am a handspinner with a mixed flock of Angora goats, Blueface Leicester, Romney and Cormo sheep and their crosses. I have lustrous coated fleeces for handspinning as well as roving, clouds, and pin-drafted sliver. Three styles of luxury yarn, machine-spun using my homegrown soft mohair. Limited amounts of handspun yarn and died mohair locks. Sheepskins. Registered breeding stock available as well as crossbred sheep for the handspinners flock.

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Historic Hildene with a blanket of winter snow.

photo by Mike Ridde

Christmas Eve 1912 at Manchester's Hildene

The ambiance is Victorian Era, it's Christmas Eve 1912 at Hildene, and The Robert Todd Lincoln Family Home is looking as it should as the family prepares for the holiday. The mansion's windows are candlelit and there's a fresh scent of balsam amidst floral flourishes and satin ribbon. A selection of holiday tunes from Robert Lincoln's collection of Aeolian pipe organ music fills the house daily. On weekends local musicians bring the organ and Mary Harlan Lincoln's Steinway to life with their talents.

Even the Christmas tree has been cut and brought in from the woods on the estate to stand proudly in the center hall. A

spruce, it is tall and graceful with ample space between its boughs for the many lovely period appropriate ornaments and candles that adorn it. The lights, sights, sounds, and scents of the season abound at Hildene in Manchester, VT from December 4 through January 2.

A December visit to Hildene provides a unique opportunity to experience the look and feel of President Lincoln's son Robert and his wife Mary's home during the holidays. With a bit of luck, the estate may even be snow covered.

Mary Harlan Lincoln, the lady of the house, described her feelings about being at her Vermont home during the Christmas season in a thank you letter to her close friend, Laura Hollister, dated December 31, 1915, "You've no idea how beautiful it is up here today...everything covered with the whitest, purest snow I ever saw, and this morning (4 degrees below zero) in a beautiful filmy white lace, studded with diamonds!...Mr. Lincoln said he never in his whole life saw such a beautiful sight."

Whether guests choose to visit the Lincoln family's century-old mansion decorated for the holidays or to browse in The Museum Store located in the historic carriage barn, now the Welcome Center, Hildene remains a place to visit during the holiday season.

Visitors can tour the home with interpreters and staff on hand to answer questions about its history and famous residents from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily. View the exhibit "The American Ideal: Abraham Lincoln and the Second Inaugural," and visit the Rowland Agricultural Center at Hildene Farm all while experiencing the estate's magnificent winter surroundings.

On the weekends in December there are guest musicians who play on the Lincoln's organ and piano in the main house. Workshops on old-fashioned ornament and wreath-making as well as a Museum Store open house also take place during December.

Hildene operates a Nordic Center for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing in the grounds. Visit the Ski Pavillion next to the Welcome Center for rentals, lessons, and warming up!

Admission to Hildene is \$13 for adults and \$5 for children 6 to 14, children under 6 are free. There is no admission charge for visiting the Welcome Center and Museum Gift Shop. For more information visit www.hildene.org or call (802) 367-7961. Hildene is located off Rt. 7A just south of the village of Manchester, VT.



photo by Mike Ridde
Ski touring at Hildene.

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A Salute to Ray

by Burr Morse

My friend Ray Hartson says he knows he's a Vermonter but he doesn't know what a Vermonter is. I find that quite odd, what with the multitude of creative speculation out there: ("A Vermonter can remember when we use to have snow up to our ass", eats his dessert first cause life is so uncertain, likes sugar in any form just as long as it's maple".) No, Ray, 76 years old and champion of understatement, simply doesn't know what a Vermonter is but, by God, has it "written all over his face". His nose for Vermont maple syrup has recently led him up here to Morse Farm as a syrup canner. He says he doesn't need additional income at this point in his life, calls it "mad" money. All he says is "I kinda like it up here" and keeps on workin'.

The sounds of country and western music usually blend with the heavenly fragrance of hot maple syrup in our canning room; quite appropriately, I'd say, because Ray Hartson is a country performer himself—Ray's a pedal steel guitar player. For those who don't know what a pedal steel guitar is, it's the instrument that makes the "weepy" sound, without which country music wouldn't be country music (think Toby Keith, "I Love This Bar.") When I asked Ray how he learned how to play this unusual instrument, he got as animated as I had seen him yet (think Willie Nelson, "On the Road Again.") "Well" he said, "I went to Nashville one time and when I heard my first pedal steel, I knew I had to learn to play one. I went home, bought one and practiced it with m'coffee every morning. Then I'd go home and practice after supper. After a fashion, I could play the thing pretty good."

Ray has held that same work ethic through his entire work life. He quit high school after a few months. "Why?" I asked him. "Hated school," he said. I told him that I fully understood, being a school hater myself. At sixteen he went to work at the North Montpelier woolen mills running the "picker machine". At seventeen he talked his mother into signing so he could join the Marines. His Marine journey took him through one tour in Korea followed by an honorable discharge. He then went back to work at the woolen mills. In the 1960s, a changing economy closed the mills and Ray found himself in the cabs of trucks for the next thirty years driving for outfits like Capital Candy Company and Cabot Cheese. For much of Ray's truck driving career, he hauled

what I'd call the "tsunami" of cargos—bulk milk. You see, for sanitary reasons, milk truck tanks have no baffles in them. They are extremely difficult to drive because the milk inside surges, unchecked, from side to side. I asked Ray if he'd ever tipped one over. "Hell, no. Drive slow 'n easy and use your head," he said. "Easier said than done," I said, thinking of all the dented stainless steel tanks I've seen caused by milk truck roll-overs.

He described some of the farms where he picked up milk. "One guy," he said "left his half-gallon milk jug sittin' on top a' the bulk tank expectin' me to measure the milk in the tank and then fill up the jug." That, of course, would have given the farmer his personal milk on the milk company's "nickel." Ray said he never told the farmer but he always filled the milk jug first and then measured the milk that Cabot would pay for—Ray Hartson's as honest as the day is long.

Speaking of long days, when we're canning thousands of quarter-pints of maple syrup, canning gets downright boring. Ray and I talk about things as varied as religion to fishin' to Fords vs. Chevrolets on those days, but being old men, we thoroughly cover the subject of our health—me with "plumbin'" problems, him with bad "wind." Early on we discovered

that we share the same doctor. Our doc is not only an ace practitioner but a down-to-earth guy and that's a prerequisite with both Ray and me in choosing our doctors. One time this doctor told me a story about an older man coming to him. When asked the proverbial question, "Do you drink," the older man palmed his chin, scrunched up his face, and replied, "Well, doctor, ya see—I try 'ta drink at least—a six-

pack a summer." My doctor and I had a good laugh over that but he couldn't tell me who the man was because of this foolish HIPAA business (HIPAA is the federal act which, among other things, portends to guarantee privacy in health care. It's the stupidest thing bureaucrats have done yet—how the hell are we supposed to help our neighbors if we don't know what ails em?) One day when we were working together, I told Ray that story. He gave me kind of a knowing look and said, "Ya' know...that might 'a been me." So much for HIPAA!

Ray's last job before he came to us was running sawing/polishing machinery in a granite shed. He said he applied for the job because he could earn twice the money in half the time than he could driving truck. "The boss actually tried t'talk me out of it—said 'it's a dirty job, y'know.'" Ray simply told that boss that he "could probably buy some soap with the extra money!"

I've been thinking lately of the perfect words to describe a man who has done just about everything—wool worker, soldier, truck driver, musician, granite cutter, maple packer—but I only recently came up with the perfect combination. The other day, Ray told a story about attending a parade over in Northfield. He said he was standing on the sidelines wearing his "Korea Veteran" cap when all of a sudden one of the cadets from Norwich University broke ranks, approached him, and saluted. His eyes were tearing up as he told the story and he said he'd never been so proud in his entire life. He went on to express his optimism for our country's future with young people like that in charge. Suddenly the words came to me, as pure as maple syrup and as lyrical as country music: Ray Hartson, "Great American."

Morse Farm Maple Sugarworks is located at 1168 County Rd., Montpelier, VT, and is open to the public year round. For maple products and more, call (800) 242-2740 or visit www.morsefarm.com.



"For much of Ray's truck driving career, he hauled what I'd call the 'tsunami' of cargos—bulk milk."

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Green Mountain Club Winter Outings

This is a good time to get out and enjoy the early winter weather with the Green Mountain Club. The woods are still and quiet, whether mouse or man, and the solstice is almost here. Here are some Green Mountain Club outings—there is no charge and newcomers and non-members are welcome. Call the leaders listed for details.

Sunday, December 12

Lye Brook Trail, Manchester Center, VT

Hike or snowshoe Lye Brook trail. A moderate 4.8 miles. 9 a.m. Sponsored by the Manchester Section of the GMC. Leader: Keld Alstrup, (802) 362-1422. keldk@aol.com.

Saturday, December 18

Mansfield Ridge, Underhill Center, VT

From Underhill State Park we'll head up Sunset Ridge to the Mansfield Chin (summit), then follow the ridge to the Forehead and return via Maple Ridge and the CCC road. A difficult hike, 9 miles. Sponsored by the Burlington Section of the GMC. Reserve by 12/16. David Hathaway, (802) 899-9982. David.Hathaway.78@gmail.com.

Sunday, December 19

Hawk Hill, Old Brandon, VT

Explore the site of the original settlement of Brandon and an old cemetery. An easy to moderate four miles. Sponsored by the Killington Section of the GMC. Meet at 10 a.m. For more information call Barb & Barry Griffith, (802) 492-3573.

Monday, December 27

Stratton Mountain, Bondville, VT

Snowshoe to Stratton summit via Long Trail and back down the ski trail, about 6-7 miles, moderately difficult. Depart at 8:30 a.m. Sponsored by the Manchester Section of the GMC. Leader: Dave Ratti, email c/o marge.fish@gmail.com. (802) 366-0698.

Tuesday, December 28

Mt. Equinox, Manchester, VT

Snowshoe Mt. Equinox via Beartown Trail, 7 miles, difficult. Depart at 8:30 a.m. Sponsored by the Manchester Section of the GMC. Leaders: Steve and Alyson Grzyb, (802) 362-6180. alyruby@gmail.com.

Sunday, January 9

The Ball, Arlington, VT

Depending on conditions, we'll snowshoe or ski The Ball, one of the five mountains in Arlington. A moderate to difficult five-six mile outing. Depart at 9 a.m. Sponsored by the Killington Section of the GMC. Leader: Larry Walter, (802) 775-3855.

Saturday, January 15

Wallingford Pond, Wallingford, VT

Snowshoe or ski around the pond, depending on conditions. A moderate three mile outing. Depart at 9 a.m. Sponsored by the Killington Section of the GMC. Leader: Tom Cops, (802) 774-5144.

Saturday, January 22

Bamforth Ridge, Bolton, VT

Snowshoe outing on the Long Trail. A moderate six miles. Depart at 8:30 a.m. Sponsored by the Killington Section of the GMC. Leader: Allison Henry, (802) 775-1627.

Saturday, January 29

High Pond, Sudbury, VT

Snowshoe and explore winter wildlife habitat at this pretty Nature Conservancy preserve. Depart at 9 a.m. A moderate four-five miles. Sponsored by the Killington Section of the GMC. Leader: Barb & Barry Griffith, (802) 492-3573.

For more information about Green Mountain Club events, membership and activities contact the Club at (802) 244-7037 or gmc@greenmountainclub.org. Visit www.greenmountainclub.org.



A lone cross-country skier traverses the meadow at Hildene in Manchester, VT. photo by Lee Krohn

FIRS IN SNOW

These woodland chieftains hear and know
The slow, majestic speech of snow.

The white wind-cloud fleet, cruising by,
Dips them salute from seas of sky.

Star-clocks have ticked for their keen ears
Earth's moments thundering into years.

The lynx and wolf and shrewd fox pause
For housing here till hunger gnaws.

What outpost stands with surer tread,
Armored in hush, from foot to head?

Tonight the moon has garbed these firs
Like Gothic kings and emperors.

—J. CORSON MILLER
Driftwind, 1932



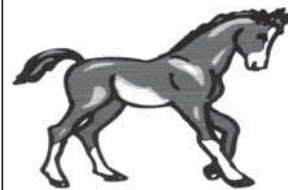
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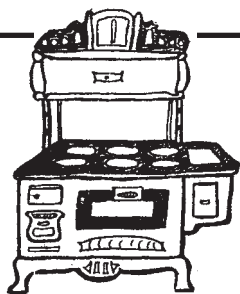
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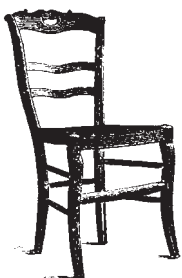
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Castleton Artist Specializes in Trompe l'oeil



photo by Ellie Chiccarelli
A Hoosier cabinet painted in the trompe l'oeil style at Memories Forever.

by Charles Sutton

Memories Forever is an apt name for this artist's studio and shop in Bomoseen, VT. Visitors can't help but remember how surprised and amused they were when a simply painted object tricked them into thinking it was the real thing!

This double-take on art here is the handy-work of artist Ellie Chiccarelli who specializes in a technique called trompe l'oeil (French for 'deceive the eye'). The end result is extremely realistic imagery that creates the optical illusion that the depicted objects appear in three dimensions.

Ellie said she has been using and perfecting the technique for 25 years. Unlike traditional artwork, these paintings take days to complete as the acrylic paint is layered, and she has to wait for each layer to dry before doing the next one.

One of her most successful works depicts a painted tablecloth on a sideboard. The cloth is on crooked and a piece hangs over the side. "One of my customers has more than once tried to straighten her 'mistake.'"

Even the artist herself can be fooled by her own work. Ellie recalls trying to grab a painted-on comb on a shelf she was moving—"I really tried to grab it."

Ellie has a good sense of humor that comes through in her art. The more challenging the assignment the better—like painting a small table to look like a watermelon!

Some of her prized work is at her home in Castleton, VT. A visitor one day warned her about the bees' nest in the corner of her cathedral ceiling. Actually the nest and bees were painted there in the trompe l'oeil style. Next to her refrigerator is a handsome 3- x 8-foot cobblestone wall that the unsuspecting admire and want to touch. This masonry job is actually paint on wallboard.

Aside from her specialty, Ellie does other types of painting. For Christmas she hand cuts and paints tile into coasters and creates seasonal designs on Christmas tree bulbs. She loves to decorate old cross-cut saws, antique pottery jugs and crocks, soap buckets, glass, chairs, and lots of wooden signs.

Ellie and her husband John moved to Vermont from Natick, MA 28 years ago. John has a talent with wood, and has his crafts in the shop. Two of Ellie's sisters are creative: Joan



photo by Charles Sutton
Ellie Chiccarelli completes a painting on an old arrowback chair at her shop, Memories Forever, in Bomoseen, VT.

Stone makes unusually beautiful doll's clothes and Lynn Stirk does random landscape quilts. Samples of their work are also available in Ellie's store.

Some artists that do trompe l'oeil paintings do large murals or even the outside walls of buildings. Ellie said the largest mural she has painted was a 15-foot picket fence for the wall of a customer's bedroom. In Rutland she has done cows for

the Ben and Jerry's store on Route 4, and the cows and life-like jute boxes at the former Ben and Jerry's on Route 7. In addition to commissioned work, Ellie offers painting classes at her store and studio.

Memories Forever is located on Route 4A in Bomoseen, VT. The store and studio is open daily Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Fridays until 6 p.m.

For information about the paintings or the classes call (802) 468-3191 or visit memoriesforevervt.etsy.com.

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Large Contemporary Ski House—Views of Sugarbush. Very private large home on 6.5 acres. Great view from deck overlooks Mad River Glen and Sugarbush slopes. Fireplaced living room with TV/DVD/cable and WiFi. Laptops and cell phones work at the house. Hot tub in the yard is the perfect way to end a ski day. Great snowshoeing and sledding right out your front door. Ideal location between Mad River Glen, Sugarbush and downtown Waitsfield. For spring and summer we have a tire swing, swing set with slide, and fortress (built on the ground) for the kids; hammock for lounging; and horseshoes on the property. A short drive takes you to great trout fishing and hiking in the valley. Pets with permission. On five levels: three full baths, four bedrooms and loft sleeps 12-14. Rent by weekend, week, or nightly rate. Contact: Greg Gryllakis, (617) 823-4550 or (978) 409-1138. gregnsarah@comcast.net. (Listing #1133)

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This all-season house on private Justin Lake in Londonderry, VT is the perfect setting for a winter vacation. (Listing #538) photo by Kathy Peterson

floors and heated terracotta tiles complement this spacious timber-framed structure. Southwest-facing windows make the cedar and earth tone walls glow with natural light. Contact: Shawna or Eamon O'Shea, (802) 326-3130 or (802) 393-3114. shedyacres@gmail.com. (Listing #1318)

STOWE, VT

Goldilocks Cabin—A Romantic Getaway. This is the perfect setting for a honeymoon or a romantic getaway, and is ideal for small families as well. Sleeps two to five. This lovely cottage, nestled on four wooded acres, is located just one mile from Stowe village and eight miles from Mt. Mansfield and skiing. Equipped with every comfort, and well-appointed with Black Forest and French antiques, antler chandeliers, and hand-loomed rugs. The piping hot wood stove and chiming cuckoo clock make this cabin a cozy retreat after a day of hiking or skiing. Open plan living room, dining room (seats six), and fully-equipped kitchen. A ladder leads to the loft (a favorite daytime hangout for older kids). There is also a sleeper sofa in the living room. The master bedroom has an antique four-poster bed with sumptuous mattress, a sitting area with sleeper sofa, television and private deck. The cabin has two decks, gas grill, WiFi, cable, free calling in US and Canada, and washer/dryer. Fine linens and towels are supplied along with all the amenities to make your stay comfortable. We think you will find Goldilocks cabin is just right. Contact: Jill, (508) 228-9598. jill@nantucket.net. (Listing #484)

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

For information on more Vermont vacation rentals, visit www.vermontproperty.com, write Vermont Vacation Rentals, PO Box 1564, Montpelier, VT 05601 or call (802) 229-2433.

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 —NELLIE S. RICHARDSON

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Vermont Country Calendar

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BARRE. Barre Town Radio Controlled Car Racing—Nascar Style. Every Sunday through March 20. Doors open at 8 am and racing from 11 am to 4 pm. NASCAR-style racing on a banked, carpet, oval. Great fun for all ages. Free to spectators. 15 Sherman Dr. (802) 839-7171. *Through March 20.*

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

BENNINGTON. Annual Festival of Trees. A community created exhibit of over 20 uniquely designed and decorated holiday trees each set in a beautifully created vignette. 10 am to 5 pm everyday (closed Wednesday). Bennington Museum, 75 Main St. (802) 447-1571. benningtonmuseum.org. *Through December 31.*

BENNINGTON. Bennington-Walloomsac Winter Farmers Market. Dec. 18, Jan. 15, Feb. 19, Mar. 19, April 16. 10 am – 2 pm. First Baptist Church at 601 East Main St. For more information contact Sarah Sanfilippo. (802) 688-7210. info@walloomsac.org. walloomsac.org.

BRANDON. Chess Club every Sunday at 12:30 pm. French Roundtable every Saturday at 9:30 am. Ball & Chain Cafe at the Briggs Carriage Bookstore, 16 Park St. (802) 247-0050. info@briggscarriage.com. www.briggscarriage.com. snakemountainbluegrass.com.

BRATTLEBORO. 5th Annual Winter Farmers' Market. Sponsored by Post Oil Solutions. Over 30 vendors offering local produce, eggs, locally-raised grass-fed meats, cider, fresh baked goods, local preserves, hand-made soaps, jewelry, pottery. Lunch, live music, certified herbalist, and much more. EBT and Debit cards accepted. Saturdays from 10 am to 2 pm at the Robert H. Gibson River Garden, downtown on Main St. For more info contact Sherry Maher, manager, (802) 869-2141. farmersmarket@postoilsolutions.org. *Saturdays through March 26.*

BRATTLEBORO. Fair Winds Farm Hay & Sleigh Rides. Half-hour reserved horse-drawn rides through fields and woods, and along a babbling brook. Adults \$12, kids 3-12 \$6, minimum \$50, after 5 pm \$80. Special rides for Winter Solstice on Dec. 20 & 21 and on New Year's Eve. Rustic heated greenhouse available for your event. Visit our farm store. Upper Dummerston Rd. off Rt. 30. (802) 254-9067. fairwind@sover.net. www.fairwindsfarm.org.

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

BRATTLEBORO. Open Mic. Longest running in the area! 7:30-11 pm at Adagio Trattoria, 123 Main St. Hosted by Kevin Parry. To sign up for a 20 minute slot call (802) 254-6046. kevinparrymusic.com. *Every Thursday.*

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

BRATTLEBORO. Exhibits at the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center. Open 11-5. Closed Tuesdays and Wednesdays. 10 Vernon St. (802) 257-0124. info@brattleboromuseum.org. www.brattleboromuseum.org.

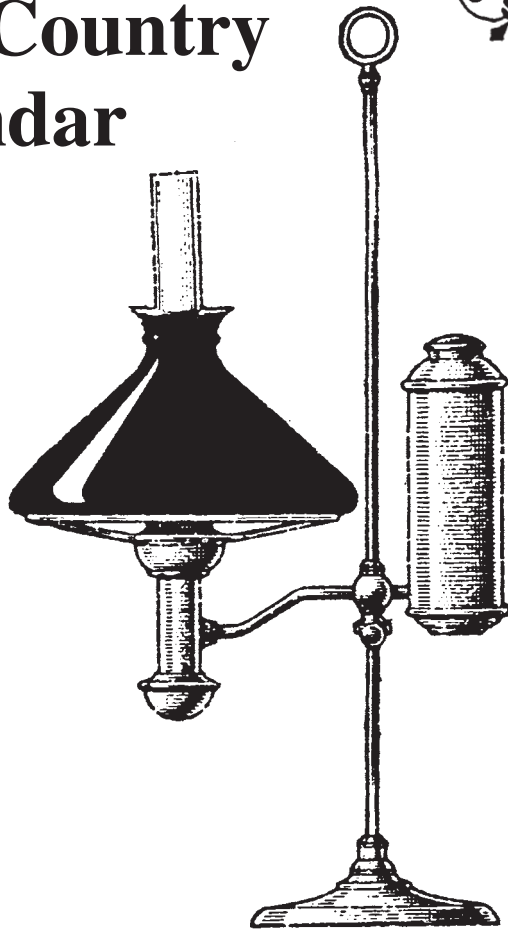
BURLINGTON. ECHO Lake Aquarium and Science Center. Exhibits, workshops, programs, café, gift shop, story hour. Daily 10 am – 5 pm. Admission: \$9.50 adults, \$7 ages 3 - 17. \$8 seniors and students, under 3 free. One College St. (802) 864-1848. www.echovermont.org.

