

Vermont Country Sampler

December 2012

Free



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- Inns, B&B's, Dining, Real Estate
- Entertainment, Book Reviews
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Valediction for the Year

One season always leads to the next.
 Each phase of the year is a promise
 of the phase to come
 and a repetition of a previous phase,
 a sure turn
 of the unbreakable cycle of the year.
 The most difficult thing for me in winter
 is to stay where I am
 and to keep from looking ahead into spring.
 It is hard to hold steady,
 and to accept the bare tangle of branches,
 the soft secrecy of the buds,
 the sleek cones of the catkins,
 which perfectly contain
 both birth and death.
 It is hard to remain in place
 in the certainty of these things here and now:
 the cold river, the crisp wind, the finite sky,
 the everlasting bouquets
 of spent flowers, the darkening hulls
 of black walnuts and Osage fruits,
 the settling leaves, the low sun,
 Orion in the night,
 the mornings without birdsong,
 the falling seeds of the winterberry,
 the withering bittersweet and honeysuckle berries,
 not seeing past the horizon, not finding God-to-
 come,
 free from the need for summer,
 self-sufficient, knowing that the center
 is here as well as there,
 in this tight and impeccable close,
 as well as in the far green paradise of June.

—BILL FELKER



photo courtesy of Billings Farm & Museum
 Learn how Christmas was celebrated in the late 19th century in Woodstock by visiting the 1890 Farm House at Billings Farm & Museum open every weekend in December and December 26 – January 1, for Christmas at the Farm.

Winter Solstice Celebration at Fair Winds Farm

Nights stretch longer and colder as our Fifth Annual Winter Solstice Celebration approaches on December 21 at Fair Winds Farm. We are located at 511 Upper Dummerston Rd. off Rt. 30 just two miles from downtown Brattleboro, VT.

Snuggle down in the sleigh to hear voices ringing out in the dark to celebrate light, magic and the change of sea-

sons. 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!

Horse-drawn sleigh or wagon rides pulled by Suffolk Punch draft horses are \$12 for adults and \$6 for kids under 12.

No reservations are needed for these half-hour rides of-

ferred from 4:30 to 7:30 pm on December 21. (Inclement weather night: Thursday December 22. check for message at (802) 254-9067).

Last Night Rides

In conjunction with Brattleboro's Last Night Celebration, we offer rides from 1-4 p.m. on a no-reservations-needed basis. Sleigh or wagon, rain or shine. 20-minute rides are adults \$6, under 12 years \$4.

To schedule a reserved ride for any other time, e-mail us at fairwind@sover.net or call (802) 254-9067.

Fair Winds Farm, is a "Diversified, Horse Powered, Vermont Family Farm" at 511 Upper Dummerston Rd. across from the country club, off Rt. 30, Brattleboro, VT. (802) 254-9067. fairwind@sover.net. www.fairwinds-farm.org.



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Vermont Country Sampler

December 2012, Vol. XXVIII

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

Calendar of Events published free of charge. Mail your information to us by the 10th of the preceding month.

Advertising rates available upon request. Deadline the 10th of the preceding month.

Vermont Country Sampler

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Billings Farm's Belgian draft horses, Tom & Jerry, are dressed for the Woodstock Wassail parade on Saturday, December 8, 2012, at 2 p.m. photo by Billings Farm & Museum

Christmas at the Farm Featured at Billings Farm & Museum

Discover the traditions of a late 19th century Vermont Christmas with a visit to the Billings Farm & Museum in Woodstock, VT. Christmas at the Billings Farm will be featured on weekends in December and December 22 to January 1, 2013, (excluding Christmas Day) 10 a.m. to 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.

Like most New England states, Vermont did not widely celebrate Christmas until late the 19th century.

It was not until 1890, the year the farmhouse at the Billings Farm was completed, that Christmas became recognized as a holiday in all the states. At that time, celebrations were much simpler than they would become in the 20th century. Families enjoyed the holiday, but still had cows to milk, ice to cut, and wood to saw. A few gifts, a special meal, and the gathering of friends, were noteworthy in an otherwise typical day.

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. Many of the ornaments reflected an

agricultural tradition, including strands of cranberries, popcorn, or dried apples that circled the tree. Apples studded with cloves, "exotic" oranges, silvered (foil-covered) chestnuts, painted pinecones, and acorns complemented the handmade paper ornaments used to decorate the tree.

In Woodstock, turn-of-the-century businesses advertised wares for Christmas gifts. Most gifts were useful domestic items: fabric, clothing, umbrellas, linens, crockery, and carpet sweepers. Homemade, handcrafted items including fancy mittens, satin bows, and stockings filled with candies, nuts, and raisins were among the most common gifts given on Christmas Day.

Highlights of the Holiday Season

December 1 & 2, 10 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Making Christmas silhouettes & poppers; candle dipping.

December 7, 8, & 9, 10 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Wassail Celebration. Make historic Christmas ornaments and pomanders. Horse-drawn sleigh or wagon rides on Sunday.

December 15 & 16, 10 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Make Christmas silhouettes & poppers; candle dipping.

December 22 – January 1 (excluding Christmas Day), 10 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Make historic Christmas ornaments, pomanders, and snowflakes; candle dipping. From December 26 to January 1) there will be horse-drawn sleigh or wagon rides and sledding with jack jumpers, if snow conditions permit.

The Billings Farm & Museum is owned and operated by The Woodstock Foundation, Inc., a charitable non-profit institution founded by Mary French and Laurance Spelman Rockefeller. Open daily May 1 through October 31, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., 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 located one-half mile north of the Woodstock village green on VT Rt. 12. For information call (802) 457-2355 or visit www.billingsfarm.org.

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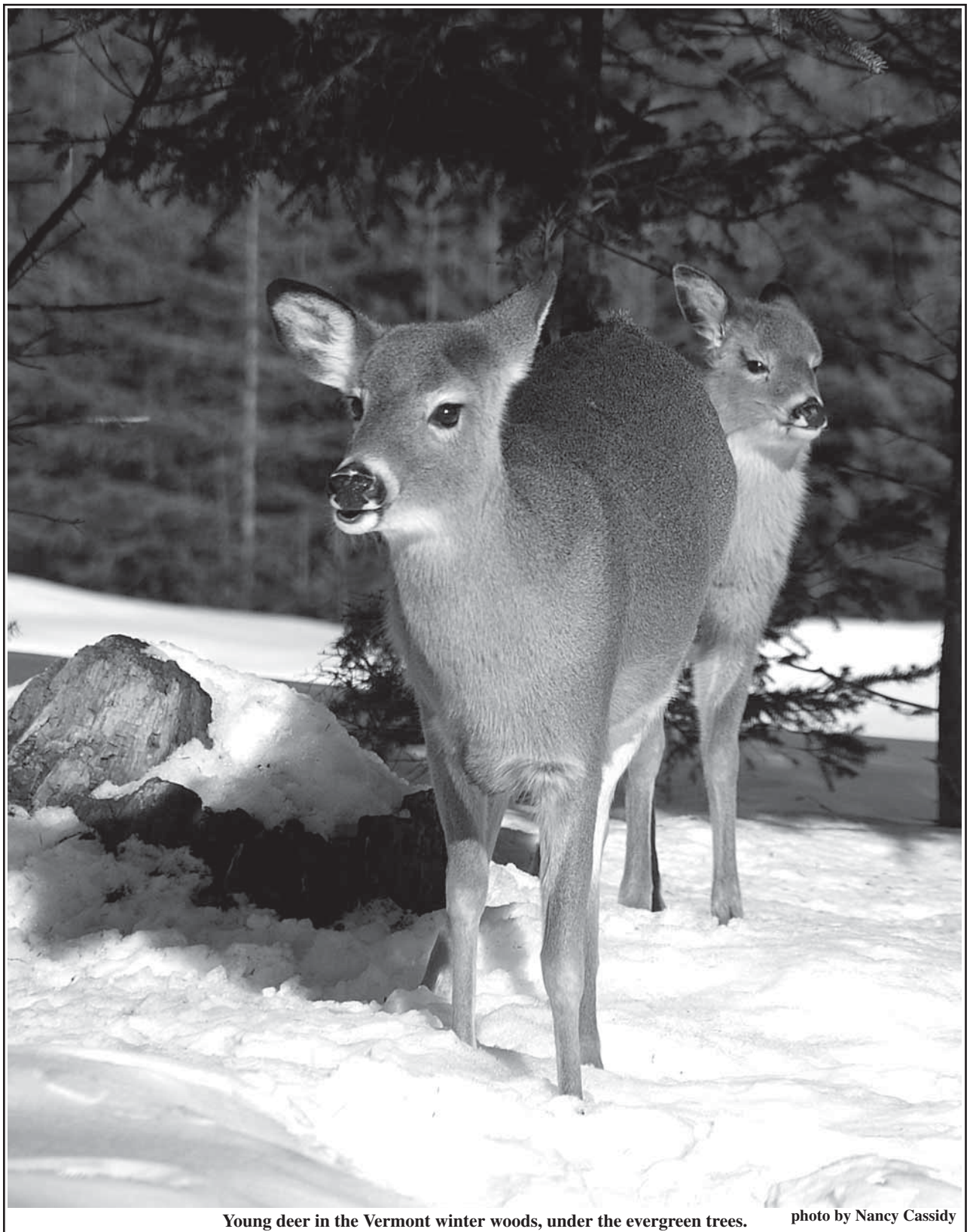
It also offers an online li-

brary of periodicals, newspapers, and multimedia collections with files ranging from family and gravestone photos to postcards and newsreels. And much more.

"We're pleased to be able to continue the tradition of offering excellent local history and genealogical resources by providing patrons with access to this powerful and easy-to-use database," says Reference and Historical Collections Librarian, Emily Zervas.

This resource is available for free, but it can only be accessed at the Rockingham Free Public Library. Patrons are reminded to bring a flash drive with them to save information.

Rockingham Free Public Library is located at 65 Westminster St., Bellows Falls, VT. (802) 463-4270. rockref@sover.net. Visit rpl.kohalibrary.com.



Young deer in the Vermont winter woods, under the evergreen trees.

photo by Nancy Cassidy

Ludlow Winter Farmers' Market

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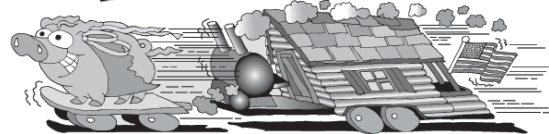
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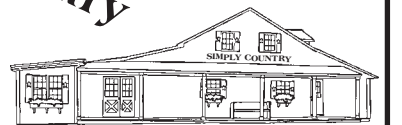
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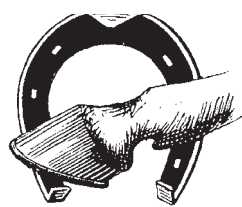
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A Vermont Almanack for Early Winter

by Bill Felker

Arrives the snow, and driving o'er the fields,
Seems nowhere to alight: the whited air
Hides the hills and woods, the river, and the heaven,
And veils the farm-house at the garden's end.

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON

The Deer Mating Moon And the Crow Gathering Moon

As Early Winter approaches and the rutting time for deer comes to a close, improvident woolly bear caterpillars, the latest of the year, hurry across the roads when the sun shines. Sparrows fight for seeds and territory. Overwintering robins crowd the honeysuckle bushes, gorging themselves on fat berries. Sandhill cranes depart for the South, and crows congregate in flocks that number into the thousands to feed until Late Winter's mating time.

December 6: The Deer Mating Moon enters its last quarter at 10:32 a.m. *December 13:* The Crow Gathering Moon is new at 3:42 a.m. *December 20:* The moon enters its second quarter at 12:19 a.m. *December 28:* The moon is full at 5:21 a.m.

The Sun

Winter solstice occurs at 6:11 a.m. on the 21st of December, 2012.

The Stars

If you get up to do your chores around five or six o'clock in the morning, you will see the evening sky of mid April. The Milky Way, along with winter's Orion and Sirius, the Dog Star, will be setting in the far west. Above you will shine the corn-planting star, Regulus. Arcturus, the star that favors the seeding of squash and tomatoes, will be the brightest light in the east, and the pointers of the Big Dipper will be positioned almost exactly north-south.

The Planets

Venus is the morning star in Libra as Early Winter opens. Mars is in Sagittarius, rising after sunup and sinking below the western horizon by supper time. Jupiter, continuing its residency in Taurus, lies in the far west before dawn. Saturn in Virgo precedes Venus before daybreak.

The Shooting Stars

The Geminids, appear at the rate of about 40 to 50 per hour on December 13-14. Find them following behind Orion in Gemini. The Ursid meteors will fall across the sky late at night deep in the northeast around the Big Dipper and Little Dipper, the Ursid or "bear" constellations, between December 17 and 25.

Weather Trends

Severe weather is most likely to occur during the following periods: December 1-3, 24-26, 31-January 1. It is probable that new moon on December 13 will intensify the arrival of Early Winter. Full moon on December 28 will bring stronger-than-average storms to the United States as Deep Winter approaches. 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.

The Seasons of Early Winter

Week 1—The Season of Earliest Sunset Time starts on the 2nd of December and continues through the 13th.

The Season of Heightened Seasonal Affective Disorders starts on December 3, peaks on January 3 and then gradually declines through February 19.

Between December 5 and January 8, the Season of Solstice (or the Season of Sunstop), the time during which the sun holds within a degree of 23 degrees and 26 minutes (its solstice position), produces a period of solar stability similar to the one between June 5 and July 8.

Redpoll Season arrives in the Northeast, and Mistletoe Gathering Season and Brown Pelican Nesting Season commence along the Gulf of Mexico.

This week brings to a close the Season of Second Spring, the Season of Late Autumn Crocus Bloom, the Poinsettia Shipment Season, the Season of Bittersweet Shedding. Leafdrop Season is complete for every tree, and Late Fall Fertilizing Season continues through the next month.

Week 2—The second major cold front of December ushers in the Season of Early Winter on the 8th. This three-week period usually puts an end to the milder weather of Late Autumn, creating a bridge to the harsher conditions of Deep Winter that develop by January 1.

The second week of December brings Duck Migration



Winding road after a snowstorm, Bethel, VT.

photo by Nancy Cassidy

Season and Honeysuckle Leafdrop Season to a close. For ducks along the northern Atlantic seaboard, the Season of Movement to Coastal Waters starts as ice covers inland ponds and lakes.

Bedding Plant Season for 2013 starts at new moon time (December 13); this is the week to prepare seeds and flats for May flowers.

On the last day of the week, the Season of the Halcyon Days, a traditional two-week period of calm before the turbulence of winter, traditionally begins. According to Greek legend, the halcyon (kingfisher) built its nest on the surface of the ocean, and laid its eggs late in the fall. In order to ensure the brood would emerge safely, the bird calmed winds for a week before and after winter solstice.

Week 3—This week brings the Season of the Shortest Days of the Years. The sun lies at its lowest point in the noon sky, and rises and sets at its farthest points south. Solar declination reaches 23 degrees, 26 minutes on December 21 and remains at that position on the 22nd and 23rd.

Pruning Season gets underway as average highs drop deep into the 20s. Take out suckers, dead and crossing branches. Cut fruit trees down to the right level for picking, but don't prune what will bloom before June. In the northern woods, White Ear Tuft Season marks the ears of red squirrels, and Wood Turtle Hibernation Season occurs along the rivers.

The Season of Slowing Cold takes place between this week and January 3, normal average temperatures dropping one degree every four days instead of one degree every three, signaling a slowdown in the chilling of the earth. Soon the averages become steady; on January 28 they start to climb toward summer.

Week 4—On the 24th of December, the sun begins its ascent toward June, shifting from a declination of 23 degrees and 26 minutes to 23 degrees and 25 minutes. (To heliocentrists, of course, it is Earth that actually shifts in relation to the sun.) Although the days do not start to lengthen until the 26th, the 24th is the first day of the Season of the Rising Sun, a period which divides the year in two equal halves and which lasts until the sun stops at its highest point above the horizon between June 19 and 23 and then begins to fall towards winter solstice on June 24.

Milder weather may open pussy willows and draw up snowdrops, crocus and aconites as the days expand, but along the Gulf of Mexico, the Season of the Rising Sun is already shortening the dormancy of trees and shrubs, hurrying the

gestation of spring. Across coastal Georgia, sweet gums and yellow poplars finally lose their leaves, and their buds swell almost immediately to replace the loss. In central Florida, red maples open, and Jessamine produces its yellow blossoms.

In Vermont, the Season of Dormancy can last from November through April, but a little more than a thousand miles south, that period narrows to a slender, ambivalent space, a borderland in which the difference between winter and spring balances on a fulcrum as small as a single plant or a single hour. Throughout the Northeast, the apparent movement of the sun on December 24 seems frozen in the long stillness of our landscape, but somewhere between the Marshes of Glynn and the Everglades that minute change undoes the advance of superficial cold and stirs the coals of far-off summer's core.

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Bennington Museum Celebrates Festival of Trees

You are invited to come and enjoy the Bennington Museum, all dressed up for the holiday season. The 16th Annual Festival of Trees will be on display from November 24 through December 30. The museum is pleased to present a community-created exhibit of uniquely designed and decorated holiday trees each in a beautiful, and sometimes whimsical, vignette. Items from the museum's collection are added to these vignettes to produce a perfect blend of current design with historical elements.

This year's theme, "Around the World," invited local businesses, non-profit and service organizations in Bennington and surrounding communities to explore their creativity as they designed and created their vignettes. Over 20 vignettes are being created for the entire family to enjoy, along with the traditional trees installed in the galleries. Vote for your favorite setting and tree among the vignettes, and see if it wins the "Best of the Fest" announced at "Afterglow," a holiday dance party on December 21.

Remember to visit the Children's Forest! Students from more than 40 classrooms in Bennington, Shaftsbury, Woodford, North Bennington, and Pownal have worked hard to decorate 40 miniature trees that are on display in the Grandma Moses Schoolhouse. For \$1, you can purchase a chance to win the tree of your choice. Winners will be drawn and notified on Wednesday, December 19. Every year the children come up with creative new ideas, so be sure to visit the Schoolhouse and enjoy their exhibit.

Our gift shop has beautiful and unusual items for every budget, plus coffee and tea to warm you up. Specializing in Vermont-made products the Museum Shop offers unique items not found at other locations.

"Around the World" Gala Saturday, December 8

The Bennington Museum hosts its 16th Annual Festival of Trees Gala on Saturday, December 8 from 7-10 p.m. This fabulous evening offers the excitement of celebrations during the winter solstice from countries around the world. The Gala is an evening to enjoy a welcoming glass of bubbly, delectable savory and sweet foods representing dishes from different regions of the world, fine wine along with signature drinks created for the occasion. Joining us with beautiful holiday music is the Mt. Anthony Union High School Chamber Chorus and Jazz Ensemble. A special appearance by Welcome Blend rounds out the line-up of entertainment. All the exquisitely decorated galleries of the museum will be open for you to enjoy.

To add yet another level of excitement and celebration, participate in the spirited bidding during the live and silent auctions. Many items have been generously donated, and include a wonderful weekend at The Plaza in New York City including theater tickets and dining certificates or a week's stay at a beautiful condo in Cayman Islands as well as many one-of-a-kind creations such as a beautiful ceramic bowl designed especially for this occasion by Roseanne Henning of Raj Earth Pottery. Over 30 auction items will be available for you to place a bid. The silent auction is open from November 24 through December 8. So visit early and



The Festival of Trees makes a grand display at the Bennington Museum. photo courtesy of Bennington Museum

bid often to be sure you get the gift you want. Tickets for the Gala are \$50 and can be purchased by calling the museum at (802) 447-1571.

"Afterglow" a Holiday Dance Party Friday, December 21

Celebrate the Winter solstice in the museum's Paul and Ada Paresky Center with your friends. Join your friends, enjoy holiday cocktails from the cash bar, and kick up your heels at the Club Muse Holiday Dance Party. Be with us when the "Best of the Fest" awards for the public's favorite

tree vignettes are announced. Join in the bidding to win a special item during the silent auction, and dance the night away with music provided by DJ Jonny Love of A-1 Entertainment. Open from 8-11 p.m., the cover charge is \$7 at the door. Join us for a festive night of fun!

There are so many ways to celebrate the holidays at the Bennington Museum. Call your friends, gather your family and mark your calendar to visit the museum.

The museum is open every day except Wednesday through December from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is adults \$10, seniors and students 18 and over \$9, children and students under 18 free. The museum is wheelchair accessible.

Bennington Museum is located at 75 Main St. (Rt. 9) in Bennington, VT. For more information call (802) 447-1571. Visit www.benningtonmuseum.org.



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Historic Hildene, Manchester, VT, all dressed for the season in winter whites.

photo courtesy of Hildene

Manchester, VT

It's Christmas Eve 1912 at the Lincoln Family Home

Christmas 2012 marks the 100th anniversary of Robert Todd and Mary Lincoln's family holiday at Hildene, their Vermont getaway in Manchester, VT.

Return to Christmas Eve 1912 and see the Lincoln family home looking as it should in preparation for the upcoming 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 or Mary Harlan Lincoln's Steinway to life with their talents. Even the tree has been cut and brought in from the woods. Its graceful boughs will be hung with lovely period-appropriate ornaments and candles. Lights, sights, sounds, and scents of the season abound from December 1, 2012 through January 2, 2013.

A December visit to Hildene is a longstanding local tradition, one that provides a unique opportunity to experience the look and feel of Presidential son Robert Lincoln and wife Mary's home during the holidays. This year is no exception and 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 and dated December 31, 1915. Mary describes her Hildene surroundings this way, "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 browse in The Museum Store located in the historic carriage barn, now the Welcome Center, Hildene is the place to visit during the holiday season. The Museum Store's annual "Our Home for the Holidays" open house takes place this year on Saturday, December 1 and Sunday, December 2. Admission fee is not required for visitors to the Welcome Center and The Museum Store.

Hildene is open from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily. Tour the home with interpreters on hand to answer questions, visit the Rowland Agricultural Center at Hildene Farm or see the Pullman palace car, Sunbeam, weather permitting. Admission: \$16 adults, \$5 children 6 to 14, under 6 free.

Hildene is located on Rt. 7A, south of the village of Manchester, VT. For more information call (802) 362-1788 or visit www.hildene.org.



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November 15, 2012

Hi Cathy,

I made a pumpkin pie tonight, with Paul's help, and it looked like it was going to be a failure—too runny, crust unmanageable—but it was a success! Kate was here earlier, wanting to make pumpkin bread, so she looked up a recipe on the internet and we opened up my large can of pumpkin, measured it, and divided it in two. She went home with her half and my baking pan—and I started in on the pie.

First to the crust—I had refused to buy one with white flour or lard so I made my own with whole wheat flour and oil (and some buckwheat flour). But when it was rolled out, I couldn't get it up without it falling apart. Finally I folded it over a piece of plastic and dropped it in the pie-pan, then sealed it all over where it had split apart. Then I put it in the oven for a start.

Next, the pumpkin. Paul offered to help—I was getting tired standing—and he stirred while I added stuff. At the end, it was awfully runny, so I added some flour and hoped for the best. As for spices, I knew which one was my cinnamon, but which bag was the ginger? Or was that dried mustard? And the cloves—they are expensive—which bag were they in? Why, oh why, didn't I label them when I bought them? (Only one was labeled: "curry." I almost used it for cinnamon.)

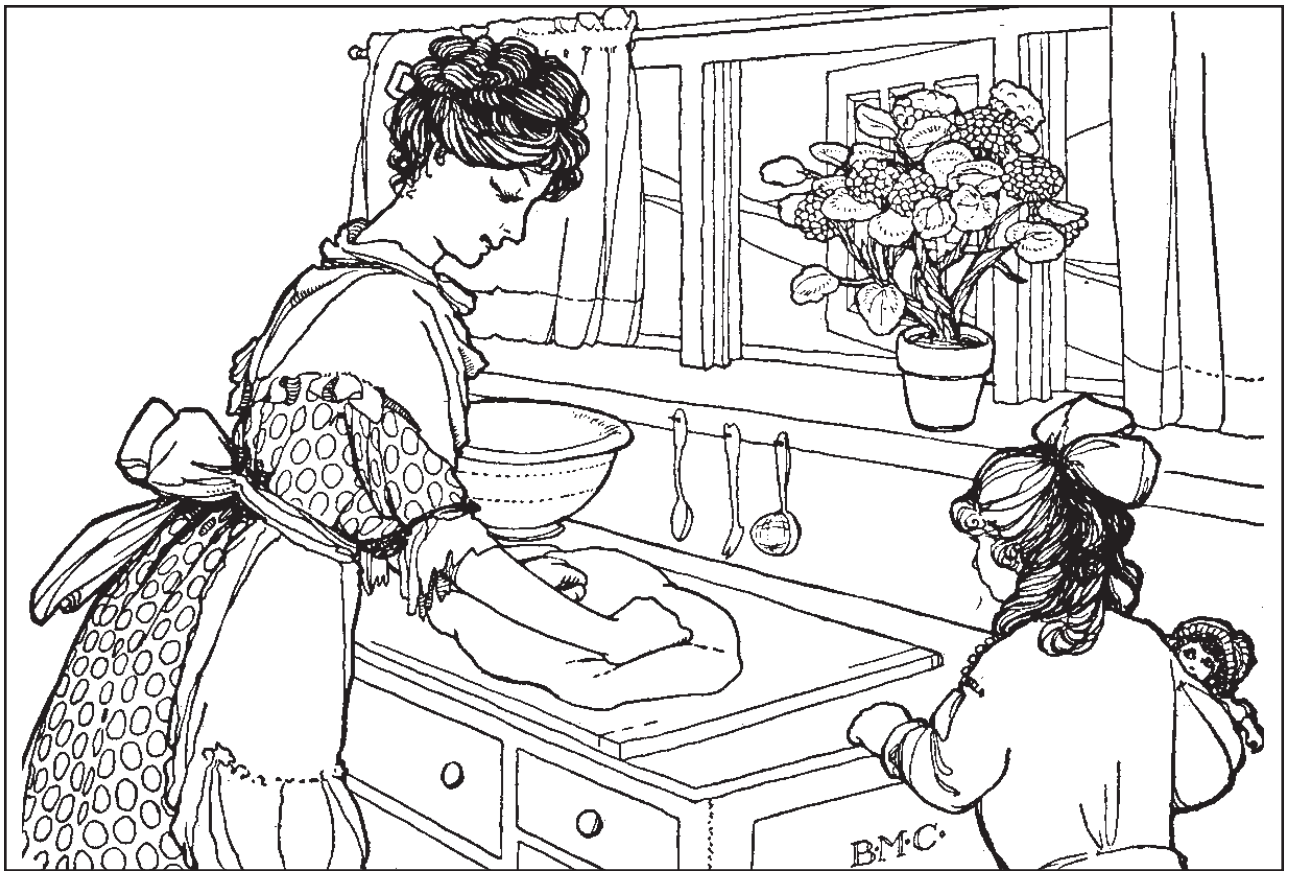
I asked Paul to take a sniff of the spices but he couldn't tell. I said, "I can't smell stuff." Paul said, "That's the first sense to go." I said, "I'm not dying yet." He said, "I mean as you age." Anyway, instead of cinnamon, ginger and cloves, I used cinnamon and a lot of grated nutmeg. After it was in the oven, I realized I could have grated some fresh ginger into it. In the past, I have put some concentrated orange juice and grated ginger in my pumpkin pie. I had forgotten.

