

Vermont Country Sampler

December
2017

- Statewide Calendar of Events, Map
- Inns, B&B's, Dining, Real Estate
- Sights to See, Things to Do
- Plenty of Good Reading!

Free



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December Journal

Attachment and Befriending

by Bill Felker

On a recent trip to see the last trees of late fall, I paid attention to the way I missed home and summer, and I thought about what caused the discomfort at leaving both behind.

Since my wife died five years ago, I have tried to understand how to come to terms with home. I have become overly attached to the place where I live and to my story contained in its rooms and gardens. It is hard for me to go away.

On the other hand, once I am on the road and look closely at the different landscape, I like the freedom and take comfort in what I find. I do not become detached so

much as I befriend the new space and time.

Spring and summer have always been my favorite seasons, and I miss them now. But when I am too sad to see the leaves come down or too fearful of abandoning the safety of my yard, the grip is too strong.

Homesickness comes from holding on and from being held too much. Befriending is an open acceptance of what appears on the other side of home.

Each pole is a mentor. Each year, I learn from autumn and the road not to hold summer and my home too close and to make friends with the cold and absence.



Decorating the 1890 Farmhouse for Christmas at Billings Farm & Museum in Woodstock, VT. photo by Billings Farm & Museum

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The Exner Block provides live-work spaces for artists and retail spaces supporting the arts:

Cut Your Own Christmas Tree With a \$5.00 Permit on the Green Mountain National Forest in Vermont

U.S. Forest Service officials in Vermont are encouraging the public to purchase Christmas tree removal permits should they be interested in a five-dollar tree for the holidays.

This year, all fourth graders can take advantage of the Every Kid in a Park Initiative and get a free Christmas tree voucher found here: www.everykidinapark.gov. Fourth graders that present a printed copy of the voucher may redeem it for an EKIP Pass and a Christmas tree removal permit at one of the U.S. Forest offices listed below.

This is a one-time opportunity for anyone with a permit to cut down a Christmas tree on national forest land during the 2017 holiday season.

Christmas trees for personal use may be cut on the

Green Mountain National Forest, subject to the following conditions:

• A "Christmas Tree Removal" permit must be purchased (\$5.00) at one of the Forest Service offices located in Rutland, Manchester Center, or Rochester, Vermont.

• The permit must be attached to the tree before transporting it from the site where it was cut.

• The permit holder is responsible for knowing that the tree comes from Forest Service land. Maps are available when you purchase your permit.

Trees over 20 feet tall are not designated for cutting by the Christmas tree permit.

• The height of the tree stump left after a tree has been cut should be six inches or less above the soil.

Christmas trees shall not be cut in active timber sales, wilderness areas, campgrounds, picnic areas, or within 25 feet of any Forest Service, town, or state maintained road.

• Only one Christmas tree permit will be issued per household per year.

Permits are not refundable.

• Trees obtained under the Christmas tree permit may not be resold.

Here are the U.S. Forest Service Offices in Vermont:
Rutland Forest Supervisor's Office, 231 N. Main St., Rutland, VT, (802) 747-6700.

Manchester Ranger Station - 2538 Depot St., Manchester Center, VT, (802) 362-2307.

Rochester Ranger Station, 99 Ranger Rd., Rochester, VT, (802) 767-4261.

Visit www.fs.usda.gov.

Valley Town

In this deep-valley town
Our winter sun is set
By half-past two, or three;

While you can probably
Get where you have to get
Before night quite shuts down,

You haven't got all day.

—JAMES HAYFORD
Orleans, VT 1975

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Vermont Country Sampler
December 2017, Vol. XXXIII

The Vermont Country Sampler is distributed free over-the-counter in and out of Vermont. Advertising rates on request. Deadline 10th of preceding month.

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

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Draft horses pull a wagon of visitors around the winter farm fields at Billings Farm & Museum in Woodstock, VT.

photo by Billings Farm & Museum

Woodstock, VT

Christmas at the Farm Hosted by Billings Farm & Museum

Like most New England states, Vermont did not widely celebrate Christmas until late in the 19th century. It was not until 1890, when the farmhouse at the Billings Farm was completed, that Christmas became recognized as a holiday in all states. At that time, celebrations were much simpler than they would become in the 20th century and certainly today. 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, which rounded out many a tree's decorations.

In Woodstock, turn-of-the-century businesses advertised their wares for Christmas gifts. Most gifts were useful domestic items: fabric, clothing, umbrellas, linens, crockery, and carpet 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.

Discover the traditions of a late 19th century Vermont Christmas with a visit to the Billings Farm & Museum this holiday season. Christmas at the Billings Farm will be fea-

tured on weekends in December and December 23 – January 1, 2018, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. (excluding Christmas Day).

Tour the authentically decorated farmhouse, visit the dairy farm for interactive programs including An Introduction to Milking and Milking the Herd at 3:15 p.m. each day. Holiday programs, making historic Christmas ornaments and candle dipping, plus the Academy Award® nominee film, A Place in the Land will be offered.

Highlights of the Holiday Season:

December 8, 9, & 10 – 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Woodstock's Wassail Celebration. Make historic Christmas ornaments and dip candles.

Sunday, December 10 – Woodstock's Wassail Celebration. Horse-drawn sleigh or wagon rides from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Closed Christmas Day – Merry Christmas!

December 26 through January 1 – 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Christmas Week. Make historic Christmas ornaments and

dip candles. Horse-drawn sleigh or wagon rides, if conditions permit: 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Billings Farm & Museum is open daily April 1 through October 31, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; weekends November through February; and Christmas & Presidents' weeks, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission: adults \$15; 62 & over \$14; children 5-15 \$8; 3-4 \$4; 2 & under, free. The dairy farm, farm life exhibits, restored and furnished farmhouse, and activities are included in the entrance fee. The Farm & Museum is located one-half mile north of the Woodstock village green on VT Rt. 12. For more information call (802) 457-2355 or visit www.billingsfarm.org.

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10th Anniversary for SO Vermont Arts & Living Magazine

SO Vermont Arts & Living magazine will celebrate its 10th anniversary with a special 10th Anniversary issue due out in January, 2018. The issue will feature a gatefold of past covers that showcases the works of prominent artists in the region, which has become the magazine's trademark.

"We'll take a look back at how the magazine started, and why, and where we are today," said owner and publisher Lynn Barrett. We're also announcing the SO Vermont Arts & Living Cultural Hero Award that will be given annually to the person or organization that has done the most to advance the arts and culture of Southern Vermont. Of course we'll recognize our community partners, writers, designers, and everyone involved with the magazine. It's hard to believe that 10 years have gone by. We've grown in terms of enhanced events, exhibitions, readership, content and social media. But, the start-up was a leap of faith."

Before moving to Vermont, Barrett specialized in marketing and public relations for CBS, other Fortune 500 companies and her own firm, Primetime Concepts in Manhattan. "Starting a publishing company was not on my list when I came here," she says.

Barrett's first foray into the magazine business came in 2005 with the Andy Warhol exhibition at the Brattleboro Museum when the Brattleboro Reformer invited her to sell ads and help produce Andy Warhol, The Jon Gould Collection. "I'd never sold an ad in my life, but I was game."

She subsequently worked with the daily newspaper to produce and market other publications centered around the arts and the local economy, including "Southern Vermont Arts," a glossy magazine that became the inspiration for her own publishing undertaking.

"The idea to publish a magazine to promote the arts and lifestyle of not just Brattleboro, but all of Southern Vermont, seemed like the next logical move," Barrett says. "Who else was going to promote Southern Vermont? The state's tourism marketing was focused north of Rt. 4."

She began publishing SO Vermont Arts & Living independently in 2008, bringing the same premise and mission to the new magazine, which she describes as "a postcard to the world about Southern Vermont."

The magazine focuses on the arts, culture, and lifestyle that chronicles the rural yet sophisticated world of Southern Vermont. It's distributed in two Welcome Centers and throughout Southern Vermont and the neighboring towns



SO Vermont Arts and Living Magazine is celebrating its 10th Anniversary this January.

along the borders of New York, New Hampshire and Massachusetts. Target readers are residents and tourists who are drawn to cultural and lifestyle coverage and are looking for things to do in the region. "We reach them where they live and where they visit," she says.

The magazine's departments focus on a specific niche of Vermont's lifestyle including Personalities; Entrepreneurs; Spotlights on productions and openings (Museums, Art Galleries, Antiques, Theater, Dance, Music); Design Observed; Food & Wine; New and Notable and Calendar of Events. The magazine also offers editorial space in "Talk of the Arts" pages for cultural commentary.

SO Vermont Arts & Living's team is comprised of Jeff Potter, design; Martin Langeveld, website; Eric Pero, calendar listings; along with a host of seasoned professional writers, including Joyce Marcel, Jon Potter, Arlene Distler, Susan Smallheer, Meg Brazill, Kathleen Cox, Nicole Colson, Kevin O'Connor, and Marty Ramsburg—all experts on various aspects of the arts and its impact on the local economy and local culture.

"While the magazine has evolved over the last 10 years,

the editorial focus of the magazine remains true," she says.

Barrett says that the magazine wants to know: Who are we? Why do we come here? Why do we stay? How do we live? How do we work? How are we inspired? How do we inspire others? What do we care about? How do we play? Whom do we turn to for advice, information, and expertise? How are we fulfilling our dreams? What do we want for the future?

"These are the questions we try to answer," she says. "We love hearing from our readers and their stories. In fact, we want to hear from folks specifically about why they love Southern Vermont. And we want to know about their biggest challenges."

The magazine is "conducting a little kitchen research," says Barrett, who can be reached at vermontartsliving@gmail.com.

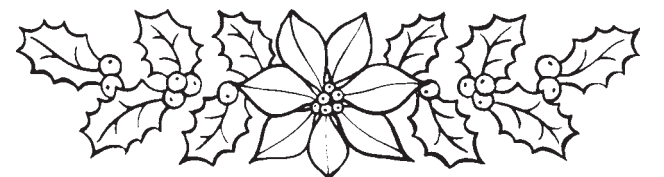
"With the world changing so fast, it's not easy to predict what will happen next," Barrett says, but she believes in the power of the magazine to help celebrate a region—and to get readers locally to perceive their own area as a special place with the capacity to capture visitors' hearts, minds, and spirits.

While many communities have turned to the arts to revitalize themselves and strengthen their economies, without a vehicle to promote the critical mass of activities, events, people, cultural experiences, and sense of place, many well intentioned efforts fall short of their full potential. Further, the lack of such a promotional tool diminishes all efforts to market the region as a vital, attractive destination. SO Vermont Arts & Living is that promotional tool that positively impacts the region," she believes.

And one editorial style decision reflects those values. "We believe in Southern Vermont with a capital S," Barrett says. "Southern Vermont is not just an adjective. Southern Vermont is a destination."

Subscribe! We'll mail you the next four issues if you send a check for \$25 made out to Primetime Concepts, Inc., 1484 Middle Rd., Dummerston Center, VT 05301. (802) 258-3992. prime@svcable.net. vermontartsliving.com.