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

CHESTER. Monthly Public Astronomy Meetings for the Southern Vermont Astronomy Group. Second Tuesday of the month – free to the public at Whiting Library. September-May, 7 pm; June-August, 8 pm. Star parties and other events. For membership and information contact the Southern Vermont Astronomy Group, PO Box 424, Chester VT 05143. www.sovera.org.

CHESTER. Activities at Gassetts Grange Hall. Craft workshops, Thursdays 2-4 pm, everyone welcome, free refreshments and coffee, info: Bonnie, (802) 875-3500. Bingo Thursdays 6-9 pm. Country Jamboree 1-4 pm Dec. 12, \$5. Monthly community breakfast buffet, first Saturdays, 8-10 am, \$5. Gassetts Grange Hall, junction of Rts. 10 and 103N. Dave (802) 875-2637.

CHESTER. Gallery 103. Dedicated to promoting fine American Craft and Design, with an exclusive showroom of Junker Studio Ironwork. Monthly "Featured Artists." Owned and operated by Elise & Payne Junker. Thurs-Mon, 10 am - 5 pm. On Rt. 103, just south of town. (802) 875-7400. Gallery103.com.



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

DANBY. Performance Venue and Concert Hall. Live music, comedy, and entertainment on Friday and Saturday nights. BYOB. Appetizers, desserts & coffee available. Doors open at 7:30, concerts at 8 pm. Check out our pages on Facebook and MySpace. The Little Cabaret, 34 South Main St. Advance tickets only. Call (802) 293-5000. thelittlecabaret@yahoo.com.

DANBY FOUR CORNERS. Danby Dog Art Studio. Folk Art, Primitive Paintings & Reproductions by Susan Houghton Debus. Open most days—please call ahead. Studio is located at 1764 Tinmouth Rd, 1.5 miles north of the Four Corners Store. (802) 293-2489.

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

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

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

GRANVILLE, NY. The Slate Valley Museum. Exhibits, events, demonstrations, programs, and gift shop. Christmas in Wales exhibit (*through Dec. 30*). Museum is open Tues thru Sat 10-5, Sun 1-4 pm. Admission \$5. Downtown at 17 Water St. (518) 642-1417. www.slatevalleymuseum.org.

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

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

LUDLOW. Fletcher Farm School for the Arts and Crafts. Vermont's oldest residential arts and crafts school. Exhibits, classes, lectures, and workshops. Fletcher Farm School, 611 Rt. 103 South. For information or to request a catalog, contact (802) 228-8770. www.fletcherfarm.org.

MANCHESTER. Southern Vermont Arts Center Exhibitions. Works by nine artists and the 16th Annual Little Picture Show. Gallery, special events, concerts, gift shop, and café. SVAC, Yester House Gallery, West Rd. (802) 362-1405. www.svac.org. *November 20 - January 2.*

MANCHESTER. A Victorian Christmas at Historic Hildene. Tour Robert Todd Lincoln's mansion decorated for the holidays. Music, special activities, museum store. Open daily 9:30 am to 4:30 pm. Admission. (802) 362-1788. info@hildene. www.hildene.org. *December 1-31.*

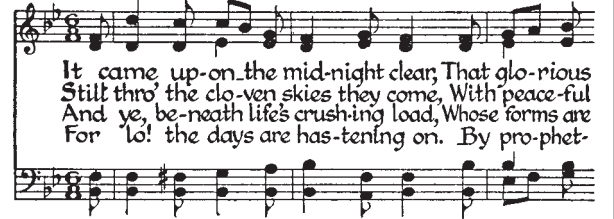
MIDDLEBURY. Brown Bag Lunch History Talks. Bring your lunch; desserts and beverages provided; fee \$2. Museum open Tues-Sat 10 am-5 pm and Sun 1-5 pm. Henry Sheldon Museum of Vermont History, One Park St. (803) 388-2117. *Second Tuesdays Sept-June.*

MIDDLEBURY. Middlebury Arts Walk. Second Friday of every month. Art, music, food and fun. 40 venues will be displaying art from 5 to 7 pm—stores remain open, becoming galleries displaying the work of dozens of area artists. (802) 388-7951. middleburyartswalk.com.



It Came upon the Midnight Clear

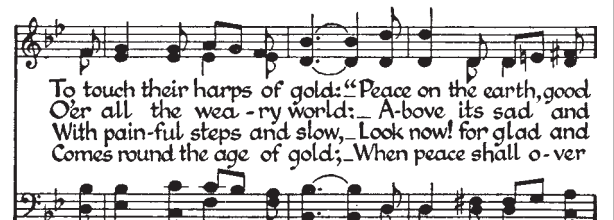
Edmund H. Sears Richard S. Willis



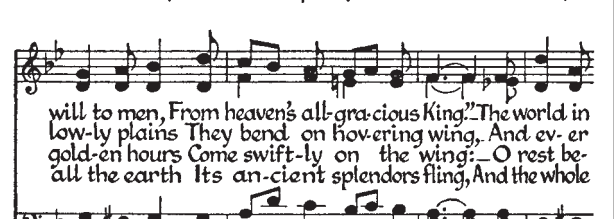
It came up-on the mid-night clear, That glo-ri-ous
Still thro' the clo-ven skies they come, With peace-ful
And ye, be-neath life's crush-ing load, Whose forms are
For lo! the days are has-tening on. By pro-phet-



song of old, From an-gels bend-ing near the earth
wings un-furled, And still the heav-en-ly mu-sic floats
bend-ing low, Who toil a-long the climb-ing way
bands fore-told, When with the ev-er-cir-cling years



To touch their harps of gold: "Peace on the earth, good
O'er all the wea-ry world: A-bove its sad and
With pain-ful steps and slow, Look now! for glad and
Comes round the age of gold; When peace shall o-ver



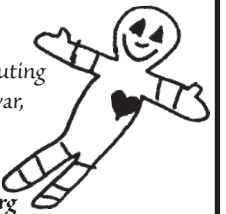
will to men, From heav-en's all-gra-cious King." The world in
low-ly plains They bend on hover-ing wing, And ev-er
gold-en hours Come swift-ly on the wing: O rest be-
all the earth Its an-cient splen-dors fling, And the whole

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TO JESUS ON HIS BIRTHDAY

For this your mother sweated in the cold,
For this you bled upon the bitter tree;
A yard of tinsel ribbon bought and sold;
A paper wreath; a day at home for me.
The merry bells ring out, the people kneel;
Up goes the man of God before the crowd;
With voice of honey and with eyes of steel
He drones your humble gospel to the proud.
Nobody listens. Less than the wind that blows
Are all your words to us you died to save.
O Prince of Peace! O Sharon's dewy Rose!
How mute you lie within your vaulted grave.
The stone the angel rolled away with tears
Is back upon your mouth these thousand years.

—EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

Vermont Country Calendar

(Ongoing events continued)

MONTPELIER. Homeschool Wednesdays. For children ages 6-12. Call to register. 1-3 pm. The Vermont Historical Society Museum, 109 State St. on the first floor of the Pavilion Building. (802) 828-2180.

MONTPELIER. Capital City Winter Farmers Market. Produce, meats, cheese, eggs, crafts, baked goods, and prepared foods to snack on! 10 am – 2 pm at the Montpelier High School, Bailey Ave. (802) 223-2958. manager@montpelierfarmersmarket.com. montpelierfarmersmarket.com. 1st & 3rd Saturdays, Dec-April.

MONTPELIER. Giant Book Sale. Thousands of books and more, arranged by subject. Great prices. Many brand new. Mon-Thurs 10 am - 8 pm, Fri & Sat 10 am - 5:30 pm. Kellogg-Hubbard Library, 135 Main St. (802) 223-3338. info@kellogg-hubbard.org. www.kellogg-hubbard.org. December 13 through January 15.

NORTH BENNINGTON. Free Open Studio for Teens. Explore art, working with paint, pastel, wood, plaster, cement, fabric inks, mixed media and more. Every Tuesday 3-5 pm during the school year. Vermont Arts Exchange at the Sage Street Mill. (802) 442-5549. vtartxchange.org.

NORTH BENNINGTON. Free Equine Seminars. 6:30 to 8 pm Wednesdays January through February presented by Arlington Equine and Whitman's Feed Store, 1873 Route 67 West. (802) 442-2851.

NORWICH. The Norwich Farmers Markets. We have moved downtown and indoors for the fall and winter. Fresh produce, storage vegetables, eggs, cheese, baked goods, crafts and clothing all produced by your neighbors. Winter Markets from 10 am – 1 pm at Tracy Hall on Jan. 8, Feb. 12, March 12 & April 9. (802) 384-7447. www.norwichfarmersmarket.org.

PITTSFORD. New England Maple Museum. Tour through Vermont's famous maple industry and visit our gift shop. Winter hours: Nov. 1–Dec. 23, 10 am – 4 pm daily. Closed Dec. 24-26, open Dec 27-30. Reopening for 2011 season on Mar. 12. On Rt. 7, south of town. (802) 483-9414. www.maplemuseum.com.

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

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

PUTNEY. Coyote's Path Wilderness Program. Monthly nature immersion program for ages 6 to 16. All day, one Saturday per month. (802) 254-5800. Through June 4.

PUTNEY. Horse-Drawn Sleigh & Wagon Rides. Pulled by beautiful Percheron horses. By reservation only, weather permitting. Farm store open through Christmas; apples and cider available all winter. Green Mountain Orchards, 130 West Hill Rd. (exit 4, I-91), look for signs in Putney Village. (802) 387-5851. www.greenmtorchards.com.

QUECHEE. Vermont Institute of Natural Science Nature Center. Exhibits, nature trail, store, nature camp. Open 10 am – 4 pm, 7 days a week. Admission: adults \$10.50, seniors \$9.50, youth (3-18) \$8.50, children 3 and under free. VINS Nature Center, 6565 Woodstock Rd., Rt. 4, 1/4 mile west of the Quechee Gorge. (802) 359-5000. info@vinsweb.org. www.vinsweb.org.

RANDOLPH. Chandler Music Hall's Annual Holiday Artisan's Bazaar. Shop for holiday gifts from juried VT & NH artists & craftspeople. Thurs & Fri 12-6, Sat & Sun 10-4, or by appt. (802) 431-0204. Through December 21.

RANDOLPH CENTER. Turkey Hill Farm. Farmer's Kitchen cooking classes. Farm skills workshops. "Moo-tique" farm store, raw milk micro-dairy, pasture-raised meats, local farm products, and books. Spacious farm-stay apartment for short-term farm stays. Chapter meetings for the Weston A. Price Foundation. Call for schedules or visit website. Stuart and Margaret Osha, 55 Turkey Hill Rd. (802) 728-7064, (802) 431-3028. turkeyhillfarmvt.com.

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

RUTLAND. Fourth Annual Winter Farmers Market. The downtown Rutland Farmers Market moves indoors till Spring! Over 40 vendors, selling everything from fresh salad greens in January to locally-grown apples in March. Local wools, grass-fed meats, artisan cheeses, freshly baked organic breads, honey, jellies & jams, maple syrup & maple products, hot foods, wines, glasswork and jewelry—a great place to shop, eat and visit! 10 am to 2 pm every Saturday through early May. Located in the Old Strand Theater (enter through the Rutland Natural Food Co-Op at 77 Wales St.). For more info call Greg Cox (802) 683-4606. vtfarmersmarket.org.

RUTLAND. Winter All-Member Art Exhibit. Featuring small works, juried and non-juried, especially nice for holiday shopping. Wed – Sat, 10-5; Sun 12-4. Chaffee Art Center, 16 South Main St. (802) 775-0356. chaffeeartcenter.org. November 26 – January 8.

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

RUTLAND. Chaffee Art Center/Rutland Area Art Association. Exhibits, classes, workshops, open studio evenings. Gallery open Wednesday through Saturday 10 am to 5 pm and Sunday 12 noon until 4 pm. 16 South Main St. (802) 775-0356. www.chaffeeartcenter.org.

RUTLAND. Himalayan Salt Cave. Come relax in the only public Himalayan Salt Cave in North America. Mon–Fri 10 am – 8 pm, Sat & Sun 10 am – 6 pm. \$10. Pyramid Holistic Wellness Center, 120 Merchants Row. Reservations. (802) 775-8080. www.pyramidvt.com.

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

SAXTONS RIVER. Foreign Language Potluck Suppers. Spanish, French, and German conversations and food. Free and open to the public. 6 pm, Main Street Arts. Call for schedule. (802) 869-2960. msa@sover.net. www.MainStreetArts.org.

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

SOUTH ROYALTON. Winter Farmers' Market. Many processed foods, produce, baked goods and locally-made crafts. Bread, pickles, relishes, maple syrup, pottery, jewelry, woodenware. Open rain or shine, wheelchair accessible, bathroom available, parking. Every Thursday from 3-5:30 at the Red Door Church on the Green. Info contact Bushrod Powers, (802) 763-8087. bushrod.powers@valley.net.

SOUTH ROYALTON. Holiday Lights. Christmas lighting display of 160,000 lights on the grounds and buildings, and nativity display. 4:15–10:30 pm nightly. Showing of films Joy to the World, Mormon Tabernacle Choir Christmas Concerts, and Mr. Kruger's Christmas starring Jimmy Stewart at the theater. Refreshments in the Meeting House. Nativity Art Exhibit by Simon Dewey and Jane Arnold. Free admission. Joseph Smith Birthplace Memorial on LDS Lane, Dairy Hill Rd. off Rt. 14. (802) 763-7742. Through January 9.

SOUTH WALLINGFORD. Line Dancing every Tuesday. Beginners and experienced. \$5 per person, snack bar available. 6-9 pm at the Maple Valley Grange Hall, Rt. 7. (802) 446-2872. www.wallingfordvt.com.

SPRINGFIELD. Shape Note Singing. Come and join us. 7 pm on the first and third Fridays at Pat and Walt Colterlyahn's, 8 Lincoln St. For more information please call (802) 885-9521.

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

SPRINGFIELD. Eleanor Ellis Springweather Nature Area. Overlooks North Springfield Lake. Trails meander through 70 acres of fields and forests, and provide many opportunities to enjoy the natural world. Reservoir Rd, off Rt. 106 (Exit 7, I-91), turn at the sign for North Springfield Lake. Free to the public. (802) 263-5321. www.weathersfieldvt.org.

ST. JOHNSBURY. "Angels Among Us." An exhibition of the many angel artworks of Stephen Huneck. Opening reception Dec. 18, 11 am – 4 pm. All are welcome, especially the family dog. It is free to attend daily. The Stephen Huneck Gallery at Dog Mountain, 143 Parks Rd. (800) 249-2580. Info@dogmt.com. www.dogmt.com. December 18 – January 31.

STOWE. Candy Cane Making. Watch chocolatiers boil, pull, turn, roll, and twist these special candy canes into works of art. Call ahead and make reservations. Admission is free to watch and \$6 per person to make your own candy cane. 11 am on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Laughing Moon Chocolates, 78 South Main St. (802) 253-9591. laughingmoonchocolates.com. Through Dec 22.

STOWE. Festival of Trees & Light and Members Art Show & Sale. The gallery is decorated with evergreens beautifully adorned by the community and the Jewish Community will prepare a Menorah display. Admission by donation. Wed-Sun 12-5 pm. Helen Day Art Center, 90 Pond St. (802) 253-8358. helenday.com. December 3 – January 2.



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Vermont Country Calendar

STOWE. Exhibit: Handmade Judaica Show.

Contemporary works from five craftspeople will be on display at Stowe Craft. Open 10 am – 6 pm daily. Stowe Craft Gallery, 55 Mountain Rd. (802) 362-2200. info@stowecraft.com. www.stowecraft.com. *Through Dec 31.*

TINMOUTH. Contra Dance every fourth Friday of the month. Admission \$8, \$6 for teens, \$3 for children 5-12, under 5 free. Refreshments available. 8 pm at Tinmouth Community Center, Rt. 140, 5 miles west of Wallingford. For info or directions call (802) 446-2928. Tinmouthvt.org.

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

WARDSBORO. Holiday Bazaar. Sponsored by the Friends of the Wardsboro Library. Handmade ornaments, some as low as \$1. Hand-hooked woolen ornaments made by a local "hooker" for \$5 and up. Tiny boutique of inexpensive gifts, cards, photo-card sleeves, gift wine bottle "sweaters," handmade hats, mittens, and toddler-sized aprons, tabletop evergreen trees and wooden reindeer centerpieces. At the Wardsboro Library, 171 Main St. (802) 896-9766. anitarafael@gmail.com. *Through December 31.*

WEST NEWBURY. Eastern Square Dance. Traditional singing squares, waltzes, polkas, foxtrots, two-steps, Virginia Reel, Portland Fancy, Paul Jones, others. With Adam Boyce, fiddler/caller. 8 pm at the Community Hall on Tyler Farm Rd. (802) 484-7719 or adamrboyce@juno.com. *Fourth Saturdays starting January.*

WEST RUTLAND. Free Financial Fitness Classes by NeighborWorks® of Western Vermont. Topics covered include: Basic Budgeting, Using a Checkbook, Saving and Investing, Borrowing Basics, Credit, and Renting in Vermont. Call to find out the dates of topics that interest you. 3-5 pm Thursdays at the NeighborWorks office at 110 Marble St. (802) 438-2303 x 216.

WEST RUTLAND. Reiki Experience. Classes at 11 am with Sylvie Lio and open-share healings at 3 pm. All are welcome. Vermont Herbal General Store, 518 Main St. (802) 438-2766. info@vermontherbal.com. www.vermontherbal.com. *The last Sunday of each month.*

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

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

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

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Listen Community Dinner. Free nutritious meals served 5-6 pm every Monday and Wednesday. Take-home available. St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 749 Hartford Ave. (603) 448-4553.

WINDSOR. Gary Milek's Painting Show "Season's of Alchemy." Works in egg tempera & gold leaf. Free. Fri-Sun 10 am – 5 pm. Cider Hill Art Gallery at 1747 Hunt Rd. (802) 674-6825. www.garymilek.com. *Through Dec 19.*

WINDSOR. New Group Exhibition and Holiday Show: "Swept Away." Featuring the work of more than 20 craftspeople and artists, including gallery owner Nancy Silliman. The public is invited to an opening reception on Nov. 20, from 4-7 pm. Open Mon-Fri 10 am – 6 pm and Sat 10 am – 3 pm. Nuance Gallery, 85 Main St. (802) 674-9616. nancysilliman@myfairpoint.net. www.wix.com/kcwebz/nuance1. *Through January 29.*

WILMINGTON. Adams Farm. Tour the livestock barn, see the animals, and visit the farm store. Special events and farm activities. Call for rates and reservations. Adams Farm, Higley Hill Rd. (802) 464-3762. www.adamsfamilyfarm.com.

WOODSTOCK. Contradance and Dinner. Every third Friday of the month. Music by Old Sam Peabody, calling by Delia Clark. Vegetarian dinner 5:30-7:30 pm; family dance at 6 pm; potluck dessert at 7:30 pm; evening contradance 8-10:30 pm. \$8 suggested donation, under 18 free. Don't bother cooking, you can just come and dance! At the Little Theater, 54 River St. For more info call Steve at (802) 785-4039. hoffmanathome@gmail.com. *Dec 17 and every third Friday.*

WOODSTOCK. Christmas at the Farm. Visit the authentically decorated 1890 Farm House with preparations underway for the holiday meal. Tour the operating dairy farm. Programs and activities, ornament-making. Admission: adults \$11; over 62 \$10; children 5-15 \$6; 3-4 \$3; 2 & under free. 10 am – 3:30 pm at Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. *December weekends and December 26 – January 2.*

WOODSTOCK. Sleigh Rides at Sugarbush Farm. Enjoy a ride through the woods with Belgian draft horses. Call for reservations based on weather conditions. Shop in the 1865 farm house store. Sugarbush Farm, 591 Sugarbush Farm Rd. (802) 457-1757. betsy_sugarbush@wildblue.net. www.sugarbushfarm.com. *December 18 through January 3.*

WOODSTOCK. First Run Movies at the Woodstock Town Hall Theatre. Old-fashioned movie-going experience with state-of-the-art Dolby Digital sound system and the largest movie screen in the Upper Valley! Fri-Mon, 7:30 pm. Adults \$8, seniors \$7, under 12, \$6. (802) 457-3981. www.pentanglearts.org.

WOODSTOCK. Hand-in-Hand Community Meal. All are welcome. Free, donations accepted. Every Thursday, 5-7 pm in the Social Hall of the Unitarian Church, 7 Church St. (802) 457-9272.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 16

HANOVER, NH. The 36th Annual Christmas Revels: A French Canadian Celebration of the Winter Solstice. Featuring renowned guests artists and the magical tale of *The Flying Canoe*. Tickets \$30-\$8. Thursday evening children \$5. 7 pm at Spaulding Auditorium, Hopkins Center. (603) 646-2422 or hop.dartmouth.edu. www.revelsnorth.org/xmas-revels. *Also December 17, 18 & 19.*

MIDDLEBURY. The Rekindling of "Night Fires." This winter solstice celebration, rooted in ancient traditions, draws on the music, poetry and dance of many cultures. A beloved local tradition for many years, now revived, presented by Theatre Group Ltd., under the direction of Marianne Lust. Tickets \$18; seniors \$15; children under 18, \$13. 8 pm. Town Hall Theater, 68 South Pleasant St. (802) 382-9222. www.townhalltheater.org. *Through December 18.*

WARREN. VSO Brass Quintet & Counterpoint. Robert De Cormier leads the ensemble in a festive combination of brass and choral works. Free admission, but tickets required, call (802) 496-9714. Performance at 7:30 pm at the Warren United Church. Call (802) 863-5966 or visit www.vso.org.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Concert: The English Beat. Tickets \$35. 8 pm at the Tupelo Music Hall, 188 S. Main St. (603) 437-5100. www.tupelohallvermont.com.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 17

BELLOWS FALLS. Holiday Farmer's Market. Handcrafts, prepared foods, holiday treats! Root veggies, squash, apples, sauerkraut, eggs, beef, chicken, lamb, maple syrup, baked goods, handmade soap, crafted jewelry, kids clothes. 4-7 pm. At Boccelli's on the Canal, downtown. Info call Abi Healey at (802) 387-6128. bellowsfallsmarket@gmail.com. www.bffarmersmarket.com.

