



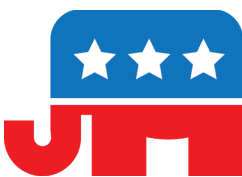
MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR WINTERSONG

“Wintersong: A Celebration of Female Songwriters” will be held, Jan. 26 at River-shed Killington. Owner Kara Tondorf is one of five performers.

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BALLOT DEADLINES APPROACH

Thursday, Jan. 18 is the deadline to submit a petition (with signatures from 5% of registered voters) to add an article to the Town Meeting Day ballot. Candidates for office have until Jan. 29 to file their petitions (with 30 signatures or 1% of registered voters.)



NH TO HOLD GOP PRIMARY ELECTION

On Tuesday, Jan. 23, New Hampshire will host the Republican presidential primary — the first official primary in the nation. New Hampshire state law protects this stating: “The presidential primary election shall be held ... 7 days or more immediately preceding the date on which any other state shall hold a similar election.” Iowa’s contest is not considered to be “a similar election” because the caucuses do not involve actual balloting.

Rutland’s CEDRR is one of 12 approved for GROW grant

Program supports relocation, recruitment, and retention of residents in Vermont

On Wednesday, Jan. 10, the Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing (VDTM) announced that 12 partner organizations were approved for grant funding from the inaugural Grants for Relocation Outreach Work (GROW) program. The grants support local, regional, county-wide, or state-wide organizations conducting new resident relocation, recruitment, and retention activities.

The Chamber and Economic Development of the Rutland Region (CEDRR) was among the dozen selected.

“For eight years our regional marketing initiative has highlighted why our county is special,” said CEDRR Executive Director Lyle Jepson last week. “It has been hard work by

many people and it is the people that cause us to stand out from the rest. CEDRR has been informed that we will be receiving a grant to help continue our efforts and we are very thankful for the support.”

“Welcoming new Vermonters to our communities is a top priority for my administration, and this funding can help,” said Governor Phil Scott. “Vermont needs more people and more workers, and GROW is an important tool in our toolbox. I want to thank our regional partners for taking on this important and challenging role.”

“We are thrilled to be able to better support our longstanding regional partners
Grow grant → 10



Courtesy Pittsford Village Farm
Architectural renderings of the planned renovation at Pittsford Village Farm, located in the center of Pittsford. Plans include a child care center in a portion of the 19th-century farmhouse.

Pittsford Village Farm gets new grant to undergo construction this year

By Katy Savage

Baird Morgan has been interested in the farmhouse in the center of Pittsford for the past 30 years.

His interest in the Pittsford Village Farm dates back to the mid-1990s, when Morgan was on the Pittsford planning commission.

“We had a series of meetings with what the townspeople wanted to see, what the town would look like 20-30 years into the future,” Morgan said. “One problem was Route 7 bifurcates the middle of the town.”

That created a need for a community space, and the 20-acre farm property, in the dead center of Pittsford, was seen as an ideal piece of land.

“We didn’t want to see big box stores or housing developments in the center of town that might detract from what we saw as being a primary community space,” Morgan said.

A nonprofit was formed in 2001. Baird Morgan and his wife, Betsy Morgan, tried to buy the property as a gift to the community in the early 2000s but weren’t successful in negotiating with the former owner.

It wasn’t until shortly after the owner died in 2015 that the Morgans were able to purchase the property with the 8,000 square-foot house in 2017.

Now, Morgan’s vision is finally coming to
Pittsford Village Farm → 2

Vermont Huts Association looks to expand outdoor offerings, partners with Vermont Adaptive

By Alissa Frame, UVM Community News Service

Editor’s note: The Community News Service is a program in which University of Vermont students work with professional editors to provide content for local news outlets at no cost.

For RJ Thompson, the seed of outdoor recreation started sprouting early on. He grew up camping with family and learning to ski — a passion that only grew as he got older, when as a student at the University of Vermont he helped form the ski and snowboard club in 2003.

The college club, he said, kindled a desire to bring people together from different backgrounds to experience the outdoors in an approachable manner. Years later, in 2016, Thompson found himself with the opportunity to make that happen on a broader scale.

That year, alongside Devin Littlefield, Thompson co-founded the Vermont Huts Association. The group manages huts — which, in the outdoor recreation realm, resemble rustic cabins or yurts with basic amenities like bunks, mattress pads and propane cooktops. Littlefield had worked on a network of huts in Maine.

The association’s mission, Thompson said, is to “foster a deeper appreciation [for] the natural environment by creating an enriching experience for everyone.”

To do this, the group has been working to build a state-wide, hut-supported trail network in partnership with the Catamount Trail Association and Vermont Dept. of Forests, Parks and Recreation, among other groups. The idea is for folks to have a convenient, immersive place to stay while exploring Vermont’s trails and backcountry.

“A lot of adult groups get overlooked ... You’re kind of expected to be an adult and figure it out yourself,” Twitchell said.

Huts → 6



Courtesy Vermont Huts Association
Students stayed in the Grout Pond hut in the Green Mountain National Forest during a recent winter retreat.

Deirdre Morris retires after 36 years at Killington Resort

By Brooke Geery, Killington Resort

On Thursday, Jan. 11, Deirdre Morris was wished happy trails from the team at Killington Resort as she retired from her position as hospitality controller. Her career at The Beast began some 40 years ago in 1983 as the Southside Food and Beverage Manager, responsible for Bear Mountain, Skyship and the Northeast Passage.

From there, she did stints as lodge manager for Snowshed and K-1 (then known as Killington Base Lodge) before moving into more behind-the-scenes roles such as commissary manager, food and beverage controller, food and beverage manager and hospitality controller. Toward the beginning of her career, she took a five-year hiatus, during which she worked in the financial sector in New York, California and Boston. She then had a choice to continue along that track or come back to Vermont.

"I had to decide if I wanted to put on a suit and heels every day, or come back to Vermont," she said. "I love Vermont, why shouldn't I stay here?"

A lot changed over her 36-year tenure at Killington. Morris remembers hand counting inventory at the end of each month and the days when you'd have to know the prices of every item to work the register.

"Way back when, there were no human resources policies that I remember and liquor regulations were sort of a suggestion," she laughed. "The focus we put on those things now is very different."

Of course, the scope of work has changed a lot, too.

"I was so lucky to be able to develop my own career. I started in operations, then worked on moving the department to more efficient ways with the help of software. I think of myself as being someone who was part of the process of computerizing our department. When I started there was literally no software, I had no computer. It's obviously a different world now," she said.

Throughout her career, she never stopped learning new things, something she appreciated.



Courtesy Killington Resort

Deirdre Morris retired from Killington as hospitality controller after 36 years Jan. 11. Morris celebrated with her sister Heather (top) and Scott Harrison (below).

"In some respects, I feel fortunate that I was able to get out of operations in a base lodge and be a little bit removed to be able to develop and point my career in a direction that let me learn new stuff all the time. I was tasked with the homeowner's association accounting for a period of time. It was a huge amount of learning late in my career, and that's been true all the way along," she said. Morris will remember her bosses and coworkers fondly.

"It's so nice, I've had good bosses, people who I was really fortunate to work for, that had a mutual respect," she said. "In addition, the people I've worked around

Deirdre Morris → 10

Rutland author readies for book release, "War Tears"

Following many years of research and writing, John Swanson is finally able to see his book in publication. Swanson, a resident of The Gables in Rutland, has released his book, "War Tears: A Journey from Vermont to Gettysburg," as an eBook and paperback on Amazon's Kindle. In February it will be available as a hardcover book as well.

Swanson, a retired historian and teacher, spent many years conducting research at the Gettysburg Civil War Institute to gain a full knowledge of what the conflict was like from a participant's point of view. The culmination of his efforts is "War Tears," a poignant depiction of a



Submitted

John Swanson, a resident of The Gables in Rutland, explained some of his opus, "War Tears: A Journey from Vermont to Gettysburg," to fellow residents, Carol Freeman and Randi Majorelle, in The Gables' library.

Vermont boy's experiences during this tumultuous period. A proud Vermont-er raised in the very region where the central figure

of this narrative lived, Swanson brings a unique and authentic perspective to this rich tapestry of Civil War history.

← Pittsford Village Farm: from page 1

life. Shortly after purchasing the property, the Morgans gave it to the community and a nonprofit board formed to start asking residents what they wanted to see.

The property will undergo a \$3.5 million renovation this year. Once complete, the three-story farm house will be the site of a community gathering space for up to 45 people, with a kitchen and bathroom. There will be a childcare center for 26 infants and toddlers on the first floor, with an outdoor play area; and two affordable two-bedroom apartments on the top floor.

"One of the things we didn't envision, 30 years ago, was an outdoor entertainment venue for the summer," Baird Morgan said.

Board members of the Pittsford Village Farm held 22 outdoor events last year, including a concert series, monthly garden gatherings and workshops, a potluck harvest dinner, an artifact roadshow, bird walks, and a touch-a-truck event.

The property is considered a birding hotspot by the National Audubon Society, with its vast wetlands. The land also connects to the Pittsford Trail Network and offers a community garden space, a children's play area, picnic tables, a covered pavilion and a knoll with views.

The Paramount Theatre uses the property as an outdoor venue in the summertime, too. And the Maclure Library in Pittsford will soon do the same.

"It's more than just a community center, it's really a place — it's a wonderful place for people to gather," Morgan said.

They've raised \$2.5 million toward the estimated \$3.5 million project and recently

secured a \$450,000 grant from the state.

Gov. Phil Scott announced Jan. 11 that the farm was one of 40 in the fourth and final round of Community Recovery and Revitalization Program (CRRP) grant winners.

Those 40 approved projects are expected to support 1,810 existing jobs, enable the creation of 117 new jobs, build or rehabilitate 75 housing units, and add 60 new childcare slots, according to Scott.

"The Community Recovery and Revitalization Program has helped dozens of communities bring much-needed capital projects to life," Scott said in a press release. "These investments are a great use of one-time funding that will benefit Vermonters for years to come."

In total, the \$40 million CRRP program has supported 125 projects over the course of four rounds of funding.

The property is not just going to serve Pittsford. Board members want to have a venue that will be attractive for people all over Rutland County.

"We're thrilled to be getting so much support in different directions," said Samantha Stone, the farm's director of outreach and communications. "It really validates what we believe in."

Stone, who lives close to the farm, used to work for the New York City parks department before she moved back to Vermont 17 years ago.

"I moved back here to raise my kids here," she said. "Having these community spaces is an essential part of a vibrant community. It's a resource for everyone in Pittsford to utilize."

OBITUARY

David F. Minard, 78

David Francis Minard, 78, of Killington died peacefully Sunday morning Jan. 7, 2024, with family by his side. He was born on Nov. 9, 1945 in Rutland.

A detailed obituary will be printed in the next edition of the Mountain Times (on stands Jan. 24) and a celebration of life will be planned for warmer months.



David Francis Minard

got news?

Email us at:
Editor@mountaintimes.info



By Victoria Gaither

Colorful sunrise commences the day in Killington

A colorful pink and purple sunrise crested over Green Mountain National Golf Course in Killington last week, Tuesday, Jan. 9.

Mission Farm awarded grants for new signage, stage

Mission Farm in Killington has been awarded a grant of \$4,000 from the Laurance and Mary Rockefeller Fund and a grant of \$15,000 from the Vermont Arts Council.

The Laurance and Mary Rockefeller grant will help to create durable and informative signs throughout the Mission Farm property.

“Currently, there is nothing that welcomes or guides visitors to Mission Farm. People arrive by chance, and wonder who we are and what we have to offer,” Mission Farm stated.

The signs will orient visitors to the

“Welcoming new visitors and improving access to Mission Farm is a top priority for the organization in 2024,” said Ransom.

site, provide a map of the buildings, outdoor structures, the trail network, and give a brief history of the property.

The Vermont Arts Council grant will fund a stage area for the stone amphitheater. An aesthetic, acoustic stone wall will provide a dramatic backdrop for performances, completing the stone amphitheater, called the Odeon, built in 2023 by Vermont stone artisan Dan Snow.

Both projects will help to draw more people to Mission Farm, encouraging a deep engagement between the people and the landscape of this valley, Mission Farm explained.

“Welcoming new visitors and improving access to Mission Farm is a top priority for the organization in 2024,” said Executive Director Lisa Ransom.

“We are thrilled to receive support from these grant-giving organizations...With additional funds from generous donors, we are excited to initiate these projects,” she added.



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Mothers' milk bank and dispensary opens in Manchester

Mothers' Milk Bank Northeast announces the opening of a donor milk depot and dispensary at Sage Willow Midwifery located on Main Street in Manchester Center in the Red Clover Community Wellness collective space.

The nonprofit milk bank collects milk from mothers who have more supply than their babies need. They screen donors, then pasteurize, test, and dispense milk primarily to premature and medically fragile babies or used for supplementation while a parent works to develop their own milk supply in the early postpartum period.

"We are grateful and delighted to be partnering with the team at Sage Willow Midwifery. They recognize the critical need to promote breastmilk donation so that there is ample supply for the tiny babies who rely on us for a healthy start in life," said Deborah Youngblood, chief executive officer of Mothers' Milk Bank Northeast.

Milk donor screening, modeled after blood donor screening, includes health history, healthcare provider approval, and a blood test. These are some of the many measures taken to assure the safety of milk for vulnerable babies served by Mothers' Milk Bank Northeast.

Sage Willow Midwifery provides preventive care, family planning, pregnancy and postpartum care, and lactation support. The practice was founded by Michelle Hansen and Lindsay Lachant who are both nurse midwives with many years of hospital and home-based experience supporting mothers and families. Lachant helped open a milk depot at a freestanding birth center a few years back and was excited to reach out to the milk bank again so that her new venture, Sage Willow Midwifery, could be a place where milk donation is encouraged and easy. Both Hansen and Lachant know how valuable donor milk can be to protect the health of medically complex babies and to support positive breastfeeding outcomes for families needing to supplement in early days of feeding.

In collaboration with Sage Willow Midwifery, Kimberleigh Weiss-Lewit, MA, IBCLC has been instrumental in expanding the depot to include dispensing human milk to families in need of supplementation in the community as well. Weiss-Lewit has a lactation consultation private practice where she sees clients virtually, in-home, and at her offices at Red Clover Community Wellness and Gentle Landing Birth Center.

"Access to donor milk locally allows families to ensure their babies are thriving while working with their provider and lactation consultant to develop a care plan to increase their own milk supply or their baby's ability to nurse well. Oftentimes donor milk is only needed for a short but vulnerable time," said Weiss-Lewit.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, children who receive breastmilk have significantly improved neurodevelopmental outcomes. They have decreased risks for many medical conditions including SIDS, asthma, celiac disease, Crohn's disease, diabetes, leukemia, childhood obesity, and they have better dental health. For preterm babies, donor milk is especially protective against a life-threatening condition called necrotizing enterocolitis (NEC), reducing the risk by well over half. When used to support breastfeeding, donor milk also contributes to maternal health benefits including decreased risk of certain cancers, type 2 diabetes, and hypertension.

The science regarding the medical importance of human milk has led to greater demand for safe, pasteurized donor human milk from nonprofit milk banks like Mothers' Milk Bank Northeast, which serves over 100 hospitals as well as outpatient families throughout the northeastern U.S. and has been accredited and operating since 2011.



By Arra Derderian

Killington ice rink is open and free to use, bring skates

Cold temperatures have finally provided conditions necessary to open outdoor rinks. The Killington ice rink at the Recreation Center on River Road is open every day weather permitting until 8:30 p.m. Bring your own skates, it is free!

Proposed bills would support community nurse programs

By Curt Peterson

Hartland's popular, successful community nurse program is administered by Aging in Hartland, (AiH), a non-profit group of volunteers dedicated to helping Hartland seniors remain independent and safe in their own homes. But many other towns, including Killington, currently have no community nurse program. The proposed Senate bill S.231 and partner House bill H.358, would make state grants available to support community nurse programs, according to state Sen. Becca White, D-Windsor, a co-sponsor of the bill. The grants would be funded from a \$450,000 fund administered by the Department of Disability, Aging and Independent Living as a two-year pilot program. Towns would submit applications outlining current programs and needs and future plans, White told the Mountain Times.

"This investment by the state will be very inexpensive relative to emergency room and EMT cost savings," White said.

Only the state could provide organization, regional coordination and information-sharing among all the Vermont programs.

AiH Care and Concern Committee chair Vicki Lawrence said the Hartland community nurse program began in 2017 with a town appropriation of \$5,175, half the program cost AiH projected. Volunteers raised the other half. The program employed one part-time nurse, who invested 6 hours per week

caring for Hartland seniors.

Select Board chair Phil Hobbie, also an AiH board member, said AiH is asking voters to repeat last year's \$28,000 appropriation in FY2025, for two nurses who spend roughly 30 hours each week with patients. Volunteers continue to raise the remaining half of the program's \$56,000 cost.

The AiH program has approximately 65 active patients who are seen regularly.

Some of the many programs statewide are funded by municipalities, but others are not. White said the grant program can help provide equity in the system.

The benefits to patients are manifold.

"We never discharge a patient — we support them right to the end," said Williams.

Community nurses provide them with consistency and familiarity — it's always the same nurse who visits and who has intimate knowledge of the client's needs, has the ability to help with healthcare decisions, makes regular house calls, and, most importantly, is not limited to a system-mandated number of minutes to spend with each patient. There's also no co-pay — community nurses provide their services without charge to patients.

Hartland community nurse Katie Williams told the Mountain Times companionship is an important ingredient in the nurse-patient relationship. Being

a senior in a rural town can be lonely. These things often mean a lot to a vulnerable, possibly low-income aging patient, Williams said.

She said the nurses are all RNs (registered nurses) with at least a B.S. in science of nursing, and work in cooperation with all other health providers, including clinics, hospitals, private practitioners and other visiting nurse programs.