For a list of outlets where you can pick up a copy, visit the website.



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Bellows Falls, VT

Stone Church Arts Winter Concerts and Retreats

Stone Church by Candlelight is a new concert series which will adorn the winter months, sponsored by Stone Church Arts, and taking place at Immanuel Episcopal Church in Bellows Falls, VT. Curated by Eugene Friesen, the Artistic Director, these special concerts, lit by candlelight, present world class solo artists in the warm acoustics of the church or chapel.

Áine Minogue Concert • December 9th

The first Stone Church by Candlelight concert is December 9th with Áine Minogue, Celtic harp and vocals.

What is it about Celtic music that truly does warm the heart and soul? Maybe it's all those days of damp, bone-chilling clouds and rain in Ireland and Scotland, where music has to stir the blood and inspire the spirit more than in other climates. Maybe it's the Celts' innate understanding of the forces of light and darkness, life and death, and their ability to walk between worlds with courage and will.

Áine Minogue, a wonderfully gifted Irish harper and singer, has created music that takes us wandering the winter landscapes of soul and settles us before a blazing fire. Áine brings a sumptuous feast of song, poetry, and dance music, perfect for celebrating the Winter time with joy.

This magical evening, graced by Áine's otherworldly voice of beauty and wisdom, is music our ancestors listened to, to warm their winter nights. Now it's your turn to enjoy.

Born and raised in Borrisokane, County Tipperary, Ireland, Áine Minogue is an award-winning harpist, singer, arranger and composer who has entertained Presidents and Prime Ministers, and has traveled extensively to perform at concerts across the United States and around the world.

At the age of 12, while at boarding school in County Galway, Áine discovered her true love – the harp. After completing school, she spent three years developing her incomparable talent as a harpist at Bunratty Castle, one of Ireland's most treasured landmarks and the perfect setting to accentuate the harp's emotional and lyrical connections to Irish history.

With a dozen solo album recordings to her credit, Áine has been nominated for several awards for her work as a record producer.

Áine's music, in varying styles including Celtic, World, Folk, Spiritual and New Age, has appeared on compilations for industry labels such as BMG, Decca, Universal, Virgin Records, Windham Hill and Putumayo.

She has a Master's Degree in Traditional Irish Harp Performance from the University of Limerick, Ireland. Her music is on Pandora, Spotify, iTunes, and Amazon. You can follow Áine on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Advance concert tickets are \$20 general admission, \$15 for seniors, and \$45 for reserved seats, up front. At the door, prices increase to \$25 general admission and \$20 for seniors.

“Following the Spiral:

Exploring Celtic Christian Heritage”

An Advent Retreat with James Ruff and Robert Bowler

Stone Church Arts' Advent retreat this year brings James Ruff, harper and singer and Gaelic speaker, to Stone Church Center. From December 15 at 4 p.m. through December 17 at 1 p.m., he will lead “Following the Spiral: Exploring Celtic Christian Heritage.” Explore Celtic spirituality and tradition through early writings, prayers, Celtic harp music, songs, chants, and stories of Celtic saints. Our time together will open our hearts to Christ's presence in the beauty that surrounds and permeates all. Liz Rogers, caterer extraordinaire, will cook delectable meals, and Beau Bowler will serve as chaplain, leading celtic morning and evening prayer times.

Things Celtic seem to be appearing frequently in our culture – in music, art, jewelry, movies – as well as in spirituality. In fact, Celtic spiritual tradition is deeply embedded in Anglican Christianity.

The ancient Celts prized deep connections with nature and the divine wisdom hidden within it – in the rocks, plants and animals that share our world, as well as in our souls and physical bodies. Due to current upheavals in our earth's climate as well as in human society, a deep yearning for a different way seems to be emerging in many of us, which may find resonance in the wisdom of our Celtic Christian ancestors.

In this introductory retreat, the traits that distinguish Celtic Christian spirituality, including images and ideas coming from earlier spiritual systems will be discussed. Selected writings from early Celtic Christian theologians that illuminate their thoughts and theology will be read and discussed. You will study and learn some prayers from the Carmina Gadelica, a collection of early Celtic prayers from the Hebrides, as well as some early Gaelic chants. You will hear and discuss stories of the Celtic saints. Through the

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Áine Minogue will be performing in Bellows Falls on December 9th.

beauty of prayer, chant, Celtic harp music and song, story, and time spent walking and praying in nature, we will seek to deepen our awareness of Christ's presence, within ourselves and in all that surrounds us.

Advent Retreat Faculty

James Ruff, our Retreat Leader, is a professional singer and harper specializing in music for voice and harp from Gaelic Scotland and Ireland. A speaker of Scottish Gaelic and a member of the Episcopal Church since 2000, he has also been involved with the Ceile De (Culdee) Order—a Celtic Christian monastic order centered in Scotland—since 2005. He has sung as soloist with many early music groups, opera companies and festivals throughout the US and in Europe. Ruff teaches Voice at Vassar College, and was Director of Music at Christ the King Episcopal Church in Stone Ridge, NY from 2004-2015.

Robert Bowler or “Beau” is the Director of Stone Church Center and will be host and Chaplain. He will sit in on the sessions, be available for private counsel, and lead Celtic Evening and Morning Prayer services. Beau majored in Religious Studies at Reed College, earned an M.Div. degree from the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California, was ordained as a Unitarian Universalist minister in 1994 and has been practicing Celtic spirituality with the Ceile De Order since 2007.

Regular tuition for this weekend retreat includes tuition, meals, and all other costs. There are three options: commuter, \$350; shared room, \$410; and single room, \$470. Early bird tuition is \$30 less for each option and available up to one week in advance. The early bird discount will be applied automatically to the regular tuition.

Immanuel Episcopal Church is located at 20 Church St. 802-460-0110. sca@sover.net. stonechurcharts.org.



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In the Bleak Midwinter

In the bleak mid-winter, frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,
In the bleak mid-winter, long ago.

Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him, nor earth sustain;
Heaven and earth shall flee away when He comes to reign.
In the bleak mid-winter a stable place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.

Enough for Him, whom cherubim, worship night and day,
A breastful of milk, and a mangerful of hay;
Enough for Him, whom angels fall before,
The ox and ass and camel which adore.

Angels and archangels may have gathered there,
Cherubim and seraphim thronged the air;
But His mother only, in her maiden bliss,
Worshipped the beloved with a kiss.

What can I give Him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
If I were a Wise Man, I would do my part;
Yet what can I give Him: give my heart.

—CHRISTINA ROSSETTI
London, United Kingdom, 1830-1894

Stonevillage Farmers Market



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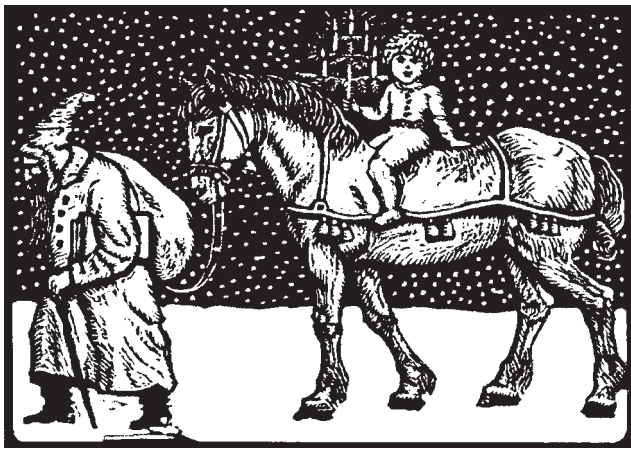
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Poor Will's Guide To Farming and Gardening

by Bill Felker

December 1: Order your pasture seeds and schedule your pasture frost seeding for January and February.

December 2: Tomorrow's Supermoon moon is likely to trigger a quick arrival of Early Winter.

December 3: Supermoon Day is likely to bring stress to livestock and family, very cold weather and difficult travel conditions.

December 4: As the chances for severe temperatures increase, protect rose bushes and new plantings with collars and mulch.

December 5: Continue to weigh pregnant ewes and does to monitor their health as a birthing time nears.

December 6: Explore the Hanukkah market in your area for sales of lambs and kids.

December 7: Even though the moon will be coming into its mild fourth quarter as the December 8 cold front arrives, that date is a major pivot for severe weather throughout the central states along the 40th Parallel.

December 8: Protect catfish, koi, tilapia and other fish you keep in small ponds. Often one or two trough heaters will keep the water from freezing all the way.

December 9: Monitor bee hives for proper ventilation.

December 10: The moon enters its weak final quarter today, improving lunar conditions for working with family and livestock.

December 11: Plan for the hothouse market, a winter period during which to market your fall lambs.

December 12: Prepare to lower Christmas tree prices in about ten days to move as many trees as you can.

December 13: Throughout much of the country, the sun begins to set later, starting its movement toward summer (even though the days continue to shorten).



Hayrack at rest in the snow in Central Vermont.

photo by Nancy Cassidy

December 14: As the weather gets colder, keep adequate ventilation in the barn.

December 15: Deer mating time finally comes to a close throughout much of the country.

December 16: Harvest mistletoe for Christmas and New Year's sales and celebrations

December 17: Take cuttings from mother plants for starting under the new moon.

December 18: Lunar apogee weakens the power of today's new moon, and lessens the chances that the December 20 cold front will bring a major snowfall.

December 19: Seed bedding plants for spring sales now as the moon waxes.

December 20: Consider adjusting travel plans to allow you to fly or drive before the arrival of the New Year's cold front – expected to be severe this year.

December 21: Mangoes bloom in the Deep South, orchids flower in warm homes everywhere.

December 22: Coyote attacks on your flock and herd often increase as the weather worsens.

December 23: As the full moon approaches, be especially careful of abortions in your more delicate livestock.

December 24: Save your best quality feed supplies for the coldest months closest to late winter and early spring birthing time.

December 25: This year, the Christmas cold front should

be relatively weak, reducing the likelihood of a white Christmas across the East.

December 26: Between today and the 29th, travel conditions should be the best of the holiday season.

December 27: In the heated chicken houses, pullets which will produce summer eggs are hatching.

December 28: Protect your pesticides from winter. Check containers for the recommended temperature ranges for the products you have on hand.

December 29: Listen for the tufted titmouse to begin mating calls, foretelling spring.

December 30: Chances for precipitation rise quickly as the last weather system of the year approaches.


December 31: Expect heavy precipitation and travel complications, especially since the first full moon of 2018 occurs tomorrow. That moon will be a Supermoon (full and at perigee), making deep cold and blizzard conditions likely.

Poor Will's Almanack for 2018 and Bill Felker's collection of essays, Home is the Prime Meridian: Almanac Essays on Time and Place and Spirit are now available. Order yours from Amazon, or for autographed copies, order from www.poorwillsalmanack.com.