BENNINGTON. Club Muse Holiday Dance Party. Fun, friends, dancing, and cash bar. Tour the Festival of Trees Exhibit. Holiday shopping and silent auction. \$5 cover charge. 8-11 pm. Bennington Museum, 75 Main St. (802) 447-1571. info@benningtonmuseum.org. www.benningtonmuseum.org.

CHESTER. Jane Austen Birthday Celebration Weekend. High tea, five course English breakfasts, formal period dress, English Christmas dinner and more! *Pride & Prejudice* on the big screen in the parlor. Book reviews by Misty Valley Books. Actress Kandie Carle will perform *The Victorian Lady*. Inn Victoria, 321 Main St. (802) 362-2200. innkeeper@innvictoria.com. *Through December 19.*

CRAFTSBURY COMMON. Local Children's Book Illustrators Exhibit. Illustrators from local children's book publisher, Radiant Hen, will be showing their work. Books will also be for sale. 10:30 am – 4:30 pm. The Art House Gallery, 1146 North Craftsbury Rd. (802) 586-2545. www.vermontartthouse.com. *Through December.*

DANBY. Performance: Yvonne Bruno. Turkish Bellydancing with music and history. BYOB. Appetizers, desserts & coffee available. Doors open at 7:30, concert at 8 pm. The Little Cabaret, 34 South Main St. Tickets \$10 in advance. Call (802) 293-5000. thelittlecabaret@yahoo.com. See us on Facebook and MySpace.

HANOVER, NH. The 36th Annual Christmas Revels: A French Canadian Celebration of the Winter Solstice. Featuring renowned guests artists and the magical tale of *The Flying Canoe*. Tickets \$30-\$8. 7 pm at Spaulding Auditorium, Hopkins Center. (603) 646-2422 or hop.dartmouth.edu. www.revelsnorth.org/xmas-revels. *Also December 18 & 19.*

HANOVER, NH. Book & Author Event. Lynn Levine will present her new children's fiction book, *Snow Secrets*. Lynn is a Vermont consulting forester and environmental educator. Free. 11 am. Dartmouth Bookstore, 33 S Main St. (603) 643-3616. dartmouthbooks.bncollege.com.

JAY. VSO Brass Quintet & Counterpoint. Robert De Cormier leads the ensemble in a festive combination of brass and choral works. 7:30 pm at the International Room at Jay Peak Resort. (802) 863-5966 or visit www.vso.org.

LEBANON, NH. Musical: White Christmas. The music of Irving Berlin presented by Wet Paint Players from Lebanon High School. 7 pm. \$10 Adults; \$5 students/seniors Lebanon Opera House, 51 N. Park St. (603) 448-0400. lebanonoperahouse.org. *Also December 18 & 19.*

LYNDON CENTER. Decade Holiday Concert. New England Ringers perform traditional carols and classical works with six octaves of handbells! Tickets \$10/\$7, free for 5 and under. 7:30 pm. Alexander Twilight Theater, Lyndon State College. (802) 748-2600. www.newenglandringers.org. www.catamountarts.org.

MIDDLEBURY. The Rekindling of "Night Fires." A winter solstice celebration, rooted in ancient traditions, with music, poetry and dance of many cultures. Tickets \$18; seniors \$15; children under 18, \$13. 8 pm. Town Hall Theater, 68 South Pleasant St. (802) 382-9222. *Also December 18.*

PUTNEY. Wildlife Program: Solving Snow Secrets. Lynn Levine, forester/tracker and author of *Mammal Tracks and Scat: Life-Size Tracking Guide*, presents her new children's book *Snow Secrets*. Lynn helps us explore the clues so we can unravel the wildlife mysteries. She will also be reading from and signing her books. 7 pm. Putney Public Library, 55 Main St. (802) 387-4407.

RANDOLPH. Book & Author Event. Lynn Levine will present her new children's fiction book, *Snow Secrets*. 2:30 pm. Bud & Bella's Bookshop Ltd., 27 North Main St. (802) 728-5509. heartwoodpress.com. budandbellas.com.

RUTLAND. Peter Pan The Musical. Full Broadway production with live orchestra. Presented by the Rutland Youth Theatre. Tickets \$10/\$8. 7 pm. The Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. paramountvt.org. *Also December 18.*

WAITSFIELD. Full Moon Snowshoe Trek. Enjoy the beauty and magic of the moonlight on snow, while exploring the nature of Stark Mountain! This easy to moderate outing includes hot chocolate. Free. Reservations required. 7 pm. Mad River Glen Cooperative. (802) 496-3551. madriverglen.com. *Also December 18.*

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(December 17 continued)

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Concert: Tom Rush. Tickets \$35. 8 pm at the Tupelo Music Hall, 188 S. Main St. (603) 437-5100. www.tupelohallvermont.com.

WILLISTON. Third Annual Holiday Concert. Festive seasonal songs and arrangements of familiar carols by Cantiamo, a subset of the popular group, Bella Voce. Heidi Soons will perform beautiful harp music. Brick Church Music Series. Tickets: \$10 for adults and \$8 for seniors, children under 6 free. Doors open at 6 pm, show at 7 pm. (802) 878-5121.

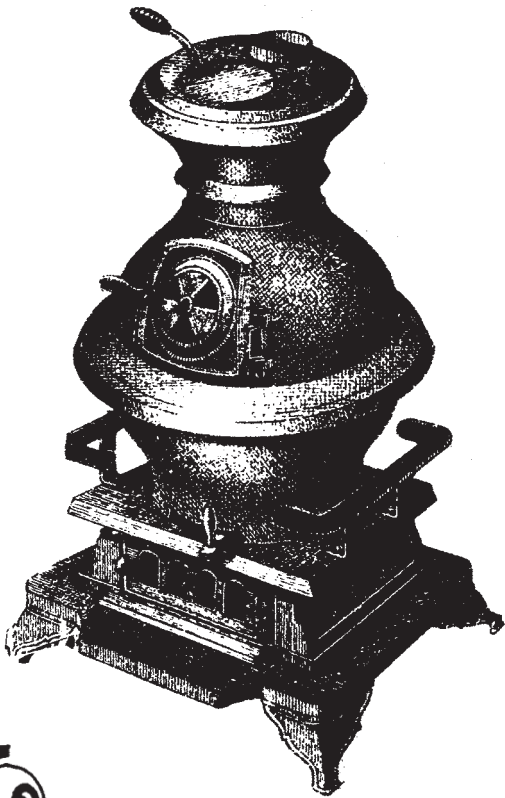
WOODSTOCK. Contradance and Dinner. Music by Old Sam Peabody, calling by Delia Clark. Vegetarian dinner 5:30-7:30 pm; family dance at 6 pm; potluck dessert at 7:30 pm; evening contradance 8-10:30 pm. \$8 suggested donation, under 18 free. You can also just come and dance! At the Little Theater, 54 River St. For more info call Steve at (802) 785-4039. hoffmanathome@gmail.com. *Continues January 21 and every third Friday.*

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 18

BARRE. The Green Mountain Nutcracker. Moving Light Dance Company presents this classic story with an original made-in-Vermont flair. Set in a rustic log cabin with contra dancing and music recreated by Colin McCaffrey. See the Maple Sugar Fairy and the spectacular Waltz of the Leaves. Tickets \$22/\$10. 7 pm at the Barre Opera House, 6 N. Main St. (802) 476-8188. barreoperahouse.org. *Also December 19.*

BELLOWS FALLS. Holiday Party at the Rockingham Free Public Library. Free, open to the public and everyone is welcome! Food, fun, and conviviality! Raffle, holiday music, refreshments. 1-3 pm. 65 Westminster St. (802) 463-4270. rockingham.lib.vt.us.

BRATTLEBORO. Performance. The Flying Nut: A Starry Night. Not your usual Nutcracker! Trapezeists, tumblers, jugglers, wire walkers and more! Presented by New England Center for Circus Arts. \$12/adult, \$8 for kids under 12. Reservations recommended. 3 & 7 pm. 76 Cotton Mill Hill, #300. (802) 254-9780. www.necenterforcircusarts.org.



BRATTLEBORO. 5th Annual Winter Farmers' Market. Sponsored by Post Oil Solutions. Over 30 vendors. Prepared lunches, live music, more. Saturdays from 10 am to 2 pm at the Robert H. Gibson River Garden, downtown on Main St. (802) 869-2141. farmersmarket@postoilsolutions.org. *Also December 24 and Saturdays through March 26.*

BURLINGTON. Ethan Allen Winter's Eve Celebration. Ethan, Fanny, and their children will greet you for candle-lit tours of Ethan Allen's home. Historical demonstrations, period refreshments, and live entertainment with Val Medve, the Fiddleheads and others. Admission \$5, children 6-12 \$3, under 6 free. 5-8 pm at Ethan Allen Homestead Museum. Call or visit website for directions. (802) 865 4556. info@ethanallenhomestead.org. www.ethanallenhomestead.org.

DANBY. Concert: Jane Boxall Allen. Marimba percussion, classical & contemporary pieces. Spectacular drumming, powerful and impressive. BYOB. Appetizers, desserts & coffee available. Doors open at 7:30, concert at 8 pm. The Little Cabaret, 34 South Main St. Tickets \$15 in advance. Call (802) 293-5000. thelittlecabaret@yahoo.com. See us on Facebook and MySpace.

GRAFTON. VSO Brass Quintet & Counterpoint. Robert De Cormier leads the ensemble in a festive combination of brass and choral works. Free admission, but tickets required, available at the General Store in Grafton. Performance at 5 pm at the White Church. For info call (802) 863-5966 or visit www.vso.org.

HANOVER, NH. The 36th Annual Christmas Revels: A French Canadian Celebration of the Winter Solstice. Featuring renowned guests artists and the magical tale of *The Flying Canoe*. Tickets \$30-\$8. 2 & 7 pm at Spaulding Auditorium, Hopkins Center. (603) 646-2422 or hop.dartmouth.edu. www.revelsnorth.org/xmas-revels. *Also December 19.*

MANCHESTER CENTER. Book & Author Event. Bring your children to hear Willem Lange read *Favor Johnson*, his Christmas tale of neighborliness and generosity. While you are here, pick-up a fruitcake! Free admission, everyone welcome. 2 pm. Northshire Bookstore, 4869 Main St. (802) 362-2200. www.northshire.com.

MANCHESTER. Holiday Music Program. By the Emerald Valley Recorder Ensemble. Refreshments will be served. 2 to 4 pm at Circa50, 4898 Main St. (802) 362-3796.

MANCHESTER. Bird Walk. Survey the wild birds present on the grounds of Hildene. Join The Vermont Bird Place & Sky Watch and local birders at the Hildene Welcome Center parking lot at 8 am. Free. For more information call Randy Schmidt at (802) 362-2270. randy@thevermontbirdplace.com. hildene.org.

MANCHESTER. Moonlight Nature Walk. Join Merck Forest's Executive Director, Elaine Eisenbraun, for a walk under the full moon of the winter solstice. This walk will echo the nature-themed holiday story, *Night Tree*. Depart from Manchester's Town Green following the tree ceremony and tractor parade, weather permitting. Free. 5:30-7 pm. (802) 394-7836. merckforest.org.

MANCHESTER. Broomball—Ugly Christmas Sweater Night. The brooms are ready so put on a pair of rubber sole shoes and join in! For more info call Emily at The Collaborative at (802) 824-4200. Free admission. 9:15-10:45 pm. Riley Rink, 410 Hunter Rd. off Rt. 7. (802) 362-3770.

MANCHESTER. Holiday Open House Tours. Wiley Inn; Bromley View Inn; Johnny Seesaws; Three Mountain Inn; Ira Allen House. 12-4 pm. Tickets \$15, pay at the inn where you start your self-guided tour. Includes Vermont cheeses, refreshments and drinks. (802) 362-1163 or (800) 670-2841.

MANCHESTER. The Stratton Foundation Winter Gala. Dress up to celebrate the winter season with a philanthropic heart! Cocktails, wine tasting, sit down dinner, live auction, silent auction, and dancing to the Don't Leave Band. 7-11 pm at Stratton Base Lodge. Tickets \$125 per person. For reservations call (802) 297-2096. www.strattonfoundation.org.

MIDDLEBURY. The Rekindling of "Night Fires." A winter solstice celebration rooted in ancient traditions. Music, poetry and dance of many cultures. Tickets \$18; seniors \$15; children under 18, \$13. 4 & 8 pm. Town Hall Theater, 68 South Pleasant St. (802) 382-9222. www.townhalltheater.org. *Also December 18.*

MONTPELIER. Capital City Winter Farmers Market. Produce, meats, cheese, eggs, crafts, baked goods, and prepared foods to snack on! 10 am - 2 pm at the Montpelier High School, Bailey Ave. (802) 223-2958. manager@montpelierfarmersmarket.com. www.montpelierfarmersmarket.com. *Continues 1st & 3rd Saturdays, thru April.*

MORRISVILLE. Concert. Ian Ethan Case returns with his double-necked guitars and kalimba, a solo show of technical and creative wizardry. Admission by donation. 7 pm. River Arts Center, 74 Pleasant St. (802) 888-1261. www.riverartsvt.org.

RUTLAND. Rutland County Fall Extended Farmers Market. Local produce and crafts from Yankee Timberloft, Mendon Mountain Orchards, Maplebrook Farm, East Shore Winery, Heleba Potatoes, Rutland Woodworks. Crafts by Sophia, Black Powder Foods, Blue House Bakery, Spotted Dog Farm, Barb Lasson, Deanna Wetherby, Suzanne Houston. Plenty of parking, heat, and lights! 10 am - 2 pm. In the gym building at College of St. Joseph, Clement Rd. (off Old Rt. 4). For info call Bob Murphy at (802) 772-7242.

RUTLAND. Peter Pan The Musical. Full Broadway production with live orchestra. Presented by the Rutland Youth Theatre. Tickets \$10/\$8. 2 & 7 pm. The Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. www.paramountvt.org.

RUTLAND. Fourth Annual Winter Vermont Farmers Market. Over 40 vendors offering fresh produce, local wools, grass-fed meats, artisan cheeses, freshly baked organic breads, honey, jellies & jams, maple syrup. Hot foods, wines, gifts, live entertainment—a great place to shop, eat and visit! 10 am to 2 pm. Located in the Old Strand Theater (enter through the Rutland Natural Food Co-Op at 77 Wales St.). For info call Greg Cox (802) 683-4606. vtfarmersmarket.org. *Every Saturday through early May.*

RUTLAND. Healer to Present Program. Stan Katz, internationally known healer "John of God" of Abadiana, Brazil, will give a video presentation on his recent 2-1/2 month trip to Brazil. 2 pm in the Lower Hall of the Unitarian Universalist Church, 117 West St. (802) 775-0850. nkatz1943@yahoo.com.

ST. JOHNSBURY. Holiday Farmers Market. 10 am - 1 pm at the Welcome Center (the old railroad station) on Railroad St. For info call Elizabeth Everts, (802) 592-3088. elizeverts@yahoo.com.

ST. JOHNSBURY. Holiday Season Concert. The Boston's Children's Chorus with special guests The St. Johnsbury Academy Hilltones. Hosted by Kingdom County Productions. \$18, students \$10. 7 pm. North Congregational Church, 1325 Main St. (802) 748-2600. www.catamountarts.org.

ST. JOHNSBURY. "Angels Among Us." An exhibition of the many angel artworks of Stephen Huneck. Opening reception Dec. 18, 11 am - 4 pm. All are welcome, especially the family dog. It is free to attend daily. The Stephen Huneck Gallery at Dog Mountain, 143 Parks Rd. (800) 249-2580. Info at dogmt.com. www.dogmt.com. *Through January 31.*

WAITSFIELD. Nature Program: Twigs, Buds and Bark. Explore the ecology of the hardwood and boreal forests of Stark Mountain, and learn how to recognize the buds and bark of some of our most common trees. Free. 10:30 am and 1:30 pm. Mad River Glen Cooperative. (802) 496-3551. ski@madriverglen.com. www.madriverglen.com.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Concert: Jorma Kaukonen. Founding member of two legendary bands, The Jefferson Airplane and Hot Tuna. Tickets \$35. 8 pm at the Tupelo Music Hall, 188 S. Main St. (603) 437-5100. tupelohallvermont.com.

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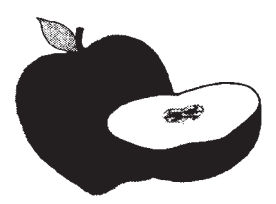
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Country Calendar



WOODSTOCK. Christmas at the Farm. Visit the authentically decorated 1890 Farm House. Tour the operating dairy farm. Programs, activities, ornament-making. Admission: adults \$11; over 62 \$10; children 5-15 \$6; 3-4 \$3; 2 & under free. 10 am - 3:30 pm at Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. Also December 19, and December 26 - January 2.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19

BARRE. Performance—*The Green Mountain Nutcracker*. Moving Light Dance Company presents this classic story with an original made-in-Vermont flair. Set in a rustic log cabin with contra dancing and music recreated by Colin McCaffrey. See the Maple Sugar Fairy and the spectacular Waltz of the Leaves! Tickets \$22/\$10. 2 pm at the Barre Opera House, 6 N. Main St. (802) 476-8188. barreoperahouse.org.

BARNET. Children's Day at Karme Choling. Spend time with your children in a friendly and enriching environment, cheerfully decorated for this winter holiday, which marks the solstice. Festivities, crafts and a play. Cost: \$20. 10:30 am - 3:30 pm. Karmê Chöling, 369 Patneau Lane. (802) 633-2384.

BRANDON. Gingerbread House Workshop. Learn how to decorate your own gingerbread house. 12:30, 2:30 & 4:30 pm. The Inside Scoop, 22 Park St. (802) 247-6600. Call (802) 247-6600 or e-mail janet@brandon.org.

BRANDON. Winter Outing to Hawk Hill. Explore the site of the original settlement of Brandon and an old cemetery. An easy to moderate four miles. Sponsored by the Killington Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. Leave at 10 am. For info contact leaders, Barb & Barry Griffith at (802) 492-3573. www.greenmountainclub.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Performance—*The Flying Nut: A Starry Night*. Not your usual Nutcracker! Trapezists, tumblers, jugglers, wire walkers and more! Presented by New England Center for Circus Arts. \$12/adult, \$8 for kids under 12. Advance reservations recommended. 1 & 5 pm. 76 Cotton Mill Hill, #300. (802) 254-9780. www.necenterforcircusarts.org.

EAST ARLINGTON. Pancake Breakfast. Menu includes pancakes and sausage, Vermont maple syrup, biscuits and sausage and gravy, homefries, coffee, juice and milk. \$6 for adults and \$3 for children under 12. 8 to 10 am at Battenkill Grange #487 on Rt. 313 west of the covered bridge.

HANOVER, NH. The 36th Annual Christmas Revels: A French Canadian Celebration of the Winter Solstice. Featuring renowned guests artists and the magical tale of *The Flying Canoe*. Tickets \$30-\$8. 1 & 5 pm at Spaulding Auditorium, Hopkins Center. (603) 646-2422 or hop.dartmouth.edu. www.revelsnorth.org.

ISLAND POND. Christmas Caroling. Go caroling in a horse-drawn wagon beginning at Sunrise Manor. Free, everyone welcome. 4 pm. www.islandpondchamber.org.

MANCHESTER CENTER. Annual Christmas Book Signing with Jon Katz. The author of *The Soul of a Dog*, *Izzy & Lenore*, *Dog Days*, *A Good Dog*, and *The Dogs of Bedlam Farm* autographs your favorites in time for the holidays. Free admission. 2 pm. Northshire Bookstore, 4869 Main St. (802) 362-2200. www.northshire.com.

MANCHESTER. VSO Brass Quintet & Counterpoint. Robert De Cormier leads the ensemble in a festive combination of brass and choral works. 4 pm at the First Congregational Church. For information and tickets call (802) 863-5966 or visit www.vso.org.

PUTNEY. Winter Farmers' Market. Holiday gifts and produce by 26 vendors. Delicious prepared foods: savory and sweet crepes and South Indian food and beverages. Make your own wreaths. Live music. 11 am - 3 pm. An indoor market at Green Mountain Orchards on West Hill Rd. Directions: west at Putney General Store, left after one mile on West Hill Rd., 3/4 mile on right. (802) 387-4234. www.putneyfarmersmarket.org.

SOUTH ROYALTON. Winter Farmers' Market. 3-5:30 at the Red Door Church on the Green. Rain or shine, wheelchair accessible, bathroom available, parking. (802) 763-8087. bushrod.powers@valley.net. Every Thursday.

SOUTH STRAFFORD. Dance: Mostly Waltz. With Carol Compton and Thal Aylward. Bring clean shoes. Lesson at 2:15 pm. Dance from 3-5 pm at Barrett Hall. For more information contact Gina Sonne, (802) 785-4220. waltzlover@gmail.com.

WAITSFIELD. Family Snowshoe Adventure. While snowshoeing on easy terrain, we will explore the flora and fauna of the slopes. Appropriate for ages 5 and up. Free. Reservations required. 10:30 am and 1:30 pm. Mad River Glen Cooperative. (802) 496-3551. ski@madriverglen.com. www.madriverglen.com.

WEST PAWLET. All-You-Can Eat Pancake Breakfast. Menu includes pancakes, eggs, bacon, sausage, homefries, toast and coffee, juice or milk. Sponsored by the West Pawlet Volunteer Fire Dept. \$7 for 12 years and older; \$5, 5 to 12, and under 5, no charge. Take-outs not available. 7 to 11 am at the Firehouse, Rte. 153, in the center of town. For info call (802) 645-0158, (802) 287-0600.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Concert: Ryan Montbleau Band. Tickets \$22. 7 pm at the Tupelo Music Hall, 188 S. Main St. (603) 437-5100. www.tupelohallvermont.com.

WOODSTOCK. Christmas at the Farm. Visit the authentically decorated 1890 Farm House. Tour the operating dairy farm. Activities, ornament-making. Admission: adults \$11; over 62 \$10; children 5-15 \$6; 3-4 \$3; 2 & under free. 10 am - 3:30 pm at Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org. Also December 26 - January 2.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 20

BRATTLEBORO. Fifth Annual Winter Solstice Celebration. Snuggle down in the horse-drawn sleigh. Watch stars that seem close enough to touch. Enjoy the beauty of a stream lit by candles and ice lanterns. Half-hour rides are \$12 for adults and \$6 for kids under 12, no reservations needed. 4:30-7:30 pm. Fair Winds Farm, 511 Upper Dummerston Rd., off Rt. 30 just 2 miles from downtown. (802) 254-9067. fairwind@sover.net. www.fairwindsfarm.org. Also December 21.

