



FIRE BAN EXTENDED UNTIL NOV. 25

The Vermont Dept. of Forests, Parks, and Recreation has extended the ban on debris burning for Rutland and Windsor Counties for an additional week. This ban, which started Nov. 11 will now end on Nov. 25, at 3 p.m.

XC TRAIL DISPUTE HEADS TO COURT

For 60 years Mountain Top Resort in Chittenden has welcomed guests to its 60 km of cross country trails. A new dispute with a neighbor who changed trails without notice heads to court.

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FELICIA FOWLER NAMED TO RISING STARS CLASS OF 2024

Felicia Fowler, Vermont Adaptive's program director, was honored among Vermont Biz's Rising Stars for her leadership in adaptive sports and contributions to Vermont's economy and community.

Skiers and riders flock to Killington, Nov. 14

Staff report

"The day you've been waiting for is here!" Killington Resort posted on Facebook, Wednesday afternoon, Nov. 13, announcing opening day the next morning.

The resort kicked off the 2024-25 winter season at 9 a.m. Thursday, Nov. 14 — once again, becoming the first resort in Vermont to open for the winter season. (Killington tied with Sunday River in Maine to be the first open in the East. Whiteface in New York was next to open on Nov. 15 but is only open on weekends.)

Opening day at both Killington and Sunday River was reserved exclusively for passholders. The resorts opened to the general public on Friday, Nov. 15, at 9 a.m. and are now open all week.

"We owe our snowmaking team a round of applause
Killington opens → 19



By Brooke Geery, Killington Resort



Submitted

Nurses hold day of action

Rutland Regional Medical Center (RRMC) nurses held a day of action in front of the State Fair Grounds at the crossroads of Route 7 and Allen Street on Thursday, Nov. 14 from 2:30 to 5:30 p.m. The event was meant to bring attention to ongoing contract negotiations with the hospital.

Rutland ramps up incentives, cuts red tape, in push for 1,000 new housing units by 2028

By Greta Solsaa/VT Digger

Over a year ago, Rutland City Mayor Mike Doenges announced the goal of creating 1,000 new housing units by 2028. The mayor recognized that, on paper, the roughly 60 new units in development this past year are a far cry from being on track toward his admittedly "lofty" target. But Doenges said he anticipated a slow start, and much of the work in Year 1 has been to address bureaucratic roadblocks to get the momentum rolling.

"I think it's going better than I could have hoped," Doenges recently said of his housing plan. "I don't think we've seen that kind of burst of development in a very long time in our city so I take that as a very, very positive sign that we're heading in the right direction."

One of Doenges' main affordable housing partners, the Housing Trust of Rutland County, has two projects in the works in Rutland City: 22 new units at the East Creek Commons on Columbian Avenue and 30 new units on Forest Street. It is also working on a 24-unit housing project in West Rutland.

Devon Neary, executive director of the Rutland Regional Planning Commission, sees affordable housing projects as a vital part of the solution to Rutland's housing crisis.

"When we really look at housing development, it needs to be along a spectrum," said Neary. "We need to make sure

Housing → 10

One dead, two arrested in Rutland shooting

By Alan J. Keays/VT Digger

Two Massachusetts men pleaded not guilty Monday afternoon, Nov. 18, to charges in the killing of a Rutland man. The prosecutor said the Friday night shooting was drug-related, and the two suspects may have been targeting someone else.

Police called it "an isolated-targeted incident."

Dylin Wainscott, 28, of Westfield, Massachusetts, faces charges of first-degree murder, conspiracy to commit first-degree murder, and possession of an illegal narcotic stemming from the fatal shooting of 32-year-old

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Rutland weighs changes to its water filtration system

By Adam Davis

An event at the Rutland Recreation Community Center held last week by local and state officials and sparsely attended by the public outlined potential solutions to the rising levels of haloacetic acids in the city's water supply.

The city is now looking to change how it will decontaminate its tap water as the recent study showed the water contains more haloacetic acid levels than are currently allowed under state regulations.

As more members were on the panel than public attendees, moderator and Alderman Joe Barbagallo strongly encouraged the public to attend the second meeting at the Recreation Center on Wednesday, Nov. 20, at 7 p.m.

City and state officials firmly pointed out that the city's water is safe to drink and that the potentially harmful effects stemming from haloacetic acids, or HAA5, are only linked with long-term exposure. Haloacetic acids are carcinogenic at higher levels and are a common contaminant in disinfected drinking water. They form when the chlorine used to treat the water chemically reacts with other naturally occurring organic matter, such as dissolved plant material.