There was quite a lot of runny pumpkin filling left over, and I baked that in three custard cups. As it baked, the pie firmed up. I checked it with a toothpick and finally it was done, a delicious pie and spicy enough. Texture more like a custard. The crust tastes nice and wheaty although it looks like cardboard. The custard is delicious too, especially with half-and-half.

Lessons: label & date spices. Before I make something, assemble the spices. Check on how to roll out a crust so I can pick it up. Figure out the correct amount in a can of pumpkin. (The recipe states only the can size.) We might have divided it wrong

I wonder how Kate's pumpkin bread turned out. Anyway, the pie's almost all gone.

Love,
Sally



Holiday Treats to Share with Friends and Family

PUMPKIN PIE

(like Mother makes)

One quart of milk, three small cupfuls of boiled and strained pumpkin, one and one-half cupfuls of brown sugar, one-half cupful of molasses, the yolks and whites of three eggs beaten separately, a little salt, one level tablespoonful each of ginger and cinnamon. Beat all together and bake with an under crust; enough for three pies. Hubbard squash may be substituted for pumpkin if latter is not at hand.

—Amy Brooks, 1902

SPRENGELA

Four cupfuls of powdered sugar, eight eggs. Stir one-half hour; beat whites separately. Take two teaspoonfuls of baking-powder, the rind of two lemons, flour enough to roll out. Cut them out with a cake-cutter and let lie over night. Then sprinkle anise seed over them and bake.

—M.O. Baldwin, 1902

SQUASH MUFFINS

2 cups flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
2 tablespoons sugar
3/4 teaspoon salt
1 egg
2/3 cup milk
1 tbsp. melted shortening
1 cup sieved cooked squash

Mix and sift the dry ingredients. Beat the egg and mix with the milk, shortening, and squash. Pour the second mixture into the dry ingredients and mix just enough to blend. Bake in a hot oven, 450 degrees F., for twenty to twenty-five minutes. Makes 18 medium-sized muffins.

—Secrets of New England Cooking, 1946

PEPPER NUTS

Take four cupfuls of fine sugar, eight eggs, stirring them for nearly one-half hour. Beat whites by themselves; rind of two lemons, two teaspoonfuls of baking-powder, flour enough to roll, two teaspoonfuls of cinnamon, one teaspoonful of ground cloves, one teaspoonful of allspice, one grated nutmeg. Cut them into shape and put two drops of brandy on each cake. Next morning turn them over and bake.

—Mrs. J. Fuller, 1902

MINCE PIES

Four pounds of lean boiled beef when cold, chopped fine, twice as much of chopped green tart apples, one pound of chopped suet, three pounds of raisins, seeded, two pounds of currants picked over, washed and dried, one-half pound of citron, cut up fine, one pound of brown sugar, one quart of cooking molasses, two quarts of sweet cider, one pint of boiled cider, one tablespoonful of salt, one tablespoonful of pepper, one tablespoonful of mace, one tablespoonful of allspice and four tablespoonfuls of cinnamon, two grated nutmegs, one tablespoonful of cloves; mix thoroughly and warm it on the range until heated through. Remove from the fire and when nearly cool, stir in a pint of good brandy and one pint of Madeira wine. Put into a crock, cover it tightly and set in a cold place where it will not freeze, but keep perfectly cold. Will keep good all winter.

—Chef de Cuisine, Astor House, N.Y., 1902

PUMPKIN BREAD

1 pie pumpkin
1/2 cup oil
1 1/2 cup maple syrup
1 tsp baking soda
1 1/2 tsp cinnamon
2 eggs
1/4 cup water
1 3/4 cup whole spelt flour
3/4 tsp salt

Heat your oven to 350°F. Cut the pumpkin in half and remove the seeds. Place the pumpkin flat side down on a greased baking pan and roast until a fork easily slides through the skin, about 45 minutes – 1 hour, rotating the pan about 25 minutes in. Remove the pan from the oven and let cool.

If your oven has cooled, reheat it to 350°F. Scoop the pumpkin flesh into a bowl or food processor. Using an immersion blender or food processor, puree the pumpkin. Measure out 1 cup of pureed pumpkin and set aside the rest for later use (soup, more pumpkin bread or the recipe below are recommended).

Combine the 1 cup pumpkin, eggs, oil, water and maple syrup in a large bowl and whisk together. In a small bowl whisk together the spelt flour, baking soda, salt and cinnamon. And the dry mixture to the wet mixture and whisk until fully combined.

Grease a 9x5x3 inch loaf pan. Pour the batter into the pan and bake until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean, about 1 hour, rotating the pan halfway through. Let cool and enjoy!

—GoodGrub.ButterflyBakeryVT.com

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An Old-Time Childhood Christmas

by Charles Sutton

For many young people one of the life's most memorable experiences is 'going home for Christmas.'

For me that came a little later in life as my early Christmas's were spent going to my maternal grandparent's home in upstate New York, now nearly three-quarters of a century ago.

That was fine for my brother Fred and I as it meant a day-long excursion on a steam-driven train winding along the ice-choked Hudson River and later extra treats and adventures in an urban setting although we had to be on our best behavior!

Christmas excitement began when we accompanied our grandfather to the large farmer's market where he purchased not one but two turkeys and a 15-foot Christmas tree.

The turkeys would turn up later all brown-glazed and full of homemade stuffing. The extended family (up to 20 people) for the Christmas dinner included my grandparents, their three daughters (one my mother), their husbands, six grandchildren—two from each daughter, and two or more extra people in the category of distant relatives or family friends who had no place to go for Christmas dinner. My grandfather and one of the sons-in-law would carve the two turkeys, one at each end of the formally-set dining room table.

Table manners were strict in those days. The men and boys all wore coats and ties; the women, their Sunday best, and no one dared pick up a fork and start to eat until everyone was served. Finally, when grandmother picked up her fork, that was the signal to begin. How hard it was for us children to

"How hard it was for us children to sit there, seemingly half-starved, waiting for the grown-ups."

sit there, seemingly half-starved, waiting for the grown-ups.

The best part of the dinner for us boys was the delicious dessert of molded ice cream Christmas figures in all their bright colors. There were green Christmas trees, red Santas, and brown reindeers. My grandparents made delicious one-flavor ice cream the old-fashioned way in a hand-cranked ice-filled bucket, but these Christmas ice creams were specially made elsewhere and brought in for the occasion. One for each person, and sadly 'no seconds.'

The older people always had wine with their dinners. One Christmas my grandfather ordered an especially expensive French sauterne wine Chateau D'Yquem (pronounced 'a-ken'). For a sweet wine that batch was a bitter disappointment and barely drinkable. But it did lead to a long-lasting family saying: Chateau D'Yquem, Never Again!

My brother and I were into toy trains, lead soldiers and puzzle-like games. We looked forward to going to the downtown Five 'n Dime store (who can remember those wonderful stores). We would wander around spotting something we might want for Christmas. Then when one of us was out of sight the other brother would make the purchase!

The downtown streets were crowded with shoppers. A familiar sight was a man dressed in a giant Planters Peanut costume passing out peanuts from a small tray. We went by several times on as many days until the 'peanut man' got wise to us and told us firmly "no more."

We were young enough to still want to hang up a stocking for Santa Claus. We used extra large ones hoping for more stuff in addition to the toothbrush and tangerine in the toe. These were hung over a fireplace downstairs and we found them on the end of our beds when we woke up in the morning. Fred announced to Mother on one occasion, much to her dismay, that Santa looked a lot like her. She told us years later how tired she got staying up half the night trying to sneak into his room, but he was always awake.

On Christmas eve the grown-ups would decorate the tree after the children had gone to bed. This was to be the main surprise for us to see all lit up and surrounded with presents in the morning but not until after breakfast. We were forbidden to sneak a peak as everyone went in to see the tree at the same time. Good boys that we were we gladly waited. After all we already had a stocking full of presents. That was a different era, and one wonders if the e-children today are having as much fun.



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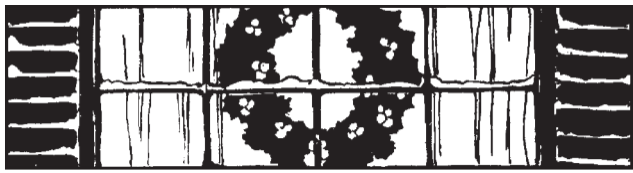
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Bellows Falls Winter Farmers' Market at the Bellows Falls Railroad Station, Depot St. Third Fridays from 4 to 7 p.m., December 21, January 18, February 15, March 15. Rachel Ware, (802) 463-2018. bellowsfallsmarket@gmail.com. www.bffarmersmarket.com.

Bennington-Walloomsac Holiday and Winter Farmers Markets at First Baptist Church, 601 Main St. Holiday Markets Dec. 1, and Dec. 15 from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Regular Winter Markets the first and third Saturdays: January 5 & 19, February 2 & 16, March 12 & 16 & April 16 & 20 from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. (802) 688-7210. info@walloomsac.org. www.walloomsac.org.

Bradford Farmers Market, Grace United Methodist Church. Holiday Market: December 8. Second and fourth Saturdays through April 27. Iris Johnson, (802) 222-5434. hellobradfordfarmers@gmail.com. facebook.com/bradfordfarmersmarket.

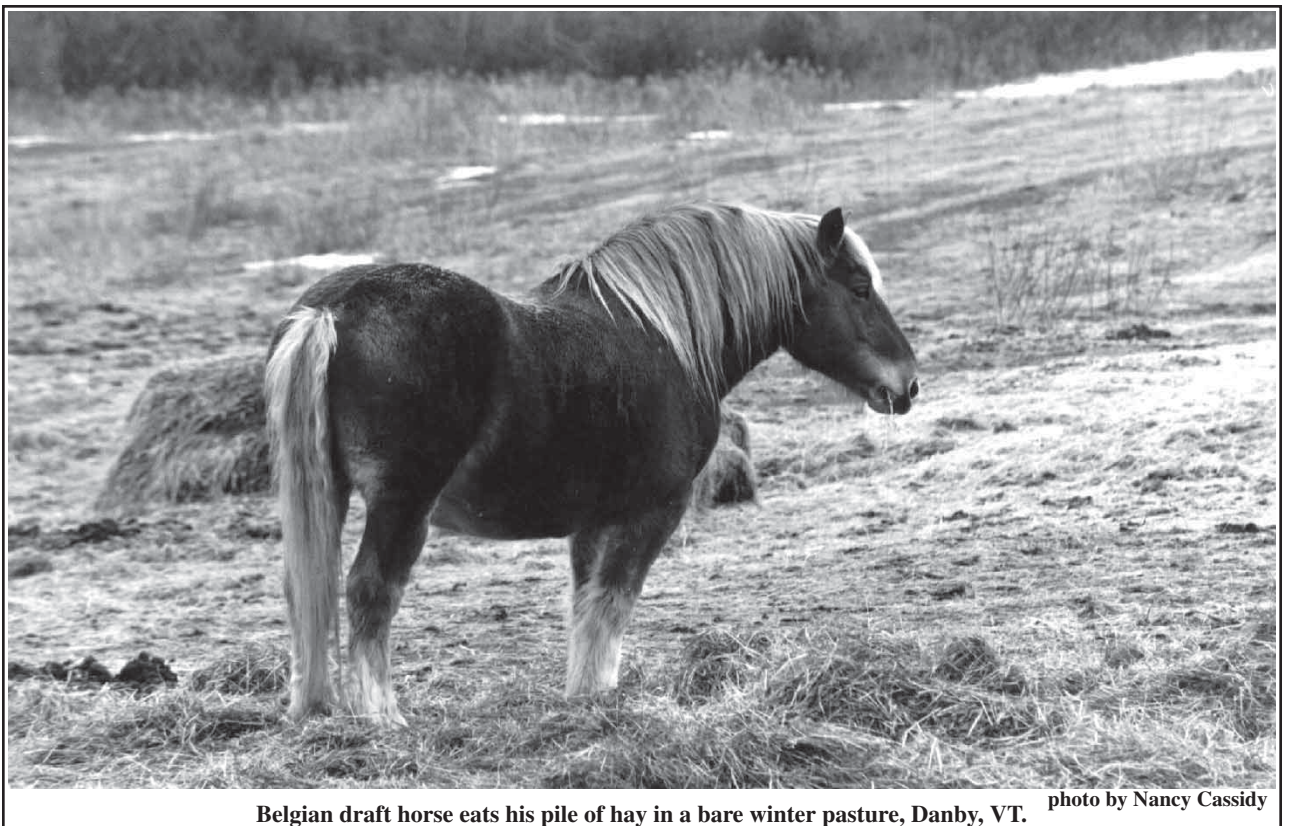
Brattleboro Winter Farmers' Market at River Garden, 153 Main St. Saturdays, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. through March 2013. Open 'til 3 p.m. from Thanksgiving to Christmas. Accepts EBT and debit cards. Sherry Maher, (802) 869-2141. farmersmarket@postsoilsolutions.org. www.postsoilsolutions.org.

Burlington Winter Farmers' Market at Memorial Auditorium, corner of Main St. and S. Union. Every third Saturday 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. through March. Accepts EBT and debit cards. Chris Wagner, (802) 310-5172. chriswag31@gmail.com. burlingtonfarmersmarket.org.

Champlain Islands—South Hero Winter Farmers' Market at South Hero Congregational Church. Third Fridays through March. 4-7 p.m. Denise Boutin, (802) 372-3291. www.champlainislandsfarmersmarket.blogspot.com.

Craftsbury Winter Farmers Market at Sterling College, Simpson Hall, Craftsbury Common. Third Saturdays, 4-7 p.m., through April. Kristin Urie (802) 755-6878.

Dorset Winter Farmers' Market at J.K. Adams Kitchen Store and Factory on Rt. 30. Sundays from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., through February 24. Nicole Henry (802) 353-3539. marketmanager@dorsetfarmersmarket.com.



Belgian draft horse eats his pile of hay in a bare winter pasture, Danby, VT. photo by Nancy Cassidy

Groton Growers' Winter Farmers Market at Groton Community Building Gym. Every third Saturday, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., from October through May. Jennifer Bone, (802) 584-4067. grotongrowers@gmail.com.

Hartland Winter Farmers' Market at Damon Hall, Rts. 5 & 12, Hartland Three Corners. December 14, 4-7 pm. Allison Bembe, (802) 436-3399. hartlandfarmersmarket@gmail.com. www.hartlandfarmersmarket.com.

Hinesburg Winter Farmer's Market at Hinesburg Town Hall, corner of Rt. 116 and Charlotte Rd. 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. on Saturday, December 15. Wendy Ordway, (802) 482-3848. wendyatthecobble@yahoo.com.

Ludlow Winter Farmers' Market at the corner of Main and Andover Streets. Every Saturday, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. through March 2. Jerry Milligan, (802) 734-3829. lfmkt@tds.net. www.ludlowfarmersmarket.org.

Middlebury Farmer's Market at Mary Hogan Elementary School, 201 Mary Hogan Dr. Every Saturday in December, and March & April, from 9:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. Special Holiday Market Dec. 1 in the Municipal Gym downtown (contact: orangeatsoaps@yahoo.com). Second and fourth Saturdays from 9:30 a.m. – 1 p.m., January through May. Jeremy Gildrien, (802) 247-4699. gildrienfarm@gmail.com. www.middleburyfarmersmarket.org.

Montpelier Capital City Winter Farmers' Market. Thanksgiving Market, Nov. 17, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. in the Montpelier H.S. gym on Bailey St. All other markets at Vermont College of Fine Arts gym, 36 College St., 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. First and third Saturdays in December, January & March; second and third Saturdays in February; first and fourth Saturdays in April. Carolyn Grodinsky, (802) 223-2958. manager@montpelierfarmersmarket.com. www.montpelierfarmersmarket.com.

Norwich Farmers' Winter Market at Tracy Hall, 300 Main St. 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. 1st & 3rd Saturdays in December.

1st Saturday in February, March and April. Steve Hoffman, (802) 384-7447. manager@norwichfarmersmarket.org. www.norwichfarmersmarket.org.

Putney Holiday Market at Green Mountain Orchards, 130 West Hill Rd. Sundays, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m., Dec. 16, Dec. 23. Annie DeCoteau, info@harmonycirclefarm.com. www.putneyfarmersmarket.org.

Rutland Holiday Fairs of Vermont, at Holiday Inn, Rt. 7. Sunday, Dec. 8, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Accepting EBT and debit cards. Sponsored by the Vermont Farmers Market. Jamie Condriell, (802) 287-9570. jdc71203@aol.com. www.vt-farmersmarket.org.

Rutland County Farmers Market Christmas Fair at College of St. Joseph. Friday, Nov. 30, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.; Saturday Dec. 1, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. www.rutlandcountyfarmersmarket.org.

Rutland Winter Farmers' Market. New location at 251 West St. Saturdays, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. through April 27. Doug Patac, (802) 753-7269. info@vtfarmersmarket.org. www.vtfarmersmarket.org

Sharon Sprouts Farmers' Markets at Sharon Elementary School. Holiday Craft Fair, Nov. 10. Winter Festival, Feb. 9. Chili Cookoff, Mar. 9. Garden Workday, May 11. 10 am – 1 pm, local lunch 11:30 am – 1 pm. Donna Foster, (802) 763-8280. vtfoster@myfairpoint.net.

St. Johnsbury Winter Markets at St. Johnsbury Welcome Center, Railroad St. First and third Saturdays in December. First Saturdays, January through April. 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Elizabeth Everts, (802) 592-3088. elizabethverts@yahoo.com. sites.google.com/site/caledoniafarmersmarket.

Waterbury Winter Farmers' Market at Thatch Brook Primary School Gym, Stowe St. Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. through April 13. Michele Boucher, (802) 522-5965. waterburyfarmersmarket.com.

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That winter our first child was in you and was born, We lived upstairs in Lyndonville, heating with oil. I gave piano lessons all round for fifty cents— It was Depression times—driving an aged Reo, And played at the Baptist Church in St. Johnsbury, Earning three dollars a week for that. Your mother gave Us food, my father sent us money every month. The child was due in January. For Christmas I Bought you a pair of cheap red slippers, sheepskin-lined, And told you someday I would give you something better.

—JAMES HAYFORD
Orleans, VT 1952

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Poultney, VT

Carol Sing & Tea at Historic Welsh Presbyterian Church

The Welsh Presbyterian Church in Poultney, VT will host a Christmas (Nadolig) season Carol Sing & Tea (Canu Carolau & Te Bach) on Sunday, December 16th at 2 p.m. in the church sanctuary.

The event is co-sponsored with the Poultney Area St. David's Society, Inc., an organization commemorating Welsh heritage. The society is active in the Poultney area due to emigration of Welsh miners from Wales to the Slate Valley area of Vermont and New York. Many persons of Welsh ancestry still live in this area, and the slate quarries are still active.

In this non-denominational Carol Sing, the congregational music will be sung in the English language. Christmas hymns will be selections from "The Celebration Hymnal, Songs and Hymns for Worship," the hymnal in use in the Welsh Church for its Sunday services.

Mary Ellen Millett of Rutland, VT will be organist. Mary is occasional Sunday organist at the Poultney Welsh Presbyterian Church and other area churches and events. She began playing the piano in Sunday School at age eight and has been playing or singing in churches ever since.

Ann Bryan, a native of Llanidloes, a small town in Mid Wales, will provide special organ music offerings. Ann has been the church organist at St. Idloes Parish Church in Wales for the past 57 years. Ann also devotes her time to fundraising and uses her organ playing to help her do this. She has completed an annual organ playing marathon for over thirty years and has raised

much needed funds for charities. Ann is visiting family in New England for the holiday season and is pleased to participate in this holiday season community event.

The Carol Sing and Tea is a benefit; a free will offering will be taken. Funds will go to the Welsh Presbyterian Church for its handicap elevator construction fund and the Poultney Cemetery Association for its annual grounds maintenance fund. This cemetery is the resting place of many members of the church, the Welsh society and the greater Welsh community.

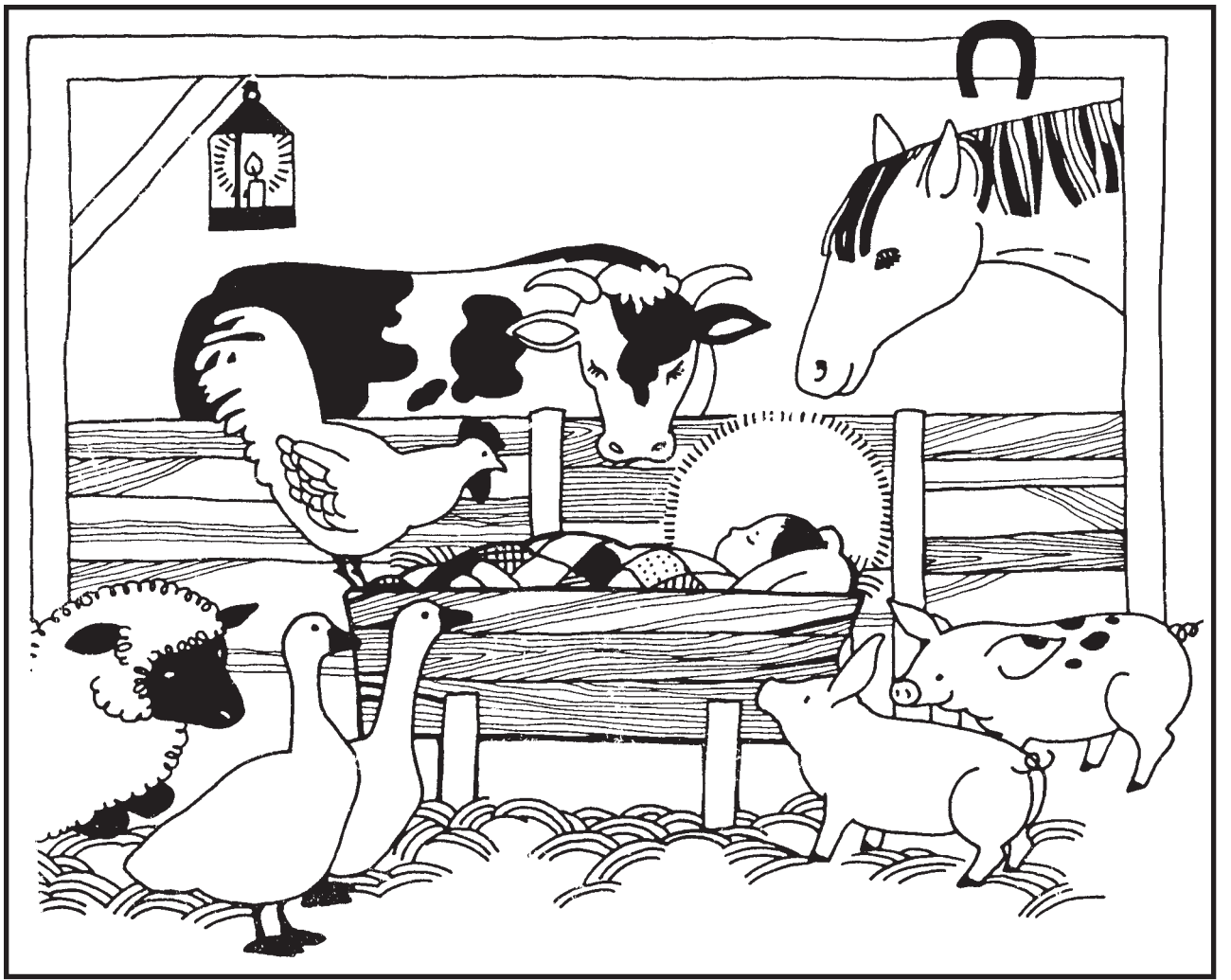
Tax-deductible donations may also be made separately to: the Welsh Presbyterian Church, mailed c/o Mrs. Benita Mead, 56 Wheeler Ave., Poultney, VT 05764; and to the Poultney Cemetery Association, mailed c/o Secretary, P.O. Box 63, Poultney, VT 05764-0063.