God Bless the Little Things

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

—MARGARET MURRAY



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A Vermont Almanack for Early Winter

by Bill Felker

Absence and presence are two aspects of the same reality. Death or ending is the mirror of life or beginning. Winter absences fill the deceptive pod of summer presence, create wholeness from the part that seems so transitory or so broken, but is only incomplete.

—Felker December Daybook

The Sun's Progress

Winter solstice occurs at 11:28 a.m. on December 21. The Sun enters the deep winter constellation of Capricorn on the same day.

On the 24th the Sun begins its movements toward summer solstice, rising just slightly from the declination of 23 degrees, 26 minutes to 23 degrees, 25 minutes. (There are 60 minutes in a degree.)

On Christmas, it moves another minute. On the 26th, it rises a full two minutes, and then its ascent takes on greater and greater momentum, changing more than five minutes in a day by January 1, about ten minutes in a day by January 15, up to 20 minutes a day by February 1.

Phases of the Paperwhite Moon And the Bedding Plant Moon

December 3—The Paperwhite Moon is full at 10:47 a.m. and reaches perigee, its position closest to Earth, this day, as well. This is the only "Supermoon" (full at perigee) of 2017.

December 10—The moon enters its final quarter 2:51 a.m.

December 18—The Bedding Plant Moon is new at 1:30 a.m. and at apogee (when it is farthest from Earth).

December 26—The moon enters its second phase 4:20 a.m.

The Planets

Venus and Saturn in Ophiuchus are not visible this month. Mars, moving retrograde into Libra, lies low on the eastern horizon with Jupiter before dawn.

The Stars

Orion the giant. An hour before sunrise, Orion has set. Sirius has moved deep into the west, Cancer and Gemini following it. The Big Dipper is overhead. June's Arcturus is coming in from the east, and August's Vega has come up in the northeast.

The Shooting Stars

The Ursid Meteors fall after midnight at the rate of about five to ten per hour on December 21 and 22. The young moon will favor your search for these shooting stars.

Meteorology

Weather history indicates that cold waves will reach the Northeast around the dates listed below.

December 3—The first high-pressure system of December is normally one of the less violent fronts of the month. This year, however, full moon and lunar perigee on the 3rd should bring a fierce arrival to early winter.

December 8—The high-pressure system that typically arrives at the end of December's first week is a major pivot for severe weather. A secondary front often increases the assault on your homestead between the 11th and the 13th.

December 15—This the period between the passage of this front and the arrival of the New Year's front, sometimes offers a "halcyon" period of relatively gentle weather (sometimes called the Halcyon Days).

December 20—Even though lunar apogee occurs on December 18, new moon on that date may strengthen this front and contribute to more snow at higher elevations.

December 25—The Christmas cold front is one of the most consistent highs of the entire year, bearing precipitation five years in ten. It is typically followed by some of the brightest days of December. Travel and transport of livestock is recommended as this weather system moves east but before the arrival of the New Year's front.

December 31—The last front of the calendar year is typically windy and wet. After this weather system passes through, the chill of deep winter grips the nation for the next six to twelve weeks.



Jersey heifers in the early winter sun in Central Vermont.

photo by Nancy Cassidy

The Phases of Early Winter

Phase One—When pear leaves fall. When sunset reaches its earliest time of the year, the brittle leaves of the pear trees fall. This is the time during which the second bloom of forsythia ends, when witch hazel blossoms wither, and the last of the golden beeches, the willows, and oaks come down.

The development of winter wheat slows in the cold. New garlic shoots are firm and green, but they have stopped growing and remain at their middle-autumn height. The Christmas tree harvest is underway, and the last poinsettias have come north.

Phase Two—When the last gulls migrate. When the last gulls migrate, then the northern states are locked in winter cold. Throughout greenhouses and under grow lights, however, nursery workers and gardeners plant and care for the seeds of tender plants that will be set out when the danger of frost is past.

Phase Three—When pruning time begins. When winter moves all the way down from Canada, then lakes and rivers start to freeze. Under the auspices of the cold, the season of winter pruning commences. It is time to force more bulbs so that they bloom in deep winter, to seed more bedding plants, to nurse annuals brought in from the cold.

Phase Four—When Spring starts north again. In central Florida, red maples open, and Jessamine produces its yellow blossoms. No matter the dramatic differences between the last phase of early winter in the North and South, this time is the gateway to the coldest time of year as well as the door to spring.



The Farmer's Field

The branches are bare and a sodden sky
Hangs over the field where furrows lie
In long straight lines of grey black soil,
Turned, one by one, with patient toil.
In the snug warm stable munching hay
The old plow horses are tied away...
The cows are milked and the barn closed tight,
For the farmer says it will freeze to-night.

He eats his supper with a relish keen
And talks to the family in between...
"The fall's work is finished, the plowing done,
To-morrow I'll take my dog and gun
And a whole day off, if the weather is fair,
To chase the red foxes away to their lair."
Then he goes to bed for a well earned rest
And the clouds roll back from a star decked west.

Before the rising of the tardy sun
The farmer is off with his dog and gun...
A neighbor's boy his chores will do,
In fact the neighbor goes hunting too.
On the grey black furrows in the morning light
The frost lies heavy...It glistens white...
A herald of promise...The Farmer knows
He welcomes the shield of winter snows.

—ELLA WARNER FISHER, 1853-1937

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Winter Festivities at Merck Forest and Farmland Center

Plan to come to Merck Forest and Farmland Center in Rupert, VT this winter for some holiday fun! Whether you take a sleigh ride, a hike through the winter landscape, visit with the animals, or make a wreath to decorate your home, you'll find exhilarating winter activities at Merck. The property is open free to the public daily, from dawn to dusk, year-round.

For outdoor events, please dress for the weather: sturdy shoes/boots, layered clothing, snow/rain gear, flashlight or headlamp, snacks and water. Outdoor events are held weather-permitting.

Advance reservations—made on a first-come first-served basis—are necessary for many events due to space limitations or scheduling considerations. Payment in full is due upon registration.

Winter Sleigh Rides. Our Suffolk Punch draft horses, Arch & Fern, are looking forward to welcoming you to a special experience at Merck Forest, once there's a snowpack. On Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and selected Saturdays through the winter, they will draw our newly-redesigned sweetheart sleigh across the winter landscape at 10 a.m., 11 a.m., 1 p.m. and 2 p.m. The trip costs \$150 (flat rate) for a one-hour ride for up to five adults. Sleigh rides will run only if weather permits; no rides will be scheduled for Christmas or New Year's day. Call (802) 394-7836 for reservations and additional information. 24-hour advance notice is required.

Wreath-Making Workshop. December 2, 10 a.m. to 12 noon or 1-3 p.m. \$25 per wreath. Ring in the holidays with this popular family event. Space is limited, so pre-registration is suggested.

Winter Tree ID Walk. Saturday, December 9, 1-3 p.m. Free. Co-sponsored with the Vermont Woodlands Association. Looking to learn more about how to identify trees and shrubs in our winter landscape? Winter tree identification can be tricky, but with some key tips from Forester Kyle Mason, attendees of this hands-on workshop will be well on their way to expanding their skills as naturalists. Dress for the weather and remember to bring water and snacks. The program is free and family friendly. If you have questions call (802) 747-7900 or email silvia@vermontwoodlands.org.

Merck Forest & Farmland Center is located at 3270 Rt. 315 in Rupert, VT. (802) 394-7836. www.merckforest.org. When you go: Merck is located between Rupert and Dorset, at the top of the very large hill on Rt. 315 (Rupert Mountain Rd). Please do not rely solely on your GPS. Once you reach the top of the big hill on Rt. 315, turn into Merck Forest's driveway. If you start going downhill, you've missed the driveway.

Merck Forest and Farmland Center is a non-profit educational organization located in the Taconic Mountains of southwestern Vermont.



photo by Merck Forest and Farmland Center
Suffolk Punch draft horse Fern pulls the sleigh on a ride through the winter woods at Merck Forest and Farmland Center.



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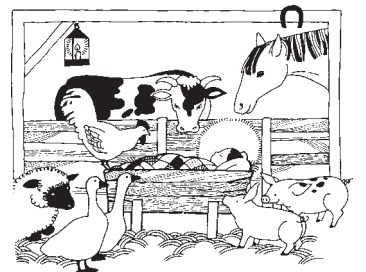
"I am tired of this barn!"
said the colt.
"And every day it snows.
Outside there's no grass any more
And icicles grow on my nose.
I am tired of hearing the cows
breathing and talking together.
I am sick of these clucking hens.
I hate stables and winter weather!"
"Hush, little colt," said the mare
"And a story I will tell
Of a barn like this one of ours

The Barn

And the wonders that there befell.
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.

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



"There was her baby born
And laid to sleep in the hay

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Holiday Festival at Bennington Museum!

Each December the Bennington Museum's Festival draws its inspiration from one of the objects in the Museum's outstanding collection.

For 2017, the annual festival of the season celebrates the creativity of a wide range of regional artists as they respond to Nichols Goddard's Musical Tall Case Clock, ca. 1810, one of the centerpieces of the Museum's newest exhibition, Early Vermont. Few American clocks of the early nineteenth century are more sophisticated, mechanically complex, or beautiful than this one. A set of ten bells and hammers play seven tunes. The movement features a day of the month wheel and moon dial with a depiction of a burning ship. All this lends itself to wonderful interpretations such as collage art, paintings, woodwork, textiles, sculpture, and more.

Surprises will delight visitors in the galleries, as well as those who join us at the Gala on December 1 and on Family Day on December 9. The exhibition is open November 24 through December 29. The original artwork created by the regional artists is available to own through a closed-bid auction taking place November 24 through December 28 at 4 p.m.

The Gala • December 1st

Bennington Museum hosts the premiere event of the season and the Museum's biggest annual fundraiser, the Gala, taking place from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. Put on your most festive attire and join us to enjoy delectable "bites", cash bar, easy listening jazz and seasonal favorites from Jay Sager, Matt Edwards, Mowgli Giannitti, and Krista Speroni. There will be spirited bidding on unique and diverse items in the silent auction, open for viewing and bidding November 24 through the Gala on December 1. Tickets for the Gala are \$100 per person and \$200 per person for a Gala Benefactor. Reservations may be made by calling the museum at (802) 447-1571 x 204.

Family Day • December 9th

Celebrate the season from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. with \$3 admission to the museum for everyone! Any child that brings new school supplies or a non-perishable school snack for children in the Seedlings Program is admitted free. Due to the generous support of local businesses and friends of the Museum, all crafts and visits with Santa are free! Every child can create a wonderful craft and get to tell Santa and Mrs. Claus what is on their list. Craft activities are available all day while visits with Santa are from 1-3 p.m.

The Children's Shopping Boutique • December 9th

A wide range of gifts ranging from \$1 to \$10 are offered from 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Shoppers' Helpers are on hand to help children ages 4-12 select presents for their friends



photo by Bennington Museum

Santa listens to a young child's wishes at Bennington Museum during Family Day, this year on December 9th.

and family members. Free gift-wrapping and gift tags are included. Also on view are Classroom Creations! Students from the region have worked hard to create an object inspired by the Musical Tall Case Clock and these are all available for you to win. Place your bid for any that inspire you.