"If it wasn't safe to

drink, Josh [Gravelin, of the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation's Public Drinking Water Program, who also spoke at the event] would be calling me right away and issuing a 'do not drink' order," said Tom

The district's water system has become refined to the point where the Rutland system has won awards for having New England's best-tasting water.

Garofano, the chief operator of the city water plant.

Haloacetic acid levels were at an all-time low in 2011 after Tropical Storm Irene decimated Mendon Brook and its vegetation, which has been Rutland's water source for over a century. As vegetation around the brook has grown back over the past 13 years, so have the higher concentrations of HAA5. The city tests the water at its most vulnerable areas based on the water's age in its mains.

Rutland has typically tested above or below the state's regulation limit but never for a long enough period to force any changes until now.

While the current slow sand filtration facility removes nearly all existing bacteria and other pathogens from the water source, a final disinfection process protects against the recur-

rence of bacteria as it flows throughout Rutland's 70 miles of water mains.

State officials presented three potential solutions to counter the rising levels of HAA5. The first two options would require the city to

build new filtration systems at a total cost of \$10 million and \$6 million, each with annual operating expenses of \$400,000. The first is a granulated activated carbon filtration system or GAC, often used to remove various organic pollutants such as fuel oils, radon, PFAS, and others.

"Carbon is very effective at removing contaminants," said city engineer Mark Youngstrom. "It would involve large vessels or tanks of activated carbon the water would pass through."

The second option is an ion exchange process involving the filtered water flowing through tanks that absorb the organic compounds like GAC.

"It's an extremely complex process. Picture a brewery or something like that; lots of stainless steel equipment, piping, and pumps," Youngstrom said.

Both of these options would require additional testing, 24-hour operator attendance, 3-phase power to the site, and other additional facilities.

The city's third and most cost-effective option is implementing chloramine disinfection in the water supply. This option involves injecting liquid ammonium sulfate (LAS) before the water is treated with chlorine. This combination forms monochloramine, a less reactive form of chlorine, and, therefore, has less risk of creating a byproduct such as HAA5. This solution would likely cost between \$300,000 and \$600,000 to construct and would only increase the facility's annual operating costs by \$20,000 per year.

Some of the few citizens who attended the first meeting raised concerns about the overall health effects of monochloramine in the water supply.

Youngstrom assured them that it's an old but proven technology invented in Denver over a century ago and still used by most of the country's largest public water systems, including Boston and New York City. Joe Duncan, the general manager of the Champlain Water District, said that they began using it in 2006

Rutland water → 4

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to treat water for their 83,000 customers. He pointed out that correct dosing of monochloramine is critical, and the district’s water system has become refined to the point where the Rutland system has won awards for having New England’s best-tasting water.

Also on hand was Bridget O’Brien, a toxicologist with the Vermont Dept. of Health, who further explained that monochloramine has been considered safe for some time.

“Monochloramine is a very well-studied chemical. As long as the system is running smoothly, that’s what’s going to come out. It really isn’t a toxic compound,” said O’Brien.

O’Brien went on to explain that reports of chloramine use in public pools that resulted in breathing problems and skin irritation were directly related to tri-chloramines, not monochloramines and that the risks associated with monochloramines were very rare.

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Mountain Top Resort’s cross-country ski routes caught up in legal dispute

The Chittenden resort and its neighbors are at odds over the reconfiguration of two ski trails that cut through private property

By Greta Solsaa/VTDigger

Generations of cross-country skiers have flocked to Chittenden’s Mountain Top Resort to spend wintry days gliding along bucolic, snow-capped paths nestled in the shadow of Killington. As the popular cross-country skiing destination celebrates its 60th year in business, Mountain Top finds itself locked in a legal battle with its neighbors, John and Debra Gerlach, over the fate of two of its trails.

On June 4, the Gerlachs sent a notice to Mountain Top stating they had created new trails to replace the Interfield and Deer Run trails, which fall across their property. The new trails are part of the resort’s 60-kilometer network of routes for cross-country skiing and horseback riding.

Roger Hill, Mountain Top’s activities director, said beginner to intermediate skiers use the original Interfield and Deer Run trails that provide necessary links to other routes. Hill said the two new trails, as reconfigured by the Gerlachs, would be difficult to groom and pose safety risks for guests.

“The new proposed trails were as narrow as seven feet in some places. They had very abrupt terrain changes from large ravines where it went to a brook to a steep incline. Visibility on corners was very poor, fall lines were directing you towards immovable natural objects,” said Hill.