ISLAND POND. Christmas Bird Count. A century-old tradition involving thousands of volunteers throughout the western hemisphere. Beginners are welcome. NorthWoods Stewardship Center, 154 Leadership Dr. (802) 723-6551. www.northwoodscenter.org.

LEBANON, NH. Performance: A Leahy Family Christmas. Christmas classics and stories as well as original Leahy material. Reserved seating is \$28/\$38. 7:30 pm. Lebanon Opera House, 51 N. Park St. (603) 448-0400. lebanonoperahouse.org.

MANCHESTER. VSO Brass Quintet & Counterpoint. Robert De Cormier leads the ensemble in a festive combination of brass and choral works. Performance at 7 pm at the Brandon Congregational Church. For tickets call (802) 863-5966 or visit www.vso.org.

NORWICH. The Norwich Farmers Market. We have moved downtown and indoors for the fall and winter. Fresh produce, storage vegetables, eggs, cheese, baked goods, crafts and clothing all produced by your neighbors. 10 am - 1 pm at the Norwich Grange. For info call Steve Hoffman at (802) 384-7447. www.norwichfarmersmarket.org. Also December 4.

STOWE. 19th Annual Community Messiah Sing-In. Sing Handel's great choruses conducted by Jane Bouffard with a full orchestra. No rehearsal required. Singers and listeners both welcome. Scores available but bring your own if you have one. Donation \$8 per person, and a contribution of non-perishable food for Lamoille County Food Shelf. Doors open 6:30 pm, singing starts 7 pm. Stowe Community Church, Main St. (802) 253-7257. www.gostowe.com.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Holiday Open Sewing Studio. Work on holiday projects and presents. We have ideas and some holiday-theme fabrics and trimmings. Sew-Op volunteers will help but basic knowledge needed. Free, no registration required. 5:30-7:30 pm on the second floor above the Upper Valley Food Co-op. For info call Kye Cochran at (802) 295-5804. uppervalleysewop@gmail.com. www.uppervalleyfood.coop.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 21

BRATTLEBORO. Fifth Annual Winter Solstice Celebration. Snuggle down in the horse-drawn sleigh. Watch stars that seem close enough to touch. Enjoy the beauty of a stream lit by candles and ice lanterns. Half-hour rides are \$12 for adults and \$6 for kids under 12, no reservations needed. 4:30-7:30 pm. Fair Winds Farm, 511 Upper Dummerston Rd. off Rt. 30 just 2 miles from downtown. (802) 254-9067. www.fairwindsfarm.org.

BURLINGTON. Shape Note Sing. 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm followed by Christmas caroling at 7:30 pm. At Ira Allen Chapel at the University of Vermont. For more info contact kclynx@gmavt.net.

DUMMERSTON CENTER. Simba's Annual Winter Solstice Celebration. Seven piece band (including 3 horns) playing funk, reggae, worldbeat and latin jazz with special guest Moonlight Davis. \$10 admission (\$25 family maximum). 7-11 pm. Evening Star Grange (corner Middle Rd and East West Rd.). (802) 869-1822. hilljoy@sover.net.

MANCHESTER. Holiday Open House. Join library staff for mulled cider, desserts, and holiday music! Free admission, everyone is welcome. Tues 10-6; Wed 10-8; Thurs 10-6. Mark Skinner Library, 48 West Rd. (802) 362-2607. Through Dec 23.

PUTNEY. Winter Farmers' Market. Holiday gifts and produce by 21 vendors. Delicious prepared foods: crepes, savory & sweet tarts, and tacos & tamales. Make your own wreaths. Live music. Horse-drawn sleigh/wagon rides. 11 am - 3 pm. An indoor market at Green Mountain Orchards on West Hill Rd. Directions: west at Putney General Store, left after one mile on West Hill Rd., 3/4 mile on right. (802) 387-4234. www.putneyfarmersmarket.org. Also December 19.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 22

LYNDON CENTER. Public Skating at Chester Arena. 2:45 - 4:15 pm. \$3 to skate and \$3 for skate rentals. Lessons, locker room and a full snack bar. 2:45 - 4:15 pm. Chester Arena, 145 College Hill Rd. (802) 626-9361. info@chesterarena.com. www.chesterarena.com. Continues Sundays and Wednesdays through March.



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Vermont Country Calendar

(December 22 continued)

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 26

SHELburne. Holiday Cheer—Community Art Show & Concert. Beautiful music, art and refreshments. South County Chorus and the Hinesburg Artist Series Brass Quintet perform traditional and contemporary Christmas selections. Sing-along and refreshments from local caterers. Tickets \$13.50 adults, \$11.95 seniors/students, children 3 and under are free. Collecting canned goods for local emergency food shelves. Concert at 7:30 pm, gathering begins at 6:30 pm. At All Souths Interfaith Gathering, 291 Bostwick Farm Rd. For tickets and information call (802) 985-3819 or visit www.allsoulsinterfaith.org.

SOUTH BURLINGTON. Christmas Eve Concert. Holiday favorites and two major choral works. The Mad River Chorale, The South Burlington Community Chorus, The Young Singers Chorus of Vermont and the Vermont Symphony Orchestra Brass Quintet—nearly 200 musicians! Tickets \$15/\$12, children 11 and under are free. 7 pm at South Burlington High School. (802) 496-4781.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 23

BRATTLEBORO. Concert: Jewmongous! Sean Altman, the singer, composer and musical force behind Rockapella, entertains with his collection of satirical comedy songs. Tickets \$20, \$17 advance at www.brattleborotix.com. 7:30 pm at Hooker-Dunham Theater & Gallery, 139 Main St. (802) 254-9276. www.hookerdunham.org.

DUXBURY. Christmas Eve Concert. Holiday favorites and two major choral works. The Mad River Chorale, The South Burlington Community Chorus, The Young Singers Chorus of Vermont and the Vermont Symphony Orchestra Brass Quintet—nearly 200 musicians! Tickets \$15/\$12, children 11 and under are free. 7 pm at Harwood Union High School, Rt. 100. (802) 496-4781.

SOUTH ROYALTON. Winter Farmers' Market. 3-5:30 at the Red Door Church on the Green. Rain or shine, wheelchair accessible, bathroom available, parking. (802) 763-8087. bushrod.powers@valley.net. *Every Thursday.*

WARDSBORO. Holiday Bazaar. Sponsored by the Friends of the Wardsboro Library. Handmade ornaments, some as low as \$1. Hand-hooked woolen ornaments made by a local "hooker" for \$5 and up. Tiny boutique of inexpensive gifts, cards, photo-card sleeves, gift wine bottle "sweaters," handmade hats, mittens, and toddler-sized aprons, tabletop evergreen trees and wooden reindeer centerpieces. 10 am – 1 pm. At the Wardsboro Library, 171 Main St. (802) 896-9766. anitarafael@gmail.com. *Through December 31.*

ARLINGTON. Old-Fashioned Community Christmas Carol Sing-Along. Live nativity. Cookies and cocoa to follow in Bailey Hall. Donations accepted for the food shelf. 3 pm. East Arlington Federated Church. (802) 362-4382.

BRATTLEBORO. 5th Annual Winter Farmers' Market. Get the freshest produce and desserts or for your holiday table and of course for all those last minute holiday gifts! Over 30 vendors. Prepared lunches and live music. Sponsored by Post Oil Solutions. 10 am to 2 pm at the Robert H. Gibson River Garden, downtown on Main St. (802) 869-2141. farmersmarket@postoilsolutions.org. *Also January 1 and then Saturdays through March 26.*

GRAFTON. Christmas Eve Celebrations. Alki Steriopolous' Famous Carol Sing, free and open to all at 3 pm. Christmas stories & music with Jolly Old Bill and the Taverners Three (lute, recorders and harp) at 8 pm. Phelps Barn at The Old Tavern, 92 Main St. (802) 843-2231. www.oldtavern.com.

GREENSBORO. Winter Trails Open for the Season at Highland Lodge. Cross-country ski by donation. There's no set price, but everyone must pick up a ticket in order to ski. Highland Lodge, 1608 Craftsby Rd. (802) 533-2647. info@highlandlodge.com. www.highlandlodge.com.

JAY. Friday Night Skates at the Ice Haus. \$10 includes ice time, rentals, pizza, and drinks. Enjoy music and light shows. 7:30-9:30 pm. Jay Peak Resort, Rt. 242. (802) 988-2750. www.jaypeakresort.com.

LYNDON CENTER. Public Skating at Chester Arena. It's just \$3 to skate and \$3 for skate rentals. Lessons are available. There is a locker room and a full snack bar serving hamburgers, hot dogs, fries, drinks and more. 12:30-2:30 pm. Chester Arena, 145 College Hill Rd. (802) 626-9361. info@chesterarena.com. www.chesterarena.com. *Through December 31 and other winter dates.*

MONTGOMERY. Old Fashioned Christmas Caroling. The Montgomery Area Community Alliance and the Montgomery Baptist Church invite you to join them caroling down Main Street from 3-5:30 pm, stopping at area establishments for food, drink and holiday cheer along the way. Bring your guitar! Christmas services at 6 pm at the Montgomery Baptist Church. (802) 578-7103.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 25

LYNDON CENTER. Free Public Skating at Chester Arena. There is a locker room and a full snack bar serving hamburgers, hot dogs, fries, drinks and more. 6-8 pm. Chester Arena, 145 College Hill Rd. (802) 626-9361.

BENNINGTON. A Coin, Sports, Postcard and Family Hobby Show will be held from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Hampton Inn, 51 Hannaford Square. No admission and anyone wanted to set up a card table to sell items should call (802) 297-1274. *The same show will be repeated on Sat. Jan 1.*

BRATTLEBORO. Contra Dance. Beginners lesson 7:15 pm. Dance from 7:30 pm to 10:30 pm. At the Stone Church, 210 Main St. (802) 257-9234. ethanhw.com/brattdance.

HUNTINGTON. Hike/Snowshoe Outing to the top of Camels Hump from the Huntington side. Moderate hike, moderate pace, 4.8 miles, 1950' elevation gain. Sponsored by the Burlington Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. For info contact Sheri Larsen, (802) 878-6828. larsen007@aol.com.

LUDLOW. Torchlight Parade, Fireworks Display & Guided Snowshoe Tour. Okemo employees ski/snowboard down the mountain with torches followed by a spectacular fireworks display. For free guided snowshoe tours meet inside the Okemo Express Rental Shop at 6 pm to be fitted for snowshoes (or bring your own). Tours depart at 7 pm and head up on the Bull Run rail to watch the fireworks. Children's Light Parade at 6:30 pm. (802) 228-4041.

THETFORD. Winter Outing—Post-Holiday Calorie Burner. Ski, hike or snowshoe in Thetford/Vershire area, depending on conditions. Sponsored by the Ottauquechee Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. For info contact leaders Heinz and Inge Trebitz, (802) 785-2129. www.greenmountainclub.org.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Concert: Stephen Kellogg and the Sixers. Tickets \$20. 7 pm at the Tupelo Music Hall, 188 S. Main St. (603) 437-5100. tupelohallvermont.com.

WOODSTOCK. Christmas at the Farm. Visit the authentically decorated 1890 Farm House. Tour the operating dairy farm. Admission: adults \$11; over 62 \$10; children 5-15 \$6; 3-4 \$3; 2 & under free. 10 am – 3:30 pm at Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. *Through January 2.*

MONDAY, DECEMBER 27

BONDVILLE. Snowshoe on Stratton Mountain. An outing to the summit via the Long Trail and back down the ski trail. A moderately difficult 6-7 miles. Sponsored by the Manchester Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. Depart at 8:30 am. Leader Dave Ratti, e-mail c/o_marge.fish@gmail.com or call (802) 366-0698. greenmountainclub.org.

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The Holidays at Billings Farm & Museum

Discover the traditions of a late 19th century Vermont Christmas with a visit to the Billings Farm & Museum. Christmas at the Billings Farm will be featured on weekends in December and December 26 through January 2, 2011, from 10 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Tours of the authentically decorated farmhouse, visits to the dairy farm for interactive programs, holiday activities, plus the Academy Award® nominee film, *A Place in the Land* will be offered.

During Christmas week there will be horse-drawn sleigh or wagon rides and holiday activities, making historic Christmas ornaments and snowflakes.

Like most New England

states, Vermont did not widely celebrate Christmas until late in the 19th century. Celebrations were much simpler then—a few gifts, a special meal, and the gathering of friends. Families still had cows to milk, ice to cut, and wood to saw.

Decorations of the period included fresh greens draped over mantels, windows, and staircases throughout the house. Small trees, packed in a jar or butter tub and placed on a tabletop were common.

Apples studded with cloves, "exotic" oranges, silvered (foil-covered) chestnuts, painted pinecones, and acorns complemented the handmade paper ornaments that decorated the tree.

In Woodstock, turn-of-the-century businesses advertised

their wares for Christmas gifts. Most gifts were useful domestic items: fabric, clothing, umbrellas, linens, crockery, and carpet sweeps. But homemade, handcrafted items including fancy mittens, satin bows, and stockings filled with candies, nuts, and raisins were the most common type of gift given on Christmas Day.

Open winter weekends, November–February, and Christmas & Presidents' weeks, 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Admission: adults: \$12; 62 & over: \$11; children 5-15: \$6; 3-4: \$3; 2 & under: free.

The Farm & Museum is one-half mile north of the village green on Route 12. For info call (802) 457-2355 or visit www.billingsfarm.org.



photo courtesy of Billings Farm & Museum
 Visitors all bundled up for a sled ride at Billings Farm & Museum in Woodstock, VT.

Vermont Country Calendar

FAIRLEE. 23rd Annual New Year's Family Camp at Hulbert Outdoor Center. Explore the winter woodlands on snowshoes, learn about dogsledding, skate, listen to stories by the fire or spend a day skiing, and much more! Cabins and family-style meals. (802) 333-3405. www.alohafoundation.org. *Through January 1.*

MIDDLESEX. Snowshoe Outing. Go to the summit of Chase's Mountain in the new Middlesex Town Forest. A moderate 3-4 miles with 2,700' elevation gain. Sponsored by the Montpelier Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. For meeting time and place contact leader Eric Seidel at (802) 223-1406 or ericseidel1@gmail.com. www.greenmountainclub.org.

RUTLAND. Vacation Animation Camp. For ages 8-14. Fee: \$140. 10 am - 3 pm at the Chaffee Art Center, 16 South Main St. (802) 775-0356. www.chaffeeartcenter.org. *Through December 31.*

STOWE. An Evening with Ben Vereen. Tickets \$60. 8 pm. The Spruce Peak Performing Arts Center, Stowe Mountain Resort. (802) 253-3000 www.sprucepeakarts.org. www.stowe.com.

WOODSTOCK. Christmas at the Farm. Visit the authentically decorated 1890 Farm House. Tour the operating dairy farm. Admission: adults \$11; over 62 \$10; children 5-15 \$6; 3-4 \$3; 2 & under free. 10 am - 3:30 pm at Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. *Through January 2.*

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 28

CHESTER. Free Scottish Country Dance Class. Join the weekly fun and get some great exercise to boot! All abilities welcomed. 7:30-9 pm. MacLaomainns Scottish Pub, 52 Main St. (802) 875-6227.

MANCHESTER. Snowshoe Excursion on Mt. Equinox. Explore the mountain via Beartown Trail. A difficult 7 miles. Sponsored by the Manchester Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. Depart at 8:30. For more info contact leaders Steve and Alyson Grzyb at alruby@gmail.com or (802) 362-6180. www.greenmountainclub.org.

STOWE. The Hills are Alive - Brooklyn Rundfunk Orkestrata. Tickets \$75. 8 pm. The Spruce Peak Performing Arts Center, Stowe Mountain Resort. (802) 253-3000. sprucepeakarts.org. stowe.com.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Concert: Seven Walkers. Featuring Bill Kreutzmann of The Grateful Dead, George Porter, Jr. of the Funky Meters, Papi Mali, and Matt Hubbard. Tickets \$40. 8 pm at the Tupelo Music Hall, 188 S. Main St. (603) 437-5100. www.tupelohallvermont.com.

WOODSTOCK. Christmas at the Farm. Visit the authentically decorated 1890 Farm House and tour the operating dairy farm. Admission: adults \$11; over 62 \$10; children 5-15 \$6; 3-4 \$3; 2 & under free. 10 am - 3:30 pm at Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. *Through January 2.*

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 29

LUDLOW. Family Program: Animal Winter Tracking. Discover how animals survive through our long New England winters. Free and open to the public. Presented by the Nature Museum at Grafton. 7 pm in the Roundhouse at Jackson Gore, Okemo Mountain Resort. (802) 228-1313. www.okemo.com.

MONTPELIER. School Vacation Fun. Explore life in 19th century Vermont in the museum's exhibit, Freedom and Unity, and participate in a related activity. For children 6-12. \$5 per student, 3 or more children in a family pay \$3. To pre-register please call (802) 828-2180. 1-3 p.m. at the Vermont Historical Society Museum, Pavilion Building, 109 State Street. (802) 362-2200. kathleen.daquila@state.vt.us.

STOWE. Concert: Eileen Ivers and Immigrant Soul. Tickets \$35. 8 pm. The Spruce Peak Performing Arts Center, Stowe Mountain Resort. (802) 253-3000. www.sprucepeakarts.org. www.stowe.com.

WOODSTOCK. Christmas at the Farm. Visit the authentically decorated 1890 Farm House. Tour the operating dairy farm. Activities, ornament-making. Admission: adults \$11; over 62 \$10; children 5-15 \$6; 3-4 \$3; 2 & under free. 10 am - 3:30 pm at Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. *Through January 2.*

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 30

BRANDON. Book & Author Event. Gayle Brunelle, co-author of *Murder in the Metro: Laetitia Toureaux and the Cagoule in 1930s France*, talks about this fascinating story. Free. 7 pm. Briggs Carriage Bookstore, 16 Park St. (802) 247-0050. www.briggscarriage.com.

MONTPELIER. School Vacation Fun. Find out how the railroad changed Vermont's population and landscape. For children 6-12. \$5 per student, 3 or more children in a family pay \$3. To pre-register call (802) 828-2180. 1-3 pm at the Vermont Historical Society Museum, Pavilion Building, 109 State Street. (802) 362-2200. kathleen.daquila@state.vt.us.

SOUTH ROYALTON. Winter Farmers' Market. 3-5:30 at the Red Door Church on the Green. Rain or shine, wheelchair accessible, bathroom available, parking. (802) 763-8087. bushrod.powers@valley.net. *Every Thursday.*

STOWE. Concert: Sara Watkins of Nickel Creek. Tickets \$45. 8 pm. The Spruce Peak Performing Arts Center, Stowe Mountain Resort. (802) 253-3000.

WAITSFIELD. Tour the Moon. Throw on your ski skins and headlamp up Mt. Ellen to the Glen House for dinner, then ski down by headlamp. \$75 includes dinner. Start at 5 pm. Sugarbush Resort. (802) 583-6300. sugarbush.com.

WOODSTOCK. Christmas at the Farm. Visit the authentically decorated 1890 Farm House. Tour the operating dairy farm. Activities, ornament-making. Admission: adults \$11; over 62 \$10; children 5-15 \$6; 3-4 \$3; 2 & under free. 10 am - 3:30 pm at Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org. *Through January 2.*

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 31

BRATTLEBORO. Last Night Brattleboro Fireworks! Warming tent with cookies and hot cocoa. Fabulous fireworks. Bring the whole family. 9-9:45 pm. Brattleboro Retreat back campus, 1 Anna Marsh Lane.

BRATTLEBORO. Fair Winds Farm Last Night Sleigh/Wagon Rides. In conjunction with Last Night Brattleboro, these rides are offered on a no-reservation basis, rain or shine. 20-minute rides. Adults \$6, under 12 years \$4. 1-4 pm. Fair Winds Farm, 511 Upper Dummerston Rd., off Rt. 30 just 2 miles from downtown. (802) 254-9067. fairwind@sover.net. www.fairwindsfarm.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Groove in the New Year at Vermont Jazz Center. Fenibo and friends perform funk/Afrobeat. All ages, family-friendly. Tickets are \$10 at Boomerang, Everyone's Books, Maple Leaf Music and Turn It Up! 9 pm. Vermont Jazz Center, 72 Cotton Mill Hill. (802) 275-7182. www.vtjazz.org.

BURLINGTON. Concert: Vermont Youth Orchestra at First Night Burlington. A festive concert featuring the world premiere of a new composition by a Vermont MIDI Project composer, Viennese waltzes by Johann Strauss, and the fourth movement of Beethoven's Symphony No. 7 in A major. Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, 153 Main St. (802) 362-2200.

BURLINGTON. Fifth Annual New Years Eve Ball. Join ballroom dance fans of all ages as we dance in the New Year. Entry Fee. 6:30 pm - 12:30 am. Emerald Ballroom at the Sheraton Hotel and Conference Center. (802) 598-6757. www.FirstStepDance.com.

BURLINGTON. First Night Burlington 2011. 28th New Year's Eve Festival of the Arts. Hundreds of artists and musicians, shows, activities. Buy a button and enjoy it all. Noon to midnight. (802) 863-6005. jennifer@firstnightburlington.com. www.firstnightburlington.com.

CHESTER. New Year's Eve. The popular band Tilth performs. 9 pm, cover charge. At the new Pizza Stone Restaurant, 291 Pleasant St. (802) 875-2121.

DANBY. New Year's Eve Festivities. Appetizers, desserts & coffee available, BYOB. Entertainers tba. 8 pm. The Little Cabaret, 34 South Main St. Tickets \$15 in advance. Call (802) 293-5000. thelittlecabaret@yahoo.com. See us on Facebook and MySpace.

JAY. New Year's Eve Party. Two bands, kids' party, food, and fireworks at midnight! Free. International Room at Tram Side, Jay Peak Resort, Rt. 242. (802) 988-2611.

LUDLOW. Okemo's Family New Year's Eve. Ice skating, snowtubing, snowshoeing, mountain coaster rides, horse-drawn wagon rides, cookie decorating, bingo games and trivia tournament. A DJ dance party, party games, a pizza party dinner, balloons, noisemakers and fireworks. Admission \$23; activities and roundhouse dance party, \$28 for children 6 and under, \$39 for adults. 5-9 pm. Jackson Gore Base Area. (802) 228-4041. www.okemo.com.