Following the sing, a Tea with holiday season baked goods will be served downstairs in St. David's Hall. All are welcome.

We encourage all singers to Come, Sing to the Lord, and make a joyful noise!

The Welsh Presbyterian Church is on Grove St. (Rt. 30) in Poultney, VT. The sanctuary is on the second floor of the historic building. It is not yet handicap accessible.

Contacts for this event include: Welsh Presbyterian Church, Benita Mead, vibenanna@aol.com, (802) 287-5264; and Poultney Area St. David's Society, Inc., Helen Jones, (802) 287-9729 and Nancy Williams (518) 642-0709 or email PASDS at pasds88@yahoo.com.



THE BARN

"I am tired of this barn!" said the colt.
 "And every day it snows.
 Outside there's no grass any more
 And icicles grow on my nose.
 I am tired of hearing the cows
 breathing and talking together.
 I am sick of these clucking hens.
 I hate stables and winter weather!"

"Hush, little colt," said the mare
 "And a story I will tell
 Of a barn like this one of ours
 And the wonders that there befall.
 It was weather much like this
 And the beasts stood as we stand now
 In the warm good dark of the barn—
 A horse and an ass and a cow."

"And sheep?" asked the colt. "Yes, sheep,
 And a pig and a goat and a hen.
 All of the beasts of the barnyard,
 The usual servants of men.
 And into their midst came a lady

And she was as cold as death
 But the animals leaned above her
 And made her warm with their breath.

"There was her baby born
 And laid to sleep in the hay
 While music flooded the rafters
 And the barn was as light as day.
 And angels and kings and shepherds
 Came to worship the babe from afar,
 But we looked at him first of all creatures
 By the bright strange light of a star!"

—ELIZABETH COATSWORTH



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Vermont Country Calendar

ONGOING EVENTS

BARRE. Exhibits, classes, workshops, and artists' studios. Free. Tues-Fri 10-5, Sat 12-4. Studio Place Arts, 201 N. Main St. (802) 479-7069. info@studioplacearts.com. www.studioplacearts.com.

BARRE. Vermont History Center and Leahy Library. Thousands of books, manuscripts, photographs, broadsides, maps, audio, video and film recordings, and many other items of ephemera which shed light on the lives and times of past Vermonters. Vermont Historical Society, 60 Washington St. (802) 479-8500. vermonthistory.org.

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.*

BELMONT. Mount Holly Community Historical Museum. Open year-round on second weekend of the month. Tarbellville Rd. (*turn right immediately after the Belmont Store, museum is on your right*). (802) 259-2460. www.mounthollyvtmuseum.org

BENNINGTON. The Dollhouse and Toy Museum of Vermont. Admission is \$2 for children three and older, \$4 for adults and \$10 for families. Open Saturdays and Sundays from 1-4 pm. 212 Union St. at the corner of Valentine St. dollhouseandtoymuseumofvermont.com.

BENNINGTON. Art exhibits, permanent collections, theater productions, workshops. Admission: adults \$9, seniors/students \$8, families \$20, under 12 are free. Bennington Center for the Arts, 44 Gypsy Lane. (802) 442-7158. www.benningtoncenterforthearts.org.

BENNINGTON. Bennington Museum—Exhibits and Public Programs, Founding Documents, Fine Art, Grandma Moses, and more. Admission \$10, children under 18 free. Open 10 am - 5 pm every day except Wednesdays. Bennington Museum, 75 Main St. (802) 447-1571. www.benningtonmuseum.org.

BENNINGTON. Bennington-Walloomsac Farmers Market. Saturdays 10 am - 2 pm. Holiday Markets on December 1 & 15. Winter Market every two weeks starting January 5 through April. At the First Baptist Church on Main St. (802) 688-7210. www.walloomsac.org.

BERLIN. Afro-Caribbean Dance. With live percussion every Thursday from 10:30 am - 12 pm. All levels welcome. Also Capital City Grange Potluck—share delicious food with your friends and future friends, starting about 6:30 each first Saturday, all are welcome, no charge. Capital City Grange, 6612 VT Rt. 12, Northfield Rd. (802) 985-3665. capitalcitygrange.org.

BRANDON. Sustainable Living Book Exchange. Self-service—take a book, leave a book. Donations accepted. Neshobe Farm, 142 Steinberg Rd. off Rt. 7 just north of the village. (Come to the house). (802) 310-8534.

BRANDON. Brandon Visitor Center. Information and public restrooms, open daily 8 am - 6 pm, 365 days a year. 4 Grove St., next to the Baptist Church at the corner of Routes 7 and 73 West. Also houses Brandon Museum at the Stephen A. Douglas Birthplace open mid-May through mid-October. (802) 247-6401. brandon.org.

BRANDON. First Fridays. Our restaurants and merchants are keeping their doors open till 9 pm the first Friday of each month. Visit "indie" shops, galleries, and restaurants. (802) 247-6401. www.brandon.org.

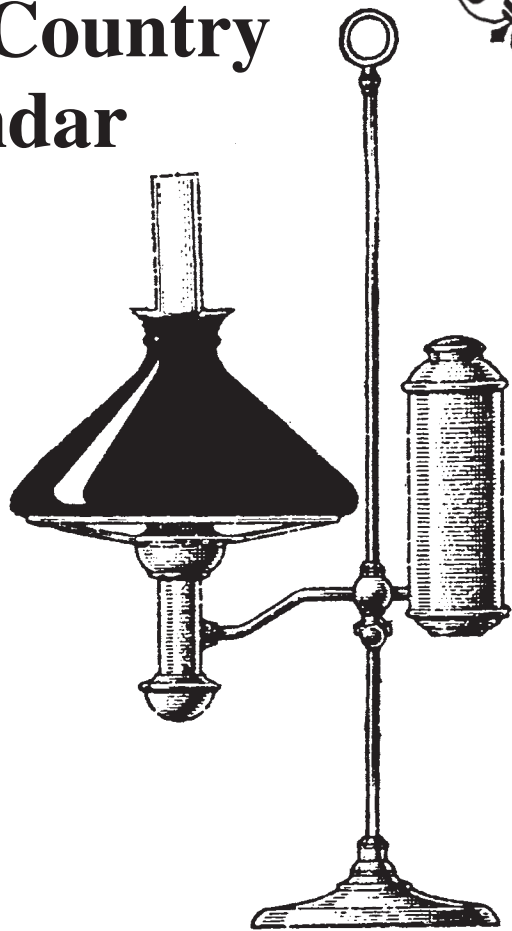
BRATTLEBORO. Brattleboro Museum & Art Center. Exhibits and programs. Open 11-5. Closed Tues & Wed. Admission \$6/\$4/\$3. 10 Vernon St. (802) 257-0124. www.brattleboromuseum.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Fair Winds Farm Wagon & Sleigh Rides. Half-hour reserved horse-drawn rides through fields and woods, and along a babbling brook. Adults \$10, kids 3-12 \$6, minimum \$50, after 5 pm \$80. Also available during Winter Solstice Celebration Dec. 21 and Last Night Dec. 31, 1-4 pm. Visit our farm store. Fair Winds Farm is a "Diversified, Horse Powered, Vermont Family Farm" at 511 Upper Dummerston Rd., off Rt. 30. (802) 254-9067. fairwind@sover.net. www.fairwindsfarm.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Social Singing from The Sacred Harp. Free and open to the public, no experience necessary, loaner books provided. 7-9 pm. Kidsplayce, 20 Elliott St. For information e-mail cuvlevler@gmail.com. *First and third Thursdays.*

BRATTLEBORO. Social Singing from The Sacred Harp. Early American hymns in the shape note tradition. Free and open to the public, no experience necessary, loaner books provided. Not a performance or church function, just fellowship in song. 3-5:30 pm. Centre Congregational Church, 193 Main St. Information: laurat@crocker.com. *Third Sundays.*

BRATTLEBORO. Winter Farmers Market. Over 30 vendors in a warm, welcoming indoor marketplace. Farm products, fresh baked goods, crafts, lunch, live music. Saturdays, 10 am - 2 pm; till 3 pm from Thanksgiving to Christmas. In the beautiful River Garden at 153 Main St. Sherry Maher, (802) 869-2141. www.postilsolutions.org. *November through March.*



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

BROOKFIELD. Christmas Tree Cutting. You choose—we cut! 9 am - 4 pm. At L.H. Stowell & Son Tree Farm, 1591 Twin Ponds Rd. (802) 276-0787. www.floatingbridgefoodandfarms.com. *Friday through Sundays through December 23.*

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

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

CENTER RUTLAND. The Rutland Railroad Museum. Housed in the Rutland Depot, built in 1917. See railroad artifacts and historical exhibits including HO & N scale model railroad layouts and a children's layout. The museum is also available to educational groups and schools for tours by appointment. Open Saturdays from 11 am - 1 pm. Rutland Railway Association, 79 Depot Lane. rra@rutlandrailway.org. www.rutlandrailway.org.

CHESTER. Vermont Institute of Contemporary Arts. Art Exhibits, Programs and Music. Free admission. Wednesday through Sunday 11 am - 6 pm. VTica, 15 Depot St. (802) 875-1018. info@vtica.org. www.vtica.org.

CHESTER. Chester-Andover Family Center Food Shelf and Thrift Shop. Great selection of clothes for the entire family including shoes and accessories, household items, books, videos, puzzles, games, etc. Food Shelf and emergency financial assistance to those in need. Thrift shop hours: Tues. 10-4, Wed. 1-7, Fri. 10-4, and Sat. 9-2. 656 Depot St. (802) 875-3236. cafc302@gmail.com. www.chesterandoverfamilycenter.weebly.com.

CHESTER. Monthly Public Astronomy Meetings for the Southern Vermont Astronomy Group. Second Tuesday of the month at 7 pm—free to the public at Whiting Library. 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. High Tea at Inn Victoria. Afternoon savories, sweets, fruit, and a variety of teas. \$19.99 per person. Open by reservation. Inn Victoria, 321 Main St. (802) 875-4288. innkeeper@innvictoria.com. www.innvictoria.com.

CHESTER. Gallery 103—an Artisan Marketplace. Hand crafted gifts, decorative accessories, small batch Chocolates and VT Maple products. Owned by artists Elise & Payne Junker, exclusive showroom of Junker Studio metalwork. Our Christmas room is open and filled with holiday cheer! Weekends—free hot mulled cider, tastings. Open every day but Tuesday 10 am - 5 pm. Located on Rt. 103, south of town—look for the life-size moose! (802) 875-7400. Gallery103.com.

CRAFTSBURY COMMON. Community Dinner. On the third Wednesday of every month, we gather for a free community supper. The food is great, the fellowship is wonderful, and you don't have to dress up! 6 pm. United Church of Craftsbury, 7 Church Lane. (802) 586-8028.

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Vermont Country Calendar

(Ongoing events continued)

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

DANBY FOUR CORNERS. Danby Dog Art Studio. Folk Art, Primitive Paintings & Reproductions by Susan Houghton Debus. Open most days—but 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, 33 Danby-Pawlet Rd. Trail rides, kid's camps, lessons, boarding & horses for sale. New indoor arena. Open daily, reservations appreciated. (802) 293-5242. www.chipmanstables.com.

DORSET. Dorset Winter Farmers' Market at J.K. Adams Kitchen Store and Factory on Rt. 30. Sundays from 10 am - 2 pm, through February 24. Contact Nicole Henry at (802) 353-3539. marketmanager@dorsetfarmersmarket.com.

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

GLOVER. Bread & Puppet Museum, Rt. 122. One of the largest collections of some of the biggest puppets in the world. Events and exhibits. Open in the winter by appointment. Free admission, donations welcome. (802) 525-3031. www.breadandpuppet.org.

GLOVER. The Museum of Everyday Life. New exhibition, "Healing Engine of Emergency—the incredible story of the Safety Pin." A self-service museum, open every day from 8 am - 8 pm. At 3482 Dry Pond Rd. (Rt. 16) a short distance south of the Shadow Lake Rd. For more information call (802) 626-4409. www.museumofeverydaylife.org.

GRAFTON. The Nature Museum at Grafton. Programs for all ages. Hands-on exhibits, dioramas, mounted specimen, wildlife garden. Hiking trails in the Village Park behind the Museum. Admission \$5 adults, \$4 seniors and students, \$3 children ages 3 to 12, 2 and under free, \$15 for families. Winter hours: Thursdays 10-4 or by appt. 186 Townshend Rd. (802) 843-2111. www.nature-museum.org.

GRAFTON. Grafton Ponds Outdoor Center. A year-round recreation center. In the winter enjoy cross country skiing with snowmaking, snowshoeing, and snowtubing. 783 Townshend Rd. (802) 843-2400. graftonponds.com.

GRAFTON. Grafton Valley Arts Guild invites you to visit the Cricketers Gallery in historic Grafton Village at 45 Townshend Road. Open Thursday thru Sunday from 10 am - 4 pm. (802) 843-4824. www.graftonvalleyartsguild.com.

GRANVILLE, NY. The Slate Valley Museum. Exhibits, events, demonstrations, programs, First Fridays, and gift shop. Tues-Fri 1-5 pm, Sat 10 am - 4 pm. Admission \$5, under 12 free. Downtown at 17 Water St. (518) 642-1417. www.slatevalleymuseum.org.

HANOVER, NH. Social Singing from The Sacred Harp. Early American hymns in the shape note tradition. Free and open to the public, no experience necessary, loaner books provided. 7-9:30 pm. Hanover Friends Meeting House, 43 Lebanon St. danhertzer@gmail.com. *Second Thursdays.*

HUNTINGTON. Monthly Bird Monitoring Walk. Our monthly walks gather long-term data on the presence of bird species, their abundance, and changes in populations. 8-10 am. Green Mountain Audubon Center, 255 Sherman Hollow Rd. (802) 434-3068. www.vt.audubon.org.

HUNTINGTON. Birds of Vermont Museum. Features over 500 carved wooden birds, representing 259 species. Museum, special events and bird walks, children's programs, gift shop, video, restrooms and trails with maps available. Admission: adult \$6, senior \$5, child 3-17 \$3. November 1 through April 30, open by appointment. The Birds of Vermont Museum, 900 Sherman Hollow Rd. (802) 434-2167. www.birdsofvermont.org.

LANDGROVE. Horse-Drawn Wagon and Carriage Rides. Rides leave on the hour from Landgrove Inn. Call for reservations. (802) 824-4663. www.karlpfistersleigh.com.

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

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.

LEICESTER. Addison County Farm Animal Homeopathy Study Group. Learn how other farmers are applying homeopathy to their herds or flocks. Discussion includes an in-depth look of at least one remedy, some theory and a case analysis. Meets the first Monday of each month and is open to all levels. 11:30 am - 1:30 pm at Taconic End Farm. For more information call Annie Claghorn, (802) 247-3979. foxclag@gmavt.net.

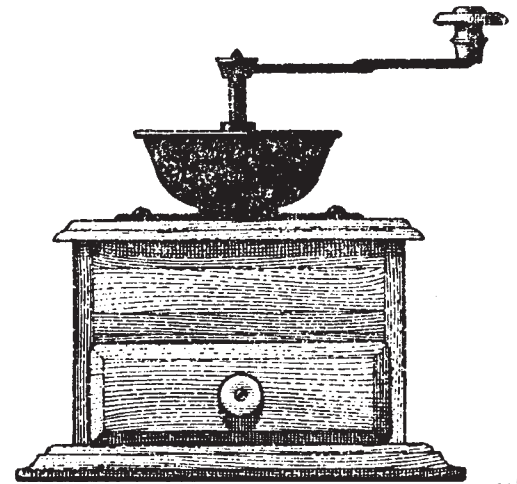
LUDLOW. Ludlow Winter Farmers' Market. At 6 Andover St. corner of Main and Andover. Fresh produce, winter vegetables, winter squash, crafts. Every Saturday, 9 am - 1 pm, through March 2. For information call Jerry Milligan at (802) 734-3829. www.ludlowfarmersmarket.org.

LUDLOW. Fletcher Farms School for the Arts and Crafts. Christmas Craft Shoppe open 7 days a week through January 1st. Vermont's oldest residential arts and crafts school. Winter classes start January 17. Fletcher Farm School for the Arts & Crafts, 611 Rt. 103 South. (802) 228-8770. www.fletcherfarm.org.

MANCHESTER. Manchester Merriment. Lighted tractor parade, wine tastings, inn tours, tree lightings, horsedrawn wagon rides and world-class shopping as Manchester & the Mountains celebrates the holiday season! Free. (802) 362-6313. visitmanchestervt.com. *Through January 1.*

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

MANCHESTER CENTER. Southern Vermont Winter Sampler Guided Tour. Enjoy the beauty of winter on the backroads of Vermont in an eight-passenger vehicle. Daily 12:30 pm. Tour meets at Adams Park, 5080 Main St. Please reserve in advance. Call (802) 362-4997. bckrddisc@aol.com. www.backroaddiscovery.com.



Bells of Joy Annual Christmas Concert in Rutland, VT

The Bells of Joy, directed by Karen James will present their 29th annual Christmas Concert on Friday, December 14, 2012 at 7:30 p.m. in the

chapel of the Rutland United Methodist Church in Rutland VT.

Inspired by the Lessons and Carols Service from

Kings College, Cambridge in England, this concert will feature original handbell compositions and adaptations of traditional Christmas carols, like "What Child is This" as well as a breathtaking rendition of 'Divinum Mysterium' surrounded by Change Ringing played on this unique instrument of 56 handbells and 39 handchimes by 12 ringers. Lessons will be read by Alan Betts.

Also featured on the program will be veteran ringer,

Bobbie Fillioe ringing a solo arrangement of "Away in a Manger" accompanied by director Karen James.

Come early to get a good seat. This concert will lift your heart and spirit and renew your soul. The United Methodist Church is handicapped accessible. A free will offering will be received.

The Rutland United Methodist Church is located at 71 Williams St., Rutland VT. (802) 773-2460.

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Vermont Country Calendar

MANCHESTER. Visit Historic Hildene, the summer home of Robert Todd Lincoln. Visit during December for a 1912 Victorian Christmas. Holiday Celebration at the Museum Store, December 1 & 2. Special activities, lectures, bird walks, museum store, visitor's center, and walking trails. Tickets: \$16 adults, \$5 youth under 14, children under 6 free. Grounds pass: \$5 adults, \$3 youth, children under 6 free. Open daily 9:30 am to 4:30 pm. Historic Hildene is off Rt. 7A, just south of the village. (802) 362-1788. info@hildene. www.hildene.org.

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

MIDDLEBURY. Henry Sheldon Museum of Vermont. The oldest chartered community history museum in the United States, welcoming visitors since 1882. Exhibits, research center, and museum shop. Tues-Sat 10 am - 5 pm, Sun 1-5 pm. Henry Sheldon Museum of Vermont History, 1 Park St. (803) 388-2117. henrysheldonmuseum.org.

MIDDLEBURY. Vermont Folklife Center. Exhibits, gallery, archives & research center, programs, and Heritage Shop. Free admission. Open Mon-Sat, 10 am - 5 pm. Sun 11 am - 4 pm. At 88 Main St., downtown. (802) 388-4964. www.vermontfolklifecenter.org.

MONTPELIER. Bethany Bowl. A community meal that is free to all. 9 am - 2 pm. At the Fellowship Hall, Bethany Church, 115 Main St. (802) 223-2424. www.bethanychurchvt.org. *Every Tuesday.*

MONTPELIER. Capital City Winter Farmers' Market. 9 am - 1 pm. weekly on Saturdays from December 1 on. Held in the Montpelier High School Gym on Bailey St. Accepts EBT and debit cards. (802) 223-2958. montpelierfarmersmarket.com.

MONTPELIER. 7th Annual Montpelier Antiques Market. Up to 24 Dealers offering primitives, furniture, art, toys, books, photos, and ephemera from the New England area. The Elks provide breakfast and lunch for sale. Admission: early buyers \$5 (7:30 am), general public \$2 (9 am). Open 7:30 am - 1:30 pm. Montpelier Elks County Club, 1 Country Club Rd., just off Rt. 2. (802) 751-6138. www.montpelierantiquesmarket.com. *2nd & 4th Sundays through March.*

MONTPELIER. Library Book Sale. Thousands of books, CDs, DVDs, maps, sheet music and more. Kellog-Hubbard Library, 135 Main St. (802) 223-3338. kelloghubbard.org. *December 10 - January 12.*

NORWICH. Social Singing from The Sacred Harp. Early American hymns in the shape note tradition. Free and open to the public, no experience necessary, loaner books provided. Not a performance or church function, just fellowship in song. 1:30-4:30 pm. Parish Hall of St. Barnabas Episcopal Church, 262 Main St. For information contact Daniel Hertzler at danhertzler@gmail.com. *Fourth Sundays.*

NORWICH. Winter Farmers' Market. 10 am - 1 pm at Tracy Hall, 300 Main St. (802) 384-7447. manager@norwichfarmersmarket.org. www.norwichfarmersmarket.org. *December 1 & 15, January 12, February 9, March 9, April 13.*

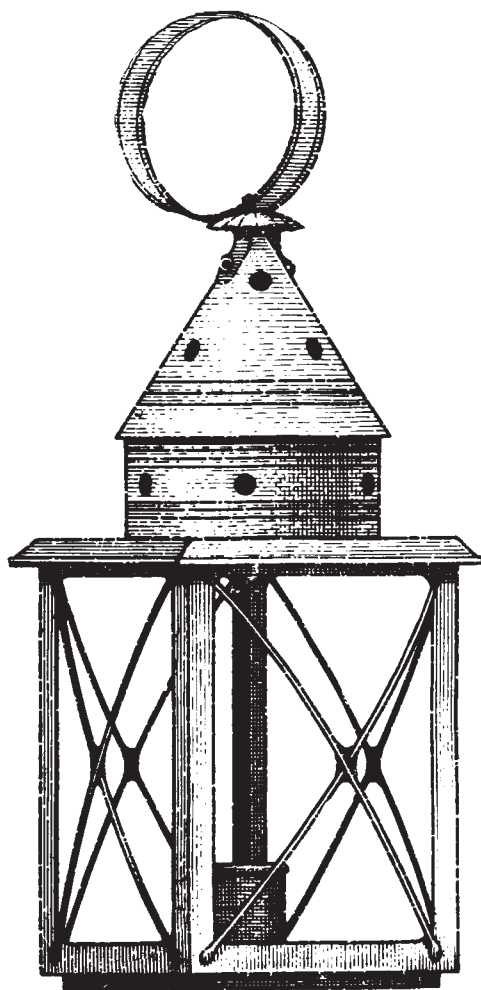
NORWICH. Montshire Museum of Science. Exhibits, trails, programs, and museum store open 10 am - 5 pm daily. Admission \$12 adults, \$10 children 2-17, under 2 free. One Montshire Rd. (802) 649-2200. www.montshire.org.

PITTSFORD. New England Maple Museum. World's largest maple museum. Antiques, paintings, slide show, folk art exhibits, maple syrup samples. A simulated boiling process, "sap to syrup" is presented all year. Tour through Vermont's famous maple industry and visit our gift shop. Admission adults \$2.50, children under 12 years 75¢, under 6 free. Open through December 23, 10 am - 4 pm daily. New England Maple Museum, 4578 Rt. 7, south of town. (802) 483-9414. info@maplemuseum.com. www.maplemuseum.com.

PLAINFIELD. Monthly Sacred Harp Sing. A free event, with beginners and loaner books available. The second Sunday of every month at 3 to 5 p.m. at the Community Center above the Co-op in Plainfield. Lynnette Combs at (802) 426-3850. lynnettecombs@gmail.com.

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. poultneyhistoricalsociety.org. www.poultneyvt.com.

PUTNEY. Green Mountain Orchards Farm Store. Apples and cider year round. Order your apple and pumpkin pies now for the holidays. Christmas trees including cut-your-own, wreaths and roping. Horse-drawn sleigh and wagon rides year-round by reservation. 130 West Hill Rd. (exit 4, I-91), look for signs in Putney Village. (802) 387-5851. greenmtorchards.com.



QUECHEE. Vermont Institute of Natural Science Nature Center. Exhibits, programs, nature trail, nature store. Admission: adults \$10.50, seniors \$9.50, youth (3-18) \$8.50, children 3 and under free. 10 am - 5:30 pm. 7 days a week. VINS Nature Center, 6565 Woodstock Rd., Rt. 4. (802) 359-5000. info@vinsweb.org. www.vinsweb.org.

ROCHESTER. Art Exhibits. BigTown Gallery, 99 N. Main St. (802) 767-9670. www.bigtowngallery.com.

RUPERT. Merck Forest and Farmland. Camping, cabins, trails, farm, workshops and seasonal events. Visitor's Center and store. Help with animal chores; meet at the pig barn at 3:30 pm sharp. Assist Merck staff in taking care of the chickens, pigs, sheep and draft horses Open year round, dawn to dusk. 3270 Rt. 315, west of Manchester. (802) 394-7836. merckforest.org.

RUTLAND. Chaffee Art Center—Rutland Area Art Association. Exhibits, classes, workshops, open studio evenings, gift shop. Annual Gingerbread Village Contest, Dec. 1-15, reception Dec. 1. Gallery open Tues-Sat 10 am to 5 pm. 16 South Main St. (802) 775-0356. www.chaffeeartcenter.org.