For their part, the Gerlachs maintain they were within their legal rights to alter the trails that pass through their property and say the work was done in accordance with the easement that allows the resort to use their land.

John Gerlach, a businessman who grew up in Rutland Town and now lives part-time in Florida and part-time in Chittenden, was involved in

“Out of the blue, they received a letter unilaterally declaring that the trails had been relocated,” said Roy.

a previous land issue when, in 2020, the town of Proctor rejected his bid of \$1.5 million to purchase 1,650 acres of watershed land that Proctor owned in Chittenden.

Christopher Roy, the attorney for Chittenden Resort LLC, which operates Mountain Top Resort, said that after reaching out to the Gerlachs to raise concerns and finding no immediate resolution, the team at Mountain Top turned to a judge to settle the



By Glenn Russell/VTDigger

A signpost with arrows pointing in both directions labeled “1 Morning Glory” helps skiers and horseback riders stay on course.

disagreement.

“Unfortunately, what happened here was there was no collaboration about the new trails. Out of the blue, they received a letter unilaterally declaring that the trails had been relocated, and that, unfortunately, then sent us down the path that led to going to the courthouse,” said Roy.

When they bought their property in 2018, the Gerlachs signed an easement allowing Mountain Top to use the trails on their land. That easement, however, also stipulates that the Gerlachs have the right to relocate trails so long as the new trails are similarly accessible to Mountain Top’s guests, according to court documents filed in the case.

Mountain Top has similar easements with other property owners and an agreement with the Green Mountain National Forest to operate all of its existing trails.

William Meub, the Gerlachs’ attorney, said the trails were moved because skiers often wandered onto their property and they wanted to log their land.

“We are looking to get the trails, perhaps, revised. We may even talk about

where the compromises are...to get the trail moved so it’s not where it is currently located so it doesn’t run through the center of their property, but it runs along the boundary,” said Meub. “Otherwise, the requirement of the easement that we have the right to move it would be meaningless.”

In an initial court ruling issued in late October, Rutland Superior Court Judge Alexander Burke agreed to the resort’s request for a preliminary

injunction. That means Mountain Top Resort can use and maintain the original trails for the time being, and skiers’ experiences will not be impacted as the cross-country ski season begins, according to Hill.

In his ruling, the judge found enough evidence to establish the potential of “irreparable harm” to the resort — both financially and environmentally — if trail maintenance operations, and therefore skier routes, were obstructed.

Roy, the resort’s attorney, said the resort is worried that guests may not come back if cross-country skiers find that trails lack the same level of quality and safety that they have come to expect from Mountain Top.

“Once the season is gone, the season is gone, and it’s unknowable what impact that would have,” said Roy.

According to Hill, the concept of “substantially similar access” was crucial for the resort’s legal argument, as the easement requires replacement trails to serve the same role as the old trails. He said the replacement trails were too narrow for grooming equipment and would be less enjoyable for guests to use.

“I will not open a trail for skiing unless I can groom it,” said Hill. “When you come and give me money for a ticket, I want you to have an enjoyable experience on a prepared surface.”

Mountain Top hired a trail designer, John Morton, as a consultant to analyze both the current and proposed trails. Hill said he and Morton took measurements and surveyed the trail in person to create topographical maps, and Morton concluded

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Christopher Hale in Rutland.

Precious Okorie, 38, of Springfield, Massachusetts, has been charged with conspiracy to commit first-degree murder and being an accessory before the fact.

Both men were arrested Friday night, Nov. 15, after the shooting and lodged at the Marble Valley Regional Correctional Facility in Rutland pending their arraignment. At the hearing Monday, the men appeared in Bennington County Superior criminal court by video from the jail. They both entered not-guilty pleas.

According to the charging document authored by Rutland Police Detective Cpl. Adam Lucia, police were called a little after 7 p.m. Friday to a reported shooting at a duplex on Elm Street and found Hale had been shot outside the residence.

Hale was taken by ambulance to Rutland Regional Medical Center, where he was later pronounced dead, Lucia wrote in the filing. Not far from the shooting scene, police found .40-caliber shell casings.

Police called it “an isolated-targeted incident” and said there was no wider threat to the public.

Dakota Moretti, a witness, reported to police shortly after the incident that a man whom he knew as “Slim” and later identified as Wainscott had been looking for another alleged drug dealer named “Josh.”