"We are unique in the overall scheme because we are not under doctors' orders and not limited by Medicare guidelines," Williams added.

Community nurses do have limits to the care they can provide. They can't provide direct medical care, change IVs, re-bandage wounds, or physically assist with bathing, for example.

"We collaborate with Biota and the Visiting Nurse programs to get these needs tended to," she said. "We educate patients and help them design their plan of care and care schedules, identify their goals and priorities, and coordinate available sources and agencies to help them achieve those goals. We never discharge a patient — we support them right to the end."

Rep. Rebecca Holcombe, D-Norwich, is a co-sponsor of H.358. "We need to explore and experiment with better ways to keep people healthy and safe in their own homes," she told the Mountain Times. "Community nurse programs are evidence-based interventions with proven success at improving health care and reducing costs."

Making a point?

Following a veto by the governor of a bill to increase legislative pay last year, Sen. Tanya Vyhovsky of Chittenden County, along with Senators McCormack and White of Windsor County, introduce a bill to reduce the governor's pay to equal that of a part-time legislator on a weekly basis. The governor's salary (set by the Legislature) is currently about \$200,000 annually. It does not include a governor's mansion, like many other states. A part-time legislator earns \$841 per week for the average 18-week session (approximately \$15,000 annually).



By Rep. Jim Harrison

While the senator's bill is not likely to get much consideration, it's clear she and her co-sponsors were attempting to make a point about Scott's reluctance to double lawmakers' pay last year.

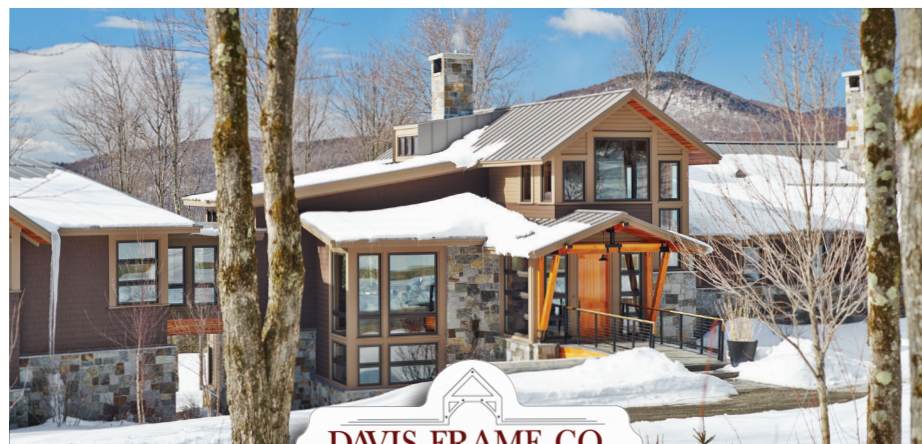
Other issues of interest:

- House Democrats, in a press release by the speaker's office, introduced legislation that would expand the state's Medicaid program. While expanding access to health care is often politically popular, raising taxes is not. Vermont's Medicaid program is the single largest expense item paid for by our General Fund revenues. Going into a tight budget year, it is unclear if the initiative was unveiled in the hope of consideration this year or in the future when state finances are more favorable?
- A tri-partisan group of lawmak-

ers, with the support of Governor Scott, have unveiled a housing bill that would make some changes to Act 250 that backers believe will help spur more housing construction.

- The first bill to pass the House this session was H.27, which would enable judges to issue prevention orders when one partner is inflicting mental and emotional abuse on another.
- The House gave final approval to H.72, which sets up two safe injection sites. To date, there are only two such sites in the U.S., both of which are in New York City. In addition to providing a safe haven for illegal drug use, the legislation does not prohibit minors from accessing the sites. The bill now moves to the Senate. Proponents believe the sites will help prevent overdose deaths. The details on how the sites will operate is to be determined.
- The House Human Services Committee is reviewing a Senate passed bill, S.18, which would ban flavored tobacco products, such as menthol, in Vermont.
- The Senate Natural Resources Committee has begun looking at a proposal to require utilities to have 100% of their power from renewable sources by 2030. One report estimated the change would increase electric rates 6% above normal increases.
- The House Judiciary Committee has begun the task of reviewing public safety laws, such as repeat offenders for retail theft. It is too

Harrison → 10



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Attorney General Clark releases list of Top 10 Scams of 2023

Scam reports to the Attorney General's Consumer Assistance Program (CAP) totaled 3,212 in 2023. The "computer tech support" scam took the No. 1 spot on the list, totaling almost 25% of the top scams reported. Phishing scams involving financial institutions, where a scammer tries to lure victims into clicking malicious links or tricking them into providing sensitive information, which can be used to steal money, took the No. 2 spot, accounting for a little more than 11% of the top scam reports in 2023.

A new scam—the "rewards credit" scam—was reported to CAP for the first time in 2023, rounding out the list of top 10 scams. This scam involves an email or text message that states there are unclaimed rewards, typically earned as a reward credit in points, a gift card, or redemption coupon. The message displays as being from major retailers and includes a link to click or a number to call. When victims click on

the link, they are asked to confirm their identity by giving personal information, then payment is requested for processing or shipping.

"We know that scammers have likely reached every Vermonter, often more than once. You may have received an annoying scam call or text, been lied to by a scammer, or lost money to a scam. But the good news is, we can fight scams by reporting them to the consumer assistance program and spreading awareness within our communities," said Attorney General Clark.

CAP actively updates scam prevention resources and strategies and manages the CAP Connection blog, keeping Vermonters informed about important consumer issues.

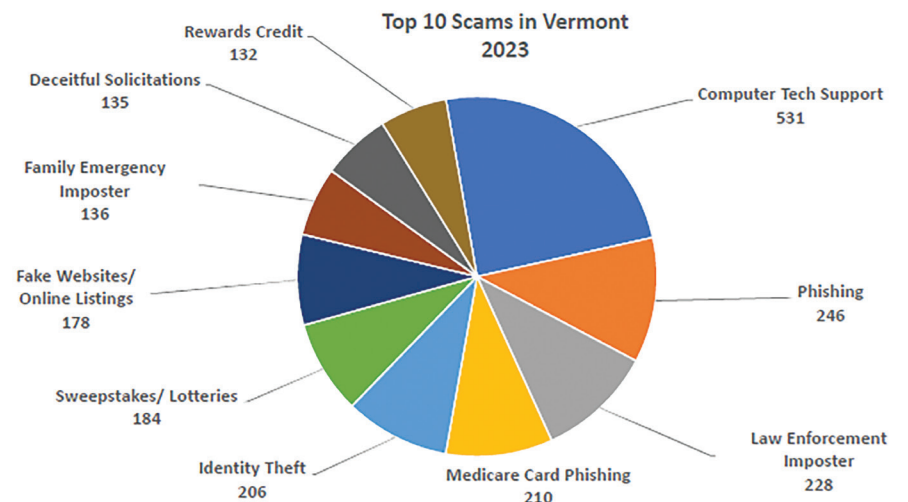
All Vermonters can help fight scams by reporting them to CAP and sharing prevention strategies in their community: visit: ago.vermont.gov/cap/scam-prevention-through-awareness-and-education.

The Top 10 Scams of 2023:

1. Computer Tech Support: 531
2. Phishing (Bank, etc.): 246
3. Law Enforcement Imposter: 228
4. Medicare Card Phishing: 210
5. Identity Theft: 206
6. Sweepstakes/Lotteries: 184

7. Fake Websites/Online Listings: 178
8. Family Emergency Imposter: 136
9. Deceitful Solicitations: 135
10. Rewards Credit: 132

There were 2,186 reports in the Top 10 of 3,212 total scams reported. For more info visit: ago.vermont.gov/StopScamsVT.



Huts: from page 1

Reflecting fondly on childhood memories at summer day camps, Thompson wanted to launch a program that would help give young people of all backgrounds the same sort of positive outdoor experiences. "I was thinking, we have this resource in the backcountry, and let's make sure everyone can use it," Thompson said.

So in 2020, Vermont Huts started a program called FOREST — or "Fostering Outdoor Recreation, Education, Sustainability and Teamwork" — that aims to bring together people who otherwise might not have the chance to explore the backcountry or feel comfortable doing so.

In its first two full years, the program has offered more than half a dozen free retreats to students ages 11 to 18, bringing students to huts at Grout Pond and Chittenden Brook in the Green Mountain National Forest. Participants have enjoyed nature walks, cooking meals, bushcraft lessons and more — activities vary based on what people want to do or learn.

So far, the retreats have taken place through partnerships with school districts and other organizations like the Teen Center in Middlebury. Josh Fisher, one of Vermont Huts' contracted outdoor educators, led a retreat with the latter.

He described how it's important to foster an accommodating environment and tailor the experience to particular groups. "My big focus is ... how are they interacting with the outdoors as individuals and as a group?" Fisher said. "Because the goal is to get them to enjoy it."

He added, "So hopefully we can keep building our populace of people who love to recreate in the outdoors."

Early on, organization leaders saw their focus on just young people was too simple.

"We really quickly realized that there was a lot more than just underserved youths that were not getting access to the outdoors," said Maggie Twitchell, program and communication coordinator for Vermont Huts. "There were people of color. There was the LGBTQ+ community. There were indigenous Americans."

It became clear that some barriers to recreation went well beyond economic restrictions — in fact, Twitchell believes, some barriers surrounding safety and inclusivity are "probably even harder than an economic restriction."

Vermont Huts is trying to better understand the needs and hesitations that particular groups may have regarding

backcountry treks — so the FOREST program is fluidly evolving. The initial vision folks like Thompson had for retreats — such as teaching skills like rope tying or fire-making — is not always what participants want or need from the outdoors.

Now, Vermont Huts is reaching out to community organizations and saying, "Look, we have accommodation out there, and we have funding, and we can help you achieve whatever your goals are to access the space that is out there," said Twitchell.

Vermont Huts would like to expand beyond just youth retreats to serve a wider, more diverse demographic. A new partnership with Vermont Adaptive Ski and Sports is one way to make this happen.

Vermont Adaptive is an organization dedicated to empowering individuals of all abilities — including those with physical and cognitive disabilities — through sports and recreation opportunities. The group uses specialized equipment, alongside trained staff and volunteers, to fit the needs of participants doing everything from mountain biking to kayaking to skiing.

Jeff Alexander, director of strategic partnerships with Vermont Adaptive, said the group plans to develop FOREST outings accessible to those with disabilities. For example, retreat participants who have visual or motor function disabilities could use equipment modified to be more comfortable. Vermont Adaptive staff would be on site to support participants' recreation and learning.

The two organizations are also working to develop a more extensive network of accessible trails in the state, including those that lead to the huts. The two organizations are collaborating with the U.S. Forest Service to outfit huts with all-terrain wheelchairs. This way, if someone comes to the hut on an adaptive bike, for example, they will have an onsite wheelchair to help them move around the hut.

Alexander said Vermont Adaptive plans to organize retreats through Vermont Huts for its veterans program as well, offering participants a sense of camaraderie they may have been missing.

Vermont Huts would like to expand beyond just youth retreats to serve a wider, more diverse demographic. A new partnership with Vermont Adaptive Ski and Sports is one way to make this happen.

As Twitchell put it, "A lot of adult groups get overlooked ... You're kind of expected to be an adult and figure it out yourself"

The partnership with Vermont Adaptive could counter that trend.

"We just want to make sure that everybody has the opportunity to recreate, and partnering with Vermont Huts is amazing because they believe the same thing," Alexander said.

In line with the program's growth, Vermont Huts wants to expand the team of educators who facilitate FOREST retreats. "We [found] that our educators don't represent

the communities that we want to help. And that's a barrier in itself," Twitchell said.

"Not having educators who are people of color or are from the LGBTQ+ community means that we really aren't serving those communities as well," she added.

So Vermont Huts wants to partner with groups like Pride Center of Vermont, Outright Vermont and Huntington Open Women's Land to offer members outdoor

educator training, Twitchell said. The hope is to nurture new educators for the huts system and to bring certification opportunities to more people.

Twitchell emphasized how the organization is actively looking for participants and groups interested in outings through the FOREST program. And outside the FOREST program, interested folks can book a stay in any of their huts — many of which are available year-round.

"We're really looking to do something special here in Vermont, and it's not just going to be our organization who does it. It's going to be all the partners working together," Thompson said. He praised the role of volunteers in recreation opportunities: "We're building a lot of this onto the success that they've achieved years before us."

Thompson is optimistic about what lies ahead. "It can grow into what I ultimately think it wants to be," he said of the FOREST program, "which is creating this safe space for anyone to have that experience and to hopefully just feel comfortable in the outdoors."

High levels of cancer-causing radon gas detected in 21.7% of Vermont homes

The American Lung Association urges everyone to test their home, businesses

Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer and the State of Lung Cancer report reveals that it is detected at high levels in about 21.7% of homes in Vermont. During January for National Radon Action Month, the American Lung Association in Vermont is urging everyone to help save lives by testing their home for radon and mitigating if high levels are detected.

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas emitted from the ground. Radon is odorless, tasteless and colorless, and can enter a home through cracks in floors, basement walls, foundations and other openings. Radon can be present at high levels inside homes, schools and other buildings. It is responsible for an estimated 21,000 lung cancer deaths every year and is the leading cause of lung cancer in people who have never smoked.

In Vermont about 21.7% of radon test results equal or exceed the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) action level of 4 pCi/L, according to the Lung Association's "State of Lung Cancer" report, released in a news release Jan. 8.

"Radon in homes is more common than you think. In fact, high levels of radioactive radon gas have been found in every state but most places in the country remain undertested, so this isn't something that should be taken lightly. Exposure to radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States,"

said Trevor Summerfield, director of advocacy for the Lung Association. "Testing for radon is the only way to know if the air in your home is safe. The good news is that it is easy to test. Do-it-yourself test kits are simple to use and inexpensive."

After high levels are detected, a radon professional should install a radon mitigation system, which is easy and relatively affordable. A typical radon mitigation system consists of a vent pipe, fan and properly sealing cracks and other openings. This system collects radon gas from underneath the foundation and vents it to the outside. Some state health departments offer financial assistance or low interest loans for radon mitigation.

Despite the early diagnosis rate in Vermont falling into the above average tier, the state still has a lot of work to do to make sure that more of those at high risk for lung cancer are screened.

Vermont falls into the average tier for percent of patients receiving no treatment. Some patients do refuse treatment, but issues such as fatalism and stigma can prevent eligible patients from accessing treatment that may save or extend their lives. All patients should work with their doctors to establish a treatment plan and goals.

For more information about radon testing and mitigation, visit: Lung.org/radon. To take the Lung Association's free Radon Basics course, visit: Lung.org/Radon-Basics.

Rate of New Cases	Survival Rate	Early Diagnosis	Surgical Treatment	Lack of Treatment	Screening
Average	Top	Above Average	Average	Average	Top

Courtesy American Lung Association

Nearly 30,000 Vermonters have lost Medicaid coverage in the past 8 months

By Peter D'Auria/VTDigger

In 2022, Erin Kellar was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes.

Kellar had enrolled in Vermont's Medicaid health insurance program as a graduate student, and was able to stay in the program while she began her career as a therapist.

Medicaid helped pay for treatment for her diabetes, which requires rapid-acting insulin, long-acting insulin and a glucose meter. She also requires thyroid medication and treatment for other autoimmune conditions.

But last year, the state determined that her income — about \$40,000 a year — made her ineligible for the program. Since then, she's paid out-of-pocket for a Blue Cross Blue Shield of Vermont plan — one that eats up roughly a quarter of her total income.

"I'm constantly fearful of, are they going to raise the costs? And I'm powerless to it," Kellar said. Without insurance, she said, "I would die."

Kellar is one of thousands of Vermonters who have lost coverage through Medicaid, a state-run government program that provides health insurance to low-income Americans, since last spring.

Between April and December of last year, 27,984 Vermonters have lost Medicaid coverage, according to data reports submitted to the federal government by the Dept. of Vermont Health Access. The losses come as millions of Americans are being disenrolled after pandemic-era protections come to an end.

What happened to Vermont's pandemic-era Medicaid recipients during the renewal process? Of the 96,956 Medicaid renewal applications processed from May 2023 to December 2023, after pandemic-era rules about Medicaid eligibility expired:

- Successfully renewed: 61,123 (61%)
- Renewal being processed: 12,271 (12%)
- Denied for procedural reasons: 20,152 ineligibility: 7,832 (27% total)

Usually, states undergo an annual process in which they check whether residents enrolled in Medicaid fit the household income requirements for the program, and remove those who don't.

But in 2020, Congress offered states money to keep Medicaid patients enrolled in the program, meaning that millions of people were able to maintain their health insurance during the Covid-19 pandemic.

After that provision expired last spring, states began trimming Medicaid rolls for the first time since 2019. Nationwide, nearly 14 million people have lost Medicaid coverage during this process, according to the health policy think tank, KFF.

'People shouldn't have to choose'

As Vermonters grapple with burgeoning health care costs, advocates, including Kellar, have urged lawmakers and Gov. Phil Scott's administration to stop removing Vermonters from Medicaid.

On Friday, Jan. 12 — the same day as a raucous State House rally against the Medicaid removals — Vermont lawmakers announced a sweeping proposal to expand Medicaid access in the state.

Currently, Vermont adults who make up to 133% of the federal poverty level are eligible for Medicaid. Children are eligible if their families makes up to 312% of the poverty level, and pregnant people with incomes up to 208% of the poverty level are eligible.

If passed, the bill, H.721, would gradually raise the limit for adults to 312% of the federal poverty level by 2030. Currently, the federal poverty level for one person is \$15,060 and \$31,200 for a family of four.