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

RUTLAND. Rutland Winter Farmers Market. Over 45 vendors. Winter vegetables, jellies, jams, maple, delicious hot foods, wines, arts and crafts—a great place to shop, eat and visit. Saturdays 10 am - 2 pm. 251 West St. For info call Doug Patac at (802) 753-7269. vtfarmersmarket.org. *Saturdays through May 4.*

RUTLAND. The Market Place. A new market in town. Producer-only vendors. Saturdays, 10 am - 2 pm. On West St. across from Little Harry's Restaurant. For info call Diane Heleba at (802) 353-0893. *Through February 23.*

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

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

SHELBURNE. Shelburne Farms. Welcome Center, Farm and Farm Store. 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 WALLINGFORD. Line Dancing every Tuesday. Beginners and experienced. \$5 per person, snack bar available. 6:30 pm at the Maple Valley Grange Hall, Rt. 7. (802) 446-2872. www.wallingfordvt.com.

SPRINGFIELD. Exhibition: Light & Space at The Great Hall. Featuring art by Sabra Field, Karen Mullen, Pat Musick, Dan O'Donnell. At The Great Hall, entrance off Pearl St. or One Hundred River Street. www.facebook.com/GreatHallSpringfield. (802) 885-3061. *Through May 10.*

Watering the Cow

I led the red Guernsey from her stable
out into glistening daylight.
She stood at the trough gulping
pailfuls of ice cold water.
Her broad back caught
and held perfect snowflakes
on the ends of her long, winter hair.
They formed a gallery of crystal shapes.
She was silver laden.
We walked back carefully
with our exquisite burden.
We entered the dark, warm barn.
Our treasure vanished.
She shook, tumbling the stars.



—WILLIAM MUNDELL

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Vermont Country Calendar

(Ongoing events continued)

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.

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

ST. JOHNSBURY. The Stephen Huneck Gallery at Dog Mountain and Dog Chapel. Free. Open Mon-Sat 10 am - 4 pm and Sun 11 am - 4 pm. The Stephen Huneck Gallery at Dog Mountain, 143 Parks Rd. off Spaulding Rd. (802) 748-2700. info@dogmt.com. www.dogmt.com.

TINMOUTH. Contra Dance every fourth Friday. Admission \$8, \$6 for teens, \$3 for children 5-12, under 5 free. Refreshments. 8 pm at Tinmouth Community Center, Rt. 140, 5 miles west of Wallingford. For info or directions call (802) 235-2718. Tinmouthvt.org.

WEST BRATTLEBORO. Cai's Dim Sum Teahouse at C.X. Silver Gallery. Dine with art all around. More than 30 authentic unique dishes, la carte with many vegan, gluten-free, and wheat-free options. Walk-ins welcome on second Sundays from 10 am - 8 pm or evenings throughout the month with reservations—call one or two days in advance. C.X. Silver Gallery, 814 Western Ave. (802) 579-9088. www.dimsuvt.com.

WEST NEWBURY. Eastern Square Dance. Traditional singing squares, waltzes, polkas, foxtrots, two-steps, Virginia Reel, Portland Fancy, Paul Jones, others. All dances taught. Adam Boyce, fiddler/caller. Donna Weston on piano. Admission by donation, all ages welcome. 8 pm at the Community Hall at 219 Tyler Farm Rd. (802) 429-2316 or adamboyce@juno.com. Fourth Saturdays starting January.

WEST PAWLET. West Pawlet Community Farmers Market. Fresh, honest food and goodies brought to you from your local farmers, chefs, and crafters. Every Friday from 4-7 pm, indoors and outdoors, year-round. West Pawlet Fish & Game Club (next to the Post Office), 2849 Rt. 153. "Like" us on Facebook and watch for weekly market menus and specials. wpcfmkt@gmail.com.

WEST RUTLAND. Reiki Healings. Herbal remedies and teas, crystals and stones. All are welcome. Vermont Herbal General Store, 518 Main St. (802) 438-2766. www.vermontherbal.com.

WEST RUTLAND. Home Buyer Education Classes. Call for schedule. NeighborWorks office at 110 Marble St. (802) 438-2303 x 216. www.nwvt.org.

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

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

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

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) 398-2780. www.listencs.org.

WILLISTON. Sweet Grass Gallery Annual Pop Up Shop. A holiday pop up shop featuring Vermont made products. Open daily, check website for hours. 6180 Williston Rd. (802) 578-8195. www.sweetgrassgalleryvt.com. Through December 27.

WILMINGTON. Scenic Horseback Trail Rides. \$25/40 minutes. Children over 6 can ride alone. Pont rides for younger children. Year round by reservation. Flames Stables, Rt. 100 south. (802) 464-8329.

WILMINGTON. Adams Farm. Horse-drawn sleigh rides up along the ridge of the mountain to an old log cabin with a wood stove. Special events. Visit the farm store. Mid-December to March. Day and evening rides. Also private rides in a vintage sleigh. Adams Farm, Higley Hill Rd. (802) 464-3762. www.adamsfamilyfarm.com.

WINDSOR. Cider Hill Gardens & Gallery. Winter hours for Gallery only, December - April by appointment. At 1747 Hunt Rd., off State St. (800) 232-4337. flowers@ciderhillgardens.com. ciderhillgardens.com. www.garymilek.com.

WINDSOR. All-You-Can-Eat Brunch Buffet. Menu includes pancakes and eggs, sausage, fruit salad, homemade bread, desserts and more. Adults \$7.50, 8 and under \$3. 11 am to 1 pm. St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 27 State St. (802) 674-6461. The first Sunday of each month.

WOODSTOCK. First Run Movies at the Woodstock Town Hall Theatre. Old-fashioned big-screen movie-going experience with state-of-the-art Dolby surround sound. Adults \$8, seniors \$7, students \$6. Famous maple popcorn! (802) 457-3981. www.pentanglearts.org.

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm & Museum. Premiere Jersey dairy farm, restored 1890 farmhouse, family programs, festivities and museum. Admission (includes all activities): \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4. Winter hours: open weekends through February 10 am to 3:30 pm and Christmas and February vacation weeks 10 am - 3:30 pm (closed Christmas day). Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.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) 457-2557.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1

BELLOWS FALLS. Concert: Stone Church Arts presents Possum Haw. Folk & bluegrass quintet. Tickets \$20. 7:30 pm. Immanuel Episcopal Church, 20 Church St. (802) 463-3100. www.stonechurcharts.org.

BENNINGTON. Bennington-Walloomsac Holiday Farmers Market. Fresh winter vegetables, baked goods, dairy products, meats, crafts, and more. Entertainment and prepared foods. 10 am - 2 pm. At the First Baptist Church on Main St. Katherine Keys, (802) 688-7210. www.walloomsac.org. Also December 15.

BRATTLEBORO. Winter Farmers Market. Over 30 vendors in a warm, welcoming indoor marketplace. Farm products, fresh baked goods, crafts, lunch, live music. Saturdays, 10 am - 3 pm till Christmas, then 10 am - 2 pm. Accepts EBT and debit cards. In the beautiful River Garden at 153 Main St. For info call Sherry Maher at (802) 869-2141. posttoilsolutions.org. Through March.



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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.

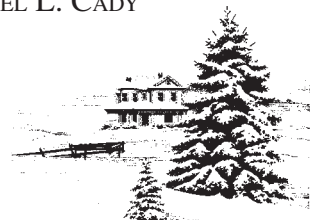
—DANIEL L. CADY



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Vermont Country Calendar



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2

BARRE. Concert: Handel's Messiah with the Vermont Philharmonic Orchestra. Tickets: adults \$15, seniors \$12 kids under 12 \$5, families \$32. 2 pm. Barre Opera House, 6 N. Main St. (802) 476-8188. www.barreoperahouse.org.

BETHEL. Raw Milk Dairy Processing Class: Cheese, Butter and Yogurt-Making. Fee: \$40. 1-4 pm. Earthwise Farm and Forest, 341 MacIntosh Hill Rd. (802) 234-5524. lmccrory@hughes.net. www.earthwisefarmandforest.com.

BURLINGTON. Bella Voce Holiday Concert: Rejoice and Sing. Featured works include Holst's "Ave Maria" and a vibrant setting of the Gloria by Canadian composer Imant Raminsh. \$18 general and \$15 for students and seniors. Advance tickets available at www.flynntix.org. 3 pm. First Baptist Church, 81 St. Paul Street. (802) 999-8881 or director@bellavocevt.org.

HARDWICK. Hike on North Branch Trail at the Nulhegan Basin. Meet at the Wenlock crossing parking area on Rt. 105, just east of the Hardwick "boots in the barrel camp". Sponsored by the Northeast Kingdom Section of the Green Mountain Club. Non-members and newcomers welcome. Free. Confirm with leader, Steve, at Bluffs@hotmail.com. www.greenmountainclub.org.

MANCHESTER. The Hildene Museum Store Holiday Celebration. Dressed in holiday finery, the spirit of the season abounds in our 100 year-old Carriage Barn! Apple cider, Vermont tastings & fresh cider doughnuts. A unique holiday shopping experience: Lincoln, Gilded Age, Gardens, History, Nature and Vermont. 9:30 am to 4:30 pm. Historic Hildene is off Rt. 7A, just south of the village. (802) 362-1788. www.hildene.org.

RUTLAND. Handel's Messiah. Rutland Area Chorus, soloists and orchestra will perform under the direction of Rip Jackson. Free will offering. 3:30 & 7 pm. Grace Congregational Church, 8 Court St. (802) 775-4301. www.gracechurchvt.org.

SPRINGFIELD. A Capella Christmas Concert. Concert with The Springfield Community Chorus. No admission, donations appreciated. 3 pm. Springfield Congregational Church. springfieldcommunitychorus@gmail.com.

STOWE. Concert: Vermont's Own 40th Army Band. Free admission. 2 pm. Spruce Peak Performing Arts Center, Rt. 108N. (802) 760-4634. www.sprucepeakarts.org.

THETFORD HILL. Christmas Vespers Concert: "Ikons and Angels." By the Thetford Chamber Singers. Featuring Charpentier's "Messe de Minuit pour Noel" plus selections by Rachmaninoff, John Tavener and others. Tickets \$15. 4:30 & 7:30 pm. First Congregational Church of Thetford, 2596 Route 113. (802) 765-4703. thetfordchambersingers.org.

WINDSOR. All-You-Can-Eat Brunch Buffet. Pancakes and eggs, sausage, fruit salad, homemade bread, desserts and more. Adults \$7.50, 8 and under \$3. 11 am to 1 pm. St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 27 State St. (802) 674-6461. *The first Sunday of each month.*

WOODSTOCK. Holiday Concert. Freelance Family Singers, with the University Chorus of the Upper Valley. Free, donations of non-perishable food welcome. 3 pm. First Congregational Church, Elm St. (802) 457-3980.

WOODSTOCK. Christmas at Billings Farm. Learn how Christmas was celebrated in late 19th century Woodstock. Holiday programs. Make historic ornaments, Christmas silhouettes and poppers and candle dipping. \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, children 2 and under free. 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org. *December weekends and December 22-January 1.*

WOODSTOCK. Concert with the Bel Canto Chamber Singers and Chamber Orchestra. Admission \$12, students \$6, free for 12 and under. 3 pm. North Universalist Chapel. (603) 448-1889. belcantosingers.org.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 3

LEBANON, NH. Concert: Dark Star Orchestra. Continues the Grateful Dead concert experience. Tickets: \$35. 7 pm. Lebanon Opera House, 51 North Park St. (603) 448-0400. lebanonoperahouse.org. www.darkstarorchestra.net.

BURLINGTON. Bella Voce Holiday Concert: Rejoice and Sing. Featured works include Holst's "Ave Maria" and a vibrant setting of the Gloria by Canadian composer Imant Raminsh. \$18 general and \$15 for students and seniors. Advance tickets available at www.flynntix.org. 8 pm. First Baptist Church, 81 St. Paul Street. (802) 999-8881.

CHESTER. 27th Annual Overture to Christmas. Visits with Santa Claus, tree lighting ceremony, parade, puppet show, music, arts & crafts, caroling, story telling and more! Throughout town. (802) 875-2626. *Through December 8.*

CHESTER. A Capella Christmas Concert. The Springfield Community Chorus. No admission. 3 pm at Chester Baptist Church. springfieldcommunitychorus@gmail.com.

CHESTER. Community Breakfast. Menu: bacon, sausage, eggs, homefries, pancakes, all the fixings, and beverages, buffet style from 8-10 am. \$5 donation at the door. The Green Mtn. Express hosts a round and square dance from 7-11 pm. Refreshments sold in the kitchen. 50/50 tickets on sale. \$5 donation at the door. At Gassetts Grange, jct. of Rts. 10 & 103N. For information call Dave at (802) 875-2637.

CUTTINGSVILLE. Silent Auction and Cookie Swap. Holiday celebration with many unique auction items, live music and cookies! Make a batch of cookies to swap. 7-9 pm. Shrewsbury Library, 98 Town Hill Rd. (802) 492-3410.

DANVILLE. "Christmas in the Kingdom" Holiday Bazaar. lunch, baked goods, cookie walk, Granny's Attic, crafts, special themed raffle baskets, Beads & Baubles, photo raffle, and much, more! 9 am - 2 pm. Danville Congregational Church, UCC, 87 Hill St. (802) 748-1456.

LEBANON, NH. Concert with the Bel Canto Chamber Singers and Chamber Orchestra. Haydn's great Missa in Angustiis, works by Thomas Morley, Edward Elgar, Josquin Desprez, John Tavener, and others. Admission \$12, students \$6, free for 12 and under. 3 pm. First Congregational Church. (603) 448-1889. www.belcantosingers.org.

LUDLOW. Ludlow Winter Farmers' Market. Locally grown and raised produce, artisanal food products and crafts. At the corner of Main and Andover Streets. 9 am - 1 pm. Jerry Milligan, (802) 734-3829. www.ludlowfarmersmarket.org. *Saturdays through March 2.*

LUDLOW. The 8th Annual Festival of Lights. Dinner and entertainment, silent and live auction of decorated holiday wreaths, and much more. To benefit the Mount Holly Community Historical Museum. \$45 per person, cash bar. 6-10 pm. At The Roundhouse at Jackson Gore. For tickets call Doris Reiser at (802) 259-2722

LUNENBURG. Gingerbread Bazaar. Festive event to ring in the Christmas season. Amazing gift items, cookie walk, fudge table. Soup & sandwich luncheon 11 am - 2 pm. Free door prizes and contests, free face painting. 10 am - 3 pm. Lunenburg Primary School, 48 Bobbin Mill Rd., off Rt. 2 in the center of town. (802) 892-6654. www.topofthecommon.org.

LYNDONVILLE. The North Pole Express. Join us aboard heated vintage coaches as we travel North to pick up lively elves, Mrs. Claus, and of course, Santa Claus! Enjoy hot cocoa and cookies, served by a chef and servers, and caroling all the way. Pajamas are encouraged! 12, 2, 4, and 6 pm. The Lyndon Freighthouse, 1000 Broad St. For tickets call (802) 626-1174. thelyndonfreighthouse.com. *Also December 2.*

MANCHESTER CENTER. Lighted Tractor Parade. Antique tractors covered with holiday lights parade through downtown Manchester with special guests Mr. & Mrs. Claus! 5:30 pm. Routes 7A and Bonnet St. (802) 362-6313. www.visitmanchestervt.com.

MANCHESTER. Holiday Horse & Wagon Rides. Festive caroling as David Lively and his champagne draft horses take you on a holiday tour through Manchester Village. Fee: \$10/per person, maximum 15 per ride. 2 & 4 pm. Reservations required. Call to reserve. (802) 362-6313. *Also December 8.*

MANCHESTER. Home for the Holidays at Hildene. The Hildene Museum Store holiday celebration. Dressed in holiday finery, the spirit of the season abounds in our 100 year-old Carriage Barn! Apple cider, Vermont tastings & fresh cider doughnuts. A unique holiday shopping experience: Lincoln, Gilded Age, Gardens, History, Nature and Vermont. 9:30 am to 4:30 pm. Historic Hildene is off Rt. 7A, just south of the village. (802) 362-1788. www.hildene.org. *Also December 2.*

MONTPELIER. Performance: Two for Christmas. Two act plays by David Budbill. The Second Shepherds Play—Budbill's faithful translation of a 15th century miracle play, and The Pulp Cutters' Nativity—the same basic story but 500 years later in Judevine! Tickets: \$20; students & seniors \$15; ages 6—11, \$10 (infants & toddlers not admitted.) 2 & 7:30 pm. Lost Nation Theater, City Hall Arts Center. (802) 229-0492. lostonationtheater.org.

MORRISVILLE. Annual Christmas Tour. Come celebrate Christmas with Dickens. Free. 1-5 pm. Noyes House Museum, 122 Lower Main St. (802) 888-7617. www.noyeshousemuseum.org. noyeshousemuseum@gmail.com.

NORWICH. Holiday Farmers' Market. 10 am - 2 pm at Tracy Hall, 300 Main St. (802) 384-7447. www.norwichfarmersmarket.org.

PITTSFORD. Pittsford Winter Farmers Market. Local food, preserves, maple products, artwork, jewelry and crafts. 9:30 am - 2 pm. Lothrop Elementary School, 3447 US Rt. 7. Sally Eugair (802) 483-2218. vtmusictherapy@comcast.net. *Saturdays through December 15.*

QUECHEE. Winter Fair Celebration. Decorate gingerbread cookies, explore gnome caves, craft ornaments and candles, enjoy wandering minstrels, and more seasonal magic. Free. 10 am - 3 pm. Upper Valley Waldorf School, 80 Bluff Rd. (802) 296-2496. www.uvws.org.

RICHMOND. 9th Annual Richmond Holiday Market. Holiday gifts and crafts on sale, plus food, music, free horse & wagon rides, Santa and silent auction. 9 am - 3:30 pm. Town Center. (802) 434-3979. www.westernslopesvt.org

RUTLAND. Rutland County Farmers Market Christmas Fair. Holiday baked goods, winter produce, sauces, jam & jellies, cheeses, wide varieties of crafts, and wreaths. Live music. Refreshments for sale from the kitchen. 9 am - 4 pm. At College of St. Joseph. www.rutlandcountymarket.org.

RUTLAND. The Market Place. A new market in town. Producer-only vendors. Saturdays, 10 am - 2 pm On West St. across from Little Harry's Restaurant. Contact Diane Heleba for more info at (802) 353-0893. *Through February 23.*

RUTLAND. Annual Gingerbread Village Contest Opening Reception. Refreshments served. Vote on your favorite entry. 5-7 pm. Chaffee Art Center, 16 South Main St. (802) 775-0356. www.chaffeeartcenter.org. *December 1-15.*

RUTLAND. 10th Annual Festival of Trees Benefit Auction. Join auctioneer Bob Prozzo as he presents a huge selection of auction items. This event is catered and will feature a cash bar. Tickets \$10. 6 pm. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. www.paramountlive.org.

RUTLAND. Rutland Winter Farmers Market. Over 45 vendors selling everything from fresh salad greens all winter to grass-fed meats, winter vegetables, cheeses, homemade baked goods, cider and apples. Jellies, jams, maple, delicious hot foods, wines, wool & crafts. 10 am - 2 pm. 251 West St. (802) 753-7269. www.vtfarmersmarket.org. *Saturdays through May 4.*

SHELBURNE. Christmas Bazaar & Luncheon. Handcrafted merchandise for sale from local craftspeople as well as fair trade products from developing nations. Christmas resale shop, gently used sweaters, baked goods, plant table. 9 am - 2 pm. Lunch from 11 am - 1:30 pm. Shelburne United Methodist Church, 30 Church St. (802) 985-3981.

ST. ALBANS. Festival of Trees—"Winter Wonderland." Entertainment, activities, dancing, and more all in our historic Downtown. Friday night Gala Dec. 7 where dozens of elegant and fun trees are sold. (802) 527-7418. www.festivaloftreesvt.com. *Through December 9.*

STOWE. Stowe Community Church Fair. Wreaths, needlecrafts, baked goods, cookbooks, puzzles and historic Stowe afghans and more. 9:30 am - 2 pm. Stowe Community Church, Main St. (802) 253-7257. www.stowechurch.org

STRAFFORD. Christmas Vespers Concert: "Ikons and Angels." With the Thetford Chamber Singers. Tickets \$15. 7:30 pm. United Church of Strafford, Justin Morrill Highway & Brook Rd. (802) 765-4703. thetfordchambersingers.org.

TUNBRIDGE. Shindig with the Sensible Shoes. Advance tickets \$8. 8-11 pm. Tunbridge Town Hall, Rt. 110. (802) 889-5521. tunbridgevt.com. www.shindigsvt.com.

VERGENNES. Holiday Stroll. Children of all ages visit & stroll with Santa. Breakfast, cookie decorating, Campplain Brass Quintet, Victory Baptist Church Choir, carolers. Join in holiday activities, craft show & Christmas shopping. 7:30 am - 5:30 pm. (802) 388-7951. www.addisoncounty.com.

WALLINGFORD. 36th Annual Holiday Craft Fair. This event will feature crafters, artisans and fresh evergreen wreaths. Homemade luncheon of soups, sandwiches and desserts. Lots of door prize giveaways. Free admission. 10 am - 3 pm. Wallingford Elementary School, 126 School St. (802) 446-2141.

WELLS. Christmas Craft Sale. Crafts, farm produce, and baked goods. Sponsored by Our Neighbors Table Food Pantry. 9 am - 3 pm. At the Modern Woodmen metal building, Rt. 30. (802) 783-8036.

WESTON. 29th Annual Old-Fashioned Christmas in Weston. Tour the village by foot or by a team of horse-drawn wagons, visiting open galleries, museums and inns. Children will enjoy Santa, ornament making, face painting, petting zoo, story-telling and crafts at the historic Little School and Wilder Memorial Library. The 208 year-old Old Parish Church will be decorated for the season and offers Christmas music, a community reading of *A Christmas Carol* with Sam Lloyd and live music from the Nordic Harmoni Singers. Santa will lead carol singing at the Village Green for the lighting of the Weston Christmas Tree. 11 am - 5 pm. (802) 824-3669. www.westonvt.com.

WOODSTOCK. Holiday Concert. Freelance Family Singers, with the University Chorus of the Upper Valley. Free, donations of non-perishable food welcome. 7 pm. First Congregational Church, Elm St. (802) 457-3980.

WOODSTOCK. 3rd Annual Woodstock Vermont Film Series. Screening: *North Face*. Tickets: adults \$11, children ages 3-15, \$6. 3 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org/filmfest. *Continues on alternate Saturdays through April 6.*

WOODSTOCK. Christmas at Billings Farm. Learn how Christmas was celebrated in late 19th century Woodstock. Holiday programs. Admission (includes all activities) \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, children 2 and under free. 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org. *December weekends and December 22 - January 1.*

Vermont Country Calendar

(December 3, continued)

BELLOWS FALLS. Cooking Class: Holiday Entertaining—Appetizers & Hors d'oeuvres. With Chef John Marston. We'll provide knives and aprons to assist your hands-on preparation. 6-8:30 pm. Fee, call to register. Leslie's Tavern, 660 Rockingham Rd. (802) 463-4929. lesliestavern.com.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 5

BELLOWS FALLS. Concert: Mary McCaslin and Rick Shea. Classic Americana music. Tickets \$18 advance, \$20 door. Doors 7 pm, show 8-10:30 pm. Popolo, 32 Village Square. www.flyingunderradar.com.

BRANDON. Jazz Concert: Gary Smulyan. Renowned saxophonist performs. Tickets \$15. BYOB. 7:30 pm. Brandon Music, 62 Country Club Rd. (802) 465-4071. info@brandon-music.net. brandon-music.net.

BURLINGTON. Natalie MacMaster, "Christmas in Cape Breton." 7:30 pm. Flynn Center for the Performing Arts. For tickets call (802) 863-5966. www.flynnntix.org.

BURLINGTON. Vermont Stage Company Presents "Winter Tales." Share stories and songs celebrating the holiday season and winter in Vermont. Warm cider and cookies. 7:30 pm. FlynnSpace. (802) 863-5966. www.flynnntix.org. www.vtstage.org. *Through December 9.*

RUTLAND. Library Book Sale. Sponsored by the Friends of the Rutland Free Library. 4-8 pm. Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St. (802) 773-1860. *Also January 18.*

SWANTON. Community Breakfast at Holy Trinity. Hot and cold breakfast items. Fee: \$2.50. 7-9 am. Holy Trinity Episcopal Church Parish Hall, 38 Grand Ave. (802) 868-7185 x 10. holytrinityepi@myfairpoint.net. www.holytrinityswanton.org. *Also December 19.*

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 6

NORWICH. Holiday Festivities in Norwich Square. Sales, wine & cheese & seasonal refreshments and lots of good cheer! Willem Lange & Bert Dodson will present their storybook, *The White-Footed Mouse*, from 5-7 pm. Admission free. 4-8 pm. Norwich Bookstore, 291 Main St. (802) 649-1114. www.norwichbookstore.com.

ST. ALBANS. 2nd Annual Running of the Bells in Downtown St. Albans. Join in this holiday fun run. Walk—run—jog with bells on your toes, or hat! One mile through downtown past holiday lights. 6:30 pm. 25 Kingman St. samessenger.com. (800) 837-6668.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 7

BARRE. Concert: Vermont Symphony Orchestra Holiday Pops. Adults \$28, seniors \$21, kids 18 and under \$10. 7:30 pm. Barre Opera House, 6 N. Main St. (802) 476-8188. www.barreoperahouse.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Jazz Concert: Vermont Jazz Center Big Band featuring Houston Person. Tickets \$25. 8 pm. Vermont Jazz Center, 72 Cotton Mill Hill. (802) 254-9088. www.vtjazz.org.