The affidavit stated that police, through “intelligence,” learned that “Josh” and “Slim” had issues with each other about a week earlier “where it was unreported, but suggested” that “Josh” had shot “Slim” when robbing him of his “drug stash” at the Elm Street duplex.

Moretti reported that at the time of the shooting Friday night, he was in a vehicle not far from the Elm Street residences and saw Wainscott run toward the duplex, Lucia wrote in the charging document. The witness then said that, while seated



Screenshot supplied by VTDigger
Dylin Wainscott (left) and Precious Okorie (right) appeared virtually during their respective arraignments on Nov. 18.

in the vehicle, he heard gunshots and saw Wainscott running, according to the filing. Wainscott then got into the vehicle and told Moretti, “he had seven shots and had made all seven shots count,” Lucia wrote in the filing.

Moretti also reported to police that Wainscott told him that he shot the first man he saw leaving the house and that the person had a covering over his face at the time.

Earlier that night, according to Moretti’s account to police, a person he knew as “P,” and later identified by authorities as Okorie, had instructed Wainscott to shoot the first person he saw exit the residence once he got there.

Moretti said to investigators that after the shooting, Wainscott had Moretti drive him to a spot not too far away, off Route 7, where Okorie was waiting in another vehicle.

The two men were arrested Friday night when they drove into the parking lot of the downtown Rutland Shopping Plaza

planning to meet Moretti, who had already contacted authorities, the charging documents stated.

According to the charging document, police also obtained and viewed surveillance video taken from a nearby residence, which showed a man with a covering over his face approaching and knocking on the door of the duplex.

While the man, later identified as Hale, was knocking on the front door, the filing stated, gunshots could be heard on the video, and a man who appeared to have fired shots could be seen running, getting into a vehicle, and leaving the area.

In court Monday, Rutland County State’s Attorney Ian Sullivan, the prosecutor, asked Judge Jennifer Barrett to set \$10 million bail for both Wainscott and Okorie.

Sullivan said during the arraignment for Okorie that Okorie “may have been conspiring to target another individual not harmed in this shooting.”

Mark Furlan, an attorney for Okorie, termed the bail request “obscenely over-reaching.” He said his client works for a pool company and doesn’t have anywhere near \$10 million. Furlan also questioned the strength of the state’s case against his client, noting it was based solely on the unsworn statement of one reported witness. Barrett set bail at \$100,000 for Okorie.

Sullivan said during Wainscott’s arraignment that the \$10 million bail was warranted given the seriousness of the alleged offenses and the possibility of risk of flight.

Anthony Falcone, Wainscott’s attorney, asked the judge to set a lower bail amount of \$1 million. The defense lawyer disputed that his client was a flight risk, stating that Wainscott was about to start barber school and was coaching a youth basketball team in Massachusetts.

Barrett ordered Wainscott held without bail pending another hearing on the matter. If convicted of the charges against them, both Wainscott and Okorie face up to life in prison.

← XC trails: from page 4

that the new trails would not have been allowed at an Olympic-level race.

In response, Meub claimed the outside consultant never surveyed the trails on-site, so the measurements were imprecise. According to Meub, the Gerlachs plan to contract with another trail expert and submit more evidence in preparation for a future trial.

“We don’t believe that all of the testimony was particularly accurate. The trail is wider than what people testified and what the judge found, which is oftentimes what happens in preliminary matters,” he said.

Mountain Top’s motion raised several issues, but the court ruled that there was not enough evidence to answer all of their questions at a preliminary stage. Roy said the concerns were, namely, whether the Gerlachs can use motorized vehicles on trails and where the Mountain Top crew can access trails along the property boundary line.

“The court took a few weeks and, frankly, did a very comprehensive job with the judge’s written decision, really laying out the facts as he saw them (and) the law as he saw it,” said Roy.

But the ski trail saga is not over. The court has instructed both parties to agree to a timeline for future proceedings by Dec. 10 so that the court can set a trial date.

Khele Sparks, the resort’s general manager, said Mountain Top is open to a resolution outside of court and even relocating the trails as Gerlachs desires. He added that Mountain Top has previously worked with neighbors to relocate trails. But the resort wants a compromise that ensures cross-country skiers have the same experience with groomed trails they have had for years, he said.

“I think it’s extremely important to say that we’re not against moving our trails,”


The resort wants a compromise that ensures cross-country skiers have the same experience with groomed trails they have had for years, Sparks said.

said Sparks.


“We just need to make sure that we provide the same experience to our guests going forward that we always have,” he added.