MANCHESTER. Manchester Music Festival "String" in the New Year! Family concert with Father Time at 4 pm, tickets \$10 adults, children free. Formal concert with MMF nine-piece ensemble at 6 pm, tickets \$25. Reception after the performance with chocolates, champagne, and a toast! First Congregational Church. (802) 362-1956.

MANCHESTER. Concert: "String" in the New Year. The 4 pm family concert, A Musical Journey Through Time, will be hosted by Father Time himself! Tickets \$10 adults, children free. The 6 pm formal concert will feature the nine-piece MMF Ensemble playing works by Mendelssohn and Gustav Holst, Astor Piazzolla's Four Seasons of Buenos Aires, plus waltzes by Johann Strauss, Jr. and a tango or two by Carlos Gardel. Reception afterwards with delicious chocolates, bubbly and a toast to the New Year! At the First Congregational Church, Rt. 7A. For tickets call (802) 362-1956. www.mmfv.org.

MIDDLEBURY. Sinatra in Vermont: A New Year's Eve to Remember. With the Swingin' Vermont Big Band and Jon Penick, singing through the great Sinatra songbook. Perfect for dancing, or just grab a seat and listen to the great music. Free champagne as the THT great bell rings in the New Year! Tickets \$25. 8 pm. Town Hall Theater, 68 South Pleasant St. (802) 382-9222. townhalltheater.org.

The Pantry Gift Shop At Chaffee Art Center

The Pantry Gift Shop at Chaffee Art Center in Rutland, VT is now open and ready for your visit! It's an inviting place offering thoughtful and creative gifts that will be appreciated and remembered for years to come. Something pretty to put on the wall, gifts for nature lovers, unusual choices, authentic artwork, a gift that matters. You can find all this at the Chaffee.

Stocked full of member artwork and gifts, the Pantry offers artist greeting cards, weavings by Betty Atwood, Steve Halford raku pottery, original wood carvings by

Christine Townsend, children's books, Sabra Field flashbags, painted gourd birdhouses by Roots, Stems, and Threads, artist prints, Joshua Primmer ceramic mugs, and more. Enjoy holiday shopping at the Pantry! And while you're there, treat yourself to a look around the Chaffee.

The Rutland Area Art Association's Chaffee Art Center is located at 16 South Main St., Rt. 7, across from Main Street Park near the intersection of Rts. 4 & 7, in Rutland, VT. (802) 775-0356. www.chaffeeartcenter.org.

RUTLAND COUNTY



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Vermont Country Calendar

(December 31 continued)

MONTGOMERY. New Years with the Dogs! Montgomery Adventures invites you to a fun filled night of dog sledding, snowshoeing, sledding, and a huge bon fire. Hamburgers and hotdogs cooked on the grill, baked beans, coleslaw, hot chocolate, hot apple cider, sodas and lots of fun! \$65 per person, call to reserve. 9 pm till 1 am. Mountain Haven, 262 Deep Gibou Rd. (802) 326-2021. mthavensledogs@yahoo.com. www.montgomeryadventures.com.

MONTPELIER. 17th Annual First Night Montpelier. Music, arts, and family activities in 14 downtown locations from noon to 10 pm. Puppets, lanterns, drummers, dancers, torches, and fire spinners will join The Lantern Choir, our celebrity D.J. Don P, The Fire Organ, and a crowd of revelers in the spinning lights of the disco ball from 9-10 pm. Bring your light to First Night! One button gets you everything: \$15, kids 3 and under free. (802) 238-6888. Jimmy@MontpelierAlive.org. www.MontpelierAlive.org.

NORWICH. New Year's Eve Contradance with Cuckoo's Nest. Ruth Sylvester caller with guest keyboard player, Gordon Peery. Sponsored by Muskeg Music. Clean, soft-soled shoes only. Please bring potluck finger food for the break. Festive attire encouraged...singing at midnight. Admission \$15, under 16 and over 60 half-price. Gather to decorate at 3 pm. Dance 8 pm till the New Year! At Tracy Hall. (802) 785-4607. rbarrows@cs.dartmouth.edu. Next dance January 8.

RUTLAND. New Year's Eve Children's Event. Make some noise and a Chinese dragon puppet for a dragon parade to welcome in the New Year. Hot cider and cookies. Free, for families of all ages. RSVP by Dec. 27 so materials can be gotten for all. 3-4 pm at Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St. (802) 773-1860. www.rutlandfree.org.

STOWE. Fireworks and Torch Light Parade. Ring in 2011 from the patio of the new Spruce Camp, Base Lodge at Stowe Mountain Resort. Events start at 7 pm. (802) 253-7321 www.gostowe.com.

ST. JOHNSBURY. 18th Annual First Night 2011. Family-friendly, alcohol-free festival of the arts—dozens of shows and venues. All kinds of music—folk, pop, rock, blues, bluegrass, Broadway, sacred, contemporary and classical, played and sung by soloists, ensembles, choruses, and bands. Ballet and breakdance, magic and hypnosis shows, juggling and comedy acts, and lots of food. Pancake supper at 10 pm, fireworks at midnight! Buy a button and do everything for \$15/\$10/pre-schoolers free. 4 pm to midnight. On and near Main St. (802) 748-2603. firstnightstj.com.

ST. JOHNSBURY. First Night at the Fairbanks Museum. We'll tour the galaxy with special planetarium shows. Reserve your ticket - shows fill quickly. 7 pm. Fairbanks Museum & Planetarium, 1302 Main St. (802) 748-2372.

STOWE. An Evening with James Taylor—A New Year's Eve Benefit Concert. With Boston Symphony Orchestra cellist Owen Young, and Caroline Taylor. 8 pm. The Spruce Peak Performing Arts Center, Stowe Mountain Resort. For tickets call (802) 253-3000.

STOWE. Snowy Eve at Spruce Peak. Ring in the New Year with the full moon up on the Long Trail. Spend New Year's Eve with other hardy adventurers at Spruce Peak Shelter. Sponsored by the Brattleboro Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. Call leader Mary Beth Berberuck at (802) 387-6281. www.greenmountainclub.org.

WARREN. Fireworks and Torchlight Parade. Beginning at 6:30 pm. Sugarbush Resort. (802) 583-6300.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. New Year's Eve with The English Beat. 9 pm. at the Tupelo Music Hall, 188 S. Main St. (603) 437-5100. www.tupelohallvermont.com.

WOODSTOCK. Cuban New Years' Celebration. The Cuban group Septeto Tipico Tivoli play at the Melaza Caribbean Bistro. Enjoy a four-course dinner with the sounds of this exceptional band. A light breakfast, champagne toast and party favors at midnight. Seatings at 5:30 & 8:30 pm; festivities begin at 9:30 pm. Reservations required. Melaza Caribbean Bistro, 71 Central St. (802) 457-7110.

WOODSTOCK. Christmas at the Farm. Visit the authentically decorated 1890 Farm House. Tour the operating dairy farm. Activities, ornament-making. Admission: adults \$11; over 62 \$10; children 5-15 \$6; 3-4 \$3; 2 & under free. 10 am - 3:30 pm at Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org. Through January 2.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 1

BARNET. Annual Christmas Bird Count. Join Northeast Kingdom's Audubon's one-day monitor/count of winter birds. Regardless of weather, dress appropriately. Registration required. (802) 748-2372. www.nekaudubon.org.

BENNINGTON. Cross-Country Ski in the George D. Aiken Wilderness. Ski into Aiken Wilderness. Start the year with an old friend. We'll likely do some skiing over frozen beaver ponds and marshes. Moderate outing, about four hours. Sponsored by the Bennington Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. For meeting place and time call leader, Martha Stitelman at (802) 442-0864, mstitel@sover.net. www.greenmountainclub.org.

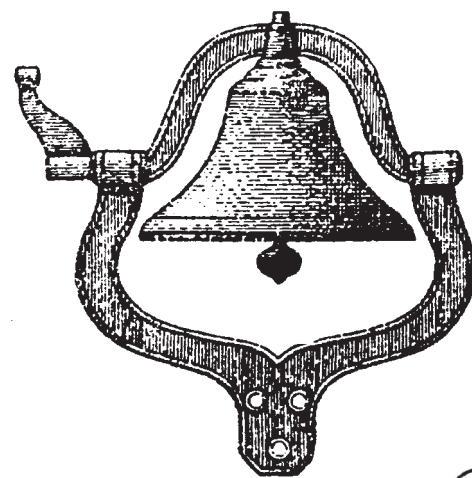
BENNINGTON. Coin, Sports, Postcard and Family Hobby Show. No admission. 8 am - 3 pm at Hampton Inn, 51 Hannaford Square. (802) 297-1274. Also January 1.

BRATTLEBORO. 5th Annual Winter Farmers' Market. Start the New Year off at your local farmers' market! Over 30 vendors with fresh baked goods, local produce, eggs, meats, cider, preserves, hand-made soaps, jewelry, pottery. Amazing, delicious local food. Prepared lunches and live music. Sponsored by Post Oil Solutions. 10 am to 2 pm at the Robert H. Gibson River Garden, downtown on Main St. (802) 869-2141. farmersmarket@postoilsolutions.org. Saturdays through March 26.

BURLINGTON. RunVermont's 23rd Annual First Run—5K Run and Kids Fun Run. Come to run, come to walk, push your kids in the jogger. Great prizes awarded in several costume categories. Delicious post-race food and raffle entry included in the race fee. (802) 362-2200.

DUXBURY. Winter Outing on Camels Hump. Difficult, strong pace, 6.8 miles, 2700' elevation gain. Sponsored by the Burlington Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. Contact leader by 12/30: David Hathaway, (802) 899-9982 or david.hathaway.78@gmail.com. www.greenmountainclub.org.

MONKTON. Snowshoe Excursion. Explore the trails around Monkton. A moderate four miles at a moderate pace. Sponsored by the Bread Loaf Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. For more info call leaders Ed and Mary Williams, (802) 453-5473. williamsandmary@gmavt.net. www.greenmountainclub.org.



The First Snow in Vermont



There's nothing anywhere I go
That beats a batch of country snow,
The sort for which you don't prepare,
But when you wake you feel its there;
There's lots more light inside the room,
That noise is grandpa with his broom;
A-towards the barn your eye you cast
And say, "Well, wife, it's here at last;
The way the hitching post sticks through
It's sifted down a foot or two"—
There's nothing like it, high or low,
A fall of good domestic snow.

You hunt your frock and belt your form
And bring the headstalls in to warm;
A crop of snow is jest the thing
Until the wind begins to sing;
The dog jumps in and makes a track
Around the little barn and back;
The stock enjoy it, every head,
The colt wakes up and kicks the shed;
The hens come out, the flirty things,

And powder up their bills and wings,
Jim Blood goes by with face aglow,
Hurrah! for good, old-fashioned snow.

The chores done up—it's middling still—
You guess you'll slip a grist to mill,
And drive around and see Sim Dorr
And get that buck you bargained for,
And find Mel Meiggs, he's pretty good
At helping haul the winter wood,
And fetch the mail and 'range with Rice
To blacksmith up for snow and ice;
It's some expense, but what of that!
A hoss can't haul that's laying flat;
The snow is here and wise men know
That there's a business side top snow.

Tomorrow, if the stage gets through,
You'll see the wood teams starting, too;
You'll see the boys with dovetailed heads
Discussing various sorts of sleds,
And talking 'bout the outs and ins
Of wooden versus iron pins;
Besides, 'twill take 'em several days
To settle on the neatest sleighs;
But life's a joy, though chillblains bite,
The world is loveliest when it's white;
There's nothing from LaMotte to Stowe
That beats good, old, domestic snow.

—DANIEL L. CADY

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Vermont Country Calendar

STOWE. The Spencers: Theatre of Illusion. Tickets \$20. 7:30 pm. The Spruce Peak Performing Arts Center, Stowe Mountain Resort. (802) 253-3000 sprucepeakarts.org. www.stowe.com.

WESTMORE. Mt. Hor Hop. The first big free-style cross-country ski race of the year, on the amazingly reliable snow and stunning setting of the Willoughby State Forest. If you want to get a feel for the Nordic scene in New England, this is a great place for it: grandmothers and young kids frequently rub elbows with top collegiate skiers and Olympians. Registration \$25. Mt. Hor, Rt. 5A. (802) 334-7144. www.mstf.net.

WOODSTOCK. Sleigh Rides at Sugarbush Farm. Enjoy a ride through the woods with Belgian draft horses. Call for reservations based on weather conditions. Shop in the 1865 farm house store. Sugarbush Farm, 591 Sugarbush Farm Rd. (802) 457-1757. betsy_sugarbush@wildblue.net. www.sugarbushfarm.com. *Through January 3.*

WOODSTOCK. Christmas at the Farm. Visit the authentically decorated 1890 Farm House. Tour the operating dairy farm. Admission: adults \$11; over 62 \$10; children 5-15 \$6; 3-4 \$3; 2 & under free. 10 am - 3:30 pm at Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org. *Also January 2.*

SUNDAY, JANUARY 2

BARNARD. Winter Outing. Snowshoe or hike in Barnard, VT area, depending on the weather conditions. A moderate six miles. Sponsored by the Ottauquechee Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. For more information call leader, Dick Ruben, (802) 333-3707. www.greenmountainclub.org.

BURLINGTON. Vermont Fancy Felines Annual Cat Show. Fun for the entire family. More than 250 beautiful cats of many different breeds. Shop for kitty goods. Auction to benefit the Franklin County Humane Society. Admission. Sheraton Hotel and Conference Center. (802) 434-2598. *Through January 3.*

FAIR HAVEN. Eureka Lodge Breakfast. Everyone welcome. Pancakes, French toast, scrambled eggs, bacon, sausage, hash, home fries, maple syrup, coffee, tea, orange juice. Adults: \$7, kids 6-12: \$3, 5 and under: free. 8-11 am. Fair Haven Eureka Lodge 75, 131 North Main St.

MANCHESTER. Equinox Preservation Trust. Red Gate to Flatlander's Pass to Pond Loop and back. Start time 10 am, distance about two miles, snowshoe, easy. Depart 10 am. Sponsored by the Manchester Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. Leader, Alyson Grzyb, alyruby@gmail.com, (802) 362-6108. www.greenmountainclub.org.

MIDDLESEX. Snowshoe Outing on White Rock Mountain. A moderate four miles. Sponsored by the Montpelier Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. For meeting time and place call leader: Charlene Bohl, (802) 229-9908 or charlenebohl@comcast.net. www.greenmountainclub.org.

STOWE. Snowshoe Hike to Stowe Pinnacle. An trek through a hardwood and beech forest to a rocky knob summit with views of the Worcester Range and surrounding area. This relatively short hike has some steep stretches. We'll return to the parking lot with some hours of daylight left. Moderate hike, moderate pace, 2.8 miles, 1520' elevation gain. Sponsored by the Burlington Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. Contact leader by 12/31: Suzanne Daningburg, (514) 935-4770 or suzannedaningburg@yahoo.ca. www.greenmountainclub.org.

WINOOSKI. Square Dance. Will Mentor and others calling, music by Pete Sutherland and Jim Burns and others. 4 pm to 7 pm at the Monkey House Bar. For more info contact willmentor@earthlink.net.

WOODSTOCK. Christmas at the Farm. Visit the authentically decorated 1890 Farm House. Tour the operating dairy farm. Admission: adults \$11; over 62 \$10; children 5-15 \$6; 3-4 \$3; 2 & under free. 10 am - 3:30 pm at Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. www.billingsfarm.org.

MONDAY, JANUARY 3

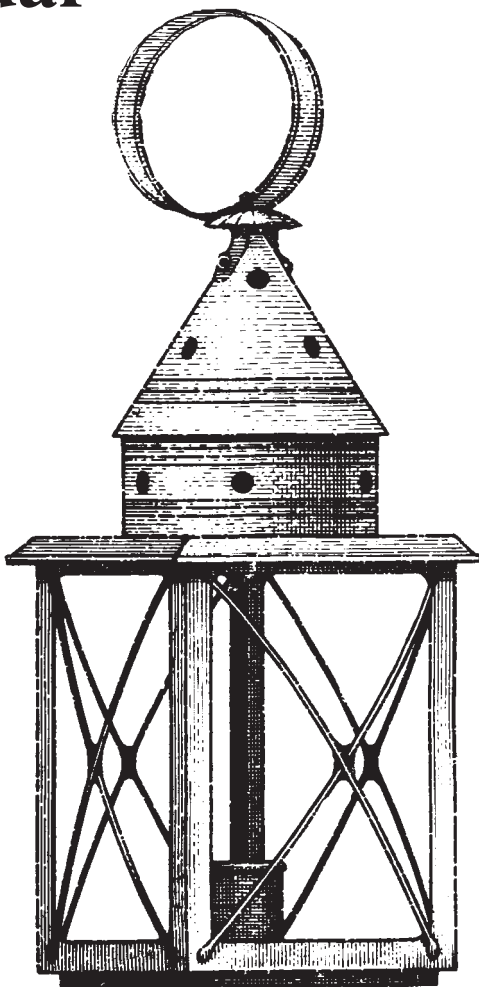
QUECHEE. Cross-Country Ski on the Golf Course. Start from Lake Pinneo. Easy to intermediate. Sponsored by the Ottauquechee Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. For more information call leader, Juergen Ewert at (802) 457-4345. www.greenmountainclub.org.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 4

TUNBRIDGE. Contra Dance. Hosted by the Ed Larkin Contra Dancers. Harold "Chuck" Luce and Adam Boyce, fiddlers. Open to the public, all dances taught, no partner necessary, children welcome. Refreshments available. Admission by donation. 7:30 pm at the Tunbridge Town Hall. edlarkincontradancers.org. *Also February 11.*

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 5

RUTLAND. Lecture: How the Civil War Forever Changed Vermont. Rolf Diamant discusses the Civil War's impact on Vermont. A Vermont Humanities Council event. Free. 7 pm. Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St. (802) 773-1860.



THURSDAY, JANUARY 6

SOUTH ROYALTON. Winter Farmers' Market. Many processed foods, produce, baked goods and locally-made crafts. Bread, pickles, relishes, maple syrup, pottery, jewelry, woodenware. Open rain or shine, wheelchair accessible, bathroom available, parking. Every Thursday from 3-5:30 at the Red Door Church on the Green. Info contact Bushrod Powers, (802) 763-8087. bushrod.powers@valley.net.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 7

COLCHESTER. English Country Dance. Featuring Mary Jones and the Flying Romanos. All dances are taught, walked through, and prompted. Advanced dance workshop for more experienced dancers at 7 pm. Dance from 7:30-9:30 pm. At the Elley-Long Music Center. For more information contact Val and Tom Medve at valandtom@myfairpoint.net.

HYDE PARK. Jane Austen Lecture: "Making Sense of the Regency World of Jane Austen." Presented by Deb Barnum, co-founder of Vermont's JASNA chapter, and inn-keeper Suzanne Boden. Dessert, tea & coffee. \$14. Advance reservations required. 8 pm. Governor's House in Hyde Park, 100 Main St. (802) 888-6888. info@onehundredmain.com. www.onehundredmain.com.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Concert: Vienna Teng with Matt White opening. Tickets \$25. 8 pm at the Tupelo Music Hall, 188 S. Main St. (603) 437-5100. viennateng.com. www.tupelohallvermont.com.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 8

BOLTON VALLEY. The 16th Annual National Winter Trails Day. Free tickets, complimentary special group lessons and free use of a portion of our rentals for first time skiers and snowshoers. Classes at 10:30 am. Snowshoe tour and winter woods exploration for families at 11:30 am. From 10 am - 2 pm at Bolton Valley Nordic Center, 4302 Bolton Access Rd. (802) 434-6871. nordiccenter@boltonvalley.com. www.boltonvalley.com. www.snowlink.com.

BRATTLEBORO. 5th Annual Winter Farmers' Market. Sponsored by Post Oil Solutions. Over 30 vendors offering local produce, eggs, locally-raised grass-fed meats, cider, fresh baked goods, local preserves, hand-made soaps, jewelry, pottery. Tasty prepared lunches, live music and much more. EBT and Debit cards accepted. Saturdays from 10 am to 2 pm at the Robert H. Gibson River Garden, downtown on Main St. For more info contact Sherry Maher, manager, (802) 869-2141. farmersmarket@postoilsolutions.org. *Saturdays through March 26.*

CRAFTSBURY COMMON. Craftsbury Outdoor Center Celebrates National Winter Trails Day. Complimentary trail use and rental equipment all day for snowshoeing and cross country skiing, and an introductory x-c group lesson at 1:30 pm for those new to the sport. 9 am - 4 pm at Craftsbury Outdoor Center, 535 Lost Nation Rd. (800) 729-7751. www.craftsbury.com. www.snowlink.com.

FAIRLEE. 6th Annual Lake Morey Skate-a-thon. How far can you skate in a day? Lake Morey is the home of the longest ice skating trail in the U.S. Donation \$25/\$20, juniors \$15/\$10. Snacks and hot drinks in a heated tent on the ice. Free Nordic skate rentals while supply lasts. Registration, lunch and awards at Lake Morey Resort. Sponsored by the Upper Valley Trails Alliance. 10 am - 4 pm. At Lake Morey Resort. (802) 649-9075. uvta.org.



Saturday Night Coffee House Concert Series in Rutland, VT

Another season of acoustic music shows at the Unitarian Universalist Church has begun in Rutland, VT.

The "Saturday Night Coffee House Concert Series" will be featuring some of old favorites as well as some that are new to this series, as well. You'll be able to hear musical styles ranging from Blues to Bluegrass, Gypsy Jazz to Folk, Latin and World Music—all with an original flair and great musicianship.

Here's the upcoming schedule. *December 4:* Rick Redington & The Luv—A Special Holiday Show, www.rickredington.com. *January 15:* Swing Noire—Gypsy Jazz, www.swingnoire.com. *February 12:* The Michele

Fay Band—Original Folk/Bluegrass, www.michelefayband.com. *March 12,* Las Gente Verde—Latin Jazz/World Music, www.greenbrothersband.com.

The concerts are on Saturdays at 7:30 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Church at 117 West St. in Rutland, VT. Tickets are \$10 advance at Tattersall's, on Merchant's Row in downtown Rutland. Tickets at the door are \$12 adults, \$7 seniors, \$4 kids.

Break up your winter—plan to come and hear some great music in an informal and friendly atmosphere.

For info about The Coffee House Concert Series call (802) 492-2252.