Adults Can Go Shopping Too!

The Museum Store is offering an expanded selection of artisan products just in time for the holidays. On November 24-26 and again on December 9, museum members receive a 25% discount while not-yet-members receive 15%.

The Bennington Museum is located at 75 Main St., Bennington, VT. (802) 447-1571. www.benningtonmuseum.org.


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Henry Sheldon Museum Holiday Open House and Holiday Season

Trains, Trees, and Topiaries!

The Sheldon Museum in Middlebury, VT is bursting with creativity and excitement this holiday season! Don't miss the amazing operating train layout, miniature Christmas tree display, festive topiaries and the exhibit "Draw Me a Story - Tell Me a Tale" that celebrates the imagination of 20 esteemed contemporary Vermont children's book artists/authors.

Lionel Train Layout running through January 13!

In what has become an annual holiday tradition in Middlebury, the elaborate Lionel train layout is sure to delight all ages. Over the years, the assemblage has grown and stands three levels high, with tracks running Lionel O gauge trains, Lionel 027 gauge trains and an upper track running HO trains. The backdrop of the Green Mountains painted by local artist Gayl Braisted adds atmosphere. Last year Gabe the Lamplighter was added to the display. Come see if there is something new this year! The train layout is made possible by a team of volunteer engineers who operate the trains December 2 through January 13, 2018.

Annual Holiday Open House

On Saturday, December 2, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sunday, December 3 from 12 noon to 4 p.m., the community is invited to the Sheldon Museum's Annual Holiday Open House. Admission to the Holiday Open House is by donation. Carols played on the Sheldon's 1831 piano, and of course the trains all add to this festive event. This year the Middlebury Garden Club has added a whimsical touch to their annual decorations with amusing topiaries. The topiaries will be raffled to support the Sheldon with a drawing on January 16, 2018.

Miniature Christmas Tree Display and Raffle

Also on view are 20 colorful, decorative miniature Christmas Trees by generous local artists, to be raffled in support of the Sheldon archives. Ornaments featured on the diverse trees will delight children and adults and will enhance the holiday home decorations of the lucky raffle winners.

Here's just a sampling of the fabulous trees:

- Otter Creek Bakery has decorated a sweet tree full of gingerbread cookies and a bread and cranberry garland.
- Three trees decorated by the volunteers at Round Robin include "Connie's Feliz Navidad," a flamboyant, feathers-and-tinsel tree in homage to long-time Round Robin and Sheldon Museum volunteer Connie Staats.
- The staff of the National Bank of Middlebury has donated four festive trees.



Families enjoy the elaborate model train layout at the Sheldon Museum in Middlebury, VT.

• Sandy Jackson of SAR (some assembly required) titled her tree "What Can You Do with a Piece of Paper?" featuring doves, trees, stars, and snowflake Sliceforms ornaments which are 3D and made using tools found on the company's website, www.someassemblyrequired.com.

The other trees are just as creative, so be sure to visit the Sheldon during the holiday season to see all of them and buy some raffle tickets!

The Henry Sheldon Museum is located at One Park Street in downtown Middlebury, VT across from the Ilsley Library. Holiday Museum hours: Tues.-Sat. 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. and Sundays, December 3, 10 and 17 from 12-4 pm. The trains will run through January 13, 2018. Volunteer engineers will

run the trains Tues.-Fri. 1-4 p.m.; Saturdays 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.; Sundays (Dec. 3, 12-4 p.m. and Dec. 10, and 17, 1-3 p.m.) Please refer to the Sheldon's website for an up-to-date schedule or call the Sheldon ahead of time to confirm that the engineer is present. Holiday hours: The Sheldon will be closed on December 24 and 25, and reopen on Tuesday, December 26.

Regular admission to the Museum is \$5 adults; \$3 youth (6-18); \$4.50 seniors; \$12 family. For more information, call the Henry Sheldon Museum, (802) 388-2117 or visit www.henrysheldonmuseum.org.

The Sheldon Museum, the oldest community-based Museum in the country, has welcomed visitors and researchers since 1882.



A decorated tree at Sheldon Museum in Middlebury, VT.



→ Christmas Morning ←

If Bethlehem were here today,
Or this were very long ago,
There wouldn't be a winter time
Nor any cold or snow.

I'd run out through the garden gate,
And down along the pasture walk;
And off beside the cattle barns
I'd hear a kind of gentle talk.

I'd move the heavy iron chain
And pull away the wooden pin;

I'd push the door a little bit
And tiptoe very softly in.
The pigeons and the yellow hens
And all the cows would stand away;
Their eyes would open wide to see
A lady in the manger hay.

If this were very long ago
And Bethlehem were here today.

And Mother held my hand and smiled —
I mean the lady would — and she
Would take the woolly blankets off
Her little boy so I could see.

His shut-up eyes would be asleep,
And he would look like our John,
And he would be all crumpled too,
And have a pinkish color on.

I'd watch his breath go in and out.
His little clothes would be all white.
I'd slip my finger in his hand
To feel how he could hold it tight.

And she would smile and say, "Take care,"
The mother, Mary, would, "Take care,"
And I would kiss his little hand
And touch his hair.

While Mary put the blankets back
The gentle talk would soon begin.
And when I'd tiptoe softly out
I'd meet the wise men coming in.

— ELIZABETH MADDOX ROBERTS

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Pam Ellis Remembers Old Ed

by Pamela Hayes Rehlen

Back in the early sixties when Pam Ellis was a little girl, her grandfather's sweetheart and the apple of his eye, every year at Christmastime the two of them would chose a day to drive over to Rutland together to look for gifts.

They walked past the Economy Department Store, past Montgomery Ward, past Carbine Anderson, Wilson and Grace, The Fashion Shop, Sterns, David's Shoes, Woolworths, Fishmans, Carroll's Cut Rate, the Paramount Theater and The Grand. They looked into all the holiday windows that lined Merchant's Row and Center Street.

One year, little Pam picked out a dress for her mother and a new living room sofa for her parents. When they finished their Christmas shopping, they had hamburgers and milkshakes for lunch at the Bardwell Hotel restaurant.

It always astonished Pam that if she arrived back home secretly wishing for a particular thing for herself, under her grandfather's tree in the big house at the top of Ellis Orchard that gift would be waiting for her on Christmas morning.

The season had been a sad time for Ed Ellis—known to anyone in town as Old Ed—because both his wife Wilma and his three-year-old daughter Alice died at this time of year. But his little granddaughter changed that.

"It always astonished Pam that if she arrived back home secretly wishing for a particular thing... that gift would be waiting for her on Christmas morning."

Pam arrived in Castleton when she was seven days old. Her parents, Young Ed Ellis and his wife Bonnie, were told that they'd never be able to have children, and a Burlington adoption had been arranged.

Her grandparents lived in the big, austere house with a wide porch at the top of their apple orchard, and her patrician grandfather was easily the most important person in Castleton—standing a rung above any other town leader—and active in every aspect of community life.

A political man, and a strong conservative at the time when Vermont was a politically-conservative state, Old Ed put his hand to a lot of enterprises. His father had owned hotels. He himself was born in a long-gone family hotel at Castleton Corners. His brother George was a Wall Street investor and a railroad tycoon who'd built a sometimes-visited Glenbrook estate, now the site of the Castleton University gym and sports complex.

After his wife died, Old Ed was left alone and lonely. At that time, Pam's parents were living in an Elm Street apartment, and Pam began to visit and keep her grandfather company. During those years, she remembers going to stay overnight in his big house where she slept in a one-time maid's room and was scared of the night-long clanking and hissing of the old steam radiators.

On Sundays, she and Old Ed sometimes drove down the hill and through the orchard to attend the Federated Church



Old Ed Ellis (on left) up at the Castleton Slate Quarry, many years ago.

and sit in the Ellis pew. Politically Important men arrived in town, and her grandfather liked to have her—wearing her white socks and black patent shoes, a camel hair overcoat and cotton gloves—at his side when he went to meet them.

In the summertime, Old Ed moved out to his Crystal Haven cottage on Lake Bomoseen's east shore. Every night at six there was a cocktail hour, and when Pam was visiting, she went around holding her little Shirley Temple drink, clinking glasses with the important guests—Uncle George Ellis and his second wife, Aunt Peggy, Judge Jones from Rutland, and Castleton's Father Cronin.

To all of them, she would clink and pipe, "Cheers" until Aunt Peggy laughed and began calling her "My little Cheers

girl." When she was ten, Pam's life changed. By then, her parents had moved from their apartment to a house at the end of Castleton's Main Street with a yard that backed up onto railroad tracks and the beginning of the orchard.

Pam's parents adopted Martin, another infant from Burlington, and soon after her mother became pregnant and filled the new house with three young children, Roger, Jill, and a third generation, Youngest Ed.

Old Ed died of leukemia in March 1973 when Pam was seventeen, and three months later, she married Pat Traverse. Olaf Johnson returned to the Federated Church from Eagle Bridge, New York to conduct the wedding ceremony between her and the son of Castleton's fire chief. Afterward, there was a big reception up at her grandfather's house where her grandfather no longer was.

Every Memorial Day, Pam and her brother Martin have made a ritual of going to Castleton's Hillside Cemetery to a set-apart spot under a stand of Norfolk pines to visit the Ellis family graves.

Pam misses her grandfather and the time in her life when he lived at the top of the orchard with the town water house above him and below, his apple barn, garages, sheds, out-buildings, and packing house, the orchard trees in the spring a low-hanging cloud of white, sweet-smelling, blossoms, and every year at Christmas what she secretly wanted most waiting for her under the tree.

All this she misses. How could she not?

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

Native Greens for the Holidays

One of the most enjoyable activities of the holiday season is decorating the home with greens fresh from the garden or landscape. We in New England are fortunate to have an abundant supply of evergreen materials. These include balsam fir, spruce, pine, cedar, hemlock, and juniper, to name a few.

Balsam fir is a native species with luxuriant, green, blunt, glossy needles from three-fifths inch to one inch long. Its branches are used for roping and wreaths, its needles for balsam pillows. It's a popular Christmas tree because it doesn't shed its needles readily. Balsam can be used both inside and out.

Spruce is another native tree found throughout northern New England that makes

a beautiful Christmas tree but will shed its needles after it dries out. Boughs can be used for wreaths, swags and other outdoor decorations. Spruce pinecones are also useful.

Beware. It's easy to confuse spruce and fir with one another when choosing or cutting greens. To be sure you're selecting fir boughs, more desirable for indoor decorating, grab the needles. If it hurts, it's a spruce (square needles); if it doesn't, it's a fir (flat needles).