BROOKFIELD. Christmas Tree Cutting. You choose—we cut! 9 am – 4 pm. At L.H. Stowell & Son Tree Farm, 1591 Twin Ponds Rd. (802) 276-0787. www.floatingbridgefoodandfarms.com. *Friday through Sundays through December 23.*

BURLINGTON. Holiday Concert: Atlantic Brass Quintet. 7:30-10 pm. UVM Recital Hall, 384 South Prospect St. For tickets call (802) 656-4455. www.uvm.edu.

HARDWICK. Performance: Two for Christmas. Two one act plays by David Budbill. The Second Shepherds Play—Budbill's faithful translation of a 15th century miracle play, and *The Pulp Cutters' Nativity*—the same basic story but 500 years later in Judevine! Tickets: \$20; students & seniors \$15; ages 6—11, \$10. 7:30 pm. Hazen Union High School. (802) 229-0492. lostnationtheater.org. *Also December 8.*

RUTLAND. Dance Performance: Tap Dogs. Rough, tough rocking entertainment. Tickets: \$45.50/\$39.50/\$34.50. 8 pm. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. www.paramountvt.org.

ST. JOHNSBURY. Concert: Shouts and Cradle Songs—A Counterpoint Christmas. \$20 adults, \$15 seniors, \$5 children. 7:30 pm, North Congregational Church. (802) 540-1784.

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION. Concert: Enter the Haggis. Tickets: \$22. 8 pm. Tupelo Music Hall, 188 S. Main St. (802) 698-8341. www.tupelohallvermont.com.

WOODSTOCK. Wassail Open House at Woodstock Historical Society. 1807 Dana House decorated for the holidays. Hot cider, treats, music, and stories for the young at heart. Free. (802) 457-1822. woodstockhistorical.org.

WOODSTOCK. 28th Annual Wassail Weekend. Horse and Carriage Parade, 2 pm Saturday. Wassail Cafe, yule log, caroling, over 400 luminaries, the lighting of the Memory Tree, all on the Village Green. Holiday House Tour. Holiday craft sale and traditional readings. Christmas Visions at the Rec. Center. (802) 457-3555. www.woodstockvt.com. *Through December 9.*

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm Wassail Weekend Celebration. \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, children 2 and under free. 10 am – 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum. Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org. *Also December 8 & 9.*

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8

ARLINGTON. Santa Lucia Festival of Lights. Open Houses at Inns with treats and cheer, 1-4 pm. Santa Lucia Pageant 5 pm includes the story of Saint Lucia and carol singing. Bring canned goods for Arlington Area Food Shelf. Swedish Dinner 6 pm with authentic Swedish holiday food. All are welcome, free will offering. At St. James's Episcopal Church. (802) 375-9952. www.stjamesarlingtonvt.org.

BARRE. Green Mountain Youth Symphony's Two Winter Concerts. The combined GMYS Concert Orchestra and UVMC Harmonic Ensemble at 3:30 pm. The Senior Orchestra & storyteller Willem Lange present Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf* at 7:30 pm. Adults \$18, kids 18 and under \$12. 3:30 pm. Barre Opera House, 6 N. Main St. (802) 476-8188. www.barreoperahouse.org.

BELLOWS FALLS. Rockingham Library Holiday Open House. Music, refreshments, raffle drawings, and everyone is welcome! 1-3 pm. Rockingham Free Public Library, 65 Westminster St. (802) 463-4270. rockinghamlibrary.org.

BENNINGTON. 16th Annual Festival of Trees Gala. Food and drink, live music, live auction. Admission \$50, call ahead to reserve. 7-10 pm. Bennington Museum, 75 Main St. (802) 447-1571. www.benningtonmuseum.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Winter Farmers Market. Over 30 vendors in a warm, welcoming, indoor market. Farm products, fresh baked goods, crafts, lunch, live music. Saturdays, 10 am – 3 pm. Accepts EBT and debit cards. In the beautiful River Garden at 153 Main St. (802) 869-2141. www.posttoilsolutions.org. *Through March.*

BROOKFIELD. Christmas Tree Cutting. You choose—we cut! 9 am – 4 pm. At L.H. Stowell & Son Tree Farm, 1591 Twin Ponds Rd. floatingbridgefoodandfarms.com. (802) 276-0787. *Friday thru Sundays thru December 23.*

BROOKFIELD. The Floating Bridge Holiday Market. Join The Floating Bridge Food & Farms Coop for caroling and community sings, holiday farm-inspired crepes and hot beverages, holiday arrangements and wreaths, and local farm gifts including: canned goods, sweets, meats, winter produce, soaps, candles, and more. Free! 10 am – 4 pm, at The Fork Shop in Pond Village, 2205 Rt. 65. www.floatingbridgefoodandfarms.com. (802) 276-0787. *Also December 9.*

NEWS FROM VERMONT

Discovering the Happy Heart of Santa

by Burr Morse

Last Friday, I felt myself getting a little surly with the Christmas tree business. Yup, everyone these days wants the perfect tree, rightfully so, but for me, "perfect" translates to "more boughs and heavier"—kinda rough on my sixty-three year old frame. I knew there was a huge weekend ahead of selling them and wanted to be at my very best so I did something way out of style for me; I went down to the local drugstore and bought one of those cheap Santa hats—"What the heck," I said to myself, "it can't hurt—maybe it'll somehow 'lighten things up' and it's a lot cheaper'n a psychiatrist." When I put it on Saturday morning, I was pleasantly surprised. It fit nicely like a more expensive hat and, yes, I felt better! I trudged down to the tree yard and started catering to the onslaught of people who almost beat me there.

That reminds me of another time I wore a Santa hat. Way back when we were first married, Betsy and I enrolled in a thing called the "est Training", a mind transformational workshop created by a guy named Werner Erhard. Werner thought he had figured out the key to human transformation through his pricey trainings which were staged in large cities all over the country. Betsy and I traveled to Boston where we joined several hundred other folks in a hotel ballroom and, for two weekends in a row, got screamed at and accosted by the drill sergeant-like "est" trainer. We both graduated from "est" feeling dutifully transformed and, much to our parents' surprise, came home to resume our daily lives instead of going to find a street corner to sell roses. That year at Christmas time, we and a few other "est" graduates decided to spend Christmas day with the patients over at the Vermont State Hospital in Waterbury. Probably because of my round face and pudgy cheeks, I was selected as our group's Santa.

Although there has been much debate about the merits of "est" since its demise in 1984, I'll always say that it helped me figure out who I am. Post "est", I knew without a doubt that I was a shy, self-conscious person. What I did not discover, however, was that the last place an introverted person

belongs is in a Santa Claus suit! I'd approach patients not knowing what to say, and when I made an effort, it was with my God-given soft, "wimpy" voice. After several feeble attempts, I retreated to a back corner away from all the patients and visitors. I had been there only a few minutes when a patient approached me. He sported an indelible grin and stood rocking from one foot to the other before he spoke:

"I mean, I'm Aa...albert" he said. "I mean, I'm Aa...albert and I've seen, I mean, I've see...een lots of Saa...antas in my time, lots of Saa...antas."

I immediately liked this guy and felt myself beginning to "melt".

He went on, "I mean, lots of of Saa...antas and Saa...antas are aa...lways haa...appy but, I mean, you need t'be haa...appy."

I grabbed his hands and said "Thank you Albert! Thank you so much...I really needed that!" His grin blossomed and just before he ambled on to the next person he beamed "You're WOW...come"! I went directly into the restroom and tore off that Santa suit quicker'n a flick of Dancer's tail. After that, I was able to mingle with the Christmas crowd at the Vermont State Hospital as Burr Morse, "at home" in my shy, self-conscious skin.

Last night I played at a family Christmas dance down in Vergennes with the Joe Levesque Big Band. Our leader Frank Mehaffey, a trombone player, issued Santa hats to the entire trombone section possibly so we could "wow" them with our presence as well as our playing. As the evening went on, it became obvious that all the small children in the house were magnifying to one person in the trombone section, the one with a round face, pudgy cheeks, and now, snow white beard...me! Thinking of that time so long ago, I slouched down in my chair like the Grinch would have and it seemed to work...they retreated to their parents.

During our first break, however, I was caught red handed. A little girl approached me, grabbed my hand and said in her tiny voice, "Hi Santa. I'm Emily". I considered running but Albert's advice from long ago came alive and I knew I had to be there for Emily..."Ho, Ho, Ho" I said with a grin. "Have you been a good little girl Emily?" Her eyes grew big as saucers and she squealed her likes, requests, and dreams to me, Santa, the real Santa in her eyes, and, yes, happy this time!

Morse Farm Maple Sugarworks is located at 1168 County Rd., Montpelier, VT and is open year-round. Visit our Country Store, Sugarhouse, and more. For maple products and balsam wreaths call (800) 242-2740 or visit www.morsefarm.com.

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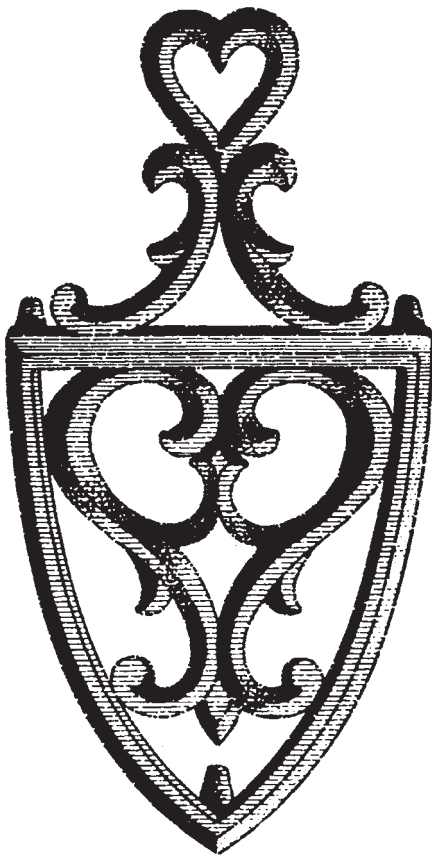
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Vermont Country Calendar



BURLINGTON. Concert: Full Circle. Celtic, Renaissance, and holiday music. Free. 1-3 pm. Phoenix Books, 191 Bank St. (802) 448-3350. www.phoenixbooks.biz.

CRAFTSBURY. Concert: Laslo Cameo. A unique musical blend of world cultures. 7:30 pm. Tickets \$10, \$8 students and seniors. The Music Box, 143 Creek Rd. (802) 586-7533. themusicboxvt.org. laslocameo.com.

DORSET. Holiday Open House. Featuring Christmas ornaments from the 1940's to the present. 11 am - 1 pm. Dorset Historical Society's Bley House Museum, Rt. 30 at Kent Hill Rd. (802) 867-0331. info@dorsetvthistory.org. www.dorsetvthistory.org.

EAST CHARLESTON. Kingdom Coffeehouse: Hungrytown—Rebecca Hall and Ken Anderson. \$10 includes refreshments. 7 pm. Northwoods Stewardship Center, 154 Leadership Dr. (802) 723-6551. www.northwoodscenter.org.

HANCOCK. Christmas Bazaar. Crafts, Christmas decor, like-new treasures, food table, and a light luncheon. 9 am - 2 pm. Town Hall, Rte. 100. Sponsored by the Community Church of Hancock and Granville. (802) 767-9157.

HARDWICK. Performance: Two for Christmas. Two one act plays by David Buddbill. The Second Shepherds Play—Buddbill's faithful translation of a 15th century miracle play, and The Pulp Cutters' Nativity—the same basic story but 500 years later in Judevine! Tickets: \$20; students & seniors \$15; ages 6—11, \$10. 2 & 7:30 pm. Hazen Union High School. (802) 229-0492. lostrationtheater.org.

LEBANON, NH. Performance: Clara's Dream. Inspired by The Nutcracker and presented by the City Center Ballet. Tickets: adults \$20, children \$15. 1, 4 & 7 pm. Also enjoy a pre-performance Clara's Tea with the dancers in costume, downtown at the Lebanon Ballet School at 11:30 am and 2:30 pm. Reserve at citycenterballet.org. Lebanon Opera House, 51 North Park St. (603) 448-0400. www.lebanonoperahouse.org.

LUDLOW. Ludlow Winter Farmers' Market. Locally grown and raised produce, artisanal food products and well made crafts. At the corner of Main and Andover Streets. 9 am - 1 pm. Jerry Milligan, (802) 734-3829. www.ludlowfarmersmarket.org. Saturdays thru March 2.

MANCHESTER. Holiday Horse & Wagon Rides. Festive caroling on a holiday tour through Manchester Village. Fee: \$10. 2 & 4 pm. Reservations required. (802) 362-6313. Also December 8.

MONTPELIER. 8th Annual Touch of Vermont Holiday Gift Market. Wares from nearly 50 Vermont artisans. Free admission. 9 am - 4 pm. Montpelier City Hall, 39 Main St. (802) 595-0607. www.touchofvt.org.

MONTPELIER. Concert: Shouts and Cradle Songs—A Counterpoint Christmas. \$20 adults, \$15 seniors, \$5 children. 7:30 pm. Christ Church. (802) 540-1784.

NORWICH. Contra Dance with Northern Spy. Caller: David Millstone. Beginners welcome, all dances taught, no partner necessary. Please bring a separate pair of soft-soled shoes for dancing. 8 pm. Admission \$8 (students \$5, under 16 free, seniors by donation). Tracy Hall. (802) 785-4607. Second Saturdays through June 2013.

PITTSFORD. Pittsford Winter Farmers Market. Local food, preserves, maple products, artwork, jewelry and crafts. 9:30 am - 2 pm. Lothrop Elementary School, 3447 US Rt. 7. Sally Eugair (802) 483-2218. vtmusictherapy@comcast.net. Saturdays through December 15.

RUTLAND. Rutland Winter Farmers Market. Over 45 vendors selling everything from fresh salad greens all winter to grass-fed meats, winter vegetables, cheeses, homemade baked goods, cider and apples. Jellies, jams, maple, delicious hot foods, wines, wool & crafts—a great place to shop, eat and visit. 10 am - 2 pm. New location at 251 West St. in the old Mintzer Building. Market manager: Doug Patac, (802) 753-7269. www.vtfarmersmarket.org. Saturdays through May 11.

RUTLAND. Concert: Sister Hazel. Southern pop and country rock. Tickets: \$34.50/\$29.50/\$26.50. 8 pm. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. www.paramountvt.org.

RUTLAND. The Market Place. A new market in town. Producer-only vendors. Saturdays, 10 am - 2 pm. On West St. across from Little Harry's Restaurant. Contact Diane Heleba for more information at (802) 353-0893. Through February 23.

RUTLAND. Christmas Holiday Fair. Handmade crafts, jams, jewelry, paintings, wreaths, candies, and more! Sponsored by the Vermont Farmers Market. Accepting EBT and debit cards. 9 am - 4 pm at Holiday Inn, Rt. 7. For info contact Jamie Condrell, (802) 287-9570, (802) 325-3203. jdc71203@aol.com. www.vtfarmersmarket.org.

ST. JOHNSBURY. Victorian Holiday Open House. A Winter 2012 Top Ten Event! 1-4 pm. Kids of all ages are invited to sample sweets and make crafts for giving or decorating as we ring in the holiday season. Free. Fairbanks Museum & Planetarium, 1302 Main St. (802) 748-2372. www.fairbanksmuseum.org.

WOODSTOCK. 28th Annual Wassail Weekend. Wassail Cafe, yule log, caroling, with over 400 luminaries, the lighting of the Memory Tree, all on the Village Green. Holiday House Tour. Holiday craft sale and traditional readings. Christmas with Christmas Visions at the Rec. Center. A capella concert with The Ten at First Congregational Church at 3 & 4:30 pm. (802) 457-3555. www.woodstockvt.com. Through December 9.

WOODSTOCK. 11th Annual Holiday House Tour. Experience the warm hospitality of old New England when Woodstock's most charming houses deck their halls and open their doors. Tickets \$35. 9:30 am - 2 pm. Starts at Woodstock Town Hall Theatre. (802) 457-3981. www.pentanglearts.org.

WOODSTOCK. 28th Annual Wassail Parade. Parade of horses and riders in traditional costume. 2 pm. Center of Woodstock Village. (802) 457-3555. info@woodstockvt.com. www.woodstockvt.com.

WOODSTOCK. Wassail Tea. Enjoy traditional "English tea" complete with scones, sandwiches, tea cakes, and a special Wassail tea blend. Admission \$25. In Great Hall of St. James Church. (802) 457-3981. pentanglearts.org.

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm Wassail Weekend Celebration. Admission \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, children 2 and under free. 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org. Also December 9.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9

BRATTLEBORO. Brattleboro Music Center Chamber Music Concert. Jamie Laredo, violin, Steven Tenenbom, viola, Sharon Robinson, cello, and Benjamin Hochman, piano perform Stravinsky Suite Italienne, Beethoven Sonata for cello and piano in A Major, Faure Piano Quartet in C minor. Tickets \$30/\$20/\$10.3 pm. Centre Congregational Church. (802) 254-4730. www.bmccvt.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Brattleboro Music Center's Holiday Celebration. Live and silent auction, hors d'oeuvres, beverages, cash bar. Admission \$25. 5 pm. Robert H. Gibson River Garden. (802) 257-4523. www.bmccvt.org.

BROOKFIELD. The Floating Bridge Holiday Market. Join The Floating Bridge Food & Farms Coop for caroling and community sings, holiday farm-inspired crepes and hot beverages, holiday arrangements and wreaths. Local farm gifts including: canned goods, sweets, meats, winter produce, soaps, candles, and more. Free admission! 11 am - 4 pm, at The Fork Shop in Pond Village, 2205 Rt. 65. (802) 276-0787. www.floatingbridgefoodandfarms.com.

BROOKFIELD. Christmas Tree Cutting. You choose—we cut! 9 am - 4 pm. At L.H. Stowell & Son Tree Farm, 1591 Twin Ponds Rd. (802) 276-0787. Fri thru Sun thru December 23.

CASTLETON. Performance: Lakes Region Youth Orchestra. Tickets \$10, children \$5, families \$26. 4 pm. Casella Theater, Castleton State College. For tickets call (802) 468-1119. www.castleton.edu.

FAIR HAVEN. Breakfast Buffet. \$7 adult, \$3.50 children. 8-11 am. Sponsored by the American Legion Post #49, 72 S. Main St. (802) 265-7983.

MONTPELIER. 7th Annual Montpelier Antiques Market. Up to 24 Dealers offering primitives, furniture, art, toys, books, photos, and ephemera. The Elks provide breakfast and lunch. Early buyers \$5 (7:30 am), public \$2 (9 am). Open 7:30 am - 1:30 pm. Montpelier Elks County Club, 1 Country Club Rd., just off Rt. 2. (802) 751-6138. montpelierantiquesmarket.com. 2nd & 4th Sundays through March.



Annual Gingerbread Village Contest at Chaffee Art Center

The Chaffee Art Center in Rutland, VT has invited everyone: kids, adults, students and professionals to let their culinary imaginations run wild in their special holiday edible art show and contest, the Annual Gingerbread Village Contest.

Creating holiday works of art using entirely edible materials, gingerbread is only one of the many creations that will be on display.

The Gingerbread Village exhibit runs from December 1-15 during Chaffee's Winter All Members' Exhibit. People's Choice Voting for your favorite entry will take place from December 1-15.

An Opening Holiday Reception for both the All Members' Exhibit and the Gingerbread Village takes

place on December 1st from 5-7 p.m. Refreshments will be served. Everyone is invited to come!

This holiday season you are invited to come to browse and shop at the Chaffee Gift Shop for some unique gift offerings made by our local artists. There are both holiday and regular handmade greeting cards, many paintings, watercolors, and pastels, books, sculpture, pottery, and creative stocking stuffers.

The Chaffee Art Center, is located at 16 South Main St. Rutland, VT. It is open Tuesday-Saturday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. For information call (802) 775-0356. kristen@chaffeeartcenter.org. Visit www.chaffeeartcenter.org.

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Christmas baked goods, jams,
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aprons & neck warmers

Vermont Country Calendar

(December 9, continued)

PLYMOUTH NOTCH. Holiday Open House at President Calvin Coolidge State Historic Site. Many of the museum buildings will be open free of charge from 10 am to 4 pm. The Coolidge Birthplace will be decorated as it would have been in 1872. Old-time music, craft demonstrations, sleigh rides, lunch at the Wilder House Restaurant, special cancellation at the historic Plymouth post office, and children's holiday activities. (802) 672-3773. www.HistoricVermont.org.

RUTLAND. Vermont Symphony Orchestra Holiday Pops Concert. The VSO Chorus helps ring in the season with a Swedish carol, selections from The Messiah, pieces that highlight brass and percussion, a lighthearted new work by a teenage composer, two sleigh rides, a sing-along, De Cormier arrangements, and a salute to Woody Guthrie. Tickets: \$9-\$30. 3 pm. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. www.paramountvt.org.

TOWNSHEND. Art Auction. The works of thirty artists from around the region. To benefit West River Valley Assisted Living. Silent auction 3-5 pm followed by live auction from 5-6 pm. Free and open to the public. Refreshments. (802) 365-4115. www.valleycares.org.

TUNBRIDGE. Breakfast & Bake Sale. Hosted by the Tunbridge Recreation Committee and the Tunbridge Central School 8th Grade Class. 8 am - 12 pm at the Tunbridge Town Hall, Rt. 110. (802) 889-5521. www.tunbridgevt.com.

WEST BRATTLEBORO. Cai's Dim Sum Teahouse at C.X. Silver Gallery. Dine with art all around. More than 30 authentic unique dishes, la carte with many vegan, gluten-free, and wheat-free options. Walk-ins welcome on second Sundays from 10 am - 8 pm or evenings throughout the month with reservations—call one or two days in advance. C.X. Silver Gallery, 814 Western Ave. (802) 579-9088. www.dimsmt.com.

WOODSTOCK. Annual Messiah Sing. Features four world-class soloists. Audience joins in for the choruses, so bring your libretto! Free, suggested donation. 4 pm at Our Lady of the Snows Catholic Church, South St. (802) 457-3981. www.pentanglearts.org.

WOODSTOCK. Billings Farm Wassail Weekend Celebration. Make historic ornaments and pomanders; candle dipping. Horse-drawn sleigh or wagon rides, weather permitting. Admission \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, children 2 and under free. 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 10

BELLOWS FALLS. Cooking Class: Basic Sauces—Classic and Contemporary. With Chef John Marston. We'll provide knives and aprons to assist your hands on preparation. 6-8:30 pm. Fee, call to register. Leslie's Tavern, 660 Rockingham Rd. (802) 463-4929. www.lesliestavern.com.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 11

BRATTLEBORO. Concert: Nowell Sing We Clear—A Pageant of Midwinter Carols. John Roberts, Tony Barrand, Fred Breunig and Andy Davis perform their popular program of unusual songs, carols, stories, and customs. Tickets: \$20, children and seniors \$16. 7:30 pm at the Latchis Theater. (802) 254-9019. www.brattleborotix.com.

CASTLETON. Performance: Barynya. Russian music, dance, and song ensemble. Tickets \$15. 7 pm. Casella Theater, Castleton State College. For tickets call (802) 468-1119. www.castleton.edu.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13

BURLINGTON. Performance: Two for Christmas. Two one act plays by David Budbill. The Second Shepherds Play—Budbill's faithful translation of a 15th century miracle play, and The Pulp Cutters' Nativity—the same basic story but 500 years later in Judevine! Presented by the Flynn Center for the Performing Arts. Tickets: \$20; students & seniors \$15; under 12 \$10. 7:30 pm at FlynnSpace, 153 Main St. (802) 863-5966. flynncenter.org. *Through December 15.*

BRANDON. Jazz Concert: Jonathan Lorentz Trio performs. Tickets \$15, BYOB. 7:30 pm. Brandon Music, 62 Country Club Rd. (802) 465-4071. info@brandon-music.net. brandon-music.net.

HANOVER, NH. The Christmas Revels—An Irish Celebration of the Winter Solstice. A powerful chorus, lively children, fantastic stories and the best of Irish dancers. Tickets \$23-\$28, 18 and under \$11-\$20, children \$8 Dec. 13 only. 7 pm. Spaulding Auditorium, Hopkins Center. For tickets call (603) 646-2422 or go to dartix.dartmouth.edu. revelsnorth.org. hop.dartmouth.edu. *Through December 16.*

MIDDLEBURY. Wildlife Walk. Help Otter Creek Audubon and the Middlebury Area Land Trust survey birds and other wildlife at Otter View Park and Hurd Grassland. Meet at 8 am at the parking area at Otter View Park at Weybridge St. and Pulp Mill Bridge Rd. (802) 388-1007. ottercreekaudubon.org.

WEST RUTLAND. Marsh Monitoring Bird Walk. Now in our 11th year. Meet at the West Rutland Price Chopper parking lot at 8 am. Leader Roy Pilcher (802) 775-3461. www.rutlandcountyaudubon.org.