Meub said the Gerlachs aim to reach an agreement in court on the relocated and revamped trails.

“The best result for everybody — which is what people are trying to obtain — is that the trails get moved and that they be safe ski trails,” he said.




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Bridge closures to affect Plymouth

By Brett Yates

Over the next three summers, the Vermont Agency of Transportation expects to replace five state-owned bridges in Plymouth and one in Bridgewater, necessitating closures on Route 100 and Route 100A.

Accelerated Bridge Program Manager Rob Young, who presented the plan to the Plymouth Select Board on Monday, Nov. 18, said VTrans will use “emergency funds” to upgrade infrastructure deemed inadequate after the July 2023 flooding. The bridges in question cross Pinney Hollow Brook, Reservoir Brook, Tinker Brook, and Money Brook.

“These projects aren’t really at the end of their design life, but because they are constricting the channels, they weren’t constructed with the best hydraulics in mind at the time,” Young said. “We’re going to go ahead and replace those structures.”

Construction is set to begin next April, albeit without any road closures “until school is out for the summer.”

Bridge 9 on Route 100A will come first. VTrans will work on Route 100’s Bridge 112 and Bridge 116 in 2026, moving on to Route 100A’s

Bridge 4 and Bridge 7 in 2027, as well as Route 100’s Bridge 108.

Rick Martin, the owner of Chloe’s Market (formerly the Plymouth Country Store), voiced concerns about the forthcoming detours at the Select Board meeting.

“This is crazy,” Martin said. “You do this thing, and it’s going to affect my sales immensely. People aren’t going to travel around to come to the store.”

According to the state’s description, Vermont’s Accelerated Bridge Program “makes use of prefabricated elements” that can “be quickly installed with minimal impact to the traveling public.”

Using this method, the smallest of the six projects will take an estimated one to two weeks. But VTrans projects a closure of 45 to 60 days for the largest of them, Bridge 116, just north of Plymouth’s town line.

In West Bridgewater, a new 63-foot bridge will replace a circa-2023 temporary span. The job will include what Project Manager Gary Laroche called “some pretty major stream realignment and construction” to create “a more resilient and maintainable stream in the future.”

With cost of education driving voters, lawmakers feel pressure to respond

Dem lawmakers and governor defer to each other to take up proposals

By Ethan Weinstein/VTDigger

Vermonters cited affordability as a top priority in the 2024 election, and last week, they voted to send more Republicans to Montpelier than in recent decades.

Driving affordability concerns is the cost of education, which fueled this year’s average education property tax increase of 13.8%.

The election results, which saw a number of Democratic incumbents unseated, signal that state education policy needs to change — and fast, some lawmakers say.

“This is what voters told us last Tuesday:

We need to fix the education funding system in Vermont,” Sen. Thomas Chittenden, Southeast.

Because Democrats lost their supermajorities in both the House and Senate, the majority party can no longer override Republican Gov. Phil Scott’s vetoes. Bills will likely need bipartisan support, and the governor may have more sway in policymaking.

“It’s fair to say that the elections made it clear that Vermonters want the Legislature and the governor to work more closely,” said Rep. Peter Conlon, D-Cornwall, chair of the House Education Committee. “We will be looking forward to very detailed proposals from the governor right away as the session begins.”

Last year, lawmakers and the administration sparred over collaboration — or lack thereof. The administration said Scott had produced years’ worth of potential cost savings ideas that the Legislature ignored. Democratic lawmakers, in turn, said Scott’s ideas came too late or lacked details.

Asked if, given last week’s election, the governor would engage in policymaking in a new way, Rebecca Kelley, Scott’s director of communications, wrote in part, “The message from voters is that legislative leaders need to start opening their minds to his ideas AND heed the warnings he puts forward.”

In a 2,500-word email, Kelley provided an 8-year timeline of Scott’s education finance suggestions, ranging from a statewide health care contract to increasing staff-

to-student ratios through attrition and using some surplus funds as property tax relief. She suggested that those ideas remained relevant, and that the onus was on the Legislature to consider what had already been proposed.

Kelley also said it was a “false narrative” that the administration had not fully cooperated in education finance policymaking last year, writing, in part, “We WERE at the table, going back and forth on ideas.”

“Here’s the bottom line,” she wrote. “If the majority — and they do still hold a jority, which means we cannot make take up any of our ideas — continue to be allowed (and sometimes abled) to say ‘we don’t like that posal, give us another one,’ we will not solve this problem.”