Pine is very abundant at lower altitudes throughout Vermont and New Hampshire. White pines have a wonderful, soft and feathery texture. Unfortunately, they're very resinous, but they do last a long time indoors and don't drop their

needles. Pine also can be used for making wreaths and roping and the cones are used in many decorations.

When pruning boughs or foliage from outdoor plants, don't prune an excessive amount from any one individual plant. Greens should be pruned off carefully, so the symmetry of the plant isn't destroyed. Use sharp pruning shears.

Prune branches as close as possible to the trunk or a main branch, but don't cut the branch collar. The branch collar is the point of attachment to the parent branch or trunk. Slant the cut slightly outward and

downward. Make a smooth cut. Don't leave a stub. Stubs, if left on the plant, die back anyway and their presence affords an opportunity for disease or insect infestation. Don't break off branches as this will leave ragged ends which don't heal properly.

So now put your jacket on, find your pruning tools and head outside. Gather up your greens and bring a little of New England's wonderful winter landscape inside your home!

Thank you to Margaret Pratt Hagen UNH Cooperative Extension, for this helpful information.



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Late Afternoon

The snow was falling softly when she came
To the edge of the slope and saw the blurred grey sky
Reach down to somber pines. No sumac-flame
Beside the path this time: she snowshoed by
Dark leafless clumps and ghosts of goldenrod,
Following the hush that called her from the wood,
Finding in whiteness deep on leaves and sod
A soundlessness she somehow understood.

The wood seemed waiting for the falling snow,
Breathless and still and lovely in its sure
Welcoming of further white, and so
She found a beauty she could not endure.
Her quick hand shut her eyes out from the sight:
The woods would take the kiss of snow all night.

—FRANCES M. FROST
St. Albans, VT, 1929

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Vermont Country Calendar

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

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 23

BURLINGTON. 24th Annual Free Thanksgiving Community Dinner and Coat Drive. Coat drive starts at 8 am. Dinner from 10 am – 5 pm. Sweetwaters, 120 Church St. (802) 864-9800. www.sweetwatersvt.com.

MONTPELIER. 45th Annual Free Community Thanksgiving Dinner. Everyone is welcome. For more information call (802) 229-9151. 11:30 am – 2 pm. Bethany Church, 115 Main St. www.wcysb.org.

WELLS. Free Thanksgiving Dinner. Turkey and all the fixings, dessert and drinks. Takeouts available. Please call ahead so we know how many turkeys to cook. 3 pm. Wells Village School, Rt. 30. (802) 645-0934.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 24

BROOKFIELD. Christmas Tree Cutting. Already-cut or Choose & Cut. Wreaths and evergreen brush. Christmas Barn with local farm goodies, maple, and more. See our electric train layout. 9 am – 4 pm. L.H. Stowell & Son Christmas Trees, 1591 Twin Ponds Rd. (802) 276-3382. www.lhstrees.com. Also open November 25, 26; December 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 22, 23.

KILLINGTON. Audi FIS Ski World Cup Weekend. U.S. Ski Team superstars compete against the best women's technical alpine skiers in the world. Free standing room access near the base. 7 am – 6 pm. Killington Resort, 4763 Killington Rd. killington.com. Through November 26.

PUTNEY. 39th Annual Putney Craft Tour. Craft, culinary and performance weekend. Meander through the beautiful Vermont countryside, following a map, and view the works where they are conceived and created. 10 am – 5 pm. Brochure and map available online. Start at The Gleanery Restaurant, 133 Main St. in Putney for information, maps, and an artisans' preview. (802) 387-4032. www.putneycrafts.com. Also November 25 & 26.

SO. ROYALTON. Christmas Celebration. A "Live Nativity Reenactment" with a wonderful narrative including Christmas music and then a "lights-on ceremony" when the lights on the trees, shrubs and buildings are turned on for all to see and enjoy. We serve hot apple cider and donuts these first two days of our celebration. 7 pm. Joseph Smith Birthplace Memorial, 357 LDS Lane. (802) 763-7742. www.lds.org/locations/joseph-smith-birthplace-memorial. Also November 25.

STOWE. Performance: Acrobats & Warriors of Tianjin, China. More than 50 artists grace our stage! Tickets: \$20-\$55. 7:30 pm. Spruce Peak Performing Arts Center, 122 Hourglass Dr. (802) 760-4634. sprucepeakarts.org.

TINMOUTH. 13th Annual Turkey Trot Contra Dance. Music by Shindy—The Excellent Band, with David Kaynor calling. Refreshments. Admission: \$10-\$12, \$8 for teens, 12 and under free. 8-11 pm. Tinmouth Community Center, 573 Rt. 140. tinmouthdance@gmail.org. tinmouthcontradance.org.

WOODSTOCK. Celebrate Thanksgiving Traditions at Billings Farm & Museum. Costumed interpreters prepare traditional Thanksgiving fare. Enjoy spiced cider. Activities for all ages. Horse-drawn wagon rides, farm tours. Introduction to Milking and Milking the Herd programs. Adults \$15, 62 & up \$14, ages 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, under 3 free. 10 am – 5 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. billingsfarm.org. Through November 26.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 25

BROOKFIELD. Christmas Tree Cutting. Already-cut or Choose & Cut. Wreaths and evergreen brush. Christmas Barn with local farm goodies, maple, and more. See our electric train layout. 9 am – 4 pm. L.H. Stowell & Son Christmas Trees, 1591 Twin Ponds Rd. (802) 276-3382. www.lhstrees.com. Also open November 26; December 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 22, 23.

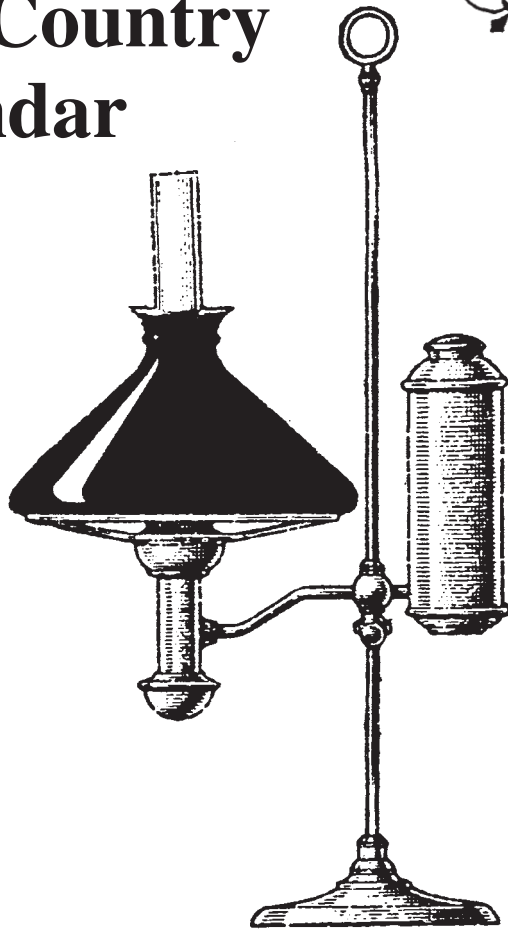
BURLINGTON. 28th Annual Women's Festival of Crafts. Browse over 50 booths of beautiful crafts including pottery, jewelry, recycled art, herbal products, greeting cards, clothing, and more. Free. 10 am – 5 pm. Burlington City Hall, 149 Church St. (802) 864-7528. www.womensfestivalofcrafts.com. Also November 26.

BURLINGTON. Up Close with Sled Dogs. Come see the October Siberians Sled Dogs at ECHO! Admission \$14.50-\$11.50. Presentations at 11 am, 12:30 pm, and 2 pm. At ECHO, Leahy Center for Lake Champlain, 1 College St. (802) 864-1848. www.echovermont.org.

EAST ST. JOHNSBURY. Christkindlmarkt Sale. Decorations, ornaments, and delicious Christmas food. 9 am – 1 pm. Third Congregational Church, Route 2.

KILLINGTON. Audi FIS Ski World Cup Weekend. U.S. Ski Team superstars compete against the best women's technical alpine skiers in the world. Free standing room access near the base. 7 am – 6 pm. Killington Resort, 4763 Killington Rd. killington.com. Also Nov. 26.

LYNDONVILLE. Northeast Kingdom Craft Fair. Handmade products and artisan pieces. Authors' table. Rotunda Café. Free. 9 am – 3 pm. Rita Bole Gym, Lyndon State College. (802) 274-8935.



MIDDLEBURY. The Bow Wow Film Festival. Devoted entirely to dogs! Tickets \$10, children 12 and under \$5. 2 & 5 pm. Town Hall Theater, 68 South Pleasant St. Box office: (802) 382-9222. townhalltheater.org.

MONTPELIER. Morse Farm Annual Holiday Open House. Discounts store wide, yard sale, silver dollar pancakes, free samples, hay rides from 12-4 pm, and more! 9 am – 6 pm. Morse Farm Maple Sugarworks, 1168 County Rd. (800) 242-2740. morsefarm.com.

NORWICH. "Giving Thanks" Family Dance and Contra Dance. Music by Upper Valley All-Stars, Nils Fredland calling. Sponsored by Muskeg Music. Potluck 5:30-6:30 pm. Family dance 6:30-7:30 pm (sponsored by Revels North, separate admission). Dance at 8 pm, 7:45 pm for walk-through. Potluck snacks, please bring finger food to share. Admission \$10, students 6, under 16 free. 8-11 pm. Tracy Hall, 300 Main St. (802) 649-1419. uvdm.org.

PUTNEY. 39th Annual Putney Craft Tour. Craft, Culinary and Performance Weekend. Meander through the beautiful Vermont countryside, following the map to find these 24 prominent craftspeople and view their works. 10 am – 5 pm. Brochure and map online. Visitors may start at The Gleanery Restaurant, 133 Main St. in Putney for information, maps, and a preview of the artisans' works. (802) 387-4032. putneycrafts.com. Also November 26.

QUECHEE. Program: Turkeys & Turkey Vultures. Discover the similarities and differences between Wild Turkeys and Turkey Vultures, and meet a live Turkey Vulture. Adults \$14.50, seniors (62 plus) \$13.50, youth (4-17) \$12.50, children 3 and under free. 10 am – 4 pm. Vermont Institute of Natural Science, 149 Nature's Way, off Rt. 4. (802) 359-5000. www.vinsweb.org.

RANDOLPH. Performance: No Strings Marionette Company's *Cunning Little Vixen*. On a stroll in the woods on a summer morning, forester Bartos encounters a fox kit. Tickets: \$7. 11 am. Chandler Center for the Arts, 71-73 Main St. (802) 728-6464. chandler-arts.org.

RUTLAND. Winter Vermont Farmers' Market. 10 am – 2 pm. Vermont Farmers, Food Center at 251 West St. in downtown Rutland. (802) 342-4727. vtfarmersmarket.org. Saturdays through April.

RUTLAND. Downtown Rutland Holiday Stroll. A day of events, sales and treats leading up to the annual Tree Lighting in Depot Park. Follow Santa to the The Paramount Theatre to meet Saint Nick and watch free movies. 8 am – 8 pm. 48 Merchants Row. (802) 773-9380.