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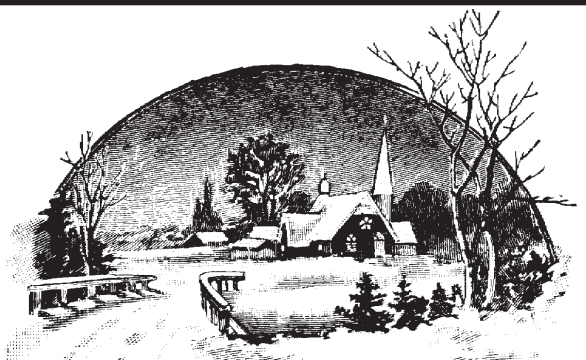
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Vermont Country Calendar

(January 8 continued)

FAIRLEE. Winter Skills Workshops. Held in conjunction with Lake Morey WinterFest and Lake Morey Skate-a-thon. Morning and afternoon workshops are open to the public but must be pre-registered. Workshops include: The Art of Building Snow Shelters, Axemanship & Firebuilding, Basics of Traditional Winter Travel & Camping, Ice Fishing 101, The Basics of Dog Sledding, and many more. Fee \$27 includes lunch. At Hulbert Outdoor Center. (802) 333-3405. www.alohafoundation.org/hulbert.

FLETCHER. Demonstration: "Walk in the Woods—Deeryard Management for Private Forest Landowners." Hosted by The Vermont Woodlands Association and the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Dept. 9 am at 290 Vreeland Rd. The tour is free and open to the public; pre-registration is appreciated. Please call (802) 747-7900 or email info@vermontwoodlands.org to register. Visit www.vermontwoodlands.org for directions.

HYDE PARK. Book Discussion Dinner: Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*. Reservations required. Also serving a full Victorian-style English afternoon tea at 3 pm with readings and discussion. Reservations required for both. Dinner at 7 pm. Governor's House in Hyde Park, 100 Main St. (802) 888-6888. info@onehundredmain.com. www.onehundredmain.com.

JERICHO CENTER. Family Contra Dance. Mark Sustic, caller, with music by the Fiddleheads. Benefits the Jericho Public Library. At the Jericho Community Center, Browns Trace Rd. For info contact dtmalin@myfairpoint.net. mrksustic@together.net. www.youngtraditionvermont.org/fiddleheads.

LYNDONVILLE. Northeast Kingdom Snowmobile Drag Races. Head to head racing on a 660' track accessible by snowmobile via VAST Corridor #52 between Lyndonville and East Burke. Races start at 9:45 am. \$20 entry + \$10 insurance fee. Admission \$5. Prize money, trophies, hot dogs, burgers, and lots of fun! Track is located on Rt. 114 North. (802) 535-6802. lyndonsnocruisers@hotmail.com. www.lyndonsnocruisers.com. Also January 15.

MONTPELIER. Capital City Winter Farmers Market. Produce, meats, cheese, eggs, crafts, baked goods, and prepared foods to snack on! 10 am – 2 pm at the Vermont College of Fine Arts Gym, Corner of E. State St. & College St. Debit and EBT cards accepted. (802) 223-2958. manager@montpelierfarmersmarket.com. www.montpelierfarmersmarket.com. Continues 1st & 3rd Saturdays, thru April.

NORWICH. Contradance with Northern Spy. David Millstone caller. Sponsored by Muskeg Music. All dances taught, no partner necessary, beginners welcome. Clean, soft-soled shoes only. Admission \$10, under 16 free, over 60 by donation. 8 pm. At Tracy Hall. (802) 785-4607. rbarrows@cs.dartmouth.edu. Next dance February 12.

NORWICH. The Norwich Farmers Markets. We have moved downtown and indoors for the fall and winter. Fresh produce, storage vegetables, eggs, cheese, baked goods, crafts and clothing all produced by your neighbors. Winter Markets from 10 am – 1 pm at Tracy Hall on Feb. 12, March 12 & April 9. (802) 384-7447. www.norwichfarmersmarket.org.

RUTLAND. The Opera Theatre of Weston presents The Magic Flute. Sung in English with a stellar cast in exquisite costume and dancers selected from the Springfield Dance Factory. This opera by Mozart will be conducted by Maestro Karen Keltner, the resident conductor of the San Diego Opera. 3 pm. The Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St. For tickets call (802) 775-0903. paramountlive.org. www.operatheatreofweston.com.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Concert: The Fools—great music, outrageous performance! Tickets \$30. 8 pm at the Tupelo Music Hall, 188 S. Main St. (603) 437-5100. www.thefools-band.com. www.tupelohallvermont.com.

WOODSTOCK. National Winter Trails Day at Woodstock Nordic Center. First-time skiers and snowshoers receive complimentary trail passes and rental equipment. Short introductory lessons also available free of charge. 1-4 pm. Rt. 106 S., at the Fitness Center. (802) 457-6674.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 9

BRATTLEBORO. Contra Dance. Beginners lesson 7:15 pm. Dance from 7:30 pm to 10:30 pm. At the Stone Church, 210 Main St. (802) 257-9234. ethanhw.com/brattdance.

COLCHESTER. Northeast Fiddlers Association Fiddle Meet. Jam starts at 12 noon. At the American Legion, on Rt. 7 two miles from Exit 16, I-89. Usually first Sundays, with exceptions for holidays. For more info contact (802) 763-8274. www.nefiddlers.org.

FAIRLEE. Lake Morey Winterfest. Skate, ski and snowshoe tours with free equipment rentals. Sledding, igloo building, ice cutting, ice & snow sculptures, skijoring, dogsleds, snowshoe volleyball. Storytelling, kids' corner, silent auction. All ages, beginners welcome. Lunch with live music. Donation \$5 per person or \$15/family (lunch separate). Call (802) 649-3939 to reserve skates, skis, or snowshoes. 10 am – 4 pm. Hulbert Outdoor Center. (802) 333-3405. www.alohafoundation.org/hulbert.

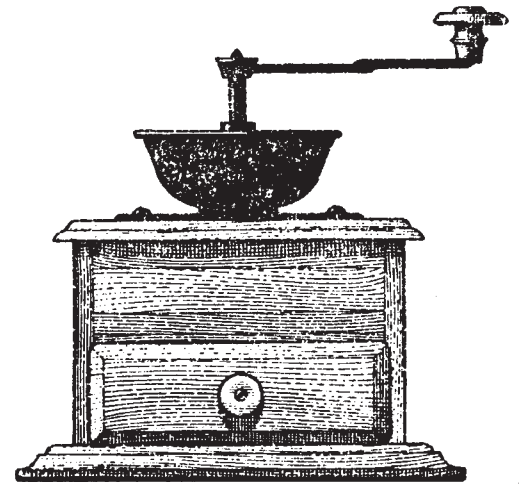
FELCHVILLE. Cross-Country Ski Outing. Meet behind Town Hall at 9:30 am. A joint excursion with Ascutney Trails Association and the Ottauquechee Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. For more info call leader Barbara Rhoad, (802) 674-2326.

MANCHESTER. Snowshoe on Bromley Mountain. Start at 9 am. A moderate six miles. Sponsored by the Manchester Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. Leader: Bob Fish, vtchmswp@gmail.com, (802) 824-3662. www.greenmountainclub.org.

NORWICH. International Folk Dance. Everyone is welcome, both new dancers and experienced, young and formerly young. No partner is necessary. Please bring a pair of clean, soft-soled shoes. Sponsored by The Upper Valley International Folk Dancers. 3-6 pm at Tracy Hall, the large brick building next to the church on the green. For info call John or Julianne at (802) 436-2151. barthoj@vermontel.net.

RIPTON. Snowshoe or Cross-Country Ski on the Wilkinson Trails. Moderate, with moderate pace, 4-5 miles. Sponsored by the Bread Loaf Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. Leader Nancy Morgan, (802) 388-9868. www.greenmountainclub.org.

RUPERT. Merck Forest Woodland Ramble. Snowshoes may be needed. A moderate three to four miles. Leave at 9 am. Sponsored by the Killington Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. Leader, Steve Williams at (802) 645-9529.



Once Upon A Christmas



by Elisabeth Doren

Aunt Frances, my mother's sister, had Bright's Disease. That much they knew. But how to cure it was not known back then, in 1919. All they could do was wait and hope for as long a delay as possible against the inevitable. There was no question about the diagnosis. Her husband was a doctor, and there was no doubt either about the outcome. So it was only a matter of waiting.

For Aunt Frances, the knowledge of her condition didn't seem to suppress her good spirits. She was joyous, carefree, and we always had a great time when she and her young son came out to the farm for a visit.

As her condition worsened, I can't remember any change in her disposition. But then, I was 15, away at school—at high school ten miles distant in those horse and buggy days—so I didn't have day-to-day family news. When the end came, it came suddenly.

The first inkling I had of the depth of my mother's devastation was when she came to town to bring my brother and sister and me home. I was upstairs at Cousin Mary's house, where we boarding students lived, gathering up my belongings for the trip home, when I heard her voice. It was so

tired, as though she had been on a very long and tiring journey. My eyes filled with tears and my voice froze.

We children did not go to the funeral, but we had a vivid memory of it as we were told that when Aunt Frances was lowered into the ground, her young son asked for one rose from among the flowers lying on her coffin.

"What if one of her own children were to come down with a life threatening malady? Pneumonia? That was the ticket!"

During the rest of the fall my mother remained depressed, and I worried about her. I tried to persuade her to let me stay home, but without success. I found it increasingly hard to study. I knew something had to be done to shake my mother out of her dark mood. What if one of her own children were to come down with a life threatening malady? That might work. Pneumonia? That was the ticket!

I took to exposing my throat to icy blasts as I walked to and from school, but I seemed to be impervious to all those threats of catching your death-of-cold.

Christmas was fast approaching and I was about to give up on this ploy when,

lo and behold, I came down with a cold, just an ordinary cold. But with a little encouragement it became full-fledged, and shortly I was ordered to bed, full of aches and pains and fevers.

Yes, it was pneumonia, and all the family's resources were organized to fight it. In those days there was no penicillin, nor sulfa drugs, nor anything except grit and waiting until the fourth day

of high fever. If you passed that day safely, you would survive; if you didn't, it was curtains.

The bout was no fun, but I did survive, and my mother did improve and took an interest in the living again.

So, in a way, this turned out to be at least a meaningful Christmas. I don't even remember our Christmas dinner or what presents I got, or any other earth-shaking events of the day. I never told my mother what I had done, nor anyone else, for that matter, until now.

Elisabeth Doren (1904–1998) helped found the Sampler and shared with us her memories of growing up on a north country farm.

Vermont Country Calendar

SHEFFIELD. Snowshoe in Holbrook State Park. Easy to moderate pace. Sponsored by the Northeast Kingdom Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. For more info call leader, Jean at (802) 586-9637. www.greenmountainclub.org.

STOWE. Winter Outing on Mount Mansfield. From the winter parking area, we will climb Mansfield via Halfway House, then to the summit, and down Sunset Ridge. Some type of crampon probably required, as well as snowshoes. Expect full winter conditions; route may be modified if conditions get too extreme. A strenuous, difficult hike, strong pace, nine miles, 3000' elevation gain. Sponsored by the Burlington Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. Contact leader, Richard Larsen, by Jan. 8 at (802) 878-6828 or larsen007@aol.com. www.greenmountainclub.org.

WOODSTOCK. English Country Dance. Sharon Broblicki, caller. Presented by Woodstock English Country Dance. 2:30-5:30 pm at the Little Theater. For more info contact Sharon Groblicki sgroblicki@hotmail.com.

MONDAY, JANUARY 10

CABOT. Free Community Dinner. All are welcome!! Sponsored by Faith In Action Northern Communities Partnership. Live music, hopefully. Call for reservations. 5-7 pm. Masonic Hall, 3339 Main St. (802) 563-3322.

CHITTENDEN. Cross-Country Ski Excursion. Join us for seven miles of back-country skiing on the Catamount Trail in the Chittenden Reservoir area. Sponsored by the Ottauquechee Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. For more info call leader, Dick Ruben, (802) 333-3707. www.greenmountainclub.org.

WATERBURY. Winter Outing on Worcester Mountain. Well-behaved dogs are welcome! Visit the Worcester Range namesake. A moderate hike with strong pace, 5.8 miles, 1970' elevation gain. Sponsored by the Burlington Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. Contact leader, Robynn Albert, by Jan. 8 if you'd like to come. (802) 878-4036 or robynnalbert@hotmail.com.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 11

MANCHESTER. Lecture. Part of the 2011 Hildene Winter History Series. The 45-minute presentation on Abraham Lincoln's Kentucky birthplace will be followed by a 15-minute question and answer period. Free and open to the public. The Museum Store will be open before and after each lecture and there will be sampling of Hildene Farm Artisanal Cheese. 7 pm in the Beckwith Room. Hildene, off Rt. 7A. (802) 367-7960. stephanie@hildene.org.

RUTLAND. Winter Birding Garden Club Lecture. Free. Bag lunch included. 11:30 am - 2:30 pm at Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St. (802) 773-1860. rutlandfree.org.

STOWE. Concert: The Lovin' Spoonful. Tickets \$40. 8 pm. The Spruce Peak Performing Arts Center, Stowe Mountain Resort. (802) 253-3000. sprucepeakarts.org.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 12

BRATTLEBORO. 5th Annual Winter Farmers' Market. Sponsored by Post Oil Solutions. Over 30 vendors offering local produce, eggs, locally-raised grass-fed meats, cider, fresh baked goods, local preserves, hand-made soaps, jewelry, pottery. Tasty prepared lunches, live music and much more. EBT and Debit cards accepted. Saturdays from 10 am to 2 pm at the Robert H. Gibson River Garden, downtown on Main St. For more info contact Sherry Maher, manager, (802) 869-2141. farmersmarket@postoilsolutions.org. Saturdays through March 26.

ESSEX. Crafts and Hobbies Knit Night. All skill levels welcome. Free. 5-7 pm. Phoenix Books & Cafe at Essex Shoppes & Cinema. (802) 972-7111. phoenixbooks.biz.

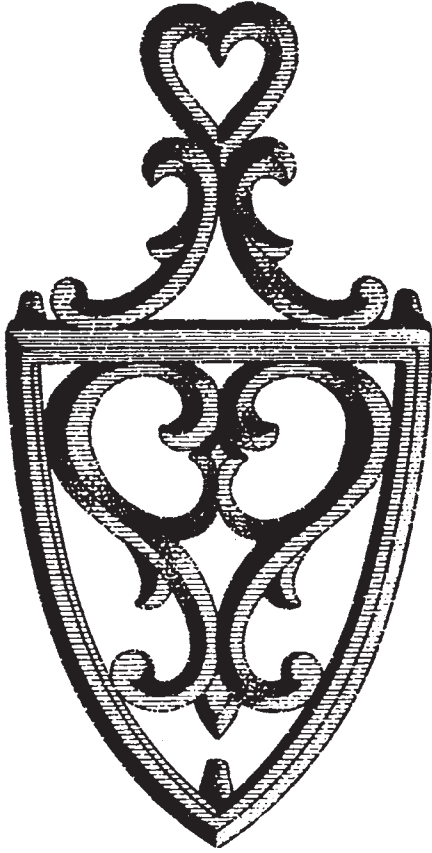
THURSDAY, JANUARY 13

BONDVILLE. Cross-Country Ski to Stratton Pond. A moderate six miles. Depart at 9 am. Sponsored by the Manchester Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. For more info contact leader, Dave Charis-Mink, jwolf@sover.net, (802) 874-4275. www.greenmountainclub.org.

SAXTONS RIVER. Third Annual Taste of the Arts Talk. The Big Top adventures of Troy Wunderle. Refreshments. Tickets \$15/\$5 at Main Street Arts or MainStreetArts.org. Reservations requested. 6 pm at Main Street Arts. (802) 869-2960.

SAXTONS RIVER. Discussion: Big Top Adventure. Troy Wunderle shares his stories of living in and outside the circus ring. Good eats by Harvest Moon. Part of A Taste of the Arts series. Tickets \$15, children \$5. Please reserve three days in advance. 6 pm at Main Street Arts. (802) 869-2960. info@mainstreetarts.org. www.mainstreetarts.org.

SOUTH ROYALTON. Winter Farmers' Market. Many processed foods, produce, baked goods and locally-made crafts. Bread, pickles, relishes, maple syrup, pottery, jewelry, woodenware. Open rain or shine, wheelchair accessible, bathroom available, parking. Every Thursday from 3-5:30 at the Red Door Church on the Green. Info contact Bushrod Powers, (802) 763-8087. bushrod.powers@valley.net.



FRIDAY, JANUARY 14

BELLOWS FALLS. Stone Church Arts Concert. Long Time Courting, a Celtic quartet. Tickets \$20/\$15 at www.brattleborotix.com. 7:30 pm at Immanuel Episcopal Church, 20 Church St. (802) 463-3100. www.immanuelepiscopal.org.

BENNINGTON. Concert with Pete and Karen Sutherland. Enjoy a performance by these 25-year veterans of the New England and national folk scenes. Admission: \$15. 8 pm. Meetinghouse Cafe of Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 108 School St. (802) 440-9816. www.uubennington.org.

BENNINGTON. Meetinghouse Cafe Concert: Pete and Karen Sutherland. As 25-year veterans of the New England and national folk scenes, Pete and Karen are known for their wide knowledge of traditional music and music-making styles, their songwriting, and their joy of performing. Admission \$15. Coffee and sweets served. Doors open at 7 pm, concert at 8 pm. Meetinghouse Cafe of Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 108 School St. (802) 440-9816. www.uubennington.org.

MANCHESTER CENTER. History Program by the Manchester Historical Society. Michael Bellesiles will speak on the founding of Vermont and of the New Hampshire Grants settlers. 7 pm. The Northshire Bookstore, 4869 Main St. (802) 362-2200.

MONTPELIER. Summit School Folk Festival. Square dance with Jennifer Steckler (caller) with Sheesham and Lotus and Mayfly at 7:30 pm at Bethany Church. (802) 917-1186. Through January 16.

STOWE. Performance: Circo Comedia. Tickets \$21. 2 & 7 pm. The Spruce Peak Performing Arts Center, Stowe Mountain Resort. (802) 253-3000. www.sprucepeakarts.org. Also January 15.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Tupelo Night of Comedy. Featuring Joey Yannetty, E.J. Murphy, and Jay Grove. Tickets \$18. 8 pm at the Tupelo Music Hall, 188 S. Main St. (603) 437-5100. www.tupelohallvermont.com.

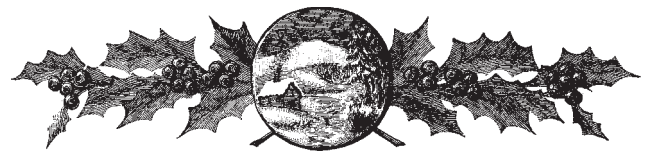
SATURDAY, JANUARY 15

BENNINGTON. Bennington-Walloomsac Winter Farmers Market. 10 am - 2 pm. First Baptist Church at 601 East Main St. For more information contact Sarah Sanfilippo. (802) 688-7210. Next market February 19.

BRATTLEBORO. 5th Annual Winter Farmers' Market. Sponsored by Post Oil Solutions. Over 30 vendors offering local produce, eggs, locally-raised grass-fed meats, cider, fresh baked goods, local preserves, hand-made soaps, jewelry, pottery. Tasty prepared lunches, live music and much more. EBT and Debit cards accepted. Saturdays from 10 am to 2 pm at the Robert H. Gibson River Garden, downtown on Main St. For more info contact Sherry Maher, manager, (802) 869-2141. farmersmarket@postoilsolutions.org. Saturdays through March 26.

BRATTLEBORO. Brattleboro Concert Choir Performs Missa Afro-Brasileira. A dynamic work for acapella chorus, the Missa Afro-Brasileira (1976) won the "Best Vocal Work" prize of the Associação dos Críticos de São Paulo. Tickets \$15/\$10 under 18. 7:30 pm. St. Michael's Catholic Church, 47 Walnut St. (802) 257-4523. info@bmcvt.org. www.bmcvt.org. Also January 16.

BRATTLEBORO. Concert: Gary Smulyan Trio. The World's best baritone sax player? The Vermont Jazz Center presents this seven-time Grammy award winner and international touring artist performing with bass and drums. 8 pm. Vermont Jazz Center, 72 Cotton Mill Hill. For tickets call (802) 275-7182. www.vtjazz.org.



God Bless the Little Things

God Bless the little things this Christmastide
All the little wild things that live outside
Little cold robins and rabbits in the snow
Give them good faring and a warm place to go
All the little young things for His sake who died
Who was a little thing at Christmastide.

—MARGARET MURRAY

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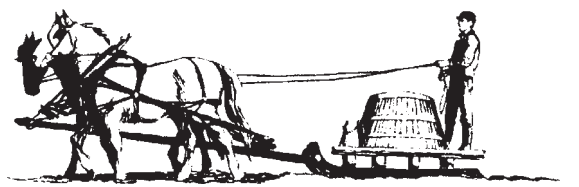
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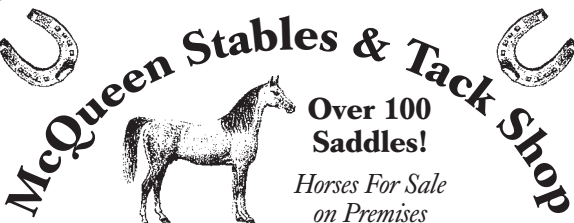
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Vermont Country Calendar

BURLINGTON. Burlington Chamber Orchestra Concert. Featuring violinist Soovin Kim. The BCO goes conductorless in the style of the famous Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, with Kim performing Winter from Vivaldi's Four Seasons, Mozart's Violin Concerto in G major and more. Tickets: \$25, \$20 seniors, \$8 students. Advance tickets available from flyntix.org. 8 pm at UVM Recital Hall, 384 S. Prospect St. (802) 864-2483. sharontevents@yahoo.com. bcovt.org. Also January 16.

HUNTINGTON. Bird Monitoring Walk. Help monitor bird populations in different habitats. Information gathered will be entered in the Vermont e-bird database. 8-10 am at the Green Mountain Audubon Center, 255 Sherman Rd. (802) 434-3068. vt.audubon.org. Also February 15.

LYNDONVILLE. Northeast Kingdom Snowmobile Drag Races. Head to head racing on a 660' track accessible by snowmobile via VAST Corridor #52 between Lyndonville and East Burke. Races start at 9:45 am. \$20 entry + \$10 insurance fee. Admission \$5. Prize money, trophies, hot dogs, burgers, and lots of fun! Track is located on Rt. 114 North. (802) 535-6802. www.lyndonsnocruisers.com.