With more Republicans in office, some of the governor’s allies have new positions of power.

After his election to the Vermont Senate this month, Rep. Scott Beck, R-St. Johnsbury, expects to continue working on issues of education finance, a primary focus during his time in the House.

He plans to advocate for a proposal like the one he brought forward last legislative session, and in previous years, which would provide a “foundation” payment to school districts based on their number of students.

“I think we should have made this change a long time ago,” he said in an interview. “You’d get the spending to right-size itself organically.”

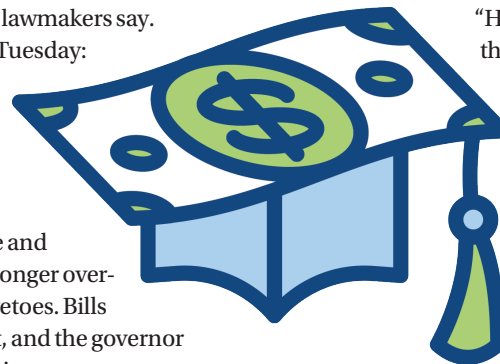
As with Vermont’s current formula, Beck’s idea would factor in “pupil weights,” or the relative expense of educating different types of students in different school settings.

The idea has a supporter in Chittenden, who sits on the Senate Finance Committee, which handles education funding.

A foundation formula that provided a base level of equitable funding “increasingly makes sense to me,” he said.

While Chittenden said he initially referred to the idea as the “Scott Beck Plan,” he said he learned that a similar idea

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GUEST EDITORIAL

Welcoming new Americans will strengthen Vt's economy

By Mike Pieciak, Vermont State Treasurer

As Vermont's Treasurer, I am committed to growing Vermont's economy and building a more inclusive future for our state. To keep our economy on a positive track, we must address our demographic challenges and grow our workforce.

I regularly hear from employers about the difficulty of finding workers — a challenge impacting all sectors of our economy, from small businesses and our largest companies to service providers and local governments. One way to grow our workforce is to address our housing shortage, and though we're making strides to build more homes, it's clear that solving Vermont's demographic challenges will require more

than new housing.

To prepare Vermont's economy for the future we need to continue welcoming New Americans.

Throughout the state, we're seeing real benefits from immigration. Win-ooski's successful efforts to welcome new Americans

It's clear that solving Vermont's demographic challenges will require more than new housing.

have brought young residents, a host of thriving refugee-run local businesses, hardworking new employees for existing businesses, and new customers for existing shops and services.

Bridge to Rutland, a grassroots nonprofit dedicated to supporting asylum seekers, has played a crucial role in helping migrants settle in the area, supporting local population growth. In Montpelier, the Central Vermont Refugee Action Network has welcomed several families from Afghanistan, including those who served as translators for the U.S. in their home country. These community-led initiatives are a healthy part of our democracy and, increasingly, a vital part of our economy.

Studies show that immigration nationwide is an overwhelmingly positive driver of economic growth. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office projects that from 2024 to 2034, immigration will reduce U.S. deficits by \$900 billion and increase federal revenues by \$1.2 trillion. These economic benefits don't account for the value added to local communities of welcoming individuals with new skills and dreams.

Welcoming new Americans to Vermont's communities will strengthen our workforce and economy. Longer term, the boost to Vermont's population will grow our tax base and help maintain our excellent credit ratings, making it easier to invest in critical initiatives like housing and climate resilience.

In 2023, Maine established the Office of New Americans. This office helps integrate foreign newcomers in Maine to strengthen the state's workforce and economy. Initiatives like these are forward-looking and are an important reminder to ensure Vermont does not lose out on the economic and societal benefits of immigration to neighboring states.

One of Vermont's greatest strengths lies in our welcoming and inclusive communities. As damaging falsehoods about immigration circulate in national political discourse, it is important to remember that new Americans have always played a key role — in Vermont and across our country — in building strong, resilient communities and economies. Our future will be no different.

As Vermont's Treasurer, I stand firmly with my fellow Vermonters — both newcomers and longtime residents — in wholeheartedly welcoming new Americans to our state. Their contributions are vital to our shared future, and I'm proud to know that so many Vermonters already share this vision.



LETTERS

Still Learning From Mistakes by Pat Byrnes, PoliticalCartoons

'You belong here'

Dear Editor,

A Latin teacher from junior high school once told me that the word "trivia" comes from roots, meaning three roads. The idea was that people would come together where roads meet to exchange small pieces of information — trivia.

Here in Vermont, we certainly swap news on street