SO. ROYALTON. Christmas Celebration. A "Live Nativity Reenactment" with a wonderful narrative including Christmas music and then a "lights-on ceremony" when the lights on the trees, shrubs and buildings are turned on for all to see and enjoy. We serve hot apple cider and donuts these first two days of our celebration. 7 pm. Joseph Smith Birthplace Memorial, 357 LDS Lane. (802) 763-7742. www.lds.org/locations/joseph-smith-birthplace-memorial.

ST. ALBANS. Ninth Annual Festival of Trees. Tree Lighting Ceremony. A family event with a Gala, pet memorial and prayer, caroling, visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus, refreshments. Fireworks. Free. 4:45 pm. Downtown. (802) 309-4487. festivaloftreesvt.com. Through Dec. 3.

WOODSTOCK. Thanksgiving Traditions at Billings Farm & Museum. Costumed interpreters demonstrate preparing traditional Thanksgiving fare. Relax in the Victorian parlor. Enjoy spiced cider. Hands-on activities for all ages—making the perfect piecrust and peeling apples for drying. Horse-drawn wagon rides, farm tours. Introduction to Milking and Milking the Herd programs. Admission: adults \$15, 62 & up \$14, ages 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, under 3 free. Open 10 am – 5 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. www.billingsfarm.org. Also November 26.

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Vermont Country Calendar

HARTFORD. Old-Fashioned Christmas, hosted by the Hartford Historical Society, Greater Hartford UCC and the Hartford Library. Antique toy display, evergreen centerpiece craft, free hand-knit hats and mittens for children, refreshments, museum tours. Tales by storyteller Simon Brooks, dollhouse and "tin house" displays, Christmas ornament crafts, quilt raffle, wassail and refreshments. Ringing of the church bells at 4 pm, bell choir concert, Christmas caroling, free soup and sandwich supper. Free. 1-7 pm. Maple St., Hartford Village. (802) 296-2568.

LEBANON, NH. AVA Holiday Exhibition and Open House. Unique gifts, artwork in all media, handmade ornaments and fine jewelry. 2-5 pm demonstrations in clay, metal and wood. 5-7 pm opening receptions for the holiday exhibition and sale and "William N. Peabody: Seasons." 11 am - 7 pm. AVA Gallery and Art Center, 11 Bank St. (603) 448-3117. info@avagallery.org. avagallery.org.

LUNENBURG. Lunenburg Gingerbread Bazaar. Door prizes, fun contests for all ages, cookie decorating with Mrs. Claus. 8th grade cookie walk, bake sale table, Christmas and gift items, fabulous fudge, Lunenburg T-shirts, and other Lunenburg gift items. Homemade soup luncheon 11 am - 2 pm. Gingerbread Creation contest. 10 am - 3 pm. Lunenburg Primary School, 49 Bobbin Mill Rd., off Route 2 in the center of town. (802) 892-6654. www.topofthecommon.org.

LYNDONVILLE. Burklyn Arts Council Christmas Market. 10 am - 4 pm. Lyndon Town School, 2591 Lily Pond Rd. (802) 626-9631. burklynarts40@gmail.com. www.burklynarts.org.

MANCHESTER. Our House for the Holidays? Hildene, the Lincoln Family Home, is decorated throughout the month as they might have done in 1912. Museum Store, 100 year old Carriage Barn. Apple cider, Vermont tastings & fresh cider doughnuts. 9:30 am to 4:30 pm. Museum Store, Hildene, off Rt. 7A, just south of the village. (802) 362-1788. hildene.org. Also December 3.

MIDDLEBURY. Annual Holiday Open House. Elaborate model train layout, carols played on the Sheldon's 1831 piano, Miniature Christmas tree raffle: 20 creative trees decorated by local artists. Exhibits: "Draw Me a Story - Tell Me a Tale", celebrating the imagination of 20 esteemed contemporary Vermont children's book artists/authors; Middlebury Garden Club's amusing topiaries. Admission by donation. 10 am - 4 pm. Henry Sheldon Museum, One Park St. (802) 388-2117. www.henrysheldonmuseum.org. Also December 3.

MONTPELIER. Morse Farm Hay Rides at the Farm. Hop on board for a free hay ride around the farm! We'll have the tractor running and ready for passengers in the wagon from 12-4 pm. Rides load approximately every half hour. No reservations. Balsam wreaths for sale. Visit our gift shop. Morse Farm Maple Sugarworks, 1168 County Rd. (800) 242-2740. morsesfarm.com. Also December 9 & 16.

PLYMOUTH. Coolidge Holiday Open House. Kick off the holiday season in one of Vermont's most scenic villages. Visit the Coolidge Birthplace, decorated as it would have been in 1872 when Calvin was born. Winter exhibits at the Museum & Education Center, Aldrich House, Plymouth Cheese Factory, and 1924 Summer White House office. Sleigh rides, old-time music, craft demonstrations, chocolate making & sampling with The Chocolatorium, lunch at the Wilder House Restaurant, special cancellation at the historic Plymouth post office, and children's holiday activities. 10 am - 4 pm. President Calvin Coolidge State Historic Site, 3780 Rt. 100A. (802) 672-3773. historicssites.vermont.gov.

RANDOLPH. Concert: Johnny Cash Tribute Show. Tickets: \$20. 7:30 pm. Chandler Music Hall, 71 N. Main St. (802) 728-6464. www.chandler-arts.org.

RUPERT. Merck Forest Hike. We will begin by hiking to the newly-renovated Clark's Clearing Cabin and then decide where to go from there. Moderate, four miles. 10 am - 2:30 pm. Sponsored by the Green Mountain Club. Contact leaders for meeting location and details: Larry Walter and Vivian Bebee, (802) 775-3855. greenmountainclub.org.

RUPERT. Holiday Wreath-Making Workshop. Ring in the holidays with this marvelous family event. Fee: \$25 per wreath. 10 am - 12 pm or 1-3 pm. Merck Forest and Farmland Center, 3270 Rt. 315, west of Manchester. (802) 394-7836. merckforest.org.

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

RUTLAND. Annual Festival of Trees. You don't want to miss this great Rutland tradition! Auctioneer Bob Prozzo will present a huge selection of assorted auction items including vacation getaways, sport ticket packages, gift certificates, one-of-a-kind experiences, home furnishings and more. Cash bar available featuring a delicious assortment of wines, beer and soft drinks. Catered by Roots the Restaurant. Tickets \$10. Doors and cash bar at 5:30 pm, live auction at 6:45 pm. Paramount Theater, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. paramountlive.org.

SO. ROYALTON. Christmas Celebration. The Christmas lights are turned on at about 4:30 pm each evening. It is dark by 5 pm and it is better to come after that time. Hot apple cider and cookies served. Open seven days a week 9 am to 9 pm, grounds open till 10 pm, but Monday through Thursday is less busy. Joseph Smith Birthplace Memorial, 357 LDS Lane. (802) 763-7742. www.lds.org/locations/joseph-smith-birthplace-memorial. Through January 1, 2018.

ST. ALBANS. Ninth Annual Festival of Trees. Free. 4:45 pm. Taylor Park and downtown. (802) 309-4487. www.festivaloftreesvt.com. Also December 3.

STOWE. A Traditional Christmas. Main Street tree lighting, a children's lantern parade, a Vermont children's author reading, an art gallery full of festooned trees, classic holiday decorations, wagon rides, live reindeer, visits with Santa & Mrs. Claus, carolers, candy cane pulling, holiday cookie decorating, gingerbread house decorating, a holiday show at the Town Hall theatre, free public ice skating! (802) 253-7321. gostowe.com. Also December 3.

VERGENNES. Book & Author Event. "Vermont Wild, Adventures of Fish & Game Wardens." Volume 5 is hot off the press. Join author Megan Price, at Bixby Library for a holiday signing of her best selling, memorable game warden adventures enjoyed by ages 9 to 99. All volumes will be for sale and the author will sign and dedicate books for those wanting a memorable "real Vermont" gift. Free. 11 am - 2 pm. Bixby Library, 258 Main St. (802) 877-2211. pinemartentv@gmail.com. vermontwild.com.

WATERBURY. 8th Annual River of Light Parade. Theme: "Ripples and Rhythms, Waves of Sound and Light." Bring your lanterns and join the parade or line the parade route for an enchanting evening of music, light, and community spirit. Free. 5 pm. Departs from the Thatcher Brook Primary School on Stowe St. ariveroflightinwaterbury.org.

WEST RUTLAND. St. Bridget's Christmas Sale. Homemade crafts, photography, maple products, and jams, Avon, bake sale, white elephant and a huge basket raffle. 9 am - 2 pm. Parish of St. Bridget, 38 Church St. For more information call Peg Harvey at (802) 438-5771.

WESTON. Christmas in Weston. Museum tours, horse drawn wagon rides, caroling, petting zoo, Santa, crafts and activities for the whole family. 11 am - 5 pm. In the village. (802) 824-0034. weston-vermont.com.

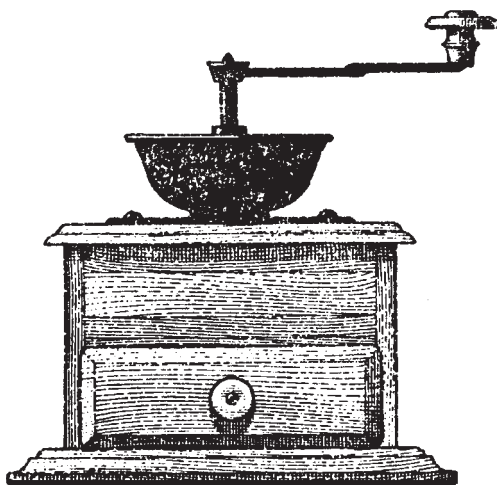
WOODSTOCK. Christmas at Billings Farm. Learn how Christmas was celebrated in late 19th century Woodstock. Adults \$15, 62 & up \$14, ages 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, under 3 free. 10 am - 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. billingsfarm.org. Also December 3, 9, 10, 16, 17, 23, 24, and Dec 26-Jan 1.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3

BRATTLEBORO. 19th Annual Cotton Mill Open Studio and Holiday Sale. 50+ artists and artisans from the Cotton Mill and surrounding communities. Culinary delights, exhilarating circus acts, music and dance performances, and pottery demonstrations. Shop the three floors of the mill for a variety of artistic creations. Free admission and raffle. An elevator operator is available for handicap accessibility. 11 am - 4 pm. Cotton Mill, 74 Cotton Mill Hill. (802) 257-7731. www.thecottonmill.org.