Denied Medicaid → 29

New Americans and farmers find purpose and prosperity

An innovative initiative is underway in Vermont: The Grow America Farm Corps initiative addresses Vermont's farm labor shortages by fostering dynamic collaboration among local farmers, new Americans, and supporting partners.

Farmers with employment opportunities can sign up to match with new Americans seeking agricultural training and mentorship. Grow America Farm Corps partners assist in placing and transitioning participants who gain housing through on-farm living spaces, professional skills development, and community. Participants can also access job placement assistance in agricultural manufacturing.

The initiative is spearheaded by the nonprofit organization Operation Recovery together with the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets; U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants; the dairy farm families of Agri-Mark; Cabot Creamery Cooperative; and Liberty Hill Farm,

according to a news release Jan. 3. Operation Recovery is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to supporting, sustaining, and enabling those connected to service, diplomacy, and humanitarian development.

Between January 2012 and October 2023, nearly half of Vermont's dairy farms closed their doors, according to a recent University of Vermont Extension report. State and national agricultural trends including an aging farmer population, increasing non-farmland pressure, and production capacity challenges face Vermont's current and future farming generations.

Through this unique new collaboration, partner organizations, agencies, and community leaders aim to combine on-ground wisdom with online resources to enhance job accessibility and prioritize housing support within the state.

"I am proud of the work being done by Grow America

Farm Corps and their partners including the Vermont Agency of Agriculture and Cabot to help our newest Vermonters to begin work on farms," said Patrick Leahy, a retired U.S. senator from Vermont noted for his leadership in agricultural and immigration matters. "Agricultural workers are much needed, so this approach can sustain existing farms while giving new Americans an opportunity to join our rural communities through working in farming, one of Vermont's most important industries."

More than 40 new American families fleeing hardship abroad are participating in Grow America Farm Corps, launched in late 2023. Interest among the state's farmers and new Americans is growing as the initiative expands.

To host a family, register to view available Grow America Farm Corps employment opportunities, donate, or learn more about the initiative, visit: GrowAmericaFarmCorps.org.

GUEST EDITORIAL

Farmer housing, jobs, and the economy

By Anson B. Tebbetts, secretary of the state Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets (VAAFAM)

From Canaan to Cavendish, and Duxbury to Dummerston, Vermonters are asking for more housing units and better-quality dwellings. Workers and employees, we hear you, asking for more well-constructed homes, apartments, and condos so you can work, live, and play closer to where you earn. We are listening and determined to act.

We hear calls for more housing from all industry sectors.

From high tech, to hospitality, to hospitals, to agriculture — the need is serious. Every week, we hear from young farmers who have tremendous energy, enthusiasm, and training to work the land, producing food for Vermont and our region. We also hear from new Americans who have moved to the Green Mountains for a better life.

But agriculture is not a 9-to-5 profession. There are often odd and long hours. Aspiring farmers are discouraged because they cannot find affordable housing closer to their farms, fields, and processing facilities. They cannot find housing closer to their jobs.

The need is acute, and critical to Vermont's future. If we don't create more places to live, youth will continue to leave our state, among them, young farmers, and entrepreneurs. We need to allow more flexibility to build housing closer to the place of work. We must listen to the next generation as we develop policies in the Legislature this year.

As the legislative session gets underway, all of us need to keep an open mind and embrace common sense suggestions that will offer more opportunities for workers and employers. That will include updating Act 250, Vermont's decades old land use law. It has been more than 50 years since Act 250 was created, and Vermont has changed.

If our regulations, guidelines, and policies don't change along with our state, we risk Vermont becoming a place where only privileged people can afford to live and work.

As we take on vast and problematic housing issues, one model we could consider broadening is existing small-scale farm worker housing policies. Vermont has invested in this area, but we must do much more if we are going to provide good jobs to Vermonters, as well as enjoy fresh food and world class products.

Imagine the possibilities if we could further elevate our food industry by boosting our workforce. Vermont produces world class dairy products like butter, yogurt, ice cream and cheese but we could do more if we had more affordable housing in our rural regions. Lack of housing has prevented companies from keeping pace or growing. Companies of all sizes are telling us they could produce more or expand their operations if there were more housing in Vermont.

There are even examples of businesses having to stop producing award winning products because of the lack of labor.

More housing could halt that trend. We have made some progress by investing in farm worker housing through the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board and the Working Lands Enterprise Fund but progress could be made if we modernize our laws.

There is growing momentum to embrace common sense changes to Act 250 this session so Vermont's farm, forest and food economy can grow. It's time for Vermont to realize that as much as employees fill jobs, they are people who need homes, as well as access to reliable utilities,

Housing → 10



Polar Vortex by Rivers, CagleCartoons

LETTERS

Snow globe of democracy

Dear Editor,

Snow globes are popular and soothing. What's not to like about a glass globe with a pleasant scene inside, with snow gently falling whenever you shake the globe? But what if those falling flakes are actually bits of greed, corruption, violence and ignorance?

That's how America seems to me now: a carefully crafted scene of democracy and equality fastened to the public image, while the slightest disturbance of the globe unleashes a storm that is anything but pure snow.

We are a nation that proclaims itself a model democracy yet cannot govern itself or even agree on what is real. One which elected a lifelong con man to its highest office and may well reelect him despite his efforts to steal the presidency.

A nation which has more guns than people and is unable to even begin addressing an epidemic of school shootings that leaves many children dead and far more traumatized for life.

A rich nation with horrendous poverty in the

Snow globe → 10

Beekeepers refute state claims of honey bee health

Dear Editor,

With decades of effort toward raising public awareness on the plight of pollinators, we the beekeepers of Vermont are deeply concerned about recent communications from the Vermont Agency of Agriculture Food and Markets (VAAFAM), and we would like to set the record straight.

The VAAFAM's claim of record honey bee numbers in Vermont as evidence of a "healthy and robust beekeeping industry" is not only misleading but serves to undermine our industry and ongoing efforts in Vermont to protect managed and native bees, both of whom are in great peril. Contrary to VAAFAM's recent communications, the beekeeping and scientific community agree that the total number of honey bee colonies cannot be used to measure bee health (a honey bee colony is a single family of bees housed in a hive.)

A more accurate estimate of our state honey bee health is annual colony loss. According to VAAFAM's own statistics, Vermont beekeepers have lost at least 25% of their bees during the winter months for the last three years. The Bee Informed Partnership, a national organization that

Vermont
beekeepers
have lost at
least 25% of
their bees
...for the last
three years.

tracks U.S. honey bee colony losses, reports combined summer and winter colony losses for Vermonters much higher at 35-85% each year for

the last four years. Vermont beekeepers have maintained colony numbers by becoming bee-replacers instead of beekeepers. When VAAFAM takes their tally of Vermont hives each July, beekeepers have already created new colonies to replace their losses. However, this is a very costly and laborious process — one that is not indicative of a "healthy

Bees → 10

Dems must vote in Republican primaries

Dear Editor,

For the first time in American history our democracy is on the precipice of becoming extinct. The odds are stacked against us. Democrats find themselves in a precarious place. They have lost the House, the Senate is holding on by a thread and our president is not a slam dunk for reelection in 2024. Unlike past campaign slogans, "Hope" is not a strategy.

The Republicans are about to nominate one of the worst presidents in U.S. history as their preferred candidate, and the courts are unlikely to keep Donald Trump off the ballot or conclude his criminal trials before the election. You may be saying to yourselves, "We're Democrats, this is a Republican problem." Wrong. It's everybody's problem. So what can we do?

Register Republican. That's right. You heard me. Register Republican and become eligible to vote in the Republican primaries.

Primaries → 10

CAPITOL QUOTES

After months of speculation, Patriots head coach Bill Belichick “mutually” departed from the organization Jan. 11. Belichick, 71, had been a head coach for 29 seasons -- 24 in New England where he notched six Super Bowl wins.

“He set the tone for the organization to never falter in the face of adversity,”

said **Tom Brady**.

“From sources familiar with those conversations, there was said to be no conflict, no disagreement, and in the end, productive talks resulted in a mutual decision that left both sides comfortable and at ease,”

said reporters **Adam Schefter** and **Mike Reiss**.

“I promise you I’ll be focused to do the best I can do to make sure we’re putting ourselves in the best long-term position to win for many years,”

said Patriots owner **Robert Kraft**.

“I will always be a Patriot. I look forward to coming back here. But at this time, we’re going to move on. I’m excited for the future,”

said coach **Bill Belichick**.

Democracy requires accountability

By State Auditor Doug Hoffer

Evidence-based. Evidence-informed. Data-driven. Results Based Accountability. PIVOT. Vermont policymakers frequently use these terms to indicate that new policies and spending decisions are the result of rigorous, fully-informed analysis. Too often, though, the promise of these terms is undercut by bad data, incomplete information, and misleading representations from officials.

When state government does performance measurement well, Vermonters are able to determine whether state programs are working well and if their tax dollars are being efficiently spent. When it’s done poorly, though, the information can tell a less-than-complete or misleading story, leading to bad decisions and wasteful spending. At worst, it can be a total waste of time.

Here are some examples we’ve encountered in our work of state agencies presenting less-than-helpful portrayals of government performance:

- The City of Burlington’s 2021 Tax Increment financing report count-

ed 150 Burlington High School teachers and staff as jobs “created” by the program, when they have merely moved temporarily out of the PCB-impacted BHS and into the empty Macy’s department store building. The Vermont Economic Progress Council, the state agency that administers the TIF program, acknowledges that “there is no way to verify the TIF District-reported numbers” (p.13). Nevertheless, they continue to report whatever the towns submit to them.

- In Measuring Up: Examining performance reporting in the Vermont Annual Outcomes Report, we found the state’s annual outcomes report depicted the percent of Vermont covered by “state-of-the-art telecommunications infrastructure” at a clearly implausible 96.2% (it was based upon antiquated 4/1 download/upload speeds). The report also

Accountability → 27

Economic justice is a civil liberties issue

By James Lyall

Editor’s note: James Lyall is the executive director of the ACLU of Vermont.

The Fair Share for Vermont campaign is calling for Vermont’s wealthiest residents to pay their fair share in taxes so we can build a better state for all of us.

As part of this campaign, the ACLU of Vermont and our partners are urging state legislators to ensure that those who can most afford it—the wealthiest 2% of Vermont residents—pay more in taxes to better support and address the needs of our communities.

There are many reasons why we are proud to support this campaign, but they boil down to this: as an organization that works to remedy deeply entrenched sources of inequality, and to advance the rights and liberties of all people, economic justice is central to our vision for a more just and equitable state, and a healthy, vibrant democracy.

Today, because of extreme and growing wealth inequality, more and more of our neighbors are denied access to opportunity and to basic necessities. As a result, many are prevented from exercising their civil rights and civil liberties to the fullest extent, participating in our democracy, and experiencing true freedom and equality in our society.

As we have long recognized, wealth inequality also reinforces the many forms of systemic racism that we are working to dismantle each and every day.

When our state invests in people in the here and now, it makes the state more sustainable and affordable for everyone in both the short- and long-term. When we prioritize real solutions like affordable housing, healthcare, and education—all things that impact our civil liberties, directly and indirectly, every day—the benefits to our state, and to Vermont workers and families, are transformative.

State legislators have started to make investments for healthier, more resilient communities—in housing, childcare, harm reduction strategies, and climate solutions. We applaud those efforts. At the same time, we know we must do far more to create a state budget that better addresses the needs of everyone who calls Vermont home.

With more revenue from the state’s wealthiest 2% of residents, we can build a Vermont with affordable housing; where no child goes hungry; where everyone gets the healthcare they need; and where our environment and infrastructure can sustain a vibrant economy and a strong democracy.

That’s why we look forward to working with legislators to advance this proposal in the coming year. We recognize there are other paths forward to raise revenue from those who can most afford it, and we hope policymakers will explore all available options to prioritize Vermont workers, families, and communities.

When they do that, it’s important for our state legislators to know that they will have the support of the ACLU of Vermont, our members, and our partners in the Fair Share for Vermont campaign. They will also have the backing of the vast majority of their constituents. Voters overwhelmingly support proposals like Fair Share for Vermont, and those voters will be looking to their representatives for solutions this election year.

← **Primaries:**
from page 8

Then vote for Nikki Haley. Why Nikki Haley? She isn't Trump and she isn't Ron DeSantis. She understands the job, and even if you disagree with her on policy, she is reasonable and can be expected to uphold the Constitution.

Your principles may be telling you not to pursue this line of reasoning. But think about

this. There are enough Democrats to change the outcome of the Republican primaries. If Democrats remain confi-

dent about the Democratic nominee for president and believe that he will win no matter what, then they are guilty of not taking action to protect our democracy. As we too often discover, blind faith is often not rewarded. If Democrats go to the Republican primary polls in

unprecedented numbers, they can at least ensure that the country will be led by either a seasoned Democrat or the country's first female president. And it can be Democrats who determine that outcome.

So Democrats, go RED... at least for a few months. Vote for Nikki Haley as the Republican nominee and

So Democrats, go RED...
Vote for Nikki Haley as the Republican nominee and then vote BLUE in November.

then vote BLUE in November. This is your choice, but it's worth doing. Protecting our democracy is a responsibility that falls on all of us.

Check with your Secretary of State for instructions on how to register for a different party.

Hon. Noah Margo and Dr. David Bernell

← **Bees:**
from page 8

and robust" beekeeping industry.

Not only is colony count the wrong measure of our industry's health, the numbers themselves are misleading. Non-keepers are largely unaware that thousands of Vermont honey bee colonies counted by VAAFM are propagated in the south, trucked to Vermont in early summer, and then moved south again before winter. These imported colonies more than double the Vermont colony count for a short period of time each year.

The apparent increase in colony numbers from 2016-2023 was largely driven by beekeepers registering their pre-existing colonies thanks to the collaborative efforts of the Vermont Beekeepers Association and the VAAFM. The increase in colony numbers during the period presented by the VAAFM represents both a growth in

program participation and an increasingly accurate state database.

Across our entire beekeeping industry, annual colony losses are too high and unsustainable. All Vermont beekeepers, including migratory beekeepers, struggle with a high degree of annual colony losses due to pests, pathogens, environmental impacts, and pesticide use. As we continue to confront these challenges, it is disheartening to find that our state agricultural agency has used inaccurate numbers and oversimplification of a complex situation to suggest that bees are flourishing in our state. These inaccuracies undermine the enormous efforts of Vermont beekeepers and the urgency of addressing the very real threats to pollinator health here in Vermont.

Vermont Beekeepers Association

← **Housing:**
from page 8

internet, groceries, and education. They're great workers, they love their jobs, and all too often, they must move away because getting to and from work is just too hard, too long, too time-consuming. Vermont has the chance to bend the curve and start creating more housing closer to jobs and opportunity.

People are seeking jobs, and employers are hiring. Good jobs are waiting. However, attracting and retaining workers is difficult when there is no place to live near your job.

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture is ready to lead. We owe it to current and future generations of Vermonters who want to call Vermont their home. Let's work together this session to create real, meaningful change for all Vermonters, for today and tomorrow.

← **Grow grant:**
from page 1

to bring in new Vermonters and keep the ones we already have," said Heather Pelham, Vermont tourism and marketing commissioner. "Recruiting and retaining residents is important one-on-one work that takes time and commitment. Many grantees have been doing this work on a volunteer basis and we're grateful the legislature set aside this money to support them as they work to grow our population."

There are two types of GROW grants, the Regional Relocation Network Track and the Outreach Track. Some awardees, including CEDRR, received grants from both tracks.

Those receiving the Regional Relocation Network Track grants will complement and support the state's relocation lead generation and distribution system on ThinkVermont.com. Grantees will be required to connect with and follow up on generated leads of potential residents interested in moving to their area. Awardees are:

- Chamber & Economic Development of the Rutland Region
- Addison County Economic Development Corporation
- Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation
- Green Mountain Economic Development Corporation
- Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Montpelier Downtown Community Association
- Northern Forest Center
- Southwestern Vermont Chamber of Commerce
- Vermont Professionals of Color Network

Those receiving the Outreach Track grants will organize events and/or conduct activities that promote their region to prospective residents and/or help new residents feel welcome in their new community. Events can target recently relocated families and individuals or potential new residents to support their relocation to Vermont. This track could also include the creation of regional marketing assets to assist with outreach. Awardees are:

- Chamber & Economic Development of the Rutland Region
- Addison County Economic Development Corporation
- Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation
- Chandler Center for the Arts
- Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Montpelier Downtown Community Association
- Southern Vermont Deerfield Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Northern Forest Center
- Southwestern Vermont Chamber of Commerce
- Vital Communities

Grantees gathered Thursday, Jan. 11 in Rutland to share best practices and learn more about the program and the data driving the need for this important work.

Grantees will be required to submit monthly reports and deliverables specific to their approved scope of work to track progress and make any adjustments as necessary in their activities to meet GROW program goals.

← **Snow globe:**
from page 8

lower strata, which refuses to fund even the infrastructure needed to keep roads and bridges from collapsing. A rich nation where millions struggle to find and afford medical care, driven into debt and bankruptcy by medical bills.

A nation in which racism, other bigotries, and book banning are growing like weeds while more and more people treat history as an enemy rather than a lesson.

That corrosive snowfall will eventually eat through the base until the globe is completely empty.

Lee Russ, Bennington

← **Harrison:**
from page 5

early to know if they will move to increase penalties for repeat offenders.

- The Vermont Judiciary plans to ask for three new judges and 10 new assistants to help with the backlog of court cases that began during the pandemic.
- The Cannabis Board is proposing to remove the cap on the potency of marijuana sold through Vermont's regulated stores. Several health groups, including the Medical Society, oppose the change.
- The education and revenue committees have begun reviewing some of the reasons for increased education property taxes this coming year. The Chair of House Ways

The Cannabis Board is proposing to remove the cap on the potency of marijuana sold through Vermont's regulated stores.