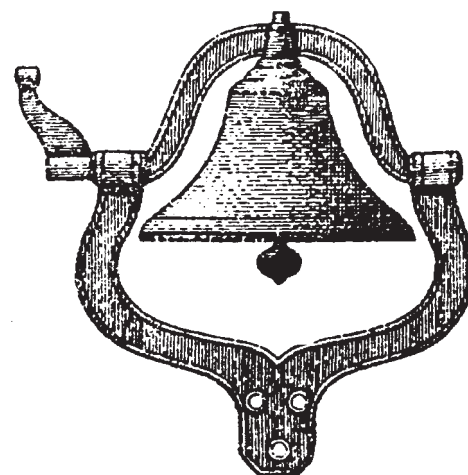
WARREN. Holiday Concert: VSO Brass Quintet and Counterpoint. 7:30 pm. Warren United Church. For tickets call (800) 876-9293. www.vso.org.

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

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14

BENNINGTON. Meetinghouse Cafe Presents Woods Tea Co. in Concert. Admission \$15. 8 pm. Meetinghouse Cafe of Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 108 School St. (802) 442-8829. www.uubenington.org.

BURLINGTON. Performance: Two for Christmas. Two one act plays by David Budbill. The Second Shepherds Play—Budbill's faithful translation of a 15th century miracle play, and The Pulp Cutters' Nativity—the same basic story but 500 years later in Judevine! Presented by the Flynn Center for the Performing Arts. Tickets: \$20; students & seniors \$15; under 12 \$10. 7:30 pm at FlynnSpace, 153 Main St. (802) 863-5966. flynncenter.org. *Also December 15.*



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Come inside now. Stand beside the warming stove. Watch out through the windows as a cold rain tears down the last leaves.

The larder full of dried herbs, hot peppers, chutneys, jellies, jams, dill pickles, pickled relishes, pickled beets.

The freezer full of frozen greens—chard and spinach, collards, kale—

green beans, basil, red sauces, applesauce and smoked meats.

The woodshed dry and full of wood, winter squashes stashed away. Down cellar: potatoes, carrots, crock of sauerkraut.

Come inside now. Stand beside the warming stove. Listen. Wait.

—DAVID BUDBILL



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Vermont Country Calendar

EAST CHARLESTON. Island Pond Christmas Bird Count. Beginners are welcome, and will be partnered with experienced birders in this all-day feather fest! 7:30 am – 4 pm. Northwoods Stewardship Center, 154 Leadership Dr. (802) 723-6551. www.northwoodscenter.org.

HANOVER, NH. The Christmas Revels: An Irish Celebration of the Winter Solstice. Tickets \$23-\$28, 18 and under \$11-\$20. 2 & 7 pm. Spaulding Auditorium, Hopkins Center. For tickets call (603) 646-2422 or go to dartix.dartmouth.edu. hop.dartmouth.edu. www.revelsnorth.org. Through December 16.

JAY. Holiday Concert: Vermont Symphony Orchestra Brass Quintet and Counterpoint. A festive program. 7:30 pm. Hotel Jay, Jay Peak Resort. For tickets call (800) 876-9293. www.vso.org.

RUTLAND. Bells of Joy Annual Christmas Concert. Original handbell compositions and adaptations of traditional Christmas carols. Free will offering. 7:30 pm. Rutland United Methodist Church, 71 Williams St. (802) 773-2460.

RUTLAND. Rutland Youth Theatre presents the Musical *Annie*. Tickets: \$8/\$12. 7 pm. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. www.paramountvt.org. Also December 15.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15

BARRE. Sixth Annual Green Mountain Nutcracker. Moving Light Dance Company presents this classic story with an original made-in-Vermont flair. Tickets \$26/\$14. 6 pm at the Barre Opera House, 6 N. Main St. (802) 476-8188. barreoperahouse.org. Also December 16.

BENNINGTON. Bennington-Walloomsac Holiday Farmers Market. 10 am – 2 pm. At the First Baptist Church on Main St. (802) 688-7210. www.walloomsac.org.

BONDVILLE. Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony. Carolers, hot cocoa, marshmallows and tree lighting. Free. 5 pm. Stratton Mountain Resort, 5 Village Lodge Rd. (800) 787-2886. www.stratton.com.

BONDVILLE. The Winter Gala. Buffet, cocktails, entertainment, dancing, auction. To benefit the Stratton Foundation. 7-11 pm. Stratton Resort Base Lodge. For tickets call (802) 297-2096. strattonfoundation.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Winter Farmers Market. Over 30 vendors in a warm, welcoming indoor marketplace. Farm products, fresh baked goods, crafts, lunch, live music. Saturdays, 10 am – 2 pm; till 3 pm until Christmas. Accepts EBT and debit cards. In the beautiful River Garden at 153 Main St. (802) 869-2141. www.postoilutions.org. Through March.

BURLINGTON. Performance: Two for Christmas. Two one act plays by David Budbill. The Second Shepherds Play—Budbill's faithful translation of a 15th century miracle play, and The Pulp Cutters' Nativity—the same basic story but 500 years later in Judevine! Presented by the Flynn Center for the Performing Arts. Tickets: \$20; students & seniors \$15; under 12 \$10. 2 & 7:30 pm at FlynnSpace, 153 Main St. (802) 863-5966. flynncenter.org.

BURLINGTON. Ethan and Fanny Allen's Winter's Eve Celebration. Candle-lit tours of Ethan Allen's home. Live entertainment, period refreshments. Admission \$7, children 6-12 \$3, under 6 free. 4-7 pm at Ethan Allen Homestead Museum. Call or visit website for directions. (802) 865-4556. www.ethanallenhomestead.org.

GRAFTON. Holiday Concert: VSO Brass Quintet and Counterpoint. 7:30 pm. White Church. For tickets call (800) 876-9293. www.vso.org.

HANOVER, NH. The Christmas Revels: An Irish Celebration of the Winter Solstice. Tickets \$23-\$28, 18 and under \$11-\$20. 2 & 7 pm. Spaulding Auditorium, Hopkins Center. For tickets call (603) 646-2422 or go to dartix.dartmouth.edu. hop.dartmouth.edu. www.revelsnorth.org. Also December 16.

KILLINGTON. Vermont Holiday Festival. 100 decorated trees to be raffled off, free sleigh rides and cocoa for the whole family, music, Vermont artisans, children's crafts, Santa's Workshop. Admission \$10, 5 and under free. 4:30-8 pm, At the Killington Grand Hotel. (802) 773-4181.

LUDLOW. Ludlow Winter Farmers' Market. Locally grown and raised produce, artisanal food products and crafts. At the corner of Main and Andover Streets. 9 am – 1 pm. Jerry Milligan, (802) 734-3829. lfmkt@tds.net. ludlowfarmersmarket.org. Saturdays through March 2.

LUDLOW. Concert with Feminine Tone. Songs celebrating Christmas, Hanukkah, and the winter solstice. With guest artists the Celtic band, Gypsy Reel. 7 pm. United Church of Ludlow, 48 Pleasant St. (802) 484-5097.

MANCHESTER CENTER. Elf Express Train Ride. One-hour journey through the Green Mountains with holiday melodies and dancing elves, hot chocolate and button cookies in decorated trains. Leaves 10 am to 4 pm every hour-and-a-half. Tickets: adults (13 and over) \$25, children (2-12) \$20, under 2 (must sit on parent's lap) free. Advance tickets only at Manchester and the Mountains Chamber or online at www.manchesterlionselftrain.com. Train leaves from R. K. Miles Depot Station, 670 Depot St. (802) 362-1645. manchesterlionselftrain.com. Also December 16.

PITTSFORD. Pittsford Winter Farmers Market. Local food, preserves, maple products, artwork, jewelry and crafts. 9:30 am – 2 pm. Lothrop Elementary School, 3447 US Rt. 7. Sally Eugair (802) 483-2218. vtmusictherapy@comcast.net.

RUTLAND. The Market Place. A new market in town. Producer-only vendors. Saturdays, 10 am - 2 pm On West St. across from Little Harry's Restaurant. Contact Diane Heleba for more info at (802) 353-0893. Through February 23.

RUTLAND. Rutland Youth Theatre presents *Annie*. Tickets: \$8/\$12. 2 pm & 7 pm. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. www.paramountvt.org.

RUTLAND. Rutland Winter Farmers Market. Over 45 vendors selling everything from fresh salad greens all winter to grass-fed meats, winter vegetables, cheeses, homemade baked goods, cider and apples. Jellies, jams, maple, delicious hot foods, wines, wool & crafts—a great place to shop, eat and visit. 10 am – 2 pm. 251 West St. (802) 753-7269. www.vtfarmersmarket.org. Saturdays through May 4.

SAXTONS RIVER. Birds' Christmas Carol. Multi-generational performance: a sentimental tale from the 1880's portraying the true spirit of Christmas. Refreshments served after. Admission by donation. 4-5:30 pm. Main Street Arts. (802) 869-2960. www.mainstreetarts.org. Also December 16.

WOODSTOCK. Christmas at Billings Farm. Learn how Christmas was celebrated in late 19th century Woodstock. Holiday programs. Make historic ornaments, Christmas silhouettes and poppers and candle dipping. Admission \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, children 2 and under free. 10 am – 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org. December weekends and December 22-January 1.

WOODSTOCK. 3rd Annual Woodstock Vermont Film Series. Screening: *Town of Runners*. Tickets: adults \$11, children ages 3-15, \$6. 3 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org. Continues on alternate Saturdays through April 6.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16

BARRE. Sixth Annual Green Mountain Nutcracker. Moving Light Dance Company presents this classic story with an original made-in-Vermont flair. Tickets \$26/\$14. 2 pm at the Barre Opera House, 6 N. Main St. (802) 476-8188. barreoperahouse.org.

HANOVER, NH. The Christmas Revels: An Irish Celebration of the Winter Solstice. Tickets \$23-\$28, 18 and under \$11-\$20. 1 & 5 pm. Spaulding Auditorium, Hopkins Center. To purchase tickets call (603) 646-2422 or go to dartix.dartmouth.edu. hop.dartmouth.edu. www.revelsnorth.org.

HARTLAND FOUR CORNERS. Concert with Feminine Tone. Songs from around the world celebrating Christmas, Hanukkah, and the winter solstice. With guest artists the Celtic band, Gypsy Reel. 4 pm. Hartland Unitarian Universalist Church. (802) 484-5097.

MANCHESTER. Holiday Concert: VSO Brass Quintet and Counterpoint. 4 pm. First Congregational Church. For tickets call (800) 876-9293. www.vso.org.

SAXTONS RIVER. Birds' Christmas Carol. Multi-generational performance: a sentimental tale from the 1880's portraying the true spirit of Christmas. Refreshments served after. Admission by donation. 4-5:30 pm. Main Street Arts. (802) 869-2960. mainstreetarts.org.



Contradance with Northern Spy

David Millstone, caller

8 pm, Saturday, December 8th
Tracy Hall, Norwich, VT

Admission \$8 (students \$5, under 16 free, seniors by donation)

All dances taught. Beginners welcome. No partner necessary.

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Middlebury, VT 05753

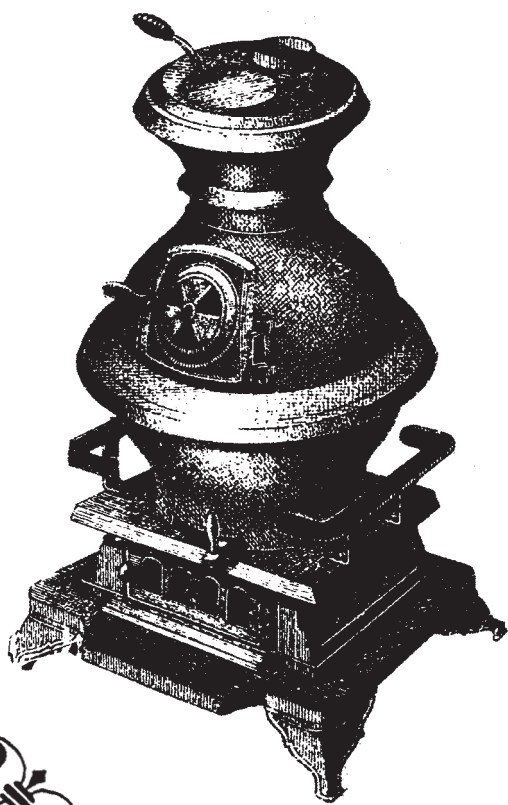
• SEPTEMBER 7th & 8th
Franklin Conference Room
at The Howe,
1 Scale Ave, Rutland, VT 05701

• SEPTEMBER 28th & 29th
American Legion # 67, Rt 103,
Chester, VT 05143

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Vermont Country Calendar

(December 16, continued)

POULTNEY. Carol Sing & Tea (Canu Carolau & Te Bach) at the Welsh Presbyterian Church, Grove St. (Route 30). 2 pm with refreshments following downstairs in St. David's Hall. Charity event for the church and Poultney Cemetery Association. Free will offering. All are welcome. Contacts: Benita Mead, Welsh Church, (802) 287-5264; Helen Jones, St. David's Society, (802) 287-9729. pasds88@yahoo.com.

PUTNEY. Holiday Farmers' Market. Local winter produce, beautiful crafts, delicious foods, jams, jellies. A delightful afternoon. 11 am - 2 pm. At Green Mountain Orchards, 130 West Hill Rd. info@harmonycirclefarm.com. www.putneyfarmersmarket.org. Also December 23.

WOODSTOCK. Christmas at Billings Farm. Learn how Christmas was celebrated in late 19th century Woodstock. Visit the 1890 farmhouse kitchen to see treats baked in the woodstove. Make historic ornaments, Christmas silhouettes and poppers, candle dipping. \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, children 2 and under free. 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org. December weekends and December 22-January 1.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 17

BELLOWS FALLS. Hungrytown—Rebecca Hall and Ken Anderson in Concert. The Stone Church Arts Concert Series 7:30 pm. Immanuel Episcopal Church, 20 Church St. For tickets call (802) 463-3100. immanuelepiscopal.org.

BELLOWS FALLS. Cooking Class: Seafood Cookery for Beginners. With Chef John Marston. We'll provide knives and aprons to assist your hands-on preparation. 6-8:30 pm. Fee, call to register. Leslie's Tavern, 660 Rockingham Rd. (802) 463-4929. www.lesliestavern.com.

BRANDON. Holiday Concert: VSO Brass Quintet and Counterpoint. 7 pm. Congregational Church. For tickets call (800) 876-9293. www.vso.org.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 18

BURLINGTON. Florentine Cookie Workshop. Adele Dienno will go through the steps to make this lacy Italian cookie. Free. 6-7:30 pm. The Sustainability Academy, 123 North St. (802) 861-9700. www.citymarket.coop.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 20

BRANDON. Jazz Concert: The Inbetweens perform. Tickets \$15. BYOB. 7:30 pm. Brandon Music, 62 Country Club Rd. (802) 465-4071. info@brandon-music.net. brandon-music.net.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 21

BENNINGTON. "Afterglow" Holiday Dance Party. \$7 cover at the door. Cash bar. 8-11 pm. Bennington Museum, 75 Main St. (802) 447-1571. www.benningtonmuseum.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Fifth Annual Winter Solstice Celebration. Sleigh rides through the winter fields to a stream lit by candles and ice lanterns. Adults \$12, kids under 12 \$6. No reservations needed for half-hour rides from 4:30-7:30 pm. (Inclement weather night Dec. 22). At Fair Winds Farm at 511 Upper Dummerston Rd. off Rt. 30. (802) 254-9067. fairwind@sover.net. www.fairwindsfarm.org.

MIDDLEBURY. "Night Fires." An annual winter solstice celebration, rooted in ancient traditions, that delivers a heartfelt pageant of singing, dancing, storytelling, and visual magic. Performed by Theatre Group, Ltd. Tickets: \$23 general, \$20 seniors, \$18 students. 8 pm. Town Hall Theater, 68 South Pleasant St. (802) 382-9222. www.townhalltheater.org. Through December 23.

WILLIAMSVILLE. Winter Solstice at Manitou. Celebrate the darkest night and return of the light, with songs, poems, reflective sharing, and rituals of fire, followed by a potluck supper. Manitou, 300 Sunset Lake Rd. For more information and directions call (802) 387-2681. rtaylor@antioch.edu.

WOODSTOCK. Third Friday Contra Dance and Dinner. Music by Old Sam Peabody, calling by Delia Clark. Dinner (soup, cheese and bread, coffee and tea) 5:30-7:30 pm; family dance 6 pm; potluck dessert 7:30 pm; contra dance 8-10:30 pm. \$8 suggested donation includes dinner, under 18 free. At The Little Theater, 54 River St. (802) 785-4039. hoffmanathome@gmail.com. Every third Friday through May 2013.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 22

BRATTLEBORO. Winter Farmers Market. Over 30 vendors in a warm, welcoming indoor marketplace. Farm products, fresh baked goods, crafts, lunch, live music. Saturdays, 10 am - 2 pm. Accepts EBT and debit cards. In the beautiful River Garden at 153 Main St. (802) 869-2141. farmersmarket@postoilutions.org. www.postoilutions.org. Through March.

LUDLOW. Ludlow Winter Farmers' Market. Locally grown and raised produce, artisanal food products and well made crafts. At the corner of Main and Andover Streets. 9 am - 1 pm. Jerry Milligan, (802) 734-3829. lfmkt@tds.net. www.ludlowfarmersmarket.org. Saturdays through March 2.

MIDDLEBURY. "Night Fires." An annual winter solstice celebration, rooted in ancient traditions, that delivers a heartfelt pageant of singing, dancing, storytelling, and visual magic. Performed by Theatre Group, Ltd. Tickets: \$23 general, \$20 seniors, \$18 students. 4 & 8 pm. Town Hall Theater, 68 South Pleasant St. (802) 382-9222. www.townhalltheater.org. Also December 23.

RUTLAND. The Market Place. A new market in town. Producer-only vendors. Saturdays, 10 am - 2 pm On West St. across from Little Harry's Restaurant. Contact Diane Heleba for info at (802) 353-0893. Through February 23.

RUTLAND. Rutland Winter Farmers Market. Over 45 vendors selling everything from fresh salad greens all winter to grass-fed meats, winter vegetables, cheeses, homemade baked goods, cider and apples. Jellies, jams, maple, delicious hot foods, wines, wool & crafts—a great place to shop, eat and visit. 10 am - 2 pm. 251 West St. (802) 753-7269. vtfarmersmarket.org. Saturdays through May 4.

WOODSTOCK. Christmas at the Farm. Visit the farm and linger in the cozy kitchen as treats are baked in the woodstove. Holiday programs. \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, children 2 and under free. 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org. Through January 1.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 23

MIDDLEBURY. Messiah Sing. Come join in this annual community arts event, more than 25 years in the running. Sing, play, or enjoy listening to favorite choruses from Handel's Messiah. Singers & orchestra players welcome. Free admission. 2 pm. Middlebury Congregational Church, 2 Main St. (802) 989-7355. go.middlebury.edu/messiah-sing.

MIDDLEBURY. "Night Fires." An annual winter solstice celebration, rooted in ancient traditions, that delivers a heartfelt pageant of singing, dancing, storytelling, and visual magic. Performed by Theatre Group, Ltd. Tickets: \$23 general, \$20 seniors, \$18 students. 4 pm. Town Hall Theater, 68 South Pleasant St. (802) 382-9222. www.townhalltheater.org.

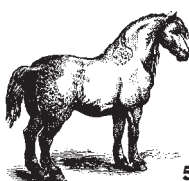


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Vermont Country Calendar

MONTPELIER. 7th Annual Montpelier Antiques Market. Up to 24 dealers offering primitives, furniture, art, books, toys, photos, and ephemera. The Elks provide breakfast and lunch. Admission: early buyers \$5 (7:30 am), general public \$2 (9 am). Open 7:30 am - 1:30 pm. Montpelier Elks County Club, 1 Country Club Rd., just off Rt. 2. (802) 751-6138. montpelierantiquesmarket.com. 2nd & 4th Sundays through March.

PUTNEY. Holiday Farmers' Market. Local winter produce, beautiful crafts, delicious foods, jams, jellies. A delightful afternoon. Sundays 11 am - 2 pm. At Green Mountain Orchards, 130 West Hill Rd. info@harmonicirclefarm.com. putneyfarmersmarket.org.

WOODSTOCK. Christmas at the Farm. Learn how Christmas was celebrated in late 19th century Woodstock. \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, children 2 and under free. 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. Through January 1.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 27

STOWE. Screening: Legend of Aahhh's. A ski film by Greg Stump. Tickets \$12. 5 pm. Spruce Peak Performing Arts Center, Rt. 108N. (802) 760-4634. sprucepeakarts.org. Also December 29 at 7 pm.

WOODSTOCK. Christmas at the Farm. Horse-drawn wagon or sleigh rides, weather permitting. Admission \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, children 2 and under free. 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org. Through January 1.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 28

TINMOUTH. Contra Dance. Call first, date is tentative. Come to an exuberant contra dance. Please bring clean, non-marring shoes. Admission is \$9, \$7 for teens and free for children 12 and under. Refreshments. 8-11 pm. Tinmouth Community Center, Rt. 140, 5 miles west of Wallingford. (802) 235-2718 or (802) 446-2928 for info or directions or visit www.Tinmouthvt.org. Continues every fourth Friday.

WOODSTOCK. Christmas at the Farm. Horse-drawn wagon or sleigh rides, weather permitting. \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, children 2 and under free. 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org. Through January 1.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29

BERLIN. Contra Dance. Come do the dances that entertained generations of rural New England people on winter nights! All levels of dancing welcome. No partner needed. Bring soft-soled shoes to save the floor. Admission is \$8 for adults, \$5 for dancing kids 15 and younger, \$4 for first-time dancers! 8 pm. Capital City Grange, 6612 VT Rt. 12, Northfield Rd. (802) 225-8921. capitalcitygrange.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Winter Farmers Market. Over 30 vendors in a warm, welcoming indoor marketplace. Farm products, fresh baked goods, crafts, lunch, live music. Saturdays, 10 am - 2 pm. Accepts EBT and debit cards. In the beautiful River Garden at 153 Main St. (802) 869-2141. farmersmarket@posttoilsolutions.org. www.posttoilsolutions.org. Through March.

LUDLOW. Ludlow Winter Farmers' Market. Locally grown and raised produce, artisanal food products and well made crafts. At the corner of Main and Andover Streets. 9 am - 1 pm. Jerry Milligan, (802) 734-3829. lfmk@tds.net. www.ludlowfarmersmarket.org. Saturdays through March 2.

RUTLAND. The Market Place. A new market in town. Producer-only vendors. Saturdays, 10 am - 2 pm. On West St. across from Little Harry's Restaurant. Contact Diane Heleba for info at (802) 353-0893. Through February 23.

RUTLAND. Rutland Winter Farmers Market. Over 45 vendors selling everything from fresh salad greens all winter to grass-fed meats, winter vegetables, cheeses, homemade baked goods, cider and apples. Jellies, jams, maple, delicious hot foods, wines, wool & crafts—a great place to shop, eat and visit. 10 am - 2 pm. 251 West St. (802) 753-7269. www.vtfarmersmarket.org. Saturdays through May 4.

WOODSTOCK. Christmas at the Farm. Horse-drawn wagon or sleigh rides, weather permitting. \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, children 2 and under free. 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org. Through January 1.

WOODSTOCK. 3rd Annual Woodstock Vermont Film Series. Screening: *Disco and the Atomic War*. Tickets: adults \$11, children ages 3-15, \$6. 3 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org/filmfest. Continues on alternate Saturdays through April 6.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30

WOODSTOCK. Christmas at the Farm. Horse-drawn wagon or sleigh rides, weather permitting. Linger in the cozy farmhouse kitchen as treats are baked in the woodstove. Admission (includes all activities) \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, children 2 and under free. 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org. Through January 1.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 31

BONDVILLE. New Year's Eve Celebration and Fireworks. Ring in the New Year at Stratton. Torchlight parade, family activities and late night music. 8:30 pm to 1 am. Stratton Mountain Resort, 5 Village Lodge Rd. (800) 787-2886. www.stratton.com

BRATTLEBORO. Last Night Sleigh Rides. Adults \$6, kids under 12 \$4. No reservations needed for 20-minute rides. Sleigh or wagon, rain or shine. 1-4 pm. At Fair Winds Farm, a "Diversified, Horse Powered, Vermont Family Farm" at 511 Upper Dummerston Rd. off Rt. 30 just north of Brattleboro. (802) 254-9067. fairwind@sover.net. www.fairwindsfarm.org.

MANCHESTER. Manchester Music Festival—New Year's Eve Concert. Family concert 4 pm, adult tickets \$10, 18 and under free. Full program 6 pm, adult tickets \$27, students w/ID \$10. First Congregational Church, 3624 Main St. (802) 362-1956. info@mmfvt.org. www.mmfvt.org.

MIDDLEBURY. New Year's Eve at Town Hall Theater. Dance in the New Year with The Horse Traders featuring local favorite musicians Deb Brisson, Rick Marshall, Jon Rooney, Pete Ryan, and John Wallace. Food and drink available. Free champagne toast at midnight, as THT's Great Bell rings in 2013. Admission \$15. 8 pm to 1 am. Town Hall Theater, 68 South Pleasant St. (802) 382-9222. www.townhalltheater.org.

NORWICH. New Year's Eve Contra Dance with Cuckoo's Nest. Ruth Sylvester calling. All dances taught. Beginners welcome. No partner necessary. Please bring a separate pair of soft-soled shoes for dancing. Bring pot-luck finger food for the break. Singing at midnight! Admission \$15 (students \$10, under 16 free, seniors and under 16 half price). 8 pm, beginners session 7:45 pm. Tracy Hall, 300 Main St. (802) 785-4607. Fourth Saturdays through May 2013.

RUTLAND. New Year's Eve Family Celebration. Make a snowglobe. Listen to live music. Bring a cup and spoon to enjoy hot, homemade soup courtesy of Rutland Area Food and Farm Link. 3:30-5 pm. Fox Room, Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St. (802) 773-1860. rutlandfree.org.