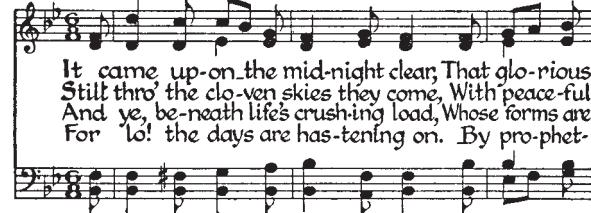
BROOKFIELD. Christmas Tree Cutting. Already-cut or Choose & Cut. Wreaths and evergreen brush. Christmas Barn with local farm goodies, maple, and more. See our electric train layout. Bake sale by the East Randolph Fire Department Auxiliary with hot dishes, drinks, and plenty of delicious snacks. 9 am - 4 pm. L.H. Stowell & Son Christmas Trees, 1591 Twin Ponds Rd. (802) 276-3382. www.lhstrees.com. Also open December 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 22 & 23.

MANCHESTER. Our House for the Holidays? Hildene, the Lincoln Family Home, is decorated throughout the month as they might have done in 1912. Museum Store, 100 year old Carriage Barn. Apple cider, Vermont tastings & fresh cider doughnuts. Distinctive items for holiday gift giving. 9:30 am to 4:30 pm. Museum Store, Hildene, off Rt. 7A, just south of the village. (802) 362-1788. www.hildene.org.



It Came upon the Midnight Clear

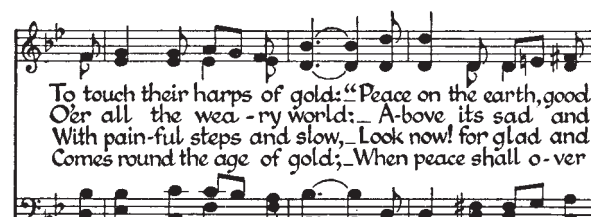
Edmund H. Sears Richard S. Willis



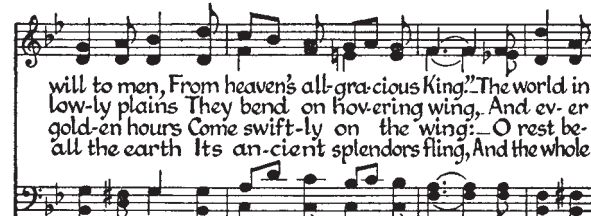
It came up-on the mid-night clear; That glo-ri-ous
Still thro' the clo-ven skies they come, With peace-ful
And ye, be-neath life's crush-ing load, Whose forms are
For lo! the days are has-ten-ing on. By pro-ph-et-





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



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



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


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Vermont Country Calendar

(Sunday, December 3, continued)

MIDDLEBURY. Annual Holiday Open House. Elaborate model train layout, carols played on the Sheldon's 1831 piano, Miniature Christmas tree raffle: 20 creative trees decorated by local artists. Exhibits: "Draw Me a Story - Tell Me a Tale", celebrating the imagination of 20 esteemed contemporary Vermont children's book artists/authors; Middlebury Garden Club's amusing topiaries. Admission by donation. 12-4 pm. Henry Sheldon Museum, One Park St. (802) 388-2117. henrysheldonmuseum.org. Also December 3.

SO. BURLINGTON. Vermont Holiday Craft Shop. "Vermont Wild, Adventures of Fish & Game Wardens" Volume 5 is hot off the press. Join author Megan Price, at this pop up holidays-only shop for the signing of her best-selling, true game warden adventures enjoyed by ages 9 to 99. Store adjoins the mall's food court. All volumes will be for sale and the author will sign and dedicate books for those wanting a memorable "real Vermont" gift. Free. 11 am - 2 pm. University Mall, 155 Dorset St. (802) 863-1066. pinemartentv@gmail.com. www.vermontwild.com.

SO. ROYALTON. Christmas Celebration. The Christmas lights are turned on at about 4:30 pm each evening. It is dark by 5 pm and it is better to come after that time. Hot apple cider and cookies served. Open seven days a week 9 am to 9 pm, grounds open till 10 pm, but Monday through Thursday is less busy. Joseph Smith Birthplace Memorial, 357 LDS Lane. (802) 763-7742. www.lds.org/locations/joseph-smith-birthplace-memorial. Through January 1, 2018.

ST. ALBANS. Ninth Annual Festival of Trees. Tree lighting ceremony. A family event, Gala, refreshments, fireworks display. Free. 4:45 pm. Taylor Park and downtown. (802) 309-4487. festivaloftreesvt.com.

STOWE. A Traditional Christmas. Main Street tree lighting, a children's lantern parade, a Vermont children's author reading, an art gallery full of festooned trees, classic holiday decorations, wagon rides, live reindeer, visits with Santa & Mrs. Claus, carolers, candy cane pulling, holiday cookie decorating, gingerbread house decorating, a holiday show at the Town Hall theatre, free public ice skating, and much more! (802) 253-7321. gostowe.com.

WEST RUTLAND. Vermont Herbal General Store's Herbs and Gemstones Workshop. Everyone will get samples to experiment with: make tea, sachets, carry the stones in your pocket. Fee: \$20 prepay, \$25 at the door. 2 noon - 3 pm. Vermont Herbal General Store, 578 Main St. (802) 438-2766. info@vermontherbal.com. On Facebook and Twitter. www.vermontherbal.com.

WOODSTOCK. Christmas at Billings Farm. Learn how Christmas was celebrated in late 19th century Woodstock. Adults \$15, 62 & up \$14, ages 5-15 \$8, 3-4 \$4, under 3 free. 10 am - 4 pm. Billings Farm & Museum, Rt. 12 & River Rd. (802) 457-2355. billingsfarm.org. Also December 9, 10, 16, 17, 23, 24, and Dec 26-Jan 1.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 5

BURLINGTON. Book & Author Event. Join Mark Bray for a discussion of his book *Antifa: The Anti-Fascist Handbook*. Born out of resistance to Mussolini and Hitler in Europe, the antifa movement has suddenly burst into the headlines. But what is it, precisely? Tickets: \$3, with a coupon for \$5 off a copy of the book. Proceeds go to the Vermont Foodbank. 7 pm. Phoenix Books Burlington, 191 Bank St. (802) 448-3350. www.phoenixbooks.biz.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6

BRANDON. Holiday Celebration. Meet artist Stephanie Stuffer, and view her "Holiday Legacy" exhibit. Shop for the holidays with special deals and more. Enjoy a fabulous meal by SoundBite's chef Vicky Regia. Beginning at 2 pm. Compass Music and Arts Center, 333 Jones Drive, Park Village, 1.5 miles north of downtown off Rt. 7. (802) 247-4295. www.cmacvt.org.

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

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7

BURLINGTON. 13th Annual Winter Tales, produced by Vermont Stage. Holiday tradition featuring brand new stories, poetry by the Young Writers Project, and songs by Patti Casey and Pete Sutherland. Tickets: adults \$32, students \$28.80. 7:30 pm. FlynnSpace, Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, 153 Main St. (888) 974-3698. www.flynncenter.org. Through December 10.

CALAIS. Concert. The Vermont Bluegrass Pioneers, the real deal with high-energy traditional bluegrass music. Free! 7:30 pm. The Whammy Bar, at Maple Corner Store, 31 W. County Rd. (802) 229-4329. www.skyblueboys.com.

LEBANON, NH. *Clara's Dream, A Nutcracker Story*. Presented by City Center Ballet. Tickets: adults \$43/\$31/\$24, students 18 and under \$24/\$18/\$14. 7 pm. Lebanon Opera House, 51 N. Park St. (603) 448-0400. info@lebanonoperahouse.org. lebanonoperahouse.org. Also December 9 & 10.

RUTLAND. Concert: The Vienna Boys Choir. 100 singers perform classic Christmas carols, including favorites such as "Stille Nacht" (Silent Night), "Sleigh Ride" (Troika), and "Carol of the Bells." Tickets: \$40-\$54. 7 pm. Paramount Theater, 30 Center St. (802) 775-0903. paramountlive.org.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8

BRATTLEBORO. Fourth Annual *A Christmas Carol*. Presented by Vermont Theatre Company. Tickets: \$5 to \$15. Bring a non-perishable food item to get \$1 off your ticket. 7 pm. Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, 10 Vernon St. (802) 380-5090. Through December 12.

BROOKFIELD. Christmas Tree Cutting. Already-cut or Choose & Cut. Wreaths and evergreen brush. Christmas Barn with local farm goodies, maple, and more. See our electric train layout. 9 am - 4 pm. L.H. Stowell & Son Christmas Trees, 1591 Twin Ponds Rd. (802) 276-3382. lhtrees.com. Also December 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 22 & 23.

BURLINGTON. Performance: *A Christmas Carol*. Presented by Nebraska Theatre Caravan. Weaving traditional Christmas carols into the narrative, this classic features a 24-member ensemble and Broadway-style scenery. Tickets \$15-\$45. 7 pm. Flynn MainStage, Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, 153 Main St. (888) 974-3698. www.flynncenter.org.

BURLINGTON. 13th Annual Winter Tales. Produced by Vermont Stage. Holiday tradition featuring brand new stories, poetry by the Young Writers Project, and songs by Patti Casey and Pete Sutherland. Tickets: adults \$37.50, students \$33.75. 7:30 pm. FlynnSpace, Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, 153 Main St. (888) 974-3698. www.flynncenter.org. Through December 10.

RANDOLPH. The Turning of the Year: A Celtic/Americana Holiday Celebration. All-Ireland accordion champion John Whelan, with American roots band Low Lily and Scottish-style fiddler Katie McNally. Traditional and original music from Ireland, Scotland, and America. Tickets: adults \$22, students \$10. 7:30 pm. Chandler Music Hall, 71 N. Main St. (802) 728-6464. www.chandler-arts.org.

RUTLAND. Friends of the Rutland Free Library Book Sale. Thousands of organized, gently-used books, CDs, DVDs and puzzles for all ages. Most items \$.25-\$3. This month's highlight: Family recipes from community cookbooks. All holiday books (crafts, food, novels): Buy One, Get One Free and rare and collectible books for holiday giving: most never previously offered for sale. 10 am - 4 pm. Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St. (802) 773-1860. rutlandfree.org. Also Dec. 9.



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Music by
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\$10-\$12 adults, \$8 teens, free for children 12 and under. All dances taught and beginners are welcome. Please bring clean, non-marring shoes.

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Vermont Farmer's Market presents its
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Holiday Inn, Rte. 7, Rutland, VT
Saturday, December 16th • 9 am - 4 pm

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Vermont Country Calendar



SO. ROYALTON. Christmas Celebration. The Christmas lights are turned on at about 4:30 pm each evening. It is dark by 5 pm and it is better to come after that time. Hot apple cider and cookies served. Open seven days a week 9 am to 9 pm, grounds open till 10 pm, but Monday through Thursday is less busy. Joseph Smith Birthplace Memorial, 357 LDS Lane. (802) 763-7742. www.lds.org/locations/joseph-smith-birthplace-memorial. *Through January 1, 2018.*

WOODSTOCK. 34th Annual Wassail Weekend. Twinkling lights and decorated historic homes. Woodstock Elementary School chorus performs on the steps of the Norman Williams Public Library at 4 pm. Woodstock History Center Open House includes a tour, holiday music, and light refreshments from 5-7 pm. Billings Farm & Museum's Christmas at the Farm open 10 am - 4 pm. Woodstock Village Green, 21 The Green. (802) 457-3555. woodstockvt.com. *Through December 10.*

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9

BELLOWS FALLS. The New Stone Church by Candlelight Concert Series: "To Warm a Winter's Night". Song, poetry, and dance music, with Aine Minogue, Celtic harp & vocals. Tickets: \$25 general admission, \$20 for seniors. 7:30 pm. Stone Church Arts, 20 Church St. (802) 460-0110. sca@sover.net. www.stonechurcharts.org.