& Means Committee recently said in a media interview, that the biggest factor will be what the locally approved school budgets look like at Town Meeting. At the end of the day, it will be up to the voters.

Jim Harrison is the state representative for Chittenden, Killington, Mendon and Pittsfield. He can be reached at JHarrison@leg.state.vt.us or harrisonforvermont.com.

← **Deirdre Morris:**
from page 2

and with are some of the hardest working, most dedicated people that I can imagine."

The feeling is mutual with her coworkers.

"Dierdre was a real asset to the company and to myself," said Director of Hospitality Scott Harrison. "I always say seasons come and go, people come and go, but the memories remain, and I have lots of great ones of Dierdre."

"I'm excited that I get to retire gracefully and move on to play forever," she said. "I hope to be able to ski long into the future.

"I've been very blessed to have enjoyed Killington work every day," Morris said. "There are days you don't like, but most days I've really

been lucky to enjoy the experience working here."

With that, Morris is looking forward to her retirement.

"I'm excited that I get to retire gracefully and move on to play forever," she said.

"I hope to be able to ski long into the future. I also play ice hockey, pickleball, golf and hike, and I'm going to do all those things, plus travel a bit," she added.

WORDPLAY

SLOWCOOKING WORD SEARCH

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally and backwards

N Y M A G N W K E N C G O M B G F H G K
 I P N D H P Y R Y R O V A S I A D K B J
 L P C N L E N L W O L J A F C E O E T P R
 R R I B O R R D F W I E L D A L O K P R
 E E V M Y U M M N O N S T I C K E E O O
 A M J I R T V F U K W E T N V S T A E F
 F I E L P A I C R O C K M A E D S F D R
 T T N C R R M W H O U R S A E T O U F S
 H R R O P E H I N J B O S S O N D A U I
 W P U O S P H L D I F O S P D H V L D C
 B U S Y L M A W I H N E H U K P N E W K
 J A D E E E U K C I R H E K I T C H E N
 S T E W G T R W N T J V B V I J G B S L
 B U T U W I N G R E D I E N T S T S O G
 C E H U I N S O G B K F H W N T W L T O
 I N I D I G I T A L S B F H E H M B J O
 R E K O O C W O L S F G N I R E M M I S
 P W P G N B W K S C E D U R R P K P B A
 K O T D Y R M L L W F A R J V S A K F N
 T H C N B U O Y O J N E J W H M T O P H

- BUSY
- FONDUE
- LOW
- SEASONINGS
- TEMPERATURE
- CROCK
- HOURS
- NONSTICK
- SIMMERING
- TIMER
- DESSERT
- INGREDIENTS
- POT
- SLOWCOOKER
- DIGITAL
- KITCHEN
- ROAST
- SOUP
- ENJOY
- LADLE
- SAVORY
- STEW

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SUDOKU

Solutions → 19

How to Play

Each block is divided by its own matrix of nine cells. The rule for solving Sudoku puzzles are very simple. Each row, column and block, must contain one of the numbers from "1" to "9". No number may appear more than once in any row, column, or block. When you've filled the entire grid the puzzle is solved.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Solutions → 19

CLUES ACROSS

1. Microgram
4. Where golfers begin
7. Each
8. Warm weather metropolis
10. Coat with sticky substance
12. Girl's given name
13. Myth (Spanish)
14. Ultrahigh frequency
16. Former NBAer Jeremy
17. Where rockers work
19. Your consciousness of your own identity
20. Soft-finned fishes
21. Localities
25. Paddle
26. Union
27. Member of religious community
29. Small shrill flute
30. Small constellation in the Milky Way
31. They ___
32. College kid on vacation
39. de Armas and Gasteyer are two

41. Part of the human body
42. A progressive grading
43. Sound unit
44. Noise some birds make
45. Abba __, Israeli politician
46. Portuguese city
48. Be extremely, uncritically fond of
49. Resembling old Norse poems
50. Ask for out of extreme need
51. Sino-Soviet block (abbr.)
52. Midway between south and southeast

1	2	3				4	5	6						
7						8					9			
10				11			12							
13						14	15				16			
17				18			19				20			
21					22	23				24				
					25			26						
				27	28			29						
				30				31						
				32				33		34	35	36	37	38
39	40					41				42				
43				44						45				
46				47						48				
49										50				
				51						52				

14. Exclamation: yuck!
15. A resident of Indiana
18. Exclamation of surprise
19. Make a mistake
20. Boundary
22. Antilles island
23. It's used to make furniture
24. Clod
27. They indicate where places are
28. Bobby __, NHL champ
29. Prints money
31. Honorable title (Turkish)
32. Appetizers
33. Midway between north and northwest
34. Spanish be
35. Breezed through
36. Grilled dishes
37. In a way, excites
38. Change mind
39. A French abbot
40. Popular candy
44. Partner to cheese
47. Wood or metal bolt

4	5					7	3	
1			2	3				6
			9					
2			4					8
7	1	8		2				
3				8				4
	4	1						7
6	2		1					5

Level: Intermediate

Guess Who?

I am an actor born in New York on January 16, 1980. I started my musical career in a comedy hip hop group. I have achieved immense fame after creating groundbreaking Broadway musicals and contributing to movie soundtracks.

Answer: Lin-Manuel Miranda

WEDNESDAY

1/17

Public Skating

Wednesdays, Jan.-Feb. Union Arena, 80 Amsden Way, Woodstock.

2-3 p.m. Seniors, parents with toddlers.

3-4:10 p.m. All ages. Ages 13+ \$6; ages 4-12 \$5; ages 3 and under, free. Rental skates available, \$6/pair. unionarena.org/public-skate-sessions

Cribbage for Adults

3-5 p.m. Wednesdays. Hartland Public Library, 153 Route 5, Hartland. Free. Join a gathering of adult cribbage players at the library's meeting room. hartlandlibraryvt.org/calendar/ or 802-436-2473

Bone Builders

3:30-4:30 p.m. Wednesdays. Chaffee Art Center, 16 So. Main St., Rutland. Improve balance and enhance energy and wellbeing. Pricing and info: chaffeeartcenter.org

Introduction to Adobe Illustrator at The MINT

5:30-8 p.m. The MINT, 112 Quality Lane, Rutland. Members, \$15; not-yet-members, \$20. Prerequisite: solid understanding of computer navigation. Details at rutlandmint.org/calendar

Introduction to MIG Welding at The MINT

5:30-7:30 p.m. The MINT, 112 Quality Lane, Rutland. Members, \$25; not-yet-members, \$45. No previous experience is necessary, supplies and PPE provided. rutlandmint.org/calendar

Figure Drawing with Live Model

5-7 p.m. Chaffee Art Center, 16 So. Main St., Rutland. Bring your own supplies. Minimum students: 4. Sign up for 4 weeks at \$60 or \$20 per class. Enjoy a creative session of figure drawing with a live model. chaffeeartcenter.org

Book Group

5:30-6:30 p.m. Monthly, 3rd Wednesday. Chaffee Art Center, 16 So. Main St., Rutland. \$25. Join us for a lively discussion of "Make Yourself Unforgettable: How to Become the Person Everyone Remembers and No One Can Resist," by Judy Ho, Ph.D. Dale Carnegie training course. RSVP required. info@chaffeeartcenter.org or 802-775-0356

Adult Open Gym: Coed Pickleball

7-9 p.m. Wednesdays, Jan. 8-Mar. 17. Killington Elementary School, 686 School House Road, Killington. Buy a 10-visit punch card for \$20 or pay \$5 for every time you come. Partially punched cards from last year are still valid. Enjoy coed team sports in a low-key environment for ages 16 & up. This is a drop-in program, no preregistration and no leagues. For questions please contact Griffin Van Niel at recadmin@killingtontown.com

BARN ARTS
COMMUNITY
CONTRA DANCES

FRIDAY 6:30 PM

**Public Skating**

Wednesdays, Jan.-Feb. Union Arena, 80 Amsden Way, Woodstock.

2-3 p.m. Seniors, parents with toddlers.

3-4:10 p.m. All ages. Ages 13+ \$6; ages 4-12 \$5; ages 3 and under, free. Rental skates available, \$6/pair. unionarena.org/public-skate-sessionsunionarena.org/public-skate-sessions

Mihali Presents: The Winter**Sessions**

8 p.m. Wednesdays in January. Pickle Barrel Nightclub, 1741 Killington Road, Killington. \$20-\$25. Join Mihali & Friends on the Pickle Barrel main stage for a 4-show residency. Each show will feature different guests and take place in a special venue. Must be at least 21. picklebarrelnightclub.com.

THURSDAY

1/18

Cassoulet Dinner

Richardson's Tavern in the Woodstock Inn, 14 The Green, Woodstock. Join us for a cozy evening with a three-course menu, wine pairings, and guest speaker Sylvie Bigar. Reservations online at woodstockinn.com.

Killington Bone Builders

10 a.m. Thursdays. Sherburne Memorial Library, 2998 River Road, Killington. Free. Weights are provided. sherburnelibrary.org or 802-422-4323.

Artery at Chaffee Art Center

10am-noon. Fridays. Chaffee Art Center, 16 So. Main St., Rutland. \$10-\$20. Adult group for connection and inspiration. Painting in all mediums welcome. No set topic or instructor, attendees will work on their individual artwork. When possible, will include 30 minute technique focus with rotating artists. Must pre-register. Info and registration: chaffeeartcenter.org.

Ukulele Group

Noon-1 p.m. Thursdays. Chaffee Art Center, 16 So. Main St., Rutland. Free. Musician Steven Wilson leads the group through specific sheet music. All levels welcome. Must pre-register. chaffeeartcenter.square.site or 802-775-0356

Michelob Ultra Race World

1-3 p.m. Thursdays, to March 14. Pico Mountain: Lower Pike or Exhibition. \$50 per individual. Weekly race series at Pico featuring 8 races, where participants can race as individuals or form a team of up to 5 racers. Each race is followed by a party at the Last Run Lounge from 4-6 p.m. Register for the race series: tfaforms.com/5031843. picomountain.com

Play Bridge!

2 p.m. Thursdays. Norman Williams Public Library, 10 The Green, Woodstock. Free. Beginners are welcome to observe. normanwilliams.org, 802-457-2295.

S.T.E.A.M. [CANCELED, Jan. 17-Feb. 17]

Hartland Public Library

Learn Ballroom Dancing with Patti PanebiancoThursdays, through Jan. 25
5- 5:50 p.m. Kids - Tango & Cha-Cha
6-6:50 p.m. Adults - Foxtrot
7-7:50 p.m. Adults - Salsa
Waldron Gym, Green Mountain Community School, 1 Brennan Circle, Poultony. Pricing and info: stonevalleyarts.org**Green Drinks: New School Building**

5:30-6:30 p.m. Woodstock Union Middle & High School building. Join us to learn about the new net-0-ready campus. Discuss the building's plans and its sustainable features. Q&A session included. sustainablewoodstock.org

Open Mic Night

7-9 p.m. Alternating Thursdays. ArtisTree Community Arts Center, 2095 Pomfret Road, South Pomfret. Free. Have fun and debut your musical talents on our warm and friendly "stage." All levels and abilities are welcome. Come to play or just to watch. artistreevt.org/artistree-events

Adult Open Gym: Basketball

7-9 p.m. Thursdays, Jan. 8-Mar. 17. Killington Elementary School, 686 School House Road, Killington. Buy a 10-visit punch card for \$20 or pay \$5 for every time you come. Partially punched cards from last year are still valid. Enjoy COED team sports in a low-key environment for ages 16 & up. This is a drop-in program, no preregistration and no leagues. For questions please contact Griffin Van Niel at recadmin@killingtontown.com

WOBBLY BARN:
PULSE

FRI & SAT

Marcus Rezak with Adrian from Twiddle - Shred is Dead

7 p.m. Pickle Barrel Nightclub, 1741 Killington Road, Killington. Shred is Dead is a progressive instrumental and vocal performance of The Grateful Dead & Jerry Garcia Band, led by guitarist Marcus Rezak. Rezak is known for his jazz improvisation and collaborations with various musicians. Attendees must be 21+. picklebarrelnightclub.com

FRIDAY

1/19

Volunteer for Hospice

8 a.m.-4 p.m. Casella Conference Room, 7 Albert Cree Drive, Rutland. Training is free and open to individuals 16 years and older. Gain knowledge and skills in hospice care and enhance the end-of-life experiences of patients. No previous experience required. Pre-registration and proof of COVID-19 vaccination are required. Contact Mary at 802-442-0540 or mary.pleasant@vnahrs.org for more information or to register.

Story Time at the Library

10:30-11:30 a.m. Fridays. Sherburne Memorial Library, 2998 River Road, Killington. Free. sherburnelibrary.org, 802-422-9765 or 802-422-4251.

Bone Builders

11 a.m.-Noon. Chaffee Art Center, 16 So. Main St., Rutland. Improve balance and enhance energy and wellbeing. Pricing and info: chaffeeartcenter.org

Movies at the Library

3-5 p.m. Community Room, Hartland Public Library. Free. Join us for a showing of "Ratatouille" and enjoy refreshments. library.com.

'The Art of Life' Art Exhibit

5-7 p.m. To March 1. The Chaffee Art Center, 16 So. Main St., Rutland. Free. Join us for the opening reception of "The Art of Life," photography and collages by artist Robert Arthur Black. Explore the galleries filled with art and history while enjoying a glass of wine and nibbles. chaffeeartcenter.org

Live at the Wobbly Barn: Pulse

Nightclub opens at 6 p.m. Performing both Friday and Saturday night. Cover charge may be required for entry. Come hear Pulse perform high energy Top 40 dance tunes, '80s, hip-hop, and rock. killington.com

BarnArts Community Contra Dances!

Potluck at 6 p.m., dancing 6:30-9 p.m. Town Hall, 115 North Road, Barnard. Free or by donation. No partner needed, all ages and experience levels welcome. Bring indoor shoes for dancing. Tickets: barnarts.ludus.com/index.php?show_id=200447293

SATURDAY

1/20

The Vermont Winter Farmers' Market

10 a.m.-2 p.m. Howe Center, Suite 92, 1 Scale Ave. (off Strongs Avenue), Rutland. Free. The Vermont Farmers' Market is one of the largest farmers' markets in the state and the first to operate year round. Find seasonal harvest, winter veggies, handcrafted gifts and more. vtfarmersmarket.org

Make & Take Saturday Kids' Class

10:30-11:30 a.m. Saturdays. Chaffee Art Center, 16 So. Main St., Rutland. Ages: 6-12. Weekly fun activity featuring arts and crafts. \$15. Min. 5 students. Must pre-register. chaffeeartcenter.org

Rutland Railway Museum & Model Club

11 a.m.-3 p.m. Weekly. 79 Depot Lane, Center Rutland. Free. Maintained by the Rutland Railway Association, Inc., the historic depot is now a museum that houses an operating HO scale model railroad setup and displays hundreds of rare or antique model trains, photographs, signs and memorabilia saved from an earlier time, including the former Rutland Railroad Caboose #45. rutlandrailway.org

Lecture by Vermont historian Jill Mudgett

Noon. Roger Clark Memorial Library, 40 Village Green, Pittsfield. Free. Jill Mudgett will present "Murder in the Vermont Woods: A Story About Race, Class and Gender in the 19th Century." Jill is a Vermont historian who works on topics of history, identity, and place. Email pittsfieldvtlibrary@gmail.com or 802-746-4067 to RSVP.

Drop 'N' Paint

Noon-2 p.m. Chaffee Art Center, 16 So. Main St., Rutland. \$25. All ages. All materials will be set up and ready for you with a choice of three images to paint. Provided: canvas, paint, brushes, easel, smock. Youth must be accompanied by an adult. Must pre-register by Friday noon. chaffeeartcenter.org

Après Afternoons at Jackson Gore: Adam

McMahon Duo

2-5 p.m. Jackson Gore Courtyard, Okemo Ski Resort, 111 Jackson Gore Road, Ludlow. Join us for live music, games, food, drinks and more. okemo.com

Famous Books Club

4 p.m. Shrewsbury Library, 98 Town Hill Road, Cuttingsville. We are reading about explorer Richard Byrd's second Antarctica expedition, 1933-1935. Learn the adventures and challenges of this historic journey. shrewsburyvt.org

Down the Hatch and Back Again! Owl Pellets

4-5 p.m. Vermont Institute of Natural Science, 6565 Woodstock Road Quechee. \$13. Join a VINS educator for a discussion and dissection of owl pellets and what they throw up can tell us about the food web. Register at vinsweb.org.