MONTPELIER. Summit School Folk Festival. Fiddle (11 am) and banjo (1 pm) workshops with Pete Sutherland. Jam session from 3-6 pm. Concert with Sheesham and Lotus and Mayfly at 7:30 pm at Langdon Street Café. (802) 917-1186. music@summit-school.org. Also Jan 16.

NORTH SPRINGFIELD. Show/Dance. Rock band Third Rail plays from 9 pm - 1 am at KJ's Place on 3 Main St. in (802) 886-2519.

QUECHEE. Outdoor Family Nature Program. Discover how animals move around in winter, hunt for food, and even play in the powder. Warm up with refreshments around a campfire! For children of all ages. Admission. 1-4 pm. VINS Nature Center, 6565 Woodstock Rd. (802) 359-5000. info@vinsweb.org. www.vinsweb.org.

RUTLAND. Concert. Swing Noire—Gypsy Jazz. Coffee House Concert Series. Tickets \$10 advance at Tattersall's, on Merchant's Row in downtown Rutland. At the door, tickets are \$12 adults, \$7 seniors, \$4 children. 7:30 pm at the Unitarian Universalist Church at 117 West St. (802) 492-2252. www.swingnoire.com.

STOWE. Performance: Circo Comedia. Tickets \$21. 2 & 7 pm. The Spruce Peak Performing Arts Center, Stowe Mountain Resort. (802) 253-3000. sprucepeakarts.org.

WESTON. The Opera Theatre of Weston presents The Magic Flute. Sung in English with a stellar cast in exquisite costume and dancers selected from the Springfield Dance Factory. This opera by Mozart will be conducted by Maestro Karen Keltner, the resident conductor of the San Diego Opera. 3 pm. Weston Theater. For tickets call (802) 824-3821. Also January 16.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Concert: Livingston Taylor. Tickets \$35. 8 pm at the Tupelo Music Hall, 188 S. Main St. (603) 437-5100. livtaylor.com. www.tupelohallvermont.com.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Dance into January. 7 pm, Legion grill and cash bar open. 7 pm, free dance lesson w/ The Tomenys. 8-11 pm, "The Moonlighters" Big Band. Ballroom. Dance routine with area pro dancers! Admission \$10/\$18 per couple. Please bring non-perishable food for the Haven's foodshelf. American Legion Post #26. For info call J. Hewes at (802) 436-2053. www.moonlightersbigband.com.

WOODSTOCK. Sleigh Ride Weekend at Billings Farm & Museum. Horse-drawn sleigh rides through the frosty farm fields, and sledding with jack jumper sleds. Visit the dairy farm and restored farmhouse. Farm programs and hands-on activities. Admission. 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, 5302 River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. Through January 17.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 16

BRATTLEBORO. Brattleboro Concert Choir Performs Missa Afro-Brasileira. A dynamic work for acapella chorus, the Missa Afro-Brasileira (1976) won the "Best Vocal Work" prize of the Associação dos Críticos de São Paulo. Tickets \$15/\$10 under 18. 3 pm. St. Michael's Catholic Church, 47 Walnut St. (802) 257-4523. info@bmcvt.org. www.bmcvt.org.

BURLINGTON. Burlington Chamber Orchestra Concert. Featuring violinist Soovin Kim. The BCO goes conductorless in the style of the famous Orpheus Chamber Orchestra. Tickets \$25/\$20/\$8. Advance tickets available from flyntix.org. Matinee performance at 3 pm at UVM Recital Hall, 384 S. Prospect St. (802) 864-2483. sharontevents@yahoo.com. bcovt.org.

JERUSALEM. Winter Hike on Mt. Ellen. Well-behaved dogs are welcome. Let's surprise the skiers when we reach the summit! A moderate eight-mile hike with strong pace, 2580' elevation gain. Sponsored by the Burlington Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. Contact leader, Robynn Albert, by Jan. 14 if you would like to come. (802) 878-4036 or robynnalbert@hotmail.com. www.greenmountainclub.org.

MONTPELIER. Summit School Folk Festival. Guitar (12:30 pm) and banjo (2:30 pm) workshops with Mark Greenberg. Concert with Wood's Tea Company at 4 pm at the T.W. Wood Gallery. (802) 917-1186. music@summit-school.org.

MOUNT HOLLY. Ski the Catamount Trail. A winter outing from Healdville to Ninevah Four Corners. Eight miles with lunch at a snowmobile/biker pub en route. Sponsored by the Brattleboro Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. For more info call leader Joe Cook at (802) 257-0609.

ROCHESTER. Chittenden Brook Winter Outing. A moderate four-five mile ski or snowshoe on a wood road. Sponsored by the Killington Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. Leave at 9 am. For more information call leaders Viv Bebee & Larry Walter at (802) 775-3855. www.greenmountainclub.org.

ST. JOHNSBURY. The Northeast Kingdom Classical Series Concert: Repast Baroque Ensemble. A collaboration of three period-instrument virtuosos joined by soprano Nell Snaidas for a concert. Admission \$16/\$13/\$6. 4 pm. South Congregational Church, 1052 Main St. (802) 748-2600.

VERSHIRE. Cross-Country Ski Outing. A strenuous 10+ miles on back-country trails. Sponsored by the Ottauquechee Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. For more info call leader Heinz Trebitz at (802) 785-2129. www.greenmountainclub.org.

WESTON. The Opera Theatre of Weston presents The Magic Flute. Sung in English with a stellar cast in exquisite costume and dancers selected from the Springfield Dance Factory conducted by Maestro Karen Keltner. 2 pm. Weston Theater. For tickets call (802) 824-3821. www.operatheatreofweston.com.

WOODSTOCK. Sleigh Ride Weekend at Billings Farm & Museum. Horse-drawn sleigh rides through the frosty farm fields, and sledding with jack jumper sleds. Visit the dairy farm and restored farmhouse. Farm programs and hands-on activities. Admission. 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, 5302 River Rd. (802) 457-2355. info@billingsfarm.org. Also January 17.

WOODSTOCK. Book & Author Event. Meet Neil Goodwin, author of We Go As Captives, at a reading and book signing. His book is a riveting adventure about the historic Royalton Raid and daring prisoner escape. Free. 2 pm. Woodstock Historical Society, Elm St. (802) 457-1822. julie.nelson@state.vt.us. vermonthistory.org.

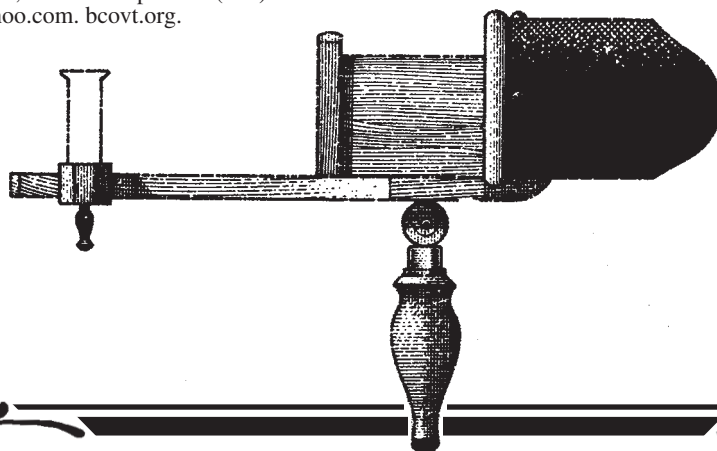
MONDAY, JANUARY 17

EAST MONTPELIER. Cross-Country Ski at Morse Farm. Groomed trails at a lovely ski touring center. Fee charged; discount for Catamount Trail Association & seniors. Sponsored by the Ottauquechee Section of the Green Mountain Club. Newcomers and non-members welcome. For more information contact leader, Iris Berezin, at (802) 295-2294. www.greenmountainclub.org.

HUNTINGTON. Snowshoe on Honey Hollow Trail. This is a nice circular route, primarily a ski trail but also used regularly by snowshoers. Easy to moderate hike, slow pace, little elevation change, five-six miles with a slightly longer loop for faster people. Sponsored by the Burlington Section of the Green Mountain Club. Free, non-members welcome. For more info call leader Dot Myer at (802) 863-2433 or Dotmyer@myhfairpoint.net.

STOWE. Winter Carnival. Ten major activities for both young and old, from zany sports events, Ice Carving Competitions, movies, Kids Carnival Kaos and the infamous Snowgolf and Snowvolleyball tournaments. Tour the town, while watching Professional Ice Carvers create elegant and masterful Ice carvings throughout the village on Demonstration Day. (802) 253-7321 www.gostowe.com. Through January 29.

WOODSTOCK. Sleigh Ride Weekend at Billings Farm & Museum. Horse-drawn sleigh rides through the frosty farm fields, and sledding with jack jumper sleds. Visit the dairy farm and restored farmhouse. Farm programs and hands-on activities. Admission. 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, 5302 River Rd. (802) 457-2355.



Lake Morey Winterfest—Don't Hibernate, Celebrate!



Lake Morey Winterfest Weekend

Lake Morey Skate-a-Thon

Saturday, January 8th—10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Lake Morey Resort, Lake Morey Rd., Fairlee, VT

Explore Lake Morey's winter wonderland on the longest ice skating trail in the country. See how many miles you can skate in a day. For the admission fee, attendees get free skate rentals (while supplies last), lunch provided by Boloco, skating instruction, and warm drinks. Register online at www.uvtrails.org and learn more about the Trails Alliance's many programs and events. The Skate-a-Thon benefits the Upper Valley Trails Alliance.

Winter Skills Day

Saturday, January 8th—All Day

Hulbert Outdoor Center, Lake Morey Rd., Fairlee, VT

A series of in-depth pre-registered Hulbert Outdoor Center winter workshops held the day before WinterFest. Learn the skills needed for safe and enjoyable winter camping or even build your very own toboggan—many interesting workshops to choose from. Morning, afternoon and full-day workshops available. Pre-register at www.alohafoundation.org/hulbert.



Lake Morey Winterfest Weekend

Photos by Deb Williams

7th Annual Lake Morey Winterfest

Sunday, January 9th—10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Hulbert Outdoor Center, Lake Morey Rd., Fairlee, VT

Beat cabin fever and get out with your friends and family for this year's Lake Morey WinterFest! There will be activities for everyone, including Nordic skating, snowshoe hikes, cross country skiing, winter travel skills, sledding, old fashioned ice cutting, igloo building, music, storytelling, winter skills, dog sledding demos and more. There will be plenty of indoor and outdoor activities and all ages and skill levels are welcome. Bring your own snowshoes, skis and skates or borrow them at the Center. Donation \$7 each or \$20 per family. Lunch and hot drinks will be available.

For more information about Saturday's Skate-a-Thon contact the Upper Valley Trails Alliance at (802) 649-9075, john.taylor@uvtrails.org, or www.uvtrails.org.

To register for Saturday's Winter Skills Workshops or for more about Sunday's WinterFest activities and events, contact Deb Williams at the Hulbert Outdoor Center, (802) 333-3405, deb_williams@alohafoundation.org. Visit www.alohafoundation.org/hulbert.

The Hulbert Outdoor Center is located on the shores of Lake Fairlee and Lake Morey in Fairlee, VT, 25 miles north of White River Junction, VT off I-91. Directions: from I-91, take exit 15. Turn west off the exit ramp toward Lake Morey. Continue straight on West Lake Morey Rd. for about three miles to Hulbert Outdoor Center.





Three friends and their bird dog in Mt. Tabor, VT, circa 1890. photo courtesy of John Griffith

Canadian Boat Song

Listen to me, as when ye heard our father
Sing long ago the song of other shores—
Listen to me, and then in chorus gather
All your deep voices as ye pull the oars;

*Fair these broad meads—these hoary woods are grand;
But we are exiles from our fathers' land.*

From the lone shieling of the misty island—
Mountains divide us, and the waste of seas—
Yet still the blood is strong, the heart is Highland,
And we in dreams behold the Hebrides.

*Fair these broad meads—these hoary woods are grand;
But we are exiles from our fathers' land.*

We ne'er shall tread the fancy-haunted valley,
Where 'tween the dark hills creeps the small clear stream,
In arms around the patriarch banner rally,
Nor see the moon on royal tombstone gleam.

*Fair these broad meads—these hoary woods are grand;
But we are exiles from our fathers' land.*

When the bold kindred, in the time long-vanished,
Conquered the soil and fortified the keep,
No seer foretold the children would be banished,
That a degenerate lord might boast his sheep.

*Fair these broad meads—these hoary woods are grand;
But we are exiles from our fathers' land.*

Come foreigner rage—let Discord burst in slaughter!
O then for clansmen true, and stern claymore—
The hearts that would have given their blood like water
Beat heavily beyond the Atlantic roar.

*Fair these broad meads—these hoary woods are grand;
But we are exiles from our fathers' land.*

The authorship of this poem, or song, has been debated for ages and is variously attributed to John Galt (1779–1839), David Macbeth Moir (1798–1851), Sir Walter Scott, and others this poem first appeared in Blackwood's Magazine for September, 1829.

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36th Annual Christmas Revels Celebrate Old Québec

Revels North presents The Christmas Revels, a French Canadian Celebration of the Winter Solstice, featuring the zesty and compelling traditional music, dance and culture of Québec. The Upper Valley's 36th annual Christmas Revels will be performed December 16-19 in Spaulding Auditorium of the Hopkins Center for the Arts at Dartmouth College in Hanover, NH.

One of the best-loved shows in the national Revels repertoire, the story takes the audience back a century or more to the Québec frontier community of Trois-Rivières, where we meet the local characters—the raucous voyageurs, the beleaguered parish priest, the long-suffering wives, and more—and are lifted skyward as the magical and devilish traditional tale of The Flying Canoe (La Chasse-Galerie) comes to life.

The cast features Debra Wise, an award-winning Boston-based theater artist and Cambridge Revels favorite who originated the role of this show's narrator, and four internationally renowned Québécois performers: Pierre Chartrand, a dance historian-ethnologist, choreographer and master step-dancer; fiddler Éric Favreau and accordionist Stéphane Landry, who have both played with the internationally known group Entourloupe; and singer/guitarist Bernard Simard, former front man for La Bottine Souriante, Le Vent du Nord and numerous other groups key to the Québécois music revival of recent decades.

An auditioned chorus of some 60 Upper Valley adult and child singers and dancers perform rousing voyageur songs, poignant choral works, shapely social dances and the inspired buffoonery of la guignolée, the French and French-Canadian equivalent of the English Mummer's play—inviting the audience to sing, dance and celebrate with them.

At its heart, the show celebrates Québécois traditional performing arts and culture and their defiantly “non-Puritan” feel, says Revels North Artistic Director Maureen Burford. “The music originally came from France but was shaped by infusions of other sounds, including Celtic and Native American. The rhythms are curvy—there's this syncopation and a way in which the musicians grab the beat early. And that's what their culture is like. It's free and flowing and intensely alive.”

The acclaimed Québécois guest artists, who have performed this show with other Revels companies, have played



Pierre Chartrand step-dancing with his partners in the Christmas Revels.

photo by Shepherd Ferguson

together for many years and “can read each other's musical minds,” Burford says. Chartrand, whose life work has steeped him a whole range of centuries-old dance styles, is “the Fred Astaire of the early dance world. When you watch him dance, he literally looks like he's floating.”

An Upper Valley holiday tradition for more than three decades, the Christmas Revels were brought to Hopkins Center by Sharon, VT-based dancer and theater director Carol Langstaff. Revels North has since developed its own rich traditions and events, including the Summer Solstice Festival, the early-spring “World of Song,” program for children, community singing and pub sings, outreach events, and the annual Christmas Revels at Dartmouth College's Hopkins Center.

Performers in Revels are amateurs and professionals of all ages, drawn both from the Upper Valley, across the United States, and overseas. In recent years, these have included performers from England, Scotland, Karelia, Russia, Norway, Sweden, Canada and Appalachia.

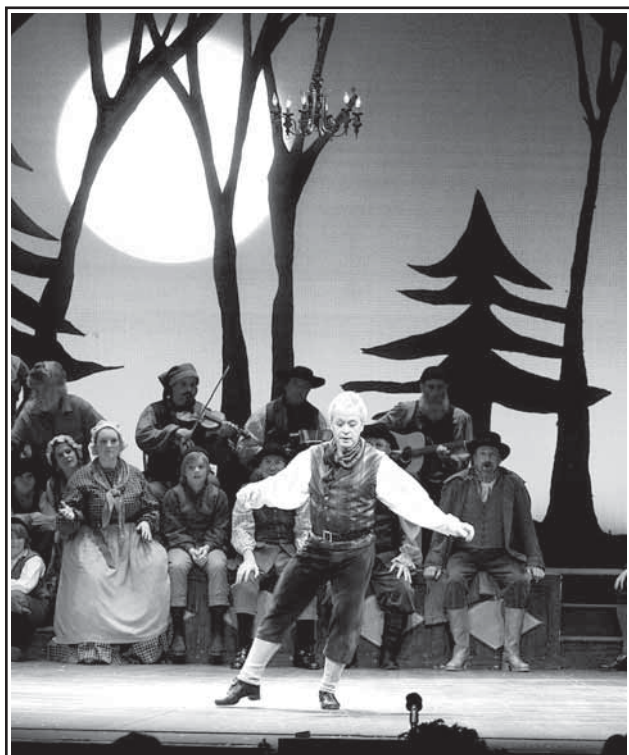
The Christmas Revels takes place in 900-seat Spaulding Auditorium of Dartmouth's Hopkins Center for the Arts in Hanover, NH on Thursday and Friday, Dec. 16 and 17, at 7 pm; Saturday, Dec. 18, at 2 and 7 pm; and Sunday, Dec. 19, at 1 and 5 pm.

Tickets range from \$20–30, \$8–12 for people 18 and under (and only \$5 for all youth tickets to the Thursday show).

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Pierre Chartrand dances by the light of the moon.

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Children gather to hear stories of old.

photo by Shepherd Ferguson

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photo by Elizabeth Ferry

Stuart and Margaret Osha with two of their cows. The black and white is Lilly, a Holstein/Jersey cross and the red and white is Blossom, a Jersey/Milking Shorthorn cross—both wonderful cows! They all reside at Turkey Hill Farm in Randolph Center, VT. For workshop schedules and farm store information see www.turkeyhillfarmvt.com.

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The Cow

'Let it be winter now,' says the cow.
'I am all haired in for cold weather
The grass is all dried up,
I'm getting tired of moseying around the pasture.
Let the cold come.'

'Let the cold come,' says the cow.
'Everything is ready for it.
I see where the mow
Is all full of clover and cornstalks for me to eat,
And the barnyard is all full of straw
For me to sleep on.
I smell chopfeed and oilmeal in the feeding aisle.
Let her come cold.

'What's keeping the winter, anyhow?
By this time of year
You'd expect every morning to be frosty
And you'd expect to see the sky
Hanging over the world
Like a pewter bowl over an old plate.
Something's gone wrong somewhere.
I hope it gets straightened out
Before there's another generation of flies.

'I remember last spring
How sick and tired I was of the barn.
All you can do in a stable is stand a while
And lie down a while.
It got to be so that it was a pleasure
To go out into the cold in the evening
And drink water out of a hole chopped in the ice.

Next spring, if I'm still living,
I'll feel the same way.
Now I wish it would freeze in.

'If it could always be summer,' says the cow,
'That would be fine.
I would like it when the grass grows high
So I can get me a bellyful in an hour.
That leaves the cream of the day
For standing under the tree
With your feet in the water.
Listening to birds, watching the snake-feeders,
Thinking things over.

'Summer is all right.
Spring is good for awhile,
because you're sick of winter,
Fall is no good at all. Fall is just waiting for winter.
The flies bite hardest in fall
And the grass gets toughest.

'At night in winter, after the lantern goes
And the lights go out in the house,
After the old dog rounds a nest in the hay-pile,
There will be feelings to feel,
Feelings that make the hair prick
Where it sticks in the hide—
Feelings that make the old dog growl out
And the horses stamp in the stable.
When I was a heifer I bawled
When the cold ghosts came.
Now I am old, and I get so I like the feeling.

'Let it get cold,' says the cow.
'What's keeping winter?'
The world has been biding its dread
Like a man coming down with sickness,
Let the cold come, so we know what we're in for.'

—JAKE FALSTAFF

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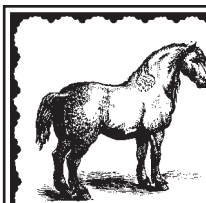
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The VSO Brass Quintet and Counterpoint, with Robert De Cormier conducting, perform in the Brandon Congregational Church.

Vermont Symphony Orchestra Celebrates the Holidays!

Glory Hallelujah! The Vermont Symphony Orchestra rings in the holiday season bringing joyful concert programs to music halls around the state.

Village Holiday Concerts

For mystical and majestic music for the holidays, Robert De Cormier and the VSO Brass Quintet and Counterpoint present concerts in five picturesque Vermont village settings: Warren, Jay, Grafton, Manchester, and Brandon.

Brass and voices alternate and join forces in a festive repertoire of traditional carols and Renaissance pieces, excerpts from the *The Nutcracker Suite* and *The Christmas Story*, and more. The Brass Quintet will perform *The Cordoban Puppet*, a new composition by 18-year-old composer Joshua Clinger of Newport, VT.

The VSO Brass Quintet and Counterpoint Holiday Concerts are on Thursday, December 16, 7:30 p.m., Warren United Church, Warren, VT; Friday, December 17, 7:30 p.m., Jay Peak Resort, Jay, VT; Saturday, December 18, 5 p.m., The White Church, Grafton, VT; Sunday, December 19, 4 p.m., the First Congregational Church, Manchester, VT; and Monday, December 20, 7 p.m., the Congregational Church, Brandon, VT.

VSO's SymphonyKids

During December elementary school children at Danby's Currier Memorial School and Pittsford's Lothrop Elementary School will be treated "Drumschtik," a world percussion presentation. These performances are part of the VSO's statewide SymphonyKids education program, which reached over 24,000 schoolchildren last year.

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Again this year, holiday audiences may also enjoy VSO music at home, on CD. The VSO offers the brilliant brass

and voices of "Christmas in Vermont," with organist David Neiweem. The popular CD presents a captivating blend of rarely heard gems and seasonal favorites, a perfect Christmas gift. It's available at concerts and through the VSO office for \$15 with a \$3.00 handling and shipping charge. Call (800) 876-9293.