BENNINGTON. The Festival—Time for the Holidays! Family Day. Children's shopping, Santa, crafts, bake sale and more. Admission: \$3; children who bring school supplies or individual non-perishable school snacks for the Seedlings Program are admitted free. 10 am - 5 pm. Bennington Museum, 75 Main St. (802) 447-1571. benningtonmuseum.org.

BRATTLEBORO. Performance: *A Christmas Carol*. Vermont Theatre Company presents its fourth annual production of the classic by Charles Dickens. Tickets: \$5-\$15; Bring a non-perishable food item to get \$1 off your ticket. 7 pm. Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, 10 Vernon St. (802) 380-5090. jessicagelter@gmail.com. *Through December 12.*

BROOKFIELD. Christmas Tree Cutting. Already-cut or Choose & Cut. Wreaths and evergreen brush. Christmas Barn with local farm goodies, maple, and more. See our electric train layout. Bake sale by the Williamstown Youth Group (who have been doing this for 20+ years at the Christmas Barn) with hot dishes, drinks, and plenty of delectable treats. 9 am - 4 pm. L.H. Stowell & Son Christmas Trees, 1591 Twin Ponds Rd. (802) 276-3382. www.lhstrees.com. *Also open December 10, 15, 16, 17, 22 & 23.*

BURLINGTON. Holiday Pops. Presented by Vermont Symphony Orchestra, Anne Decker, conductor. Festive music from around the world, carol singalong, and special appearance by the Bronze Ambassadors, student bell choir from Newport. Tickets: adults \$52/\$42/\$27/\$15, students \$10. 7:30 pm. Flynn MainStage, Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, 153 Main St. (888) 974-3698. www.flynncenter.org.

BURLINGTON. 13th Annual Winter Tales. Produced by Vermont Stage. Holiday tradition featuring brand new stories, poetry by the Young Writers Project, and songs by Patti Casey and Pete Sutherland. Tickets: Saturday matinee, adults \$32, students \$28.80. Saturday night: adults \$37.50, students \$33.75. 2 pm & 7:30 pm, FlynnSpace, Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, 153 Main St. (888) 974-3698. www.flynncenter.org. *Also December 10.*

ESSEX. Book & Author Event. "Vermont Wild, Adventures of Fish & Game Wardens" Volume 5 is hot off the press. Join author Megan Price, at Phoenix Books for the signing of her best selling true game warden adventures, enjoyed by ages 9 to 99. All volumes will be for sale and the author will sign and dedicate books for those wanting a memorable "real Vermont" gift. Free. 1-4 pm. Phoenix Books, 2 Carmichael St. (802) 872-7111. pinemartenvt@gmail.com. www.vermontwild.com. www.phoenixbooks.biz.

LEBANON, NH. *Clara's Dream, A Nutcracker Story*. Presented by City Center Ballet. Tickets: adults \$43/\$31/\$24, students 18 and under \$24/\$18/\$14. 1 pm & 4 pm. Lebanon Opera House, 51 N. Park St. (603) 448-0400. www.lebanonoperahouse.org. *Also December 10.*

MONTPELIER. Concert: The Sky Blue Boys open for acclaimed folksinger Dave Mallet in a concert to benefit our excellent free community newspaper, The Montpelier Bridge. Tickets: \$20. 7:30 pm. Unitarian Church, 130 Main St. (802) 249-8262. www.skyblueboys.com.

MONTPELIER. Morse Farm Hay Rides at the Farm. Hop on board for a free hay ride around the farm! We'll have the tractor running and ready for passengers in the wagon from 12-4 pm. Rides load approximately every half hour. No reservations. Balsam wreaths for sale. Visit our gift shop. Morse Farm Maple Sugarworks, 1168 County Rd. (800) 242-2740. morsefarm.com. *Also December 16.*

NORWICH. Contra Dance. Featuring music by Shindy with Dana Dwinell-Yardley calling. Beginners welcome, no partner needed. Admission: \$10, students \$6, seniors by donation, under 16 free. Sponsored by Muskeg Music. Dance starts at 8 pm. 7:45 pm for walk-through. Bring clean, soft-soled shoes. Potluck snacks. 8-11 pm. Tracy Hall, 300 Main St. (802) 649-1419. uvdm.org.

RUTLAND. Friends of the Rutland Free Library Book Sale. Thousands of organized, gently-used books, CDs, DVDs and puzzles for all ages. Most items \$.25-\$3. This month's highlight: Family recipes from community cookbooks. All holiday books (crafts, food, novels): Buy One, Get One Free and rare and collectible books for holiday giving: most never previously offered for sale. 10 am - 2 pm. Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St. (802) 773-1860. rutlandfree.org.

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SPRINGFIELD. Holiday Open House. Paint a watercolor of your favorite winter tree with artist Nancy Lanoue (free, all materials provided). Music by Kathi Byam, flute, and Karen Engdal, violin. Gifts from the creations of 160 artists, in a historic 1907 bank with a real vault. 20% off Danforth Ornaments. Refreshments, crafts, and gift-wrapping station. 12 noon - 4 pm. Gallery at the VAULT, 68 Main St. (802) 885-7111. galleryvault.org.

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10th HOME ALONE

17th HOW THE GRINCH STOLE CHRISTMAS + A CHARLIE BROWN CHRISTMAS

25th A CHRISTMAS STORY

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Christmas Revels Heads to Nordic Lands this December

This December, take a whirlwind trip to Nordic lands as the Christmas Revels spins a poignant tale told through the lively and enchanting music, dance and storytelling of that region. As the winter solstice brings with it long nights of frosty breath and nose-nipping cold, gather with us before a warming hearth as we weave a tale of adventure, enchantment, and self-discovery.

"The Christmas Revels: A Nordic Celebration of the Winter Solstice" is presented Thursday through Sunday, December 14-17, in Spaulding Auditorium of the Hopkins Center for the Arts in Hanover, NH.

A beloved Upper Valley tradition for the whole family for 43 years, The Christmas Revels each December celebrates the holiday season with glorious carols, festive dance, and traditions that span the centuries and the globe. Recent performances have featured the stories, music and traditions of the Québécois, Ireland, Appalachia, and England.

The show is performed by a large, auditioned case of singers, dancers and actors from the Upper Valley, as well as guest artists renowned in the tradition of that year's show. Those guest artists not only share their virtuosity and authenticity as performers in the show but also help the local cast capture the nuances of that year's style of dance and music.

This year's guest artists include show-stopping Norwegian dancer Tom Løvli, who has won dance competitions throughout his home country and frequently performs abroad; Loretta Kelley, a legend on the richly resonant Nordic hardanger fiddle (hardingfele) for more than 30 years; and Merja Soria, a native of Finland who weaves spells with the haunting songs of Finland's indigenous Suomi people, accompanying herself on the harp-like kantele. They are joined by Swedish-music duo Lydia Ievins on five-string fiddle and nyckelharpa and Andrea Larson on fiddle; and double-bassist Corey di Mario. Ievins and Larson are also experts in Scandinavian social dancing.

The music, dance and pageantry unfold through a new story written by Revels North Artistic Director Nils Fredland. When a young girl goes in search of her Nordic heritage, she is drawn into the mystical and fantastical stories of her father's Finnish homeland, as well as the masterful craftsmanship of her mother's Scandinavian musical and dance traditions. As we are swept along on her journey through epic folklore, alongside heroes and magical creatures, and across the vast and vibrant landscape of the Nordic region, we are treated to a smorgasbord of the music and dance of the five Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden).



photo by Erin Sutherland and Washington Revels
Dancers circle round in the Christmas Revels in Hanover, NH.

The six performances take place Thursday, December 14, 6 pm; Friday, December 15, 7 pm; Saturday and Sunday, December 16 & 17, 1 pm & 5 pm. Tickets on December 14 are \$25-46 for adults and \$8 for 18 and under and for other performances are \$27-48 for adults and \$11-20 for 18 and under.

The Christmas Revels is a production of Revels North, a grassroots community arts nonprofit organization founded in 1974. Revels North has provided over 11,000 individuals in the community the opportunity to connect in meaningful ways as it brings traditions to life through music, dance, song and theater, in programs throughout the year.

Spaulding Auditorium in the Hopkins Center for the Arts is located at 4 East Wheelock St. in Hanover, NH. (603) 646-2422. hop.dartmouth.edu.

For more information about Revels North call (866) 556-3083, contact info@revelsnorth.org, or visit www.revelsnorth.org.



photo by Erin Sutherland and Washington Revels
Dancing lady in the Christmas Revels in Hanover, NH.



photo by Erin Sutherland and Washington Revels
A gnome enjoys his repast in the Christmas Revels at the Hopkins Center in Hanover, NH.



Beggar's Rhyme

Christmas is coming, the geese are getting fat,
Please to put a penny in the old man's hat;
If you haven't got a penny, a ha'penny will do,
If you haven't got a ha'penny, God bless you.

—TRADITIONAL

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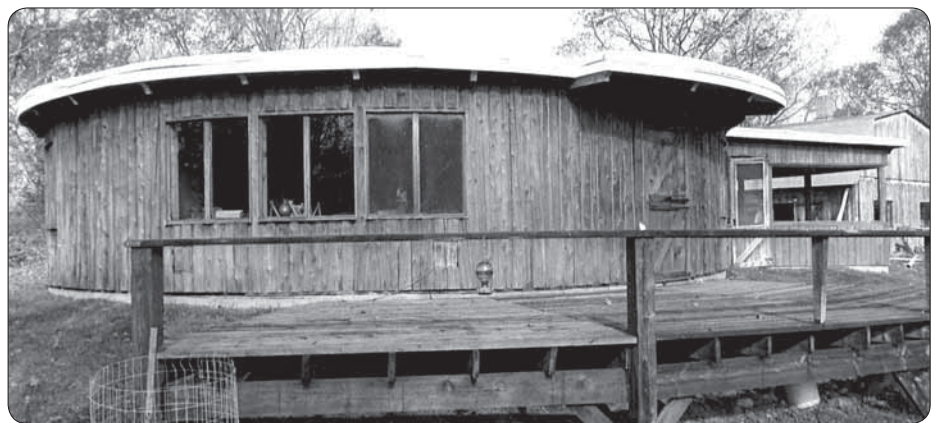
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