APRÈS AFTERNOONS AT JACKSON GORE: ADAM MCMAHON DUO

SATURDAY 2 PM



Comedian Bob Marley

5:30 p.m. and 8 p.m. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St., Rutland. \$42. Maine-born comedian Bob Marley will perform. paramountvt.org

'Snowdance' Film Soiree

5:30-8 p.m. Billings Farm and Museum, 69 Old River Road, Woodstock. \$125 per person. An evening of culture, community, and a touch of Vermont glamour to benefit the Woodstock Foundation's Vermont Film Series. Enjoy live music, specialty cocktails, savory chili and cornbread, sweet treats, film shorts and classics, and a silent auction. Dress in Hollywood-chic-meets-Vermont-winter-fancy. Advance tickets required. billingsfarm.org

Live at the Wobbly Barn: Pulse [Pulse is still there]

Nightclub opens at 6 p.m. Performing both Friday and Saturday night. Cover charge may be required for entry. Come hear Pulse perform high energy Top 40 dance tunes, '80s, hip-hop, and rock. killington.com

SUNDAY

1/21

Dance Improvisation Workshop

10-11:30 a.m. West Rutland Town Hall, 35 Marble St., West Rutland. Cost: \$16 drop-in or \$45 for all 3 sessions. The workshop focuses on spontaneous creation of movement and sound through various practices and tools. Participants will explore personal movement, respond to space, sound, and movement, and experiment with ensemble practice. Compositional structures from improvisation will be shaped by the participants. To sign up, contact erikaschmidt.sva@gmail.com

Relay For Life Kickoff & Basket Raffle

10 a.m. - 2 p.m. West Rutland American Legion, 871 Pleasant St., West Rutland. Free. Join Relay for Life of Rutland County for its kickoff event and basket raffle! In addition, there will be door prizes, hot food, bake sale and a 50/50 raffle. relayforlife.org/rutlandvt

Barstow PTO's Annual Fundraiser, Paint 'N' Sip

3-5 p.m. The Barn at Mountain Top Resort, 195 Mountain Top Road, Chittenden. \$45. This fun activity raises funds for Barstow School events throughout the year. The event is open to the public, 21+. This year's theme is "For the Love of Art Hearts" and is led by art teacher Jennifer Hogan. thebarstowpto@gmail.com

Adult Open Gym: Pickleball

7-9 p.m. Runs Jan. 8-Mar. 17. Killington Elementary School, 686 School House Road, Killington. Buy a 10-visit punch card for \$20 or pay \$5 for every time you come. Punch cards from last year with holes not yet punched, are still valid. Enjoy coed team sports in a low-key environment for ages 16 & up. This is a drop-in program, no preregistration or leagues. For questions please contact Griffin Van Niel at recadmin@killingtontown.com

MONDAY

1/22

Killington Bone Builders

10 a.m. Weekly. Sherburne Memorial Library, 2998 River Road, Killington. Free. Weights are provided. sherburnelibrary.org or 802-422-4323

Okemo Innkeepers Race Series

4-5 a.m. Mondays, Jan. 8.- Mar. 11 Okemo Ski Resort. A Ludlow tradition. Teams and individual skiers and snowboarders compete in 8 age categories. There is an après race gathering hosted by a local bar from 5-7 p.m. okemoracing@gmail.com

Monday Movie

1 p.m. The Sherburne Memorial Library, 2998 River Road, Killington. Free. Please call the library for the title of the film. sherburnelibrary.org, 802 422-9765

Poetry Group

4-5:30 p.m. Monthly, 1st and 3rd Mondays. Norman Williams Public Library, 10 The Green, Woodstock. Free. Join the poetry group at NWPL for sharing and critique in a workshop format, focusing on different elements of poetry such as theme, language, sound and rhythm, structure, and context. This group is open to all interested in poetry and offers feedback on poems. RSVP. normanwilliams.org, 802-457-2295

New school, district budget Q&A held at the Killington Select Board meeting

6:30 p.m. Killington Public Safety Building 800 Killington Road and via Zoom (link in town calendar). Members of the Mountain View School District will present the school district budget and plans to build a new middle/high school next to the current structure in Woodstock. The public is encouraged to attend.

Adult Open Gym: Indoor Soccer

7-9 p.m. Runs Jan. 8-Mar. 17. Killington Elementary School, 686 School House Road, Killington. Buy a 10-visit punch card for \$20 or pay \$5 for every time you come. Punch cards from last year with holes not yet punched, are still valid. Enjoy coed team sports in a low-key environment for ages 16 & up. This is a drop-in program, no preregistration or leagues. For questions please contact Griffin Van Niel at recadmin@killingtontown.com

TUESDAY

1/23

Play Chess & Backgammon

5 p.m. Tuesdays. Norman Williams Public Library, 10 The Green, Woodstock. Free. Join us for chess and/or backgammon on Tuesday evenings. All skill levels are welcome, and coaching is available. Bring your own set or use one of ours. normanwilliams.org, 802-457-2295

Read Between the Lines: Fiction Discussion Group

6-7:30 p.m. Monthly, 4th Tuesday. Hybrid (in person & via Zoom), 10 The Green, Woodstock. Want to talk about fiction? This fiction discussion group meets at Norman Williams Public Library with facilitator Donna Steed. Newcomers are always welcome! Email programs@normanwilliams.org to register.

Adult Open Gym: Indoor Soccer

7-9 p.m. Runs Jan. 8-Mar. 17. Killington Elementary School, 686 School House Road, Killington. Buy a 10-visit punch card for \$20 or pay \$5 for every time you come. Punch cards from last year with holes not yet punched, are still valid. Enjoy coed team sports in a low-key environment for ages 16 & up. This is a drop-in program, no preregistration or leagues. For questions please contact Griffin Van Niel at recadmin@killingtontown.com



Celebration of Life for Kathleen Demaio

Jan. 23 from 12-3 p.m.

A celebration of life will be held for friends of Kathleen Demaio at Choices Restaurant in Killington

ONGOING EVENTS

Artist Exhibition - Jeanette Fournier

Through April 30

Neale Pavilion / VINS Nature Center. Enjoy the beautiful watercolor paintings of self-taught artist Jeanette Fournier, featuring animals, birds, and nature in her distinct and original style. Proceeds from artwork sales benefit VINS. For more on Jeanette's art, visit; jfournierart.com. Pricing and info: vinsweb.org

Matthew Mazur Exhibit in Locals Gallery

Through Jan. 24

Main St. Museum, 58 Bridge Street, White River Junction. The Art of Matthew Mazur. mainstreetmuseum.org

Wacky Woodstock, VT Scavenger Hunt

Daily through March 31.

11 a.m. & 2 p.m. Through Mar. 31. Mon Vert Cafe, 28 Central Street, Woodstock. \$24. A creative and interactive scavenger hunt where participants explore various locations in town, complete tasks and challenges, and document their progress through photos and videos. Suitable for families and dog-friendly. Offers a mix of indoor and outdoor activities, with bonus challenges. Great for corporate groups, tourists, locals, and special occasions. Custom-designed experiences and virtual team builders available. tinyurl.com/53cfxpv9

Ice Skating Fun

9 a.m.-8:30 p.m. Thanks to the incredible efforts of volunteers, the Killington Parks and Rec Ice Skating Rink is open. Lace up those skates and glide into a world of frosty fun. killingtonvt.myrec.com

Rockin' the Region with Kara Tondorff

One of my top events from last year was the 2nd annual Singer/Songwriter Festival at Rivershed Killington. On Jan. 26, at 7:30 p.m., for the first time, they're hosting "Wintersong: A Celebration of Female Songwriters." One notable difference, besides being all female, is that owner Kara Tondorff is one of the performers. I've heard a lot that Tondorff has made guest appearances on stage, but I've always missed it. Now is the time to hear her and the other five women perform. Joining Tondorff from the Singer/Songwriter Festival are April Cushman, Kylie Sackley, Tiffany Goss, and Rivershed newcomers Olivia Rudeen and Erin Enderlin. These women have written songs for Pink, Walker Hayes, Luke Bryan, Randy Travis, Faith Hill, Brett Young, and Reba McEntire and won many awards. This will also happen the next night at Rivershed in Scituate, Massachusetts. Tondorff is from Massachusetts, April is from New Hampshire, and the others are from Nashville, but they all have Nashville ties. Tondorff talked about them and said, "I got rave reviews about Olivia and Erin and heard they're phenomenal. Cushman is a Nashville-quality songwriter who is local to New Hampshire, so it's cool to have her right in our backyard. I just met Tiffany in October, and we hit it off, as has Kylie, whom I've done a couple of festivals with. Tiffany wrote 'You Ain't Here to Kiss Me' for Brett Young; it's a great song."

Tondorff opened the Scituate restaurant in 2014 and Killington in 2021. Killington was a complete remodel, as it used to be Peppino's. If you've ever been there, you know the two are like night and day. Her first career was as a touring songwriter. She said, "I got to the point where I needed to make a living, and this wasn't sustainable. When I got into restaurants, part of my passion with The Rivershed, I was able to build a network of musicians, and now I'm tapped into the writing communi-

ty." One thing I love about Rivershed is the music they bring to town; it's unique but so good." Tondorff added, "I'm pretty picky about who I have playing."

Tondorff wants to get back into songwriting and said, "I figured I'd do something that scares me a little bit and throw myself right in." Tondorff's biggest tour was an eight-week tour through the U.S. and Canada, and then she moved to Los Angeles for seven months. She had success there, and her "Your Words" song was put on Dawson's Creek." Her record won "Record of the Year with Music Connection magazine. Tondorff added, "That got me a lot of attention—gigs, stuff like that. I used to play the House of Blues in Boston; that was kind of my home base." Tondorff said her music is singer-songwriter with a flair for country.

In 2007, she moved to Nashville and lived there for nine months. Tondorff said, "I immersed myself in the songwriting community there." She is headed there this week to "hopefully do some writing," as she said, and to check out some performers too. She got into songwriting later in life; her focus was as an artist, but it's something she has a passion for now. She and April are writing some songs together. She said, "It's something I want to break into. Some of these women that I'm networking with, when we're up in Killington, we're going to take a day or two to do some co-writing."

Tondorff got the idea for this after she had April, Tiffany, and Kylie up in October for the Singer/Songwriter Festival. She said the four of them really hit it off. She said, "We had such a great time together, beyond just music, like actual friendship. We decided we didn't want to go another year, so let's do an all-female one and celebrate the female songwriter. I put the wheels in motion and got it all solidified. I think it's going to be a great event." If it's anything like the others, it's a

do-not-miss event.

Tondorff said she's trying to get better about setting aside time to write, and that's going fairly well, but she could be driving in the car and an idea will hit her. "I'll have moments where I'll come up with something in my head, and I know I have to write. Yesterday I woke up at 4 a.m. with an idea for a song, and then I wrote almost a whole song at 4 a.m. Crazy, but whatever. I have two or three songs I really love but haven't had the time to finish. But yesterday's I have to tweak a little, but I got it done from start to finish and it feels good, check." She said the song is about finding someone you like. She added, "It's kind of a sappy, romantic song. I have a lot of success writing early in the morning."

Tondorff didn't start playing guitar until she was 17, and she dabbles on the piano but isn't very good. She said, "I can do enough that I've been trying to write a little on the piano. I have a digital piano in Killington and Massachusetts that I try to play around with." One of her favorite songwriters is Lori McKenna, from Massachusetts. She wrote "Humble and Kind" for Tim McGraw and many others. Tondorff said, "She's brilliant." Her parents were big into music, so she grew up on Nina Simone, Van Morrison, and The Dead. Her new favorite band is Wild Rivers.

Tondorff wants to encourage people to come out and see music this way. Many haven't seen Nashville style like this in the round. She said, "People are blown away. They want to see music like this all the time. You get such variety, and you get to learn how the songs were made and created, and you hear people's stories. I've had people tell me these festivals are life-changing for them. That makes me feel good."

Tondorff said music has helped her get through hard times, so having a song impact somebody who is maybe going through something and they can relate to it is special to her.

For more information, visit therivershed.com.



Rockin' the Region
By Dave Hoffenberg



Kara Tondorff



Submitted



[MUSIC Scene]

By DJ Dave Hoffenberg
Have a music scene coming up? Email djdavehoff@gmail.com

WED 1/20

KILLINGTON

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Daniel Brown

6 p.m. Rivershed – Liz Reedy

6 p.m. Moguls – Tommy T-Bones

7 p.m. Pickle Barrel Nightclub – Mihali & Friends

8 p.m. Jax Food & Games – Nick Bredece

LONDONDERRY

6 p.m. New American Grill – Zach Yakaitis

LUDLOW

6 p.m. Off the Rails – Learn to Line Dance

QUECHEE

6 p.m. Public House Pub – Kim Wilcox

SOUTH POMFRET

6:30 p.m. Artistree – Acoustic Music Jam with Kerry Rosenthal

BARNARD

5:30 Fable Farm – Rumney Sessions with Randy Leavit and Friends

THURS 1/21

BRANDON

5:30 p.m. Red Clover Ale Company – Open Mic hosted by Emily Nelson

KILLINGTON

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Chris Pallutto

2 p.m. Snowshed's Long Trail Pub – Duane Carleton

6 p.m. Liquid Art – Open Mic hosted by Grateful Gary

6 p.m. Moguls Sports Pub – Duane Carleton

6 p.m. The Freerider – Nick Bredece

6 p.m. Rivershed – Chris Pallutto

6 p.m. The Foundry – Liz Reedy

7 p.m. Pickle Barrel Nightclub – Shred is Dead

8 p.m. Jax Food & Games – Jenny & Friends

LONDONDERRY

7 p.m. New American Grill – Open Mic Night hosted by DJ Jazzy Joel & Catnip John

LUDLOW

6:30 p.m. The Killarney – Irish Sessions with Gypsy Reel

QUECHEE

6:30 p.m. Public House Pub – Name That Tune Bingo with DJ Dave

RUTLAND

8 p.m. Angler Pub – A Sound Space Open Mic

8 p.m. Center Street Alley – Karaoke 101 hosted by Tenacious T

SOUTH POMFRET

7 p.m. Artistree – Open Mic Night

FRI 1/22

BARNARD

6 p.m. Town Hall – Community Potluck & Contra Dance

CASTLETON

6 p.m. Blue Cat Bistro – Ruby Street

KILLINGTON

1 p.m. Bear Mountain Base Lodge – Duane Carleton

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Daniel Brown Duo

2 p.m. Pico's Last Run Lounge – Rhys Chalmers

2 p.m. Snowshed's Long Trail Pub – Chris Pallutto

4 p.m. The Foundry – Jamie's Junk Show

6 p.m. Rivershed – Mike Brown

6:30 p.m. Still on the Mountain – Nick Bredece

7 p.m. The Foundry – Aaron Audet

7:30 p.m. McGrath's Irish Pub – Extra Stout

8 p.m. Pickle Barrel Nightclub – Liquid A

8 p.m. Wobbly Barn – Pulse

9 p.m. Jax Food & Games – Jamie's Junk Show

9 p.m. Moguls Sports Pub – Last Chair Band

QUECHEE

5:30 p.m. Public House Pub – John Lackard

RANDOLPH

7:30 p.m. Underground Listening Room - HIFI + DJ Sound Syndicate

RUTLAND

6 p.m. American Legion – Ryan Fuller

SAT 1/23

BRIDGEWATER

8 p.m. Woolen Mill Comedy Club – Comedy Night with Janelle Draper

BOMOSEEN

5:30 p.m. Bomoseen Lodge & Taproom – James Joel

KILLINGTON

1 p.m. Bear Mountain Base Lodge – Aaron Audet Duo

2 p.m. Casey's Caboose – Ruby Street

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Daniel Brown Trio

2 p.m. Pico's Last Run Lounge – Gully Boys

2 p.m. Snowshed's Long Trail Pub – Chris Pallutto Trio

5 p.m. Pickle Barrel Nightclub – Jamie's Junk Show

6 p.m. Moguls Sports Pub – Duane Carleton

6 p.m. O'Dwyers Pub – Daniel Brown

6 p.m. Rivershed – Mike Brown

6 p.m. Wobbly Barn – KGB

6:30 p.m. Still on the Mountain – Sammy B

7 p.m. The Foundry – Jenny Porter

7:30 p.m. McGrath's Irish Pub – Extra Stout

8 p.m. Pickle Barrel Nightclub – Liquid A

9 p.m. Jax Food & Games – Aaron Audet Band

9 p.m. Moguls – Gully Boys

9:30 p.m. Wobbly Barn – Pulse

10 p.m. Pickle Barrel Crows Nest – Jamie's Junk Show

LUDLOW

9 a.m. Okemo's Sunburst Six Bubble - Lift Party with DJ Dave

2 p.m. Jackson Gore Courtyard – Apres Afternoons: Adam McMahon Duo

QUECHEE

5:30 p.m. Public House Pub – Rose Hip Jam

RUTLAND

9 p.m. Center Street Alley – Karaoke 101 hosted by Tenacious T

STOCKBRIDGE

7:30 p.m. Wild Fern – Rick Redington & Tuff Luv

SUN 1/24

KILLINGTON

12 p.m. Rivershed – Brunch with Mike Brown

1 p.m. Pico's Last Run Lounge – Duane Carleton

2 p.m. Bear Mountain Base Lodge – Kenny Mehler

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Chris Pallutto

2 p.m. Snowshed's Long Trail Pub – Rhys Chalmers

5 p.m. The Foundry – Jazz Night with the Summit Pond Quartet

6 p.m. Liquid Art – Tee Boneicus Jones

6 p.m. Rivershed – Trivia

6 p.m. Still on the Mountain – Open Mic Night hosted by Indigenous Entertainment

9 p.m. Jax Food & Games – Jenny Porter

MON 1/25

KILLINGTON

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Duane Carleton

2 p.m. Snowshed's Long Trail Pub – Chris Pallutto

5:30 p.m. Mary Lou's – BAK'n

6 p.m. Rivershed – Mandatory Mondays with Name That Tune Bingo by DJ Dave

8 p.m. Jax Food and Games – Sammy B

LUDLOW

8:30 p.m. The Killarney – Open Mic Night with Indigenous Entertainment

TUES 1/26

KILLINGTON

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Sammy B

5:30 p.m. Mary Lou's – Bow Thayer & Krishna Guthrie

7:30 p.m. Rivershed – The 2nd Annual Singer/Songwriter Festival at Rivershed Killington

8 p.m. Jax Food & Games – Taco Tuesday with Rick Webb

LONDONDERRY

6:30 p.m. New American Grill – Trivia hosted by Zach Yakaitis

LUDLOW

6 p.m. The Killarney – Trivia with Rick Davis

PITTSFIELD

6:30 p.m. Town Hall – Acoustic Jam

QUECHEE

5 p.m. The Public House – Jim Yeager

RUTLAND

8:30 p.m. Street Alley – Acoustic Open Mic hosted by Josh LaFave

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Experience an evening of culture, community and a touch of Vermont glamour at the Snowdance Film Soiree

Saturday, Jan. 20, 5:30 p.m.—Woodstock— The intersection of cinema and winter will unfold on Saturday, from 5:30 to 8 p.m. at the Snowdance Film Soiree. The event is hosted to support the Woodstock Vermont Film Series, an outlet curated and directed by award-winning filmmaker Jay Craven for sharing stories not heard every day as it transports audiences by exploring the world through nine documentary films and behind the scenes looks with special guests including film directors and producers.