Join the Vermont Symphony Orchestra for festive celebrations you'll remember long after the plum pudding is gone! For tickets or additional information, please call (800) 876-9293 x 10, or visit online at www.vso.org.

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North Country Book News

The Gilfeather Turnip Cookbook And Other Favorite Recipes All 'Rooted' in Wardsboro

(Published by the Friends of the Wardsboro Library)

It's not too often a vegetable is grown exclusively for many years on only one farm and with an enduring family name. Such is the case of the egg-shaped, big-knobbed, but tasty and flavorful Gilfeather turnip that is now sold in a few farm outlets after a long history of being very scarce if not available at all.

The white turnip, a member of the mustard family known as Brassica Rapa, has been raised in Europe for over 4,000 years. But thanks to the efforts and research by the Wardsboro, VT, Library, the Gilfeather story is told in this handsomely-made book along with recipes for converting this special hybrid turnip into tasty dishes.

We learn that this species of turnip became part of Wardsboro history when John Gilfeather, the son of immigrants from Northern Ireland, started planting the turnips on his hillside farm in the early 1900's. He sold them by the cartload in Brattleboro, Northampton, MA, and in other markets. But he always cut off the tops and bottoms so one else could reproduce them, either by root or seed. John was a bachelor all his life, remaining on his farm for 68 years. He served as a selectman and also as representative to the state legislature. He died in 1944 and his turnip might have died with him.

Over the years a few neighbors were able to garner some

seeds, but the actual survival of the Gilfeather is attributed to Mary Lou and Bill Schmidt of Dummerston, VT. Because their crop of turnips turned out to have such a fantastic flavor, they subsequently got the Gilfeather registered as an heirloom variety by the Vermont Department of Agriculture. The Schmidts then began marketing the seeds through Agway and by mail order. Walker Farm in East Dummerston, the Brattleboro Co-op, and Dutton's Farm Stands in Manchester, Newfane, and West Brattleboro also began selling the turnips, which they still do to this day. The Schmidts sold the seed business in 2002 to Paul Dutton of Brookville, VT, who is now the authorized distributor.

One might think there's not too much a cook can do with the lowly turnip even if its known for a sweet, wonderful flavor. This cookbook dispels any such thoughts as the turnip becomes the key ingredient in soups and stews, bread and pies, or roasted alone or with other vegetables. It really does have a marvelous flavor.

The cookbook also has several pages of recipes 'rooted' in Wardsboro, contributed by local residents. Many of these take advantage of local crops: acorn squash, blueberries, rhubarb, pumpkins, eggplant and apples, and other seasonal produce. But its the Gilfeather, for good reason, that is the pride of Wardsboro.

The cookbook itself is a community project—the Friends of Wardsboro Library gather and put together the pretty little brown book, with a clever hand binding made from twine and a stick. An unusual and useful addition to your cookbook collection.

The Gilfeather Turnip Cookbook and Gilfeather seeds can be ordered from the Friends of Wardsboro Library. Call Chris Holden at (802) 896-6292, e-mail info@friendsofwardsborolibrary.org, write the Friends of Wardsboro Library at P.O. Box 157, Wardsboro, VT 05355 or visit www.friendsofwardsborolibrary.org. The cookbook is \$15 plus \$3 for s&h and the seeds are \$2.25 a packet plus \$1 for s&h.

The Gilfeather Turnip Cookbook, seeds and all things Gilfeather are also available at the annual Gilfeather Turnip Festival held each October in Wardsboro.



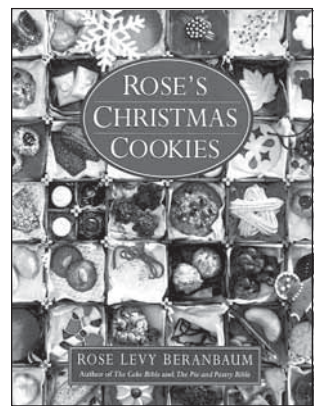
Rose's Christmas Cookies

by Rose Levy Beranbaum
(HarperCollins Publishers)

It is no surprise that award-winning author and baker Rose Beranbaum would have a special place in her heart and recipe repertoire for Christmas cookies. After all, she asks us in the forward to this beautiful cookbook, "what would Christmas be without Christmas cookies? Nothing expresses the spirit of loving, nurturing, and giving more than a homemade cookie. It is made and given from the heart. It is small and pretty, sweet and comforting. It's something that friends and family can make together."

All of us have favorites at Christmas beginning from early childhood: sugar cookies in the shape of Christmas trees, reindeer and Santas, gingerbread people, the German classic Pfeffernusse, tiny fruitcakes, Austrian Linzer squares or cookies, and much more.

Full-page enticing color photographs of all 60 Christmas cookies tempt the reader to make more than one kind for this holiday. If one follows her careful and exacting directions, something eye-catching and tasty is bound to emerge from the oven for all to enjoy. Rose has her own favorites including spritz butter cookies which she describes as having a lovely almond flavor and very tender texture. They can be decorated with candied fruit, nuts, colored sugar and sprinkles. Another favorite is a rugelach recipe from a friend, Lora Brody, who warns: "Beware, you can't eat just one!" The secret of



these tender pastries is an extra zing of tartness from apricot preserves and the "sweet, sharp sting" of lots of golden raisins.

Rose tells us that no Christmas cookie book would be complete without instructions for a gingerbread house. In this case she has elaborate designs for a gingerbread cathedral which takes about a week to complete, which she says is ideal for "craftspeople with impassioned souls and genius in their fingertips."

Other recipes include these treats for Christmas and beyond: lemon butter bars, marzipan spirals, macadamia bars, black and whites, and buttered rum cookies. Rose Beranbaum is the author of nine award-winning cookbooks including The Cake Bible, The Bread Bible and The Pie and Pastry Bible. Her most recent work is Rose's Heavenly Cakes. She has been called the "Diva of Desserts" and "the most meticulous cook who ever lived." Her instructions may be clear and exacting, but the end result is a work that can be eaten!

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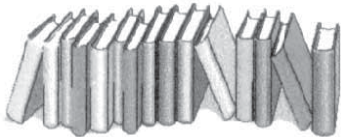
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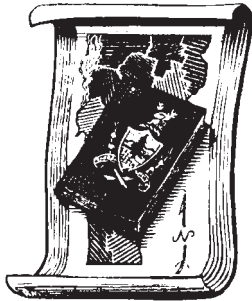
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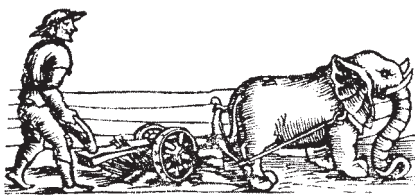
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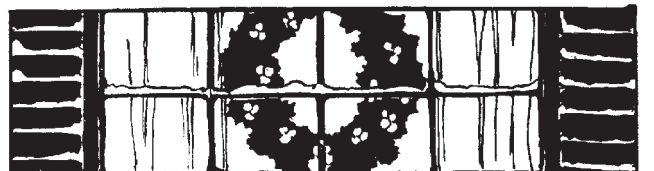
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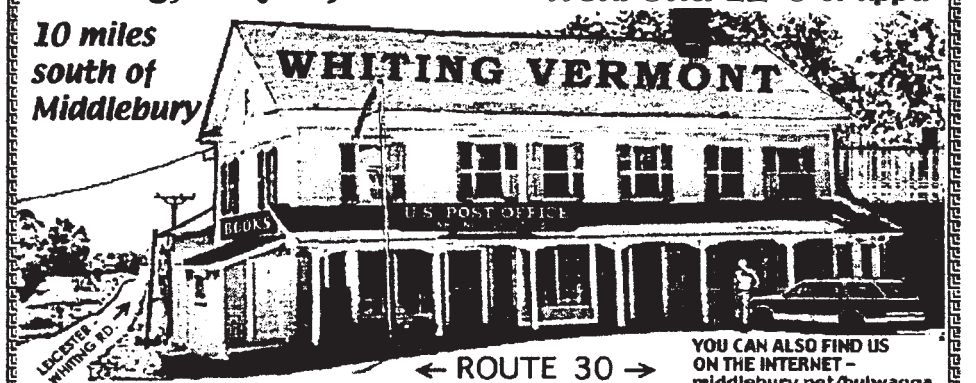
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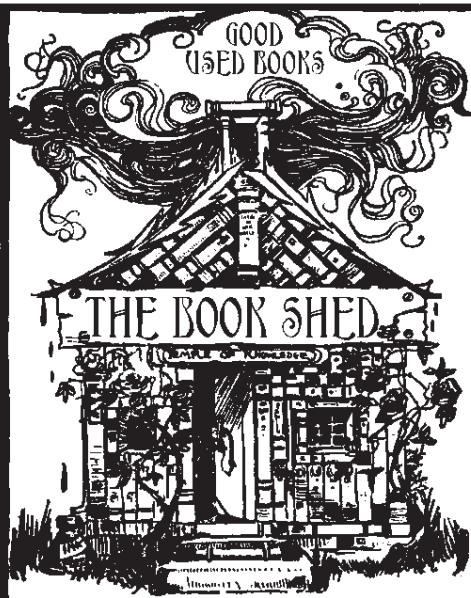
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Children's Christmas Tales

We are treated to both humorous and whimsical drawings and an amusing story in *Grandma Drove the Snowplow* by Katie Clark and illustrated by Amy Huntington (*Down East Books, Camden, Maine. www.downeast.com*). In this children's Christmas story we find that lively Grandma is saving the day by driving a heavy-duty snowplow during a blizzard to clear snow-laden roads so the townspeople could get to their annual carol sing and party at the local church.

Her two sons, in other trucks, would have cleared the roads but one we see one stuck in a snowbank and the other in a ditch. Along the way on her rescue mission grandma swoops up a giant wreath, a Christmas tree, and three sheep who seem to be enjoying the adventure!

An array of animals greet the reader on nearly every page. You'll do a double-take when you see the kids and adults—they look so much like someone you might know. In fact

Book Reviews by Charles Sutton

Amy said the red-haired man with the wire-rimmed glasses and beard is her husband.

Katie Clark told us she based the idea for the "Grandma" books on a friend of her mother's who took on a garbage collection route in Wells, Maine. The first book was *Grandma Drove the Garbage Truck*. She and artist Amy Huntington are considering for a third book in the series—Grandma again saving the day, perhaps in a lobster boat. Both women have Vermont ties: Katie, who now lives in Brunswick ME, spent the first nine years of her life in Chester, VT. Amy and her husband live on a farm in Williston, VT, where she has her studio and a few farm animals including the black and white sheep who often appear in her books.

Amy did the illustrations for the book during the summer days, but she told us she was able to get perfect model of snowplows thanks to the Williston public works department which hooked up a truck and plow for her to make drawings. Her favorite animal is a Basset hound, although presently the family has two cats and no dogs. She is presently working on a dog book, *Where Are You, Bailey?* about a Great Dane. And, in fact, the pages of *Grandma Drove the Snowplow* are graced with a brindle Great Dane, a pretty and less common color of that breed, sure to please dog lovers.

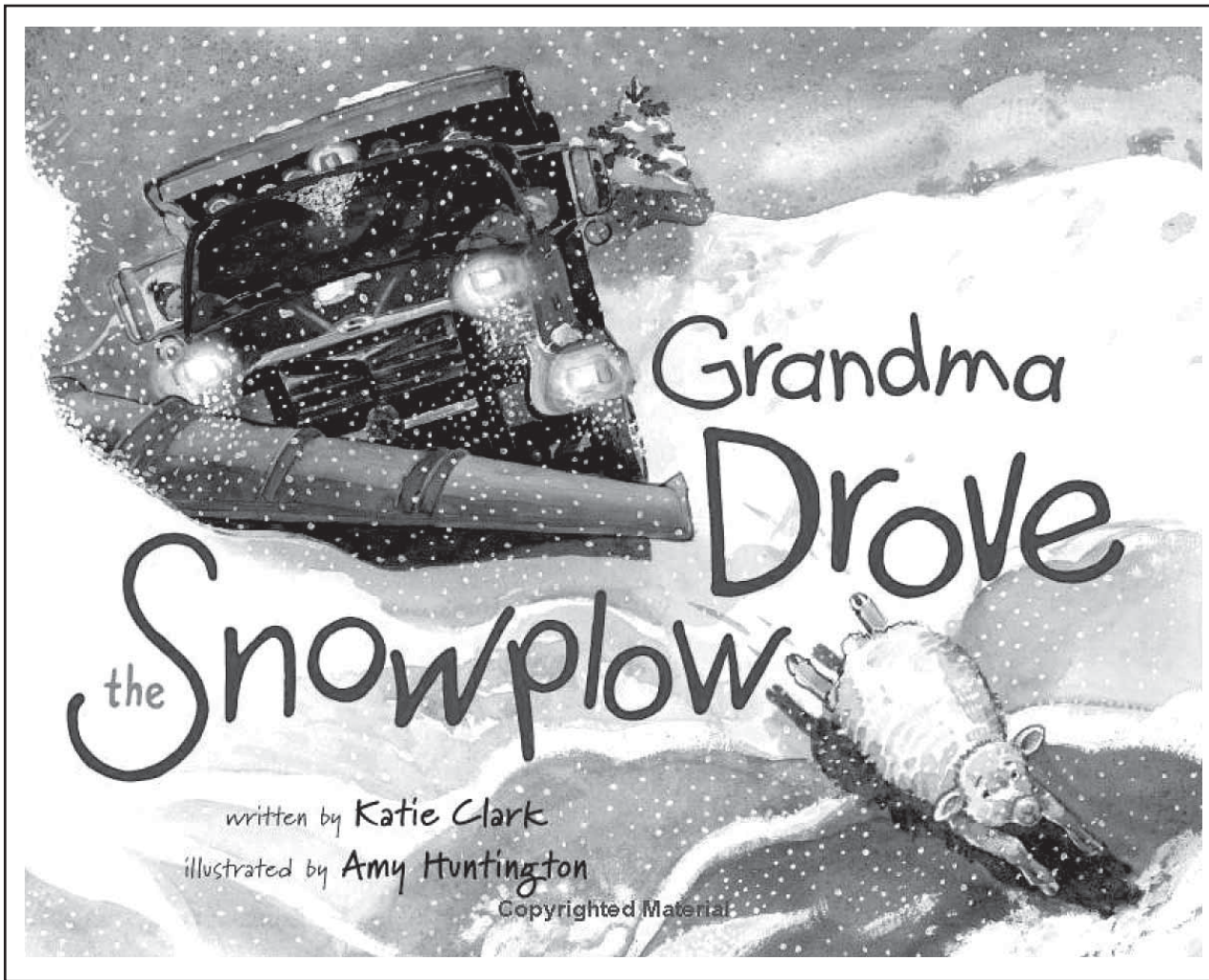
Amy said she is illustrating both that book and another about African animals squeezing into a tiny car used in Kenya called a Tuk-Tuk. She became fascinated with that little vehicle earlier this year when she and her husband visited their daughter who is serving in the Peace Corps in Kenya.

Author Katie also is an animal person and raises Angora goats. In addition to writing children's books, she designs and sews felt dolls. She has been both a school teacher and home-schooling mom.

One usually doesn't associate crows with Christmas, but in *Merry Christmas, Merry Crow* by Kathi Appelt and illustrated by Jon Goodell (*Houghton Mifflin Harcourt*), we join one lonely crow flying among the Christmas shoppers in a snowy village. The crow is collecting an unusual assortment of trinkets: a button, a feather, twigs and twine, a ring, a key, a bottle cap, a broken chain, a forgotten racing car, a bag of bird seed, and much more! These all end up as decorations for a community tree. The story told in verses ends: "A magic sight All heats aglow, Merry Christmas, merry crow!" The snowy, wintry scenes beautifully contrast the flight of this determined crow.

We may think that Christmas is a holiday just for us, but new and timely books continue to surprise us showing the animal kingdom enjoying and appreciating this event, too.

Consider *Fletcher and the Snowflake Christmas* by Julia



Rawlinson and illustrated by Tiphonie Beeke (*HarperCollins Greenwillow*) where we see the tiny fox Fletcher worried that Santa Claus won't be able to deliver presents to his friends, a family of rabbits, because they have a new burrow. He starts a arranging a trail of sticks to guide Santa to the new burrow. Wanting to help him on his mission, he is joined by a squirrel, a flock of bluebirds and some mice. The rabbits thank their friends for their efforts with some good cheer and warm blackberry pie. However, that night when everyone has gone to bed, a big snowstorm comes, covering up the trail of sticks! But Santa finds the rabbits anyway, and all's well that ends well. Readers will delight in the lovely drawings warming this wintry tale.

One is never too old to be able to help out somehow and be needed, too. This is the lesson of this story *Old Dog Cora and the Christmas Tree* by Consie Powell (*Raven Publications, Ely, MN. www.ravenwords.com*). Cora, an aging Newfoundland dog, is being replaced by two younger Newfies, Minx and Ebony in this year's trek into the woods to haul home a Christmas tree on a toboggan. Cora tags along but is told several times to get out of the way and not interfere when they are hitching the younger dogs to the fallen tree. Feelings may be hurt, but Cora is determined to help and takes a shortcut through the woods, joining the younger dogs as the team leader, and breaking the way through the deep snow for the trip home. The family realizes Cora still needs to do a job, even if she is getting older, and vows to let Cora help out. The happy dogs are last seen together un-

der the Christmas trees. Bright full-color illustrations grace this story and make the winter woodlands and the big black Newfoundlands especially appealing.

But what about having Christmas where there are no trees to decorate at all? What then? In *Tacky's Christmas* by Helen Lester and illustrated by Lynn Munsinger (*Houghton Mifflin Harcourt*) six penguins in the Arctic north make the most of their surroundings by making a Merry Christmas sign out of ice cubes, and hiding behind blocks of ice to wrap their presents in secret. The problem of having no tree is solved by volunteering one of their number, Tacky, to be a tree that actually resembles Santa. All is fine until Christmas is threatened by the arrival of three hunters, a bear and two wolves, who plan to steal the penguins' Christmas gifts. Thankfully the hunters believe Tacky is a real Santa and the penguins, his elves. Friendships are instantly made and the hunters stay for the Christmas festivities including a meal of fish pudding. The penguins and their guests are amusingly colorful in this icy setting.



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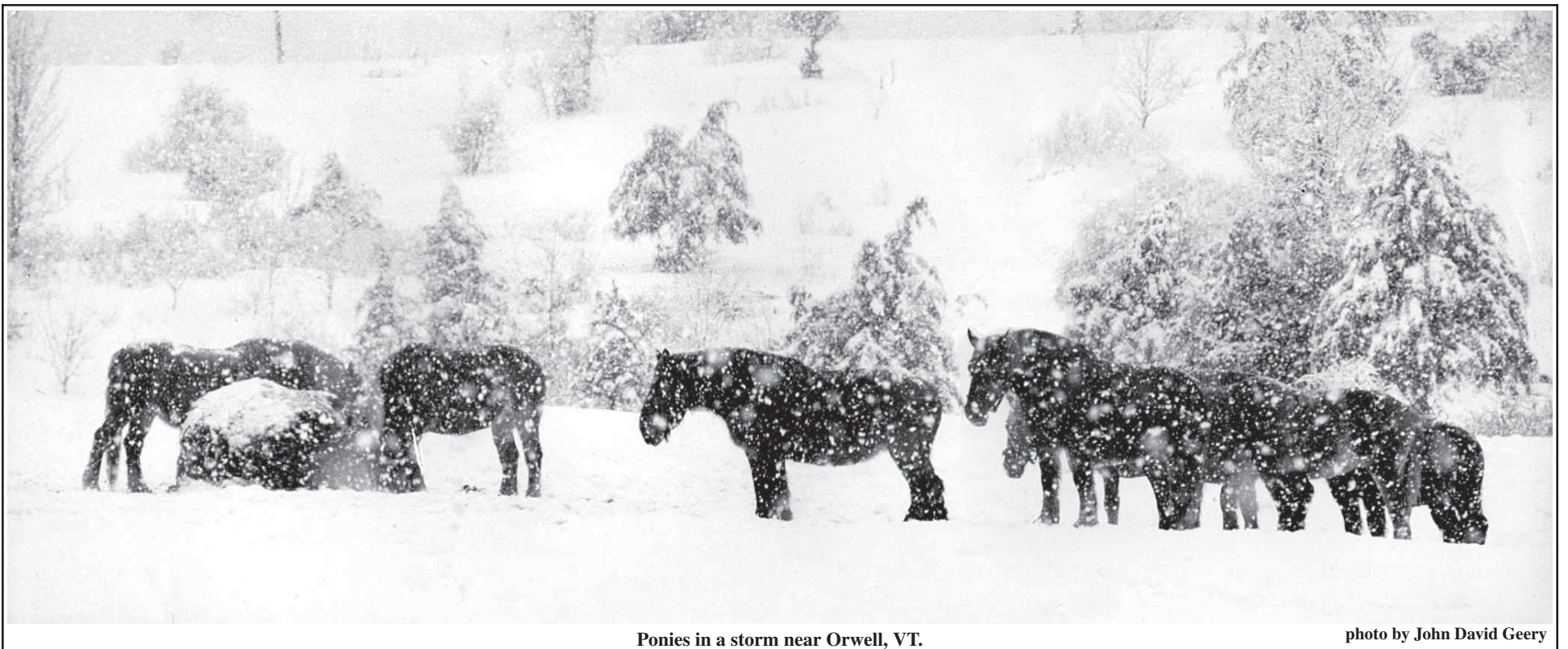
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Ponies in a storm near Orwell, VT.

photo by John David Geery

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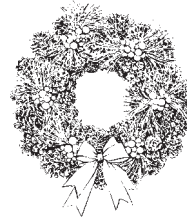
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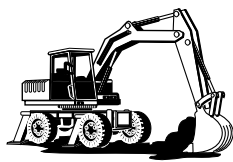
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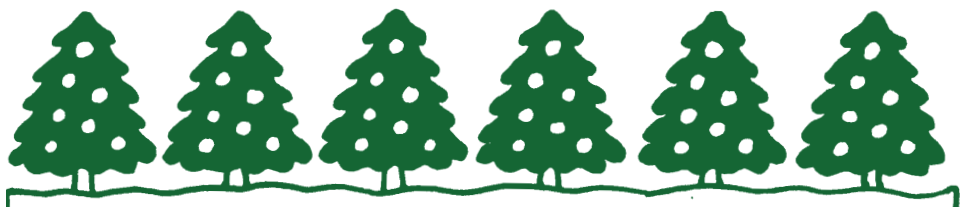
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