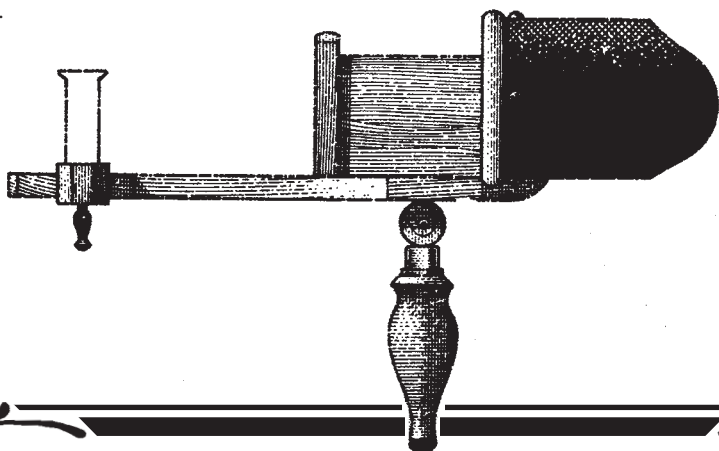
ST. JOHNSBURY. St. Johnsbury First Night 2013. The biggest New Year's Eve celebration in Vermont's Northeast Kingdom and New Hampshire's North Country. Music, comedy, dance, movies, magic, hypnotism, fire juggling, star gazing, and visual arts. Special family music and puppet shows, children's stories, games and other activities. Tickets \$20 adult, \$13 students. 4 pm to midnight. Various locations. (802) 748-2600. www.catamountarts.org.

TUNBRIDGE. Shindig with the Starline Rhythm Boys. Advance tickets \$15. 9 pm - 12:30 am. Tunbridge Town Hall, Rt. 110. (802) 889-5521. www.tunbridgevt.com. www.shindigsvt.com.

WOODSTOCK. Christmas at the Farm. Horse-drawn wagon or sleigh rides, weather permitting. \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, children 2 and under free. 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org. Also January 1.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 1

WOODSTOCK. Christmas at the Farm. Horse-drawn wagon or sleigh rides, weather permitting. Learn how Christmas was celebrated in late 19th century Woodstock in the farmhouse and linger in the cozy kitchen as treats are baked in the woodstove. Holiday programs and making historic ornaments. \$12 adults, \$11 seniors, \$6 children 5-15, \$3 children 3 & 4, children 2 and under free. 10 am - 3:30 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org.



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| Cracked Corn | 21% Turkey Grower Pellets |
| Whole Corn | Whole Barley |
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| 20% Dairy Pellet | Whole Oats |
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The Floating Bridge Holiday Market and Tree Cutting

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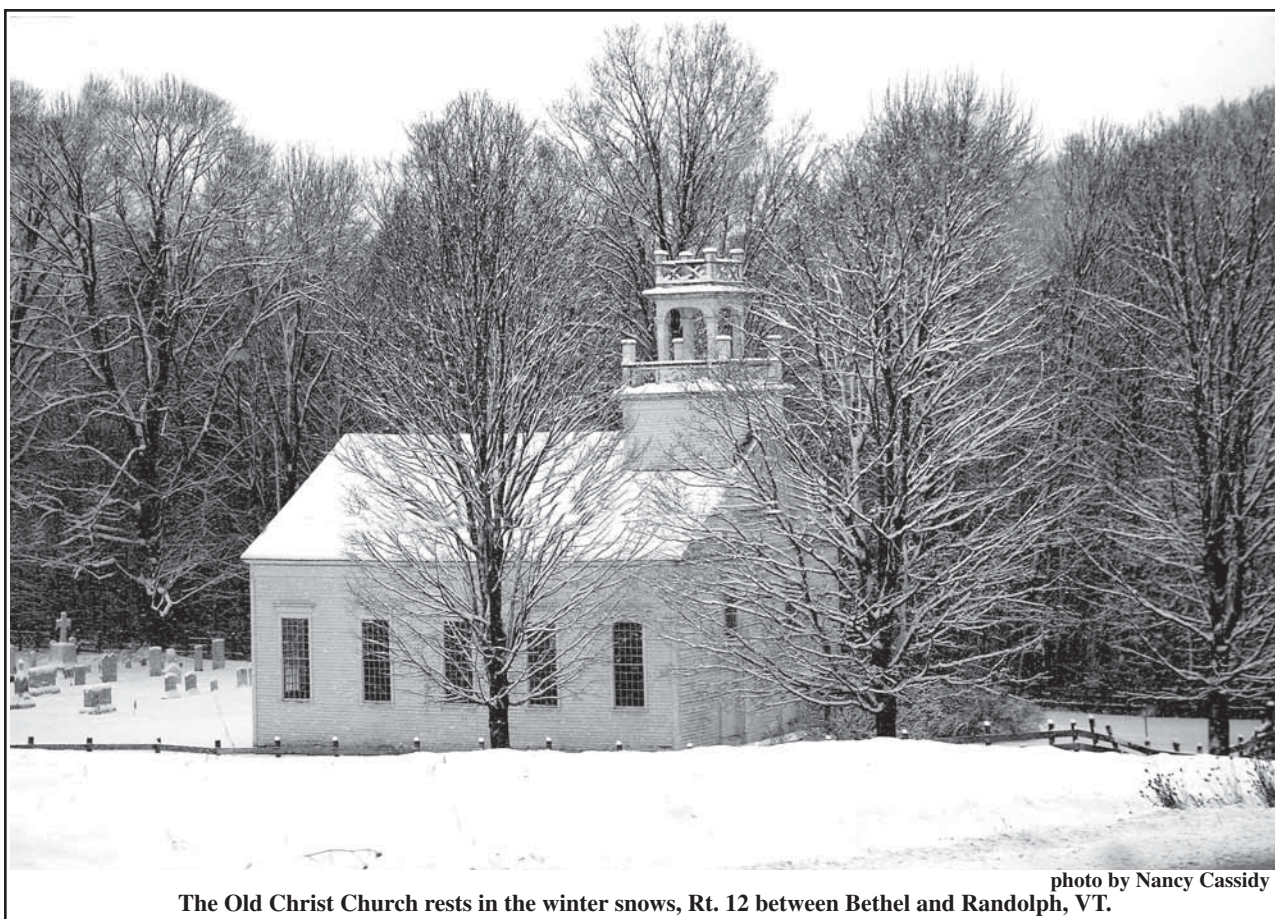
There will be group caroling and community sings, holiday farm-inspired crepes and hot beverages, holiday arrangements and wreaths. Local farm gifts include canned goods, sweets, assorted meats, winter produce, soaps, candles, and much more. Admission is free and everyone is invited to come join in the season's festivities.

The Holiday Market will

be open on Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and from Sunday 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at The Fork Shop in Pond Village, 2205 Rt. 65 (next to Ariel's Restaurant and the Floating Bridge) in Brookfield, VT.

The Christmas Tree Cutting takes place on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., at L.H. Stowell & Son Tree Farm, 1591 Twin Ponds Rd, Brookfield, VT. "You choose, we cut!"

For more information, visit www.floatingbridge-foodandfarms.com. Or call the Coop at (802) 276-0787.



The Old Christ Church rests in the winter snows, Rt. 12 between Bethel and Randolph, VT. photo by Nancy Cassidy

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King John's Christmas

by A.A. Milne

King John was not a good man—
He had his little ways.
And sometimes no one spoke to him
For days and days and days.
And men who came across him,
When walking in the town,
Gave him a supercilious stare,
Or passed with noses in the air—
And bad King John stood dumbly there,
Blushing beneath his crown.

King John was not a good man,
And no good friends had he.
He stayed in every afternoon...
But no one came to tea.
And, round about December,
The cards upon his shelf
Which wished him lots of Christmas cheer,
And fortune in the coming year,
Were never from his near and dear,
But only from himself.

King John was not a good man,
Yet had his hopes and fears.
They'd given him no present now
For years and years and years.
But every year at Christmas,
While minstrels stood about,
Collecting tribute from the young
For all the songs they might have sung,
He stole away upstairs and hung
A hopeful stocking out.

King John was not a good man,
He lived his live aloof;
Alone he thought a message out
While climbing up the roof.
He wrote it down and propped it
Against the chimney stack:
"TO ALL AND SUNDRY
— NEAR AND FAR —
F. Christmas in particular."
And signed it not "Johannes R."
But very humbly, "Jack."

"I want some crackers,
And I want some candy;
I think a box of chocolates
Would come in handy;

I don't mind oranges,
I do like nuts!
And I SHOULD like a pocket-knife
That really cuts.
And, oh! Father Christmas, if you love me at all,
Bring me a big, red, india-rubber ball!"

King John was not a good man—
He wrote this message out,
And gat him to this room again,
Descending by the spout.
And all that night he lay there,
A prey to hopes and fears.
"I think that's him a-coming now!"
(Anxiety bedewed his brow.)
"He'll bring one present, anyhow—
The first I had for years."

"Forget about the crackers,
And forget the candy;
I'm sure a box of chocolates
Would never come in handy;
I don't like oranges,
I don't want nuts,
And I HAVE got a pocket-knife
That almost cuts.
But, oh! Father Christmas, if you love me at all,
Bring me a big, red, india-rubber ball!"

King John was not a good man,
Next morning when the sun
Rose up to tell a waiting world
That Christmas had begun,
And people seized their stockings,
And opened them with glee,
And crackers, toys and games appeared,
And lips with sticky sweets were smeared,
King John said grimly: "As I feared,
Nothing again for me!"

"I did want crackers,
And I did want candy;
I know a box of chocolates
Would come in handy;
I do love oranges,
I did want nuts!
And, oh! if Father Christmas, had loved me at all,
He would have brought a big, red,
india-rubber ball!"

King John stood by the window,
And frowned to see below
The happy bands of boys and girls
All playing in the snow.
A while he stood there watching,
And envying them all...
When through the window big and red
There hurtled by his royal head,
And bounced and fell upon the bed,
An india-rubber ball!

AND, OH, FATHER CHRISTMAS,
MY BLESSINGS ON YOU FALL
FOR BRINGING HIM
A BIG, RED,
INDIA-RUBBER
BALL!



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From *Now We Are Six* by A.A. Milne, illustration by Ernest H. Shepard, published by Dutton/Penguin Group, us.penguinroup.com.



The Christmas Revels: An Irish Celebration of the Winter Solstice at the Hopkins Center in Hanover, NH.

Hopkins Center photo

The Christmas Revels

An Irish Celebration of the Winter Solstice

If you're in the audience for *The Christmas Revels: An Irish Celebration of the Winter Solstice*—the 38th Christmas Revels production—you can look forward to an unforgettable night aboard a ship in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, as a boatload of hopeful immigrants from Ireland make their way to America.

The show takes us to 1907, when emigration from Europe to the United States was at a peak. The Irish formed a significant part of this relocation of families, bringing with them their culture of poetry, dance, music and a powerful instinct for survival. We join a boatload of those immigrants on the deck of the *Glenna Troy* as they create a memorable Christmas at sea.

Kieran Jordan, a Boston-based dancer and choreographer performs in and choreographs the show. Vermont-based musician Jennifer Culley Curtin sings. Along with Jordan and Curtin, the guest artists include fiddler Laura Risk, flutist Nicholas Williams, piper Joey Abarta and guitarist/percussionist Paddy League who head up a terrific céilidh band playing blazings and reels as well as sorrowful laments. As always, talented singers and dancers of all ages from throughout the Upper Valley and beyond fill out the chorus and cast of characters.

Culley Curtin toured and made two recordings with the Washington, DC-based Celtic ensemble Clishmaclaver. She 2011 released a CD *Comfort for the Comfortless* in 2011 winning "Best Traditional Album" from *The Rutland Herald* and admiring reviews from *Seven Days* and *The Times-Argus*.

Performances are on December 13 & 14, 7 p.m.; Saturday, December 15, 2 & 7 p.m.; Sunday, December 16, 1 & 5 p.m.

Tickets are \$23/28/33/38, 18 & under \$11/13/15/20. All children's tickets \$8 for the Thursday, December 13 performance only.

With a powerful chorus, lively children, fantastic stories, the best of Irish dancers and all the usual Christmas Revels magic, this promises to be a joyous celebration.

Jordan and Curtin conduct pre-concert workshops

Take a Musical Journey from Ireland to America. Vermont-based Celtic-style singer Jennifer Culley Curtin and the Christmas Revels Children's Chorus sing songs and tell stories of Ireland and Irish immigrants on Sunday, December 2 at 2 p.m. at Howe Library 13 East South St., Hanover NH. Admission is free. For information call (603) 646-3991.

Join Revels guest dancer and choreographer Kieran Jordan for Irish Dance Workshops on Monday, December 10, at the Norwich Grange, 344 Main St., Norwich, VT. There is a beginners class at 5–6:15 p.m. and an intermediate-advanced class at 6:30–7:45 p.m. Fee: \$20 adults, \$15 students.

Jordan will teach the dance style called Sean-nós—pronounced "shawn-nos" and meaning "old style" in the Irish language. As a solo, improvised form of dance, the Sean-nós style is as varied and unique as every dancer who dances it. Sean-nós dance performance is often informal, playful, and expressive, allowing the dancer to engage in a here-and-now

dialogue with the music. Distinct from more modern forms of Irish step dancing, Sean-nós steps feature short rhythmic patterns, subtle movements with footwork kept close to the floor, and a loose, relaxed upper body. Jordan has studied Sean-nós dance traditions from Connemara and West Clare, and has become a major figure in teaching and performing it in the US. In 2005, she won second place in the Comórtas Chóilín Sheáin Dharach, the Sean-nós jig competition in Ros Muc, County Galway.

Spaulding Auditorium is in the Hopkins Center, 2 East Wheelock St. in downtown Hanover, NH. For information or to contact the box office call (603) 646-2422. You can purchase tickets online at dartix.dartmouth.edu.

For more information go to www.jenniferculleycurtin.com. www.kieranjordan.com. www.revelsnorth.org/xmas-revels.hop.dartmouth.edu.

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New England's Holly

by Judith Irven

The holly of my childhood was the 'Christmas card holly', with fat red berries and shiny spiny leaves that stayed green all winter long. I can still recall a row of enormous holly bushes along the back fence of my parent's garden. Each year we cut branches for Christmas decorations, carefully placing a holly sprig above every picture in the house.

Presumably these huge bushes were the English Holly, *Ilex aquifolium*. To me they exuded a dark gloomy look and I really disliked the prickly dead leaves that collected beneath them.

In the 1950s New York plant hybridist, Kathleen Meserve worked on crossing holly types from around the world. Her breeding program resulted in a magnificent line of smaller evergreen hollies, called *Ilex x meserveae* in her honor, among them the popular Blue Holly and China Girl Holly.

Unfortunately these evergreen hollies are not good candidates for our Vermont gardens. Unless if you live in the warmest part of the state (with a Hardiness Zone 5 rating) they are unlikely to survive our cold winters. And even then you must be sure to plant them in a sheltered spot to avoid the leaves being damaged by 'winter burn'.

However the holly family (all the plants starting with the Latin name *Ilex*) is huge—with over 400 species of trees and shrubs that inhabit woodlands all over the world. One of these, the Winterberry or *Ilex verticillata*, is native to New England and, needless to say, it comes through our winters beautifully.

New England's Winterberry is different

Winterberries, as their name suggests, have bright red berries that grace the plants in wintertime.

But, unlike the familiar 'Christmas card holly', winterberries are deciduous. This means, as a defense against our normally colder winters, they lose their leaves in winter, all the better to show off their abundant berries against the snow.

These berries are a rich source of food for the birds in the coldest part of the year when they need it most, and for us humans they create a wonderful symbol of the season.

Wild winterberries

Winterberries—also known as Black Alder—grow wild in damp spots throughout New England. Most of the year they are nothing more than a tangled jumble of nondescript bushes. But come November and December their myriad red berries positively shine in the low sun.

There is a huge winterberry colony in the boggy spot along Route 73 just beyond the new Brandon police station, and when driving home in December I always slow down to admire the beautiful fruit.

Taming the jumble: domesticated winterberries

Winterberries also make great garden plants. Their fruit starts to fatten up and turn red in September, but they look their most spectacular against a mid-winter snow. And is always fun to cut a few stems and make a table centerpiece for the holidays.

We probably would not want to grow the messy-looking wild version of winterberries around our homes. But plant breeders have also worked to develop a wide range of elegant winterberries for the garden.

I like the way these shrubs look when they are planted in groups of three or even five, as it seems to make their fruit look more dramatic. And while winterberries are slow growing, most cultivars eventually grow quite large. So check the information supplied by the nursery and space your plants accordingly!!



Winterberries drop their leaves in winter, leaving their beautiful red fruit for us to enjoy in December and January. photo by Dick Conrad

It is also very important to remember that (as with almost all species of *Ilex*) winterberries are dioecious, meaning that the male and female flowers are borne on different plants, with the wind carrying the pollen from the male to the female plants. So, for your female bushes to set fruit, you must plant a compatible male variety, one that flowers at the same time, in a nearby spot.

A winterberry hedge

I wanted to create an informal hedge around the corner of our driveway where we park our cars. So about ten years ago I planted three *Ilex verticillata* 'Winter Red' plants along both sides of the L-shaped bed. This gave me a total of six female bushes, spaced eight feet apart. Each has grown into an elegant vase-shaped shrub, about eight feet across and eight feet high.

Then in the angle between the two sides I added one compatible male plant, 'Southern Gentleman' which, like 'Winter Red', flowers in June.

For a small garden the cultivar 'Red Sprite'—growing just three feet high and wide—is an excellent choice. A group of five shrubs would look nice, with the compatible male 'Jim Dandy' in the center.

The controlling gardener

Nothing beats the picture the winterberries, with their bare branches covered with brilliant red fruit, set off against a fresh January snow. So I really want to be sure my bushes still have their berries by that time.

I think of myself as a 'wildlife friendly' gardener. But I

also resent wild creatures helping themselves to all the fruits of my labors, most especially to the berries on my carefully tended bushes closest to the house.

Unfortunately each November robins gather in large flocks, eager to fill their bellies in preparation for their coming migration and they especially seem to enjoy the winterberry fruit. The robins are more than welcome to partake of winterberries growing near our pond, but I draw the line at those around the house.

However, scaring off a crowd of determined thieving robins can be a quite challenge, and over the years I tried many approaches, with little success.

I started out by tying paper plates, with round 'eyes' painted in the middle, to the bushes. Then I floated four 'Evil Eye' balloons above the bushes.

After the eyes failed, I set fake owl on a post in the middle of the bushes—to no avail.

After that I turned to making noise. Certainly banging a yogurt container against a garbage can lid will send the robins flying, but I still have to run outside every time they return.

Finally my husband, Dick, had the brilliant idea of activating the car horn remotely from the house!!

SUCCESS!! The car horn is now our remote-controlled bird scarer.

And I get to feel like the ultimate control freak!!!

Judith Irven is a landscape and garden designer. She and her husband Dick Conrad live in Goshen, VT. Visit her sites outdoorspacesvermont.com & northcountryreflections.com.

Ring Out, Wild Bells

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

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

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

Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife;

Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

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

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

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

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

—ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON
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Holiday Concerts with the Vermont Symphony Orchestra

The Vermont Symphony Orchestra will present of three Holiday Pops and five Brass Quintet and Counterpoint concerts in December, bringing tidings of joy to communities around the state.

Holiday Pops

The VSO Chorus joins the Orchestra to ring in the season with Robert De Cormier and Dawn Willis conducting. The Holiday Pops program includes a Swedish carol, selections from Messiah, brass and percussion pieces, two sleigh rides, a sing-along, and a salute to Woody Guthrie.

The VSO will premiere a new work, "Danse Slav et Valse," by teenage composer Jacob Morton-Black, a senior at Colchester High School. He has won numerous awards for his compositions and performs with several orchestras in Vermont.

Holiday Pops performances are Friday, December 7, 7:30 p.m. at the Barre Opera House; Saturday, December 8, 7:30 p.m. at the Flynn Center in Burlington; and Sunday, December 9, 3 p.m. at the Paramount Theatre in Rutland (the first of the three-concert Sunday Matinee Series.)

VSO Brass Quintet and Counterpoint Concerts

The VSO Brass Quintet and Counterpoint concerts will combine brilliant brass and shining voices in intimate village settings.

Counterpoint's new director, Nathaniel G. Lew, has collaborated with the VSO Brass Quintet to choose a

festive program that ranges from the medieval to the modern and includes Leroy Anderson's Christmas Festival, the Canadian Brass's bravura arrangement of The Twelve Days of Christmas, Bizet's March of the Kings, and—of course—some traditional carols.

VSO Brass Quintet and Counterpoint performances are Thursday, December 13, 7:30 p.m., Warren United Church, Warren, VT; Friday, December 14, 7:30 p.m., Foeger Ballroom at Jay Peak Resort, Jay, VT; Saturday, December 15, 5 p.m., The White Church, Grafton, VT; Sunday, December 16, 4 p.m., First Congregational Church, Manchester, VT; and Monday, December 17, 7 p.m., Congregational Church, Brandon, VT.

VSO Holiday CDs

Again this year, holiday audiences may also enjoy VSO music at home. The "Christmas in Vermont," CD featuring the VSO Brass Quintet and Counterpoint, presents a captivating blend of rarely heard gems and seasonal favorites.

The VSO's first commercial orchestral CD, "Triple Doubles," featuring three double concertos written for violinist Jaime Laredo and cellist Sharon Robinson, is also available. Both recordings will be sold at these concerts, through the VSO office, and on the VSO website.

For tickets or additional information, please call (800) VSO-9293, ext. 10, or visit www.vso.org.



A lone horse eating hay in a winter field, Bethel, VT.

photo by Nancy Cassidy

Advice for Sleeping Rooms

—circa 1902—

First of all, the bedroom ought, if practicable, to be large and airy.

Particular attention must be paid to the ventilation. The door and the windows ought to be thrown wide open in the daytime, and the bedclothes should be thrown back, that the air might, before the approach of night, well ventilate them. Pure air and a frequent change of air is quite necessary.

The bed must not be loaded with clothes, more especially with a thick coverlet.

If the weather is cold, let an extra blanket be put on the bed, as the perspiration can

permeate through a blanket when it cannot through a thick coverlet.

The knitted blankets, for the summer, are the best, as they allow the perspiration from the body to escape. The eiderdown comforters, for winter, are light, warm, and ventilating.

It is a marvel how some people, with four or five blankets, and with a thick coverlet on the bed, can sleep at all—their skins and lungs are smothered, and are not allowed to breathe, for the skin is as much a breathing apparatus as are the lungs themselves.

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North Country Book News

Book Review

Burr Morse—Hardscrabble Renaissance Man

by Stephen Morris

Here's how to make the mythical new cocktail that is sweeping the nation. (Well, the nation north of the 42nd degree latitude, anyway. And note the word "mythical." Don't try this one at home, kids, or at your local pub.)

Take two handfuls of snow and put it in the blender. That will give you plenty of "br-r-r-r." Now, remove those prickly burrs from the burdock plant that have attached themselves to your coat, and put those in for some attention-getting spice. Next, add three jiggers of maple syrup, one fancy, one amber, one dark, and a jigger of moonshine for measure. Squiggle in some maple cream. Finally, add a heaping teaspoon of hardscrabble dirt from a seventh generation Vermont farm. Season to taste with crankcase oil, sawdust, and manure (Jersey only, please). Blend and serve in a Mason jar topped with a pinch of P.T. Barnum.

You have now made The Ol' Vermontah. And while you won't find this being ordered at the chi-chi bars on Church St. in Burlington, it perfectly describes Burr Morse, the real life equivalent of the Ol' Vermontah.

Burr lives and works on the Morse Family Farm in East Montpelier. He is the seventh generation of Vermont farmers in his family, although not on the same piece of turf. They came

to the current farm in 1948, the year Burr was born. As it has become more and more difficult to make a viable living on a hillside farm, Burr has diversified in a way that defines the phrase "Yankee ingenuity." In addition to managing the sugarbush, he operates a mail order business to ship his syrup worldwide. To generate traffic in the winter he maintains trails for cross-country skiers. When that season ends, you are welcome to join him in the sugar house for a warm sample fresh from the arch (boiling pan). As spring turns to summer, Burr adds the maple sweetness to his cream machine and also uses it to flavor his famous Kettle Corn, a popcorn treat. Then, in the fall, Burr puts on a show for the busloads of tourists who come up to take a peak at the leaves. He also stages theatrical events and carves folk life figures on display throughout the farm store.

And in between it all, he writes. He is a Renaissance man,

Green Mountain style. Burr takes on life's big subjects in his new book *Sugar Words: Musings of An Old Vermonter*, a follow-up to his previous collections *Golden Times: Tales Through the Sugarhouse Window* and *Sweet Days and Beyond*. The stories include such topics as the nuances of chopping corn, his mother's winter driving techniques, and the similarities between making great syrup and great moonshine.

As a writer Burr Morse is a perfect balance of insight, warmth, and nostalgia. In an essay called "Sweet Beginnings" he recounts the history of the current Morse Farm, the ebb and flow of the dairy business, and ties them to the unbridled aspirations of a new generation. That's a lot of territory for a single essay, but Morse does it masterfully—and unapologetically.

As Burr says, "I was born into the age of square bales and long summers." But his game is more than simple nostalgia. When he writes about corn chopping, for instance, there is no gauzy filter of romantic memory, but rather the stark and gritty detailed recollections of feeling cold, sweaty, and one mis-step away from instant dismemberment. Similarly, he finds little romance about haying or picking strawberries.