The Soiree will feature live music by Brooks Hubbard, delightful specialty cocktails by Vermont Spirits Distilling Co., and savory chili and cornbread crafted by Chef Matthew McClure of Woodstock Inn & Resort.

Attendees will be treated to sweet treats prepared by Executive Pastry Chef Philippe Niez, also from Woodstock Inn & Resort, as well as a showcase of film shorts and classics. The night will be elevated with a silent auction offering exclusive items, including dinner with film series curator and Vermont filmmaker, Jay Craven, and a pair of tickets to the 2024-2025 film series season.

Strike a pose on the red carpet, and adhere to the dress code, which suggests Hollywood chic meets Vermont winter fancy—fleece and flannel included!

Tickets cover live music, food, beer, wine, and one specialty cocktail. Additional cocktails will be available for purchase.

Proceeds from the event will directly contribute to the Woodstock Vermont Film Series, supporting its mission to share compelling, place-based stories and foster connections among diverse audiences.

For more information, visit: billingsfarm.org/filmseries.



Submitted
The Snowdance Film Soiree in Woodstock on Jan. 20 from 5:30 to 8 p.m. will feature live music, cocktails, fine cuisine, and a silent auction, all in support of the Woodstock Vermont Film Series, a curated outlet directed by award-winning filmmaker Jay Craven.

The Castleton women's hockey team will host the 15th annual 'Pink the Rink'

Saturday, Jan. 20, at 3 p.m.—RUTLAND—The Vermont State University's Castleton Women's Ice Hockey team will host the 15th annual Pink the Rink game against Plymouth State University at 3 p.m. at the Spartan Arena in Rutland.

Over the past 15 years, the team has contributed close to \$91,000 to the Breast Care program at the Foley Cancer Center at Rutland Regional Medical Center. The enthusiasm for the event has grown considerably, with huge crowds of fans showing their support and helping to raise funds in the fight against breast cancer.

"Pink the Rink is a fantastic event," said Dr. Bagley, retired Rutland Regional surgeon and founder of the Breast Care Program at the hospital. "The energy and enthusiasm is high with the stands awash in pink, smiling breast cancer survivors in attendance, and exciting hockey on the ice."

As in previous years, Castleton will trade their traditional Spartan green apparel for newly designed, limited edition pink jerseys. The jerseys will be auctioned off online to raise awareness and funds in support of the Foley Cancer Center. To bid on the auction, go to 32auctions.com/ptr2024.

In addition, there will be a varied basket raffle and bake sale at the event, and 200 complimentary custom pink towels courte-

sy of Foley Services, Inc. will be given away once again this year. Admission to the game is \$7 for adults, \$4 for seniors, and \$2 for students.

One of the strongest risk factors for breast cancer is family history, and this year's ceremonial puck drop will honor three sisters, Cathy Kozlik, Jill Burke, and Joan Olson, all of whom are breast cancer survivors and all of whom received their treatment at Rutland Regional. Although years apart in their diagnoses and treatment, each can attest to the benefit of early detection and treatment as well as to the importance of advances being made in breast cancer research. Cathy and Jill will represent the three cancer survivor sisters with the puck drop before the game.

"While Pink the Rink is about raising funds and awareness, it is also a time for celebration of breast cancer survivors and a time to celebrate progress to finding a cure," said Traci Moore, senior director of Development & Community Relations at Rutland Regional Medical Center. "We are very grateful to Coach Tim McAuliffe, the women's hockey team, parents, and volunteers for all the work they put into making this event so special and so successful."

For more information, visit: rrmc.org or call 802-747-3634.

Volunteers for hospice can be trained to make a difference

Friday, Jan. 19 at 8 a.m.—RUTLAND—VNA & Hospice of the Southwest Region (VNAHSR) provides training for those interested in becoming hospice volunteers. Training will be held on Friday, Jan. 19 from 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. in the Casella Conference Room at the Rutland office, located at 7 Albert Cree Drive. Training is free and open to individuals 16 years of age and older. Volunteers need to pass a background check. No previous hospice and health care experience is required. Pre-registration and proof of COVID-19 vaccination are required.

VNAHSR volunteers play a critical role in enhancing the end-of-life experiences of people facing serious illness and their families. Volunteers represent all life experiences and are drawn to hospice for a variety of reasons, but the defining characteristics that unite them are compassion and the desire to help others. Their many skills are matched to important tasks within our mission.

Once training is complete, assignments and schedules are tailored to the volunteer's geographic and time commitment preferences.

Training topics include:

- Understanding the hospice philosophy of care
- Knowing boundaries when interacting with patients and families
- Communicating with patients and families
- Understanding basic health and safety precautions
- Understanding patient confidentiality

The benefit of becoming a hospice volunteer

While our volunteers make a tremendous impact on the lives of our patients, families and staff, we hear time and again that they, too, benefit from their hospice experiences. Among the things they mention are:

- Increased appreciation for living life in the moment and defining what is really important
- Greater knowledge and more inner peace about the end-of-life experience
- Greater insight about diversity and the different perspectives among cultures
- Heightened sense of fulfillment and pride because of their contributions to patients and families and to the VNA & Hospice of the Southwest Region.

For more information or to register call Mary at 802-442-0540 or email at mary.pleasant@vnahsr.org.



Mary Lou's

"Mary Lou's is your perfect place to warm up and enjoy wood fired pizza, drinks and live music. Sit by the fireplace by the lower bar! Please check our updates by hitting the Update tab. See you here!" (802) 422-9885.

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Sushi Yoshi

Sushi Yoshi is Killington's true culinary adventure. With Hibachi, Sushi, Chinese and Japanese, we have something for every age and palate. Private Tatame rooms and large party seating available. We boast a full bar with 20 craft beers on draft. We are chef-owned and operated. Serving lunch and dinner. Delivery or take away option available. Now open year round. www.vermontsushi.com 802-422-4241.



Liquid Art

Relax in the warm atmosphere at Liquid Art. Look for artfully served lattes from their La Marzocco espresso machine, or if you want something stronger, try their signature cocktails.

Serving breakfast, lunch and dinner, they focus on healthy fare and provide you with a delicious meal different than anything else on the mountain. liquidartvt.com, (802) 422-2787.



Choices Restaurant & Rotisserie

Choices Restaurant and Rotisserie was named 2012 "Ski" magazines' favorite restaurant. Choices may be the name of the restaurant but it is also what you get. Soup of the day, shrimp cocktail, steak, hamburgers, a variety of salads and pastas, scallops, monkfish, lamb and more await you. An extensive wine list and in house made desserts are also available. choicesrestaurantkillington.com (802) 422-4030.



Lookout Tavern

A place for fun, friends and good times here in Killington! Everything from soup to nuts for lunch and dinner; juicy burgers, fresh salads, delicious sandwiches and K-Town's best wings. Your first stop after a full day on the Mountain for a cold beer or specialty drink and a great meal! lookoutvt.com, 802-422-5665.



Back Country Café

The Back Country Café is a hot spot for delicious breakfast foods. Choose from farm fresh eggs, multiple kinds of pancakes and waffles, omelets or daily specials to make your breakfast one of a kind. Just the right heat Bloody Marys, Mimosas, Bellini, VT Craft Brews, Coffee and hot chocolate drinks. Maple Syrup and VT products for sale. Check Facebook for daily specials. 802-422-4411.



Moguls

Voted the best ribs and burger in Killington, Moguls is a great place for the whole family. Soups, onion rings, mozzarella sticks, chicken fingers, buckets of chicken wings, salads, subs and pasta are just some of the food that's on the menu.

Free shuttle and take away and delivery options are available. mogulssportspub.com 802-422-4777.



Soup Dog

With a focus on soups and hotdogs, this restaurant offers a delicious and comforting menu for visitors and locals alike. Opening in the winter of 2023, Soup Dog invites guests to stop by and enjoy their tasty offerings. The menu features a wide variety of soups, paired with delicious bread, as well as specialty hotdog toppings. Guests also have the option to create their own hotdog combinations. (802) 353-9277. Visit us on Facebook.



Killington Market

Take breakfast, lunch or dinner on the go at Killington Market, Killington's on-mountain grocery store for the last 30 years. Choose from breakfast sandwiches, hand carved dinners, pizza, daily fresh hot panini, roast chicken, salad and specialty sandwiches. Vermont products, maple syrup, fresh meat and produce along with wine and beer are also for sale. killingtonmarket.com 802-422-7736 or 802-422-7594.



Mountain Top Inn

Whether staying overnight or visiting for the day, Mountain Top's Dining Room & Tavern serve delicious cuisine amidst one of Vermont's best views. A mix of locally inspired and International cuisine – including salads, seafood, poultry and a new steakhouse menu - your taste buds are sure to be satisfied. Choose from 12 Vermont craft brews on tap. Warm up by the terrace fire pit after dinner! A short drive from Killington. mountaintopinn.com, 802-483-2311.

Sugar and Spice



Stop on by to Sugar and Spice for a home style breakfast or lunch served up right. Try six different kinds of pancakes and/or waffles or order up some eggs and home fries. For lunch they offer a Filmore salad, grilled roast beef, burgers and sandwiches. Take away available. www.vtsugarandspice.com 802-773-7832.

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Submitted
Self-taught artist Lauren Teton teaches step-by-step classes on how to create masterpieces like Van Gogh's "Starry Night," held up in the photo, right.

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Paint-and-sip classes come to Killington

Staff report

Lauren Teton learned to paint a few years ago at a paint and sip class, where she created paintings for the first time. Now, she's teaching others.

The self-taught artist is launching paint and sip classes, where she'll teach guests step-by-step how to create Van Gogh's "Starry Night" and other designs.

"I've created a process that makes it doable for everybody," she said. "It's catching on like wildfire."

Classes are about two hours long and will be held Tuesday nights starting Jan. 16 at 6 p.m. at North Star Inn & Resort in Killington.

Outside of painting, Teton launched an Amazon third party reseller business, and owns a laser that she rents to an ophthalmologist. She also owns an Airbnb and a sterling silver business.

"I don't want to work for other people," she said. "I'm an entrepreneur and I believe whatever work I choose should be fun. This is work and fun."

For more information, contact Teton by email at lauren@one.net or call 914-420-2194. Classes are \$25 for advance registration or \$30 in person. Guests can bring their own alcoholic beverages.

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vermontfarmersfoodcenter.org/onlinemarket

The 37th Annual Rutland Regional Bridal Show Takes Center Stage at The Brandon Inn

Sunday, Jan. 21 at 11:30 a.m.—BRANDON—The Brandon Inn, 20 Park Street, Brandon, will hold the 37th annual Rutland Regional Bridal Show, which will be the Vermont Wedding Association's 167th show. The VWA bridal shows have been voted the top bridal shows in the industry by brides, grooms, and wedding professionals. When you attend our bridal shows, you'll meet the pros who are ready to share wedding ideas and suggestions. This event provides opportunities to explore, be inspired, meet a DJ, photographer, baker, florist, caterer, and find a venue.

Enjoy the modern comforts paired with the historic charm of a full-service hotel located in the center of Brandon. A true walking town with shopping, dining, and galleries, Brandon in any season offers all you could want for the wedding of your dreams.

The Brandon Inn, steeped in rich history, has been greeting guests for nearly 250 years. The Brandon Inn is on the Registry of Historic Places, is a National Landmark, and is considered to be one of Vermont's oldest continuously operating hotels. The doors opened in 1786 as a one-story tavern, and under the guidance of dedicated owners and inn keepers with notable visions for expansion, the inn maintains 39 well-appointed guest rooms, a restaurant, café, garden room, the very social front porch, and a ballroom.

This grand old hotel continues on its quest to welcome historians, world travelers, and locals with a sense of pride and community shared by Brandon residents.

For more information, contact: judy@vermontweddingassociation.com.



**Sunday
Jan. 21**

Courtesy rutlandbridalshow.com
The 37th annual Rutland Regional Bridal Show will be held at The Brandon Inn on Sunday, Jan. 21 at 11:30 a.m. The event, hosted by the Vermont Wedding Association, marked its 167th show, bringing together brides, grooms, and wedding professionals.

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Solutions From page 11

Crossword

M	C	G						T	E	E							
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Sudoku

9	6	3	7	5	1	8	2	4
4	5	2	8	6	9	7	3	1
1	8	7	2	3	4	9	5	6
5	3	4	9	1	8	2	6	7
2	9	6	4	7	3	5	1	8
7	1	8	5	2	6	4	9	3
3	7	5	6	8	2	1	4	9
8	4	1	3	9	5	6	7	2
6	2	9	1	4	7	3	8	5

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Golden Ticket waiting to be found in the Come Alive Outside Winter Passports for Kids event

January—RUTLAND REGION—Come Alive Outside the program encouraging children and families to spend more time being active outdoors and exploring their local community, has kicked off in the Rutland area.

Every elementary school in Rutland County, plus 6 community groups, are handing out the Winter Passport allowing kids to earn points and win prizes by doing simple tasks like visiting parks, farmers' markets, and community events.

One of the 6,000 passports has a special golden ticket hidden inside. For the lucky kid who finds it will get a private pizza party in a stretch limo with five friends and Bigfoot, the fun mascot. The golden ticket must be claimed by Feb. 1.

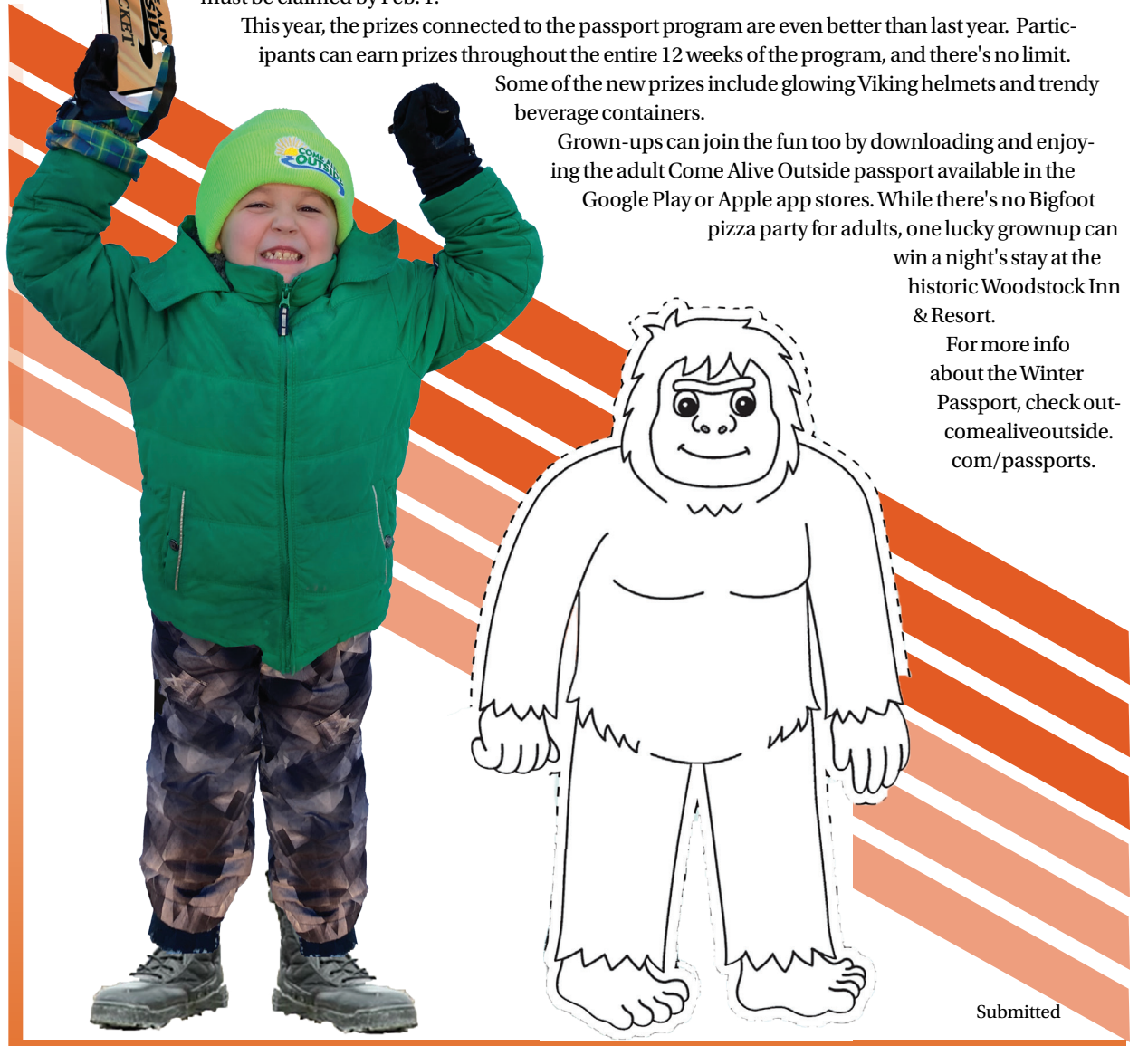
This year, the prizes connected to the passport program are even better than last year. Participants can earn prizes throughout the entire 12 weeks of the program, and there's no limit.

Some of the new prizes include glowing Viking helmets and trendy beverage containers.

Grown-ups can join the fun too by downloading and enjoying the adult Come Alive Outside passport available in the Google Play or Apple app stores. While there's no Bigfoot pizza party for adults, one lucky grownup can

win a night's stay at the historic Woodstock Inn & Resort.

For more info about the Winter Passport, check out comealiveoutside.com/passports.




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Rutland County Humane Society



JAYLEE

5-month-old Standard Schnauzer mix, so she will be medium to large when full grown. Jaylee is a sweet girl and has a brother and sister looking for loving homes as well. They all look about the same. Male is larger and darker. We are open Wed-Sat from noon to 4 for walk-ins.

This pet is available for adoption at
Springfield Humane Society
 401 Skitchewaugh Trail, Springfield, VT • (802) 885-3997
 *Open by appointment only. spfldhumane.org



HENRY

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This pet is available for adoption at
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 *(By appointment only at this time.)
 Tues. - Sat. 12-4 p.m. & Thurs. 12-7 p.m. • lucymac.org



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 Neutered male. Domestic shorthair.



Johnny Cash—2-year-old.
 Neutered male. Catahoula mix.



Squeaks—3 months old.
 Neutered male. Domestic shorthair.



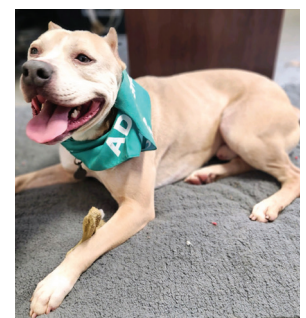
Shadow—5-year-old.
 Neutered male. Domestic shorthair.



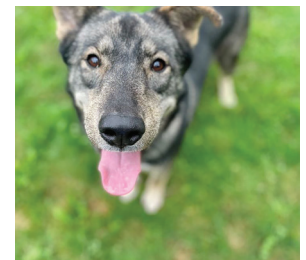
BOONE

Boone—10-month-old. Neutered male.
 Mixed breed.

All of these pets are available for adoption at
Rutland County Humane Society
 765 Stevens Road, Pittsford, VT • (802) 483-6700
 Tues. - Sat. 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.
 Closed Sun. & Mon. • www.rchsvt.org



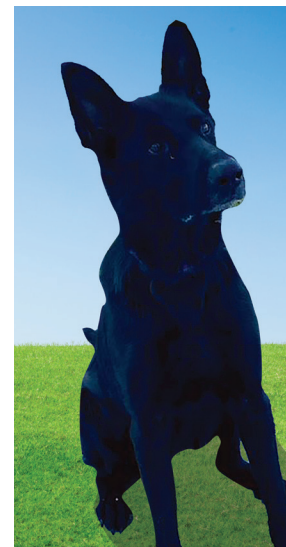
Genesis—7-year-old.
 Neutered male. Mixed breed.



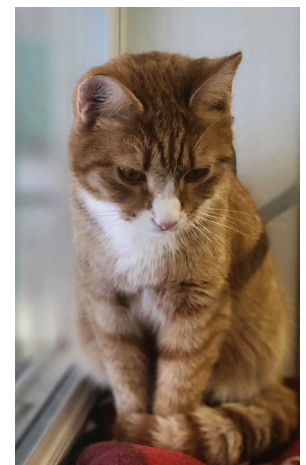
Raven—1-year-old. Spayed Female.
 Mixed breed.



Blueberry—10-month-old.
 Spayed female. Mixed breed.



Shadow—6-year-old.
 Spayed female. German Shepherd.



Sunny—1-year-old. Neutered male.
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March 21 - April 20

Despite your reputation for going solo, your life trajectory is heading into new territory. You're about to discover what it means to collaborate, particularly within a group setting. Friends, communities and your networks – both online and in real life, are about to take a profound turn. Go all in, you have no option. At the same time, be aware of power dynamics that happen in groups. Avoid your instinct to cut and run!

 **Leo**
July 21 - August 20

Do you remember over the past few years, just how much you were tested in love? Just when you thought tough times were done, a fresh batch of challenges arrive straight out of the cosmic oven. This isn't the same rocky terrain of which you became accustomed. On the contrary, this is your chance to explore deep and exquisite love. Face your greatest fears and the light you shine toward someone will never fade.

 **Sagittarius**
November 21 - December 20

The more you know, the further you'll go. You're in a phase where you deeply and passionately want to know something more than you do now. This could be self-development or upgrading your skills. Perhaps you'll opt to make meaningful changes to your day-to-day life, allowing room for a little wonder and magic. Where do you want to be in twenty years? What you do on the daily will get you there.

 **Taurus**
April 21 - May 20

Are you ready to be deeply satisfied with your lot in life? If you're not thus far, the opportunity now awaits for you to take full responsibility for that. You may come to realize that your overall life direction, your career or the larger life choices you've made no longer hold the meaning they once did for you. Change isn't your strong suite, but change is inevitable. Start exploring what a life with meaning means to you.

 **Virgo**
August 21 - September 20

Do you want to be right or do you want to be happy? Please do ask yourself this question often. You're a stickler for self-improvement and perfection at the best of times. However, when is something you've been working on done? When is a song done? When is love done? When is a career done? There is always something to fix or tweak, but if you spend all your energy doing that, will you have room for anything else?

 **Capricorn**
December 21 - January 20

On the one hand, you can breathe a massive sigh of relief that a challenging fifteen-year period of personal growth is done. While on the other, the question begs, what will you do with all that you've learned about yourself? How can you turn this knowledge, these skills and talents into real growth – material and otherwise? Deeply believe in yourself and you'll discover everyone else will begin to as well. Start working on attracting the abundance you want.

 **Gemini**
May 21 - June 20

Can you imagine the unimaginable possibilities that life has in store for you? You might be feeling it, but can't actually think about it. Think about it you must, because life is opening up for you in incredible ways and it is electric. Foreign places, foreign people, topics of spirituality, religion and philosophy will change your life and for the better. Your job, don't ask questions. Grasp these opportunities with both hands and don't look back!

 **Libra**
September 21 - October 20

As life starts to take on a new turn, you might like to deeply explore what true happiness means to you. What you once liked to do with yourself may no longer satisfy you. This might mean trading casual encounters for something that reaps lasting benefits. A joy, a hobby or even a child may take more of your time and energy, but bring meaning and light into your life in more profound ways.

 **Aquarius**
January 21 - February 20

The next twenty years sees Pluto in your sign. While this isn't going to be an active or obvious influence for the entire time, you'll notice threads permeate your experience. There will be profound and steep learning curves. Some will bring you to your knees while others will be the source of deep joy and fulfillment. A big part of this is how you approach it. Begin opening your mind to new ways of being.

 **Cancer**
June 21 - July 20

A lot of people want love. They complain about the absence of love in their life. What they are truly missing is intimacy. As a Crab, you can be reluctant to let your tender underbelly be exposed, even to those you profess to love. To be truly known, you need to put at risk the most vulnerable parts of your being. When you can do this, the depth, the love and the magic you dream of can happen.

 **Scorpio**
October 21 - November 20

It may have slowly been dawning on you that you're ready to grow roots in your life in a way you've yet felt called to do. This could mean purchasing a home or making some kind of commitment to family life. In whichever way feels right for you, you're ready to lay a foundation that will last for the next twenty years. Home and family will be the source of your greatest trials, tribulations as well as profound blessings.

 **Pisces**
February 21 - March 20

Powerful Pluto resides into your Private Zone for the next twenty years. For some Fishes, this may mark a period where you'll prioritize retreat, isolation and rest more than usual. At times, the craving to shut out the world will be difficult to ignore. If you don't meditate, dream or imagine, now is the time to start. All the answers you seek are within, you just have to dare to look.

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Cassandra has studied astrology for about 20 years. She is an international teacher of astrology who has been published all over the globe.

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No turning back

When something is seen, it can't be unseen. When something is known, it can't be unknown. Some words, once spoken, can't be taken back.

This week brings something truly unique. Something that in years to come, may turn out to be your "sliding doors" moment. It may be something you see, speak or hear. For some, it may be something that's so deeply felt, so deeply known that it's like a past life memory coming into the present moment.

As new experiences arrive, there are new lessons to learn. Once the Rubicon is crossed, there is no turning back. Are you ready to explore an area of

your life in a deeper and more profound way? Are you ready to be frightened, yet exhilarated by the danger and possibility at the same time?

Every challenge presents an opportunity and it all comes down to the way you choose to think about it.

As old barriers fall away, new realities emerge. As new realities emerge, so do new ways of being in the world. If you've been waiting for something, waiting for someone, this is a new day.

Are you ready to feel so alive? Unplug from what has been and embrace the future for it has now arrived.



Cosmic Catalogue
By Cassandra Tyndall



Snow

Mounds of snow,
Pile up high,
Getting taller and taller,
Reaching the sky,
Falling to the ground,
Without a single sound,
The snow falls,
The snow falls,
Piling up,
Its sparkling crystals,
Glitter so bright,
Just as the sun hits them,
Shining and glistening,

Just like a star,
Floating down to the ground,
Slowly drifting,
Down,
Beautiful,
It is,
Sparkling,
Shining,
Glittering,
Snow.



Poetry Is Power
By Bree Sarandrea



Heed the winds of change

"We are stars wrapped in skin. The light you are seeking has always been within," said Rumi, a 13th-century poet.

When winds of change stir up our world, we often feel unsteady and confused. But these strong winds are ushering in a new era for the human race and a new psyche for us. We're being called. I feel it in my heart. Do you feel it, too, a longing in your soul for more peace and an end to suffering in our world?

The winds of change are compelling us to uplift humanity to a new level through kindness, compassion, and connectivity for all creatures, including humans.

How can we best heed the call? By staying centered and balanced, no matter the circumstances. When we are vessels of forgiveness and love, others abandon their defenses and walls. Authentic relationships with our loved ones enable us to live on a higher plane, with elevated vibrations and deeper awareness.

Certain practices help us to be more closely connected with our own souls:

A quiet mind through meditation clears our thoughts for divine inspiration. It helps lessen internal conversations that, too often, put us down.

Feeling compassion for ourselves can be a difficult advancement to make. It's often a challenge for us to forgive ourselves for our weaknesses and shortcomings. It has been proven that looking in the mirror and saying "I love you" for 30 days increases self-confidence and self-esteem.

It's a great place to start since, to love another, we must first love ourselves.

Expressing gratitude for the life we're given is one of the highest emotions we feel. Being grateful for dear ones in our midst and celebrating the tribe that we're in is a wonderful thing because life is too hard to navigate alone. Keeping and growing our connections also boosts our vitality. Helping others by sharing

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Mountain Meditation
By Marguerite Jill Dye

The phenomenon of winter light

In mid-winter 1988, I went contra-dancing at the Congregational Church in Lyme, New Hampshire. During intermission, I joined other dancers who stepped out of the overheated hall into a star-studded night alive with shimmering waves of color, from blue to pinkish-red. We stood in awe, while luminous curtains of light performed a *pas-de-deux* across the arch of the sky dome.

Our home star was the director of this celestial dance, and atmospheric gases choreographed the show. Northern lights, the *aurora borealis* – perhaps the most spectacular display of winter light – are borne of light emitted when electrons in the gases of Earth's upper atmosphere (nitrogen and oxygen) are energized by bursts from a solar geomagnetic storm. The northern lights are one of many forms of radiance that color our lives throughout the shortest days, influenced by the angle of the sun and moon, as well as other factors.

"The sun angle certainly affects the quality of the light" during winter, said Mark Breen, senior meteorologist and planetarium director at the Fairbanks Museum and Planetarium in St. Johnsbury, Vermont. "When the sun tracks low across the skies, it has to travel a longer path through the atmosphere, filtering the brighter blues and greens, and allowing a greater mix of the reds, yellows, and oranges that favor a golden hint to the light."

That affects the brilliance of sunrises and sunsets, which often seem more colorful during winter days. In addition, a study conducted at the University of York revealed that human perception of color in the range of yellow actually shifts with the seasons due to changes we see in the natural world. During the summer, our eyes are exposed to an abundance of green leaves, but winter months are dominated by grays and browns. In response, our summer color perception is more sensitive to greenish yellows, while in winter it highlights reddish yellows.

The sun's angle also means that sunbows – which resemble a rainbow around the sun – are more common during cold winter mornings and evenings. As the sun arches low, high altitude ice crystals become tiny prisms that refract sunlight into an aura around the sun. Snow and ice also provide color and sparkle during winter. Minute ice-crystal spectrums can be seen when viewing the brightly lit

surface of powdery snow through polarized sunglasses, fragmenting each snow-star's sunlight as tiny prisms bejewel the land with violet starbursts.

Emily Dickinson elegantly expressed the way winter light transforms the nivean world in her poem "A Certain Slant of Light": "When it comes, the Landscape listens – / Shadows – hold their breath –"

"Once the sun sets, a clear moonless sky is SO dark. Should the skies clear, the ebony velvet of night is pierced with the diamond light of the distant stars," said Breen, noting that the angle of the moon and its reflection onto snow also contribute to differences in winter light. "A winter's full moon bathes the snow-encrusted landscape with a surprising brilliance. Positioned as high, or even a little higher than the summer solstice sun, its silver light, though bright, almost seems imbued with the deep, penetrating cold of a clear, calm winter's night."

Stillness reigns. Time stands still. Winter light enralls with a face both ineffable and infinite.

The best way to experience winter light is to "sally forth," as Thoreau might say, as in his literary saunterings of "A Winter Walk": "At length we awake to the still reality of a winter morning. The snow lies warm as cotton or down upon the window-sill; the

broadened sash and frosted panes admit a dim and private light."

Breen encourages people to experience the changes of winter light. "Take the time, even 15 minutes, and simply observe and enjoy the 'little beauties' – how the sun shines on an icicle, how the alpenglow (the pink-amber color of the sunlight from the setting sun) gives the mountains an almost surrealist painting appearance. Bundle up and find a dark location to let yourself almost 'fall' into the stars that surround you. And maybe, just maybe through the immersion, realize that every one of us can find some beauty, and some peace."

Perchance winter light touches us deeply because it reflects, in the grand tapestry of sky, the existential duality of darkness and light with which we all struggle. Or maybe winter light is so enchanting simply because it is extraordinarily beautiful.

Michael J. Caduto is a writer, ecologist, and storyteller who lives in Reading, Vermont. He is coauthor of "Keepers of the Night: Native American Stories and Nocturnal Activities for Children." Illustration by Adelaide Murphy Tyrol. The Outside Story is assigned and edited by Northern Woodlands magazine and sponsored by the Wellborn Ecology Fund of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation: nhcf.org.



The Outside Story
By Michael J. Caduto



Fun in the Sun

In 1950, a young George Martin, having been educated at the acclaimed Guildhall School of Music and Drama, joined the British record label EMI as a producer. Five years later he became the head of Parlophone Records where he specialized in classical and comedy recordings. Martin, however, was always on the lookout for ways to expand the label's scope, so he began considering musical acts that he would have previously passed over.

His life would be forever altered in 1962 when four young lads from Liverpool (calling themselves "The Beatles") walked in looking to make a recording. Martin was initially skeptical about the group's potential. At that point, they were a young and relatively unknown band, but they had built a reputation as an entertaining live act, so Martin agreed to an audition.

In their initial session, Martin was struck by the member's personalities and their witty banter, but he wasn't immediately convinced of their musical prowess. He also had heard that the group had been turned down by most of the other major record labels, making Parlophone one of their last chances.

Legend has it that after that first audition, Martin commented to his assistant that he didn't think the Beatles had much talent. Despite his reservations, however, he decided to give them a chance and offered them a recording contract.

Martin's classical background and innovative approach to studio recording played a pivotal role in shaping the Beatles' sound. He introduced orchestral arrangements, experimented with new recording techniques, and collaborated closely with the band on seminal albums like "Rubber Soul," "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band," and "The White Album."

Martin also contributed musically, playing piano on many tracks and arranging orchestral elements. But his true genius was bringing the concepts and rhythmic meanderings of the Fab Four to fruition. The Beatles provided the ideas; Martin provided the means to see them realized. And because of his deep involvement, George Martin was often referred to as the "Fifth Beatle."

A great example of George Martin's influence on the Beatles was when he provided guidance for Paul McCartney's song "Yesterday," one of the group's most iconic and enduring songs.

Originally, "Yesterday" was composed by McCartney with just vocals and an

acoustic guitar. When McCartney brought the song to the studio, Martin recognized its potential and suggested adding a string quartet to enhance the emotional impact of the melody.



The Movie Diary
By Dom Cioffi

Despite initial hesitation from McCartney (who was concerned about departing from the Beatles' usual rock sound), he eventually agreed to Martin's suggestion. Martin then arranged and conducted the string quartet, creating a distinctive musical backdrop for the song.

The addition of the strings elevated the song to a new level, giving it a classic and timeless quality. The orchestration

contributed significantly to the emotional resonance of "Yesterday" and showcased George Martin's skill in arranging. The song went on to become one of the Beatles' most beloved and covered tracks.

Over time, Martin's initial skepticism transformed into a deep appreciation for the Beatles' creativity. Their collaborative partnership would lead to the creation of some of the most intriguing and accessible pop music in history and result in Martin's being considered one of the greatest record producers in the world.

After the Beatles disbanded in 1970, Martin continued to produce for other artists. And while he loved the facilities in London, he yearned to create a recording experience where musicians could truly connect with the process.

In 1979, Martin founded AIR Studios, a recording workplace located on the Caribbean island of Montserrat. The studio was built in a lush, scenic location and was equipped with the most advanced recording gear money could buy.

Musicians from all over the world journeyed to the tiny island to record in the unique environment.

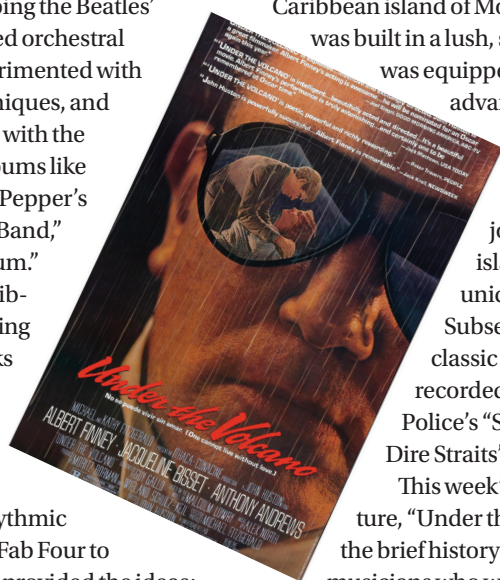
Subsequently, many classic rock albums were recorded there, including the Police's "Synchronicity" and Dire Straits' "Brothers in Arms."

This week's documentary feature, "Under the Volcano," outlines the brief history of AIR Studios, the musicians who went there, and the unique magic that was experienced on the island. It also delves into the studio's unexpected demise.

Check this one out if you loved early eighties music because there's a good chance that some of your favorite albums were created at this location.

A turbulent "B" for "Under the Volcano," now available for rental on Amazon Prime.

Got a question or comment for Dom? You can email him at moviediary@att.net.



The weight of snowy eyelashes

It is quiet. Almost eerily so if you aren't used to it. All I can hear is the squeak of my skins as they slide across the snow and the sometimes random clicking of a binding or a boots here or there. The forest is so quiet I can even hear my pole planting into the snow.

Maybe it's not that quiet. Maybe I am just actually listening for the silence in between the noise. The wind is rustling and I can feel my eyelashes slightly freezing together. I can definitely feel the extra weight as moisture sticks to the individual strands of hair and freezes, making them heavier to open and close. At some points, I just keep my eyes facing the skin track, avoiding the weight of my lashes.

I try to keep my sunglasses on to protect my retinas, but the fog and the frost prove to

be too great as my heart rate rises and I am forced to place them in my headband. It's about 14 degrees up here and everything is freezing on me as I make my way up the mountain, one stride at a time.

The temps are cold enough that the gondola maze is packed, but all the other lines are pretty empty as people seek the warmth of the box. The wind has picked up and you can see random snow squalls, like winter tumbleweeds rolling down the mountain. It just looks cold up there, like if you pushed a tree branch it would just snap off.

I choose to make my own warmth. It's a perfect day for my favorite tour and the first time I've been able to make this journey this season. Let's just say that the weather has not been cooperative this season. But today, today is perfect. It's only slightly cloudy and the blue sky is peeking through with pride and just enough warmth to make a huge temperature difference from the shade.

But in the open areas, the sun is glorious. The views are unobstructed and everything is coated with a thick layer of rime. The

Living the Dream → 29



Living the Dream
By Merisa Sherman

Inspiration to begin 2024

Happy New Year to all.

I usually start the January newsletter with Oprah's famous quote, "A new year and another chance to get it right." I still like the thought of that. A second chance is always good. Every year I get a book for Christmas from my daughter, Paige. This year's choice was "The Little Book of Daily Sunshine"



Senior Scene
Gerrie Russell

by Clare Josa. It's a book of inspiration to light up each day. The very first reading really inspired me and I would like to share it with you: "When we look at a beautiful diamond, we pick it up and look at it from all angles. The same goes for inspiration in life. It calls for us to pick it up, view it from several angles, try it on for size or maybe try it out in different situations. We shine a light on it to see how we might be lifted by it today. And, if we encounter it in the future, it asks us to look at it with fresh eyes to see if there are deeper levels in there for us. When life lessons come back to you or inspiration strikes twice, it's your deeper wisdom's hint that there is still more for you to learn, more for you to experience. Don't dismiss it. On this beautiful journey of life, there is always another perspective to enjoy."

Whether we live here full-time, part-time or only visit, we are so lucky to experience small town life in Vermont. Small or not, Killington and our neighboring Pittsfield both have wonderful libraries that work hard to provide programs for us.

The Roger Clark Memorial Library in

Pittsfield is hosting Jill Mudgett on Saturday, Jan. 20 at noon. Mudgett is a cultural historian with an interest in the connection between the people and the environment of northern New England. She holds a Ph.D in American history and is interested in public history outreach. Her presentation will tell the story of an Indigenous man from southern New England who came to central Vermont during the late 19th century and was the victim of a murder. The story recreates community connections in a rural Vermont hill town. It's a story about poverty, racism, disability and gendered violence against women, but it is also a story about the Indigenous movement and choice despite great obstacles.

The Sherburne Memorial Library in Killington hosts movies every Monday at 1p.m. This is the lineup for the rest of January:

- Monday, Jan. 22: What Happens Later
- Monday, Jan. 29: Empire Falls

Book Ends Book Group meets on Wednesday, Jan. 31 at 1 p.m.

The new Sherburne Library activity calendar is available at the circulation desk and includes adult and children's programming.

Any New Year usually includes resolutions and I'm sure this year is no different. More often than not they are health resolutions. So, of course, I have a few to share. These are health routines that don't require too much, just daily practice.

1. Floss your teeth daily. In addition to fighting gum disease, flossing is linked to heart health and improves diabetic control.
2. Stand and move your body at least 5 minutes every hour. High amounts

Senior Scene → 31

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← Accountability:

from page 9

represents subtle changes in certain measures as meaningful when they are within the “margin of error” (e.g. fluctuations in the percent of adults who smoke cigarettes), meaning that there has not been any statistically significant change. Yet these outcomes are portrayed as meaningful trends.

- The Legislature’s Joint Fiscal Office (JFO) analyzed an executive branch report touting the success of the “new worker relocation grant” program and found it relied on unrepresentative and misleading data to derive its most important conclusions. Nonetheless, the report remains on the Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD) website with no mention of the JFO analysis, which effectively rendered the report of little to no value.
- Our audit of the Agency of Digital Service’s IT project management found that a key performance measure—percent of on-target projects—is calculated based on the percentage of projects in “green” status. Vermonters would assume that means the project has gone smoothly and is expected to be completed on time. However, ADS considers some projects to be “green” even with significant cost increases and completion date extensions. Their use of “green” status is based upon revised cost and schedule expectations, masking how well the project has met initial expectations.
- Our evaluation of the state’s Ten-Year Telecommunications Plan found that it included no performance measures, leaving legislators and the public without any measurable basis for determining whether the Public Service Department is doing a good job furthering Vermont’s broadband, cell

service, and emergency communications goals. The response from the commissioner of public service was that they didn’t include performance measures because the statute doesn’t require them to. Nothing prevents the department from adopting useful measures of their performance — in fact, it should be considered a no-brainer in this day and age.

- Performance reporting for the ACCD’s Vermont Training Program makes it difficult to know the extent to which taxpayer funded training has benefited the trained employees. The methodology includes several measures of questionable usefulness, and the data excludes almost half of all the trainees.
- Our audit of the Dam Safety Program found that the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) failed to regularly monitor dam conditions, so there is no assurance that they are accurately calculating and correctly reporting the percentage of dams in poor condition. This summer’s floods highlight the importance of providing the public accurate information in this area.
- Our review of 10 nurse recruitment and retention incentive programs found that none had performance measurement in place to determine whether the incentives were having any effect on the size of Vermont’s nursing workforce.

When we encounter these weaknesses in government accountability, we offer constructive suggestions to the relevant agency. Sometimes they adopt our recommendations, but not always. When they do not, it is Vermonters who lose out. Vermonters fund state government and are the ones who are impacted by its performance. They deserve accurate, clear, and timely performance measures.

← Mountain Meditation:

from page 24

our gifts incorporates the Golden Rule of life: “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”

Seeking rejuvenation through the beauty of nature raises our spirits by touching our senses with pure delight and awe. Savoring sunrises, sunsets, and stars and spending time in the natural world is a basic human need that keeps us connected to our Mother Earth.

Living our passions, doing things we adore, expressing creativity, and exploring more multiplies our *joie de vivre*. Whenever I paint *en plein air*, surrounded by nature and connected to God, inspiration flows freely from my heart to my hand, like in the tradition of Chinese brush strokes. Painting and sharing the places I’m drawn to gives me a thrill and immense happiness.

What do you most enjoy doing in your life? Sports, science, music, art, history, poetry, being with animals, reading books? Can you make whatever it is part of your daily existence? If not, think ahead and plan how you can prioritize so you can practice your passion.


Allow synchronicity and miracles to enter by opening your heart to new experiences. Keep a positive frame of mind to

attract more positive things in life.

The powerful winds we experienced last week inspired the idea for this column. Then I learned of the Scorpions’ ballad from 1990 called “The Wind of Change,” which became an anthem of hope for the people living through the transitions in Russia and Eastern Europe.

*“The world is closing in.
And did you ever think
That we could be so close, like brothers?
The future’s in the air; I can feel it everywhere.
Blowing with the wind of change.
Take me to the magic of the moment.
On a glorious night
Where the children of tomorrow dream away
On the wind of change.
The wind of change blows straight into the face of time.
Like a storm wind that will ring the freedom bell
For peace of mind.”*

—Klaus Meine
Marguerite Jill Dye is a writer and artist who divides her time between Vermont and Florida.



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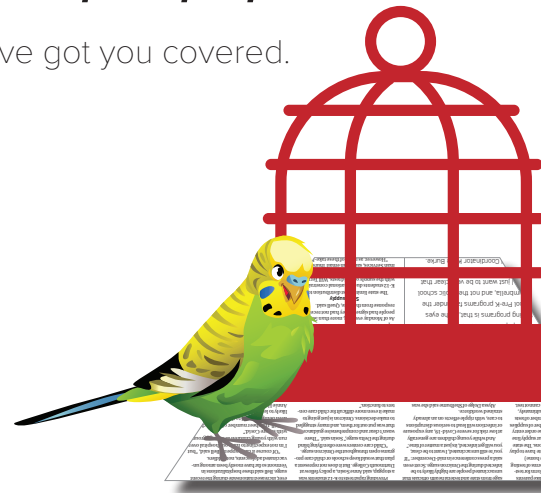
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Barstow PTO's annual fundraiser, the Paint and Sip returns

Sunday, Jan. 21 at 3 p.m. —CHITTENDEN— Barstow PTO's Annual Fundraiser, Paint and Sip, returns, from 3–5 p.m. at The Barn at Mountain Top Resort, 195 Mountain Top Rd., Chittenden. This year's theme is "For the Love of Art Hearts" and is led by extraordinarily talented art teacher Jennifer Hogan. The Barstow Memorial School serves PreK through 8th grade Mendon and Chittenden residents. The event is open to the public, age 21 and up. The fundraiser looks to raise funds for important student, family, and faculty events throughout the year. A \$45 ticket includes all art materials, light hors d'oeuvres, and a wine bottle or canvas to paint on. Door prizes will be randomly awarded throughout the event. The resort will have beverages for sale.

For questions regarding the purchase of tickets, email Lacey Ramage at thebarstowpto@gmail.com.



Denied Medicaid: from page 7

The bill would also expand the state's publicly funded health care program for children — called Dr. Dynasaur — to cover all Vermonters up to 26 years of age and pregnant people. Today Vermonters up to age 19 are eligible.

It would also direct the Dept. of Vermont Health Access to increase Medicaid reimbursement rates to providers for health care services.

"We really need to start looking at what Vermonters pay for health care and how we can make it more affordable and accessible," Rep. Lori Houghton, D-Essex Junction, chair of the House Committee on Health Care and a sponsor of the bill, said in a committee meeting Friday. "We found through the pandemic that Medicaid works for a lot of people," she said. "We know Medicaid is a well run program in Vermont. And so I drafted this bill to expand Medicaid in several different areas, as well as increase provider reimbursement rates."

'Procedural reasons'

Of the roughly 14 million Americans who lost Medicaid coverage in the past year, roughly 70% were disenrolled for "procedural reasons," according to KFF — meaning they did not meet a deadline or incorrectly completed a renewal application.

In Vermont, 20,152 of the 27,984 people removed were done so for such administrative reasons. It's not clear how many of those might actually be ineligible for Medicaid coverage.

Alex McCracken, a spokesperson for the Dept. of Vermont Health Access, which ad-

ministers the state's Medicaid program, said that those procedural disenrollments could be due to a number of factors.

"That could be a whole host of things, from document deficiencies, invalid paperwork or information errors, to logistical issues of not receiving the application or not receiving it by the deadline," McCracken said.

Vermont's rate of procedural disenrollments — about 70% — is in line with most other states. A handful of states, however, have managed to bring that rate down. In Maine, for example, only about a quarter of disenrollments are due to procedural reasons, and in Illinois, it's only 13% — the lowest rate in the country, according to KFF.

In Vermont, the Health Access informs Medicaid enrollees by mail ahead of their renewal deadline, and reaches out via phone or email if possible, McCracken said. Officials try to provide Vermonters with resources to help them complete their applications correctly and within deadlines, and the state offers an appeal process for those who believe they were disenrolled incorrectly.

The state's process is about halfway through, and so far, roughly a quarter of Vermonters processed have been disenrolled. McCracken said that it's not clear when exactly the state will finish processing everyone.

"It's the mission of the department to provide access to high quality, affordable health care to every Vermonter that we can," McCracken said. "And we take that very seriously."

Living the Dream: from page 25

snow is sparkling in the sunlight as it peeks through the trees and the world appears covered in glitter.

I come to an intersection and it's snack time! I've worked up too much of a sweat for the temps, so this has to be a quick stop. Just enough to drink some of the warm water from my thermos and open my snack bar to eat while moving. Sweat might seem fun at first, but when it freezes in the backcountry you are living close to danger.

And so I gradually work my heart rate back down. I can feel my wool longjohns soaked on my skin, but I know it will keep me warm even when wet. My puffy coat is waiting for me in my pack, wrapped around some open hand warmers so that it will be gloriously warm when I get to the summit of my ascent. At that point, the hand warmers will go in my mittens as they will surely need it. My hands are warm now, with the blood pumping through them, but I know they will freeze up quickly at the transition.

But I cannot think about that now, I have to keep sliding my way up, maneuvering a path through the forest, before my body freezes from the cold. I will slow my pace down as I come to the transition, want to give my body a chance to adjust for the descent and the fact that I will be stationary for a few minutes while I remove my skins, adjust my bindings from tour-to-ski-mode. It doesn't take a lot of time, but somehow my body always knows that the hard work is over and begins to freeze up.

I love this special time, when it's just me and the mountain. I can go wherever the mountain takes me on the snow covered ground. I have been back here so many times I can let go for a bit, feeling out the ridge lines and letting my skis take me where they will — up to a point. There's a fall-off point, almost like a cliff drop, that will suck you down and into the depths of the forest with a very, very long way back. I don't have enough snacks for that today.

And so I just enjoy my journey and my mountain companion. The trees, bent over with their heavy burden of snow so that I have to lift them to go where my skis want to go, even as I bend down on one knee and scoot underneath. It's fun, being wrapped up in frozen branches — you should try it sometime!



By Merisa Sherman

A journey along the ridgeline of the mountain offers a view of the azure sky. The parts of the trees that are exposed reveal the snow sparkling in the sunlight and the world appears covered in glitter.



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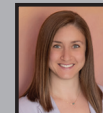
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Senior scene:

from page 25

of sitting time are associated with increased risks of cancer and cardiovascular disease. Standing and moving just 5 minutes every hour is very effective.

- Express gratitude daily. Many studies have shown that expressing gratitude releases stress and improves mood. Every day, express three things you are grateful for.
- Cuddle with your pet.

I can hear you now saying, what? Actually I didn't make these four things up but read them in an article and thought they had value. People who cuddle with a pet have lower stress levels and are happier. If you don't have a pet, maybe now is the time to get one. Maybe not! Pets are a big responsibility and the decision to get one requires much consideration. Just a thought!

Our "Thoughts on Aging" group is still going strong. We will meet on Wednesday, Jan. 17, at the library starting at 1 p.m. We talk about anything and everything. I doubt that we actually solve any problems but we certainly come up with a lot of solutions. The nice thing about our discussions is that all problems and opinions never leave the room. This month we will discuss the new year and its challenges, our resolutions and how we plan to keep them.

The beginning of a new year always seems like a good time to evaluate things and make

changes if needed. Dr. Parul Goral, a geriatrician at Vanderbilt Health Center in Nashville, says there are three different components to aging well. They are physical health, an emotional community and mental support. When all these elements come together it helps us live a life that's rewarding and healthful.

Some of the indicators that you are aging well are really quite simple. Do you take the time and have an interest in learning new things? Are we honest about our needs? Don't suffer in silence. Sharing is a good thing! Are you part of a community? This is not necessarily where you live but your connections. We have the Killington Active Seniors (KAS). The nice thing about this group is you can take part in everything or you can just join the group for lunch on Wednesdays. Do you prioritize your physical health? Eating good food and moving, along with drinking enough water, is a good start. Do you do things you enjoy? We all have issues but it's important that we all experience joy, too. Are you planning for the future in the event something changes in your life? Maybe downsizing or eliminating steps or needing household help is in the cards. Chronological age doesn't really mean a lot. It's how you're feeling that is most important.

During the past year we have talked about a KAS phone book and many of you have sent me your information. Of course, there is no obligation. We just thought it would be nice if we all had a way of contacting each other.

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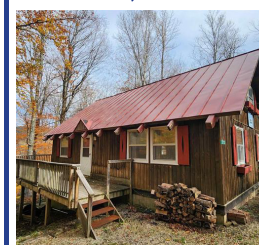
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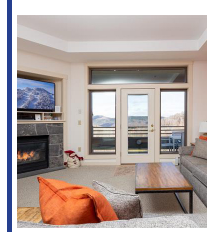
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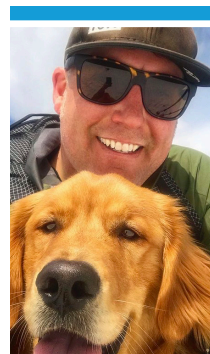
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