His father gave up on milking cows in 1966 and decided the future of the Morse Farm was in strawberries. What a romantic notion! Everyone loves strawberries, especially when they come from a hilltop farm. The only problem is, nobody told Burr's father about the occupational hazards of "nematodes, cut worms, root rot, leaf spot, deer, woodchucks, frost damage, tarnished plant bugs, cedar waxwings, and slugs as big and fat as the ripe strawberries they devoured." The result was periodic crop failures that necessitated the entire Morse clan being loaded into the pick-up truck to be transported to the farm of Hezzy Somers in West Barnet for a day of back-breaking picking.

Crop failures are a part of life on a Vermont farm, and Burr Morse is a connoisseur of them. Last year was a lousy one for sugaring. The year before that Tropical Storm Irene ruined the "tourist crop." And there hasn't been a lot of skiable snow for the past few winters. Burr Morse knows that if you keep your sense of humor that one seasonal disaster will likely be followed by an equal and opposite bonanza. The trick is, he figures, to have your fingers in enough pies that they can't all fail at once.

And if they do, you can always turn it into a new essay. In a classic case where knowing your village means knowing your world, Burr Morse has made his hardscrabble farm a metaphor for the meaning of life.

Sugar Words: Musings of An Old Vermonter is available from independent book sellers or may be ordered directly from Morse Farm, 1168 County Rd., Montpelier, VT 05602. \$19.95 plus \$2.50 shipping and handling. Details at morsefarm.com.

Stephen Morris is the editor of *Green Living Journal* and the publisher at *The Public Press*.



Book Review

The Year-Round Vegetable Gardener How to Grow Your Own Food 365 Days a Year

by Niki Jabbour
(Storey Publishing)

Anyone who is still harvesting vegetables like Brussels sprouts, carrots and greens this late in the season probably has thought it would be great if this could happen all winter.

Dream no more. This handy and informative guide to year-round gardening will be an inspiration to get started now and not even wait until next spring.

The 250-page book with its beautiful color photographs has advice for growing vegetables in all seasons, but its impressive illustrations also show gardeners picking vegetables from their cold frames in the dead of winter snows. Included in the winter harvest are Oak Leaf lettuces, kale, carrots, beets, scallions, parsnips, celeriac, turnips, leeks, herbs, and Chinese vegetables.

Instead of traditional greenhouses that can be costly and may need heating systems, the book recommends a series of cold frames planted a short distance from your house for easy access in the snow and cold, south-facing, and in a protected microclimate, if possible.

We learn that cold frames are easy to build and can be constructed from recycled materials like scrap wood, cement blocks, bricks and old windows. They can be made out of straw bales, as well as wood. Covers include storm windows, shower doors, and clear plastic materials.

Also, learn about installing a 1½ to 3 ft. tall mini-hoop tunnel over the cold frame. This actually is a miniature greenhouse made out of inexpensive materials available at most hardware stores.

Polytunnels (which are not heated) also are described

at length—these are larger and resemble greenhouses, except they are of a more simple structure of poly coverings over hoop-shaped light-weight tubing. If you live in a snow-belt, a strong galvanized steel frame is recommended. For anyone doing winter gardening, look out for snow and brush it off the covering so the sunlight gets back in as soon as possible. There are extra tips—if you are using a cold frame or mini-hoop tunnel "you'll need to wait until the plants have 'defrosted' in mid- to late morning to avoid ending up with a bowl of green mush."

When it is bitter cold the author says cover your tunnel or frame with an old sleeping bag, heavy blanket or other insulating barriers like straw or bags of shredded leaves. Some gardeners string old-fashioned holiday lights in the tunnel whose heat will raise the temperature and provide additional protection for cold-season crops.

Too late this year for you to do a winter garden? With a cold frame you can start planting some seeds in mid- to late February—just "scratch some compost and alfalfa meal in to the top few inches of soil and seed with bunching onions, spinach, arugula, mache, and other cold-tolerant salad greens." You'll be harvesting fresh greens before you know it!

The Year-Round Vegetable Gardener—How to Grow Your Own Food 365 Days a Year No Matter Where You Live by Niki Jabbour is at bookstores or can be purchased for \$19.95 from Storey Publishing at www.storey.com.

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Tales & Treasures for Children at Christmas

The real St. Nicholas was revered for his generosity and was the person from whom the Santa Claus legend grew. In *The Baker's Dozen—A Saint Nicholas Tale* told by Aaron Shepard and illustrated by Wendy Edelson (Skyhook Press, Shepard Publications, \$12.50, www.aaronshp.com), St. Nicholas, disguised as an old woman with a long black shawl, visits a baker, Van Amsterdam, in Albany, NY. She asks for an extra one of his tasty gingerbread St. Nicholas cookies when she orders a dozen. He refuses to make a dozen, 13. "However honest you may be, your heart is small and your fist is tight," she tells him. Soon afterwards his business starts to fail and his life worsens. St. Nicholas visits the baker again, this time in a dream, with a message about giving; and then to the bakery, again disguised as the old woman. The baker has had a revelation—now he gladly gives her an extra cookie—13 instead of 12—and from that day forward the term "a baker's dozen" as many of us have seen in our own lives, means 13 not 12, be it cookies or ears of corn.

The book has beautiful period drawings of the late 17th century when the baker learned his lesson about generosity. This 15th anniversary edition has a bonus cookie recipe and a pattern for making St. Nicholas Christmas cookies.

Many of us know about the Christmas legend of an old woman wandering through the winter woods in search of the Christ Child. Here the legend of *Babushka* is retold by Sandra Ann Horn and illustrated by Sophie Fatus (Barefoot Books, \$16.99, www.barefootbooks.com). We are told about an elderly woman who lived alone in the woods. In a dream she is directed by the angels to leave her tidying-up and visit the new-born Christ child laying in a manger in an neighboring village.

This is after she had shooed away The Three Wise Men and their camels who were already following the Star to Bethlehem. Babushka takes gifts for the Christ child but gives them away to the needy along the way and arrives empty-handed. "Everything you gave with love, you gave to my son also," Mary tells her. And Babushka is allowed to hold the child, much to her joy. The illustrations will make you feel good because they are amusing yet capture the magic of this miraculous time.

Children, perhaps better than adults, understand and appreciate the enduring Christmas message of joy and fun, sharing and gift-giving (and receiving), its special foods, and how amusing adults can be when they just "be real" for one day.

Reading and sharing *A Child's Christmas in Wales* by Dylan Thomas and illustrated by Chris Raschka, (Candlewick Press, \$17.99, www.candlewick.com) will make your Christmas memorable regardless of your age. First published in Harper's Bazaar 50 year ago, the short story remains Welsh poet Dylan Thomas's most popular prose work in the United States.

In this recollection, we go on a journey with the author, age 12, and his friend Jim. Their adventure begins with helping to put out a house fire with snowballs before fire brigade arrives. Next the rosy button-nose postman brings 'Useful' and 'Useless' presents. Useful presents include mittens made for giant sloths and blinding tam-o'-shanters like patchwork tea cozies; and Useless would include toffee, fudge and allsorts, crunches, humbugs, glaciers, marzipan, and butterwelsh for the Welsh. And troops of bright tin soldiers who, if they could not fight, could always run.


It is always snowing; relatives eat and drink too much: "Auntie Hannah, who had got on to the parsnip wine, sang a song about Bleeding Hearts and Death, and the another in which she said her heart was like a Bird's Nest; and then everybody laughed again; and then I went to bed."

Quite the unusual Christmas story as are the 'torn-paper' illustrations that background this narrative.

This edition of *A Child's Christmas in Wales* was named a New York Times Book Review Best Illustrated Children's Book.

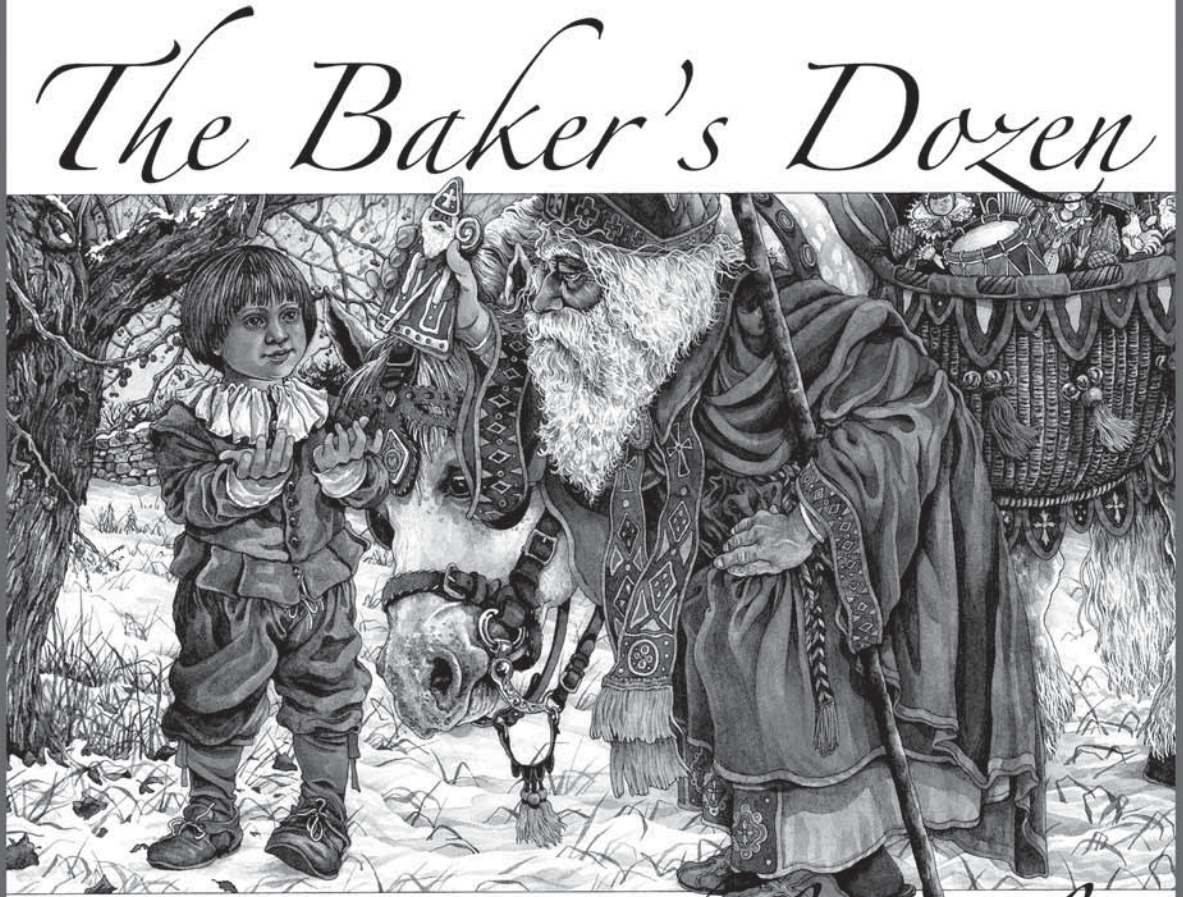
The unforgettable tale of Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer has been with us in many forms for more than 70 years. Now a hardcover reprint of the original 1939 book, *Rudolph The Red-Nosed Reindeer* by Robert L. May, Illustrated by Denver Gillen (Applewood Books, \$14.95, www.awb.com), is available in time for Christmas.

The book has the same charming designs, illustrations and typeface with its enduring message as originally conceived by Robert L. May. Remember Rudolph was mocked and shunned by his peers (deer can be mean, too) because of his big, red, shining nose. His misfortune and handicap, however, saves Christmas for many as the shining nose becomes a beacon of light in a foggy, dark night so Santa can see where to deliver presents on Christmas eve. In this heroic role Rudolph becomes the lead deer for Santa's sleigh. And we read: "These bad deer who used to do nothing but tease



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The Baker's Dozen

A Saint Nicholas Tale
Aaron Shepard • Wendy Edelson

him would now have done anything...only to please him!" Not a bad sentiment for any time of year.

No Christmas would be complete with a reading of "King John's Christmas," the second poem in *Now We Are Six* by A.A. Milne and illustrated by Ernest H. Shepard (Dutton/Penguin Group, \$12.99-\$19.99 hardcover, www.us.penguin.com). Milne is, of course, famous for having created Winnie the Pooh, now known to us all. His books of poetry for children, this one and the previous *When We Were Very Young*, capture the innocence of childhood and are beloved by both children and adults. First published

in 1927, they are just the best introduction to poetry that a child could have. The rhymes and the stories they tell will last through

a lifetime. There are several editions available—the original with black and white illustrations and a deluxe with colored illustrations. Choose one for the child in your life, even if that's you. (See p. 24 of this Sampler to read "King John's Christmas.")


We're familiar with Santa and his reindeer soaring over cities or the snowy countryside, but imagine him delivering gifts under the sea. In this fantasy, *The Night Before Christmas, Deep Under the Sea* by Kathie Keffehe and illustrated by Dan Andreasen, (Holiday House, \$16.95, www.holidayhouse.com) one sees large colorful illustrations with Santa's sleigh being pulled by seahorses named Dipper, Digger, Limpel,

Quahog, Urchin, Snail, Chiton and Sea Dog. Keeping to the sea theme, Santa puts crisp new sand dollars in the stockings, and certainly is enjoying his time with the fish.

Gift-giving takes on a whole new perspective in this picture book, *Just Right for Christmas* by Birdie Black and illustrated by Rosalind Beardshaw (Candlewick Press, \$15.99, www.candlewick.com). Here left-over scraps of a beautiful red cloth that the King made into a cloak for his Princess are salvaged by the maid who makes a jacket for her mother. Her discards are then discovered and made into gifts by Bertie Badger, Samuel Squirrel, and tiniest Millie Mouse who gives a handmade scarf to little Billy Mouse. The drawings catch the spirit of making a gift from scratch—and, in this case, even little scraps of cloth.

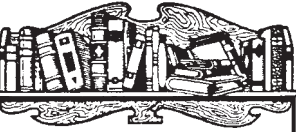
Book Review by Charles Sutton

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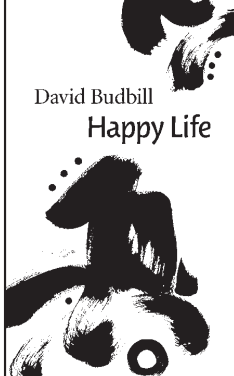
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DANBY, VT

Danby Hill Cabin—This is Vermont Tranquility. This custom-built, post & beam log cabin is set within a grove of sugar maples at an elevation of 2000'. Outside there is a post & beam barn and 10+ private acres with a network of hiking/snowshoeing trails and trail head on property. Very close to V.A.S.T. snowmobile trails. There are spectacular mountain views and large wraparound deck with BBQ. Three very comfortable bedrooms, including bunk room, sleep eight. Two full bathrooms. A large open kitchen with dishwasher and breakfast bar. The Great Room has a cathedral ceiling, loft, wide-plank floors and custom fireplace with beautiful stonework. The large open basement has a game area and full laundry. The home has Wi-Fi & Internet, HD LED TV w/ DVD, Netflix and premium surround system. Southern exposure offers all-day sun with amazing sunsets! Quietly nestled atop Danby Hill in the quaint town of Danby near Manchester and Rutland. Bromley, Stratton, Okemo, Pico & Killington all within 45 minutes. No pets. No smoking. Night, week, month. Contact Paula Wozniak, (973) 636-0656. (Listing #2004)

GREENSBORO, VT

Cozy All-season House. Cozy house in lovely rural setting, off quiet gravel road, surrounded by farms and forest in Greensboro, near Caspian Lake. Many hiking trails, splendid cross-country skiing nearby and Craftsbury Outdoor Center just 15 minutes away. Thirty minutes to downhill skiing at Burke & Stowe; one-hour drive to Jay Peak. Within walking distance to Long Pond, an uninhabited mile-long treasure. Also close to Hill Farmstead Brewery. Country



photo by John Napoli

Come explore the woods in Danby VT on your cross-country skis or snowshoes. (Listing #2004)

living at it's best, yet close to town. Two bedrooms with queen-size beds sleep four - six, one bath with a tub/shower. A gas fireplace, electric heat and ceiling fans, Wi-Fi, linens & towels, and a fully equipped kitchen await you. Just bring your personal items and food. One-car garage and gas grill. Watch the moon rise up over the mountain from your living room window and walk outside to gaze at all the stars! No smoking please. Pets on approval by owner. No smoking. Owner lives 1/2 mile away and is available to address rental needs. Year-round by week, weekend, or midweek. Contact Elaine Cole, (802) 533-2333. (Listing #350)

HUNTINGTON, VT

Spectacular Views in Every Season. This unique, peaceful and spacious log home has sweeping southwesterly views of Vermont's Green Mountain foothills and New York's Adirondack Mountains. It is surrounded by a large cross-country trail system (Camel's

Hump Skiers Association) and is just minutes from the Long Trail. Up to six renters enjoy use of three bedrooms with separate thermostats (two more guests for extra charge/night), two full baths, and living room with Jotul gas stove in fieldstone fireplace, dining room, furnished kitchen, multi-tiered back deck. Cozy and stylish furnishings, Wi-Fi, TV/VCR/DVD, sound system, laundry, swing set/clubhouse, games, books, seasonal fire pit, charcoal grill. Guests love the earthy ambiance and unusual experience of staying at this special home. Accessibility: 35 minutes to Burlington and Waitsfield; 45 minutes to Stowe and Montpelier; 3 1/2 hours to Boston; 2 1/2 hours to Montreal. Well-behaved dogs welcome. Non-smoking rental. Nights, weekend, week. Contact Chaska Richardson, (802) 434-5232. (Listing #30)

LANDGROVE, VT

Spacious Home, Lovely Pond, Five Private Acres, Large Hot Tub. Beautiful home in great area near Viking Nordic Center and near numerous downhill ski areas. Living room seats 20, with stone fireplace, TV/DVD with surround sound. Wi-Fi. Eat at the counter of the large kitchen with new appliances. Separate dining room seats 12. Spacious family room with TV/DVD, card table, comfy seating, and pullout couch. Second seating area, ping pong table. Four bedrooms, three full bathrooms, sleeps 11-13. In separate part of house is the large master bedroom suite with queen bed, cathedral ceiling, French doors to pond and marble bathroom, double sinks, tiled steam shower. Upstairs are three more bedrooms: queen with twin and full galley kitchen and dining area; second queen with twin and extra pullout twin; third with double twins; and small workroom area. Large mirrored hot tub room (for eight maximum) with separate sauna. Glass doors to back woods. Over-sized washer/dryer, and plentiful supply of linens. Large closets. Two-car attached garage with space for ski and equipment storage. Inquire about pets. No smoking. Weekends, week or season. Contact Catherine Gallagher, (212) 579-1196. (Listing #11)

STOWE, VT

Stowe Mountain Ranch. Ski Lift 400 Yards, Hot Tub, Sauna. Beautiful 10-bedroom, two-loft, five-bath home, ideally located within Stowe Mountain Resort. Property borders both the Stowe Mountain Resort Cross Country Ski Center and The Von Trapp Family Lodge Cross Country Ski Center and near other nordic skiing centers in Stowe and Stowe Mountain. Stowe Mountain Ranch is a luxury vacation property with mountain views in three directions. On the Mountain Road and free shuttle/bus route. Each bedroom is uniquely theme-decorated. Sleeps 28 with 19 beds. Two large great rooms with cathedral ceilings; two-cooking-area kitchen seats 10, and separate dining room seats 10. There are dozens of classic Vermont antiques. Includes Wi-Fi, flat screen TVs and gas grill. Our property doubles as both a horse ranch and a spa with six-person outdoor hot tub and eight-person indoor cedar sauna. This newer \$2 million property has a team of Clydesdale horses and a black stallion. For feeding/watering and exercising of horses, owner stays in a private/separate section of the property. Inquire about pets. No smoking. Nights, weeks. Contact Gerry, (802) 585-9006. (Listing #1164)

WHITINGHAM, VT

Very Quiet & Private Country House on 10 Acres. Cozy, sunny A-frame house for you to enjoy. Cross-country ski or hike right from the door. Property borders national forest. Mount Snow skiing and skating nearby. Sleeps six in two bedrooms (each with queen bed) with TVs, plus full-size bed in living room. Full bathroom with tub/shower. Fully furnished house. Well-equipped kitchen with dishwasher. Cathedral ceiling living room, dining room. Wi-Fi, HD 42" TV with DVD, Dish TV, stereo, CD/radio, washer/dryer, telephone, unlimited long-distance phone calls. Propane, electric heat, and Noritz tankless water heater. New wood-burning stove with glass front (free firewood). Deck with BBQ. Enjoy historic sites, shops and restaurants. Pet with prior approval. No smoking. All seasons: nights, week. Contact Steven, (212) 304-9107. (Listing #332)

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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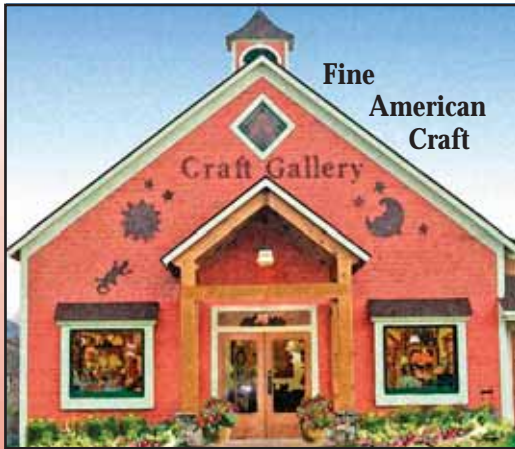
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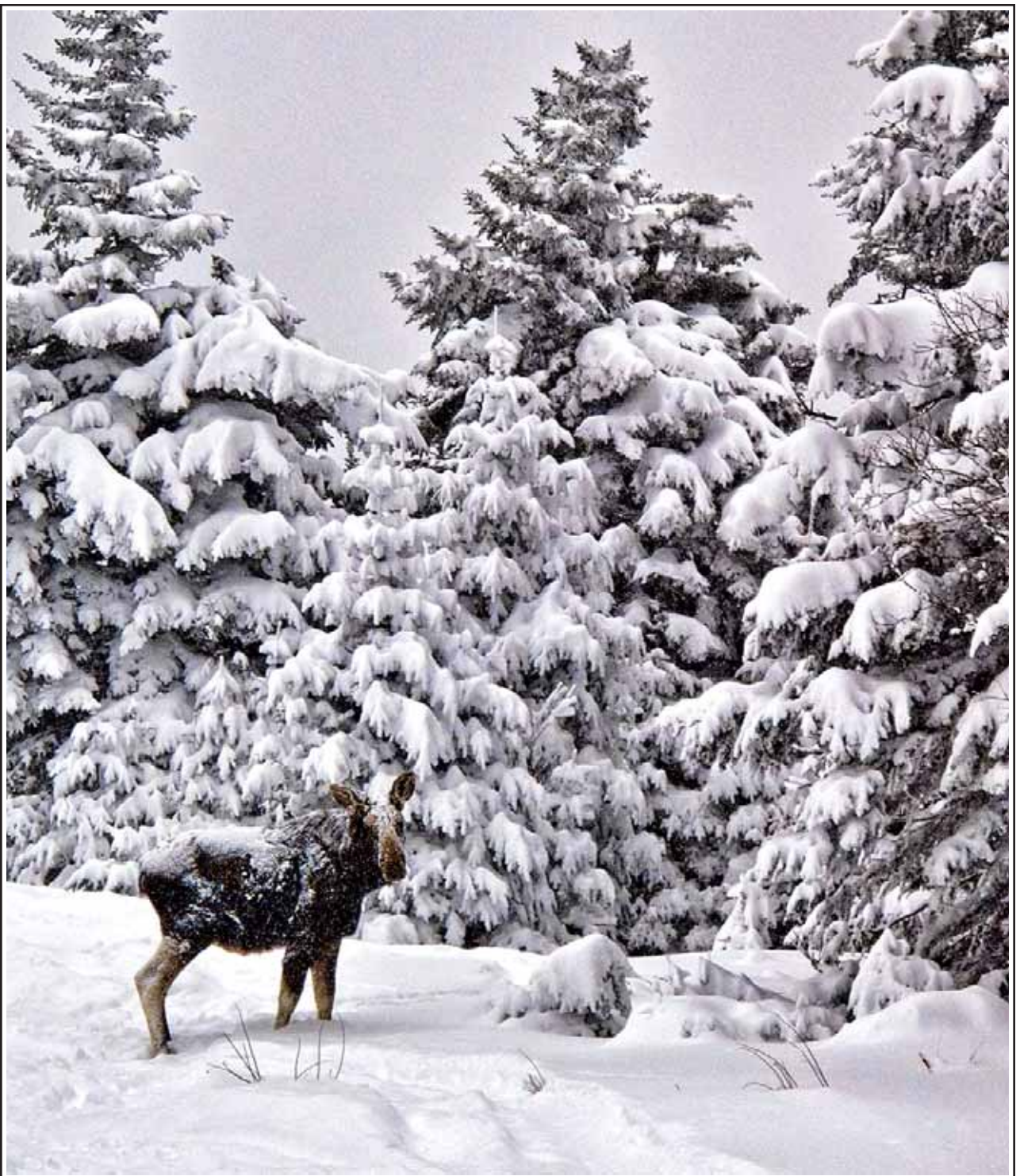
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A snow-covered moose wanders out of the woods in Killington, VT. photo by johndavidgeery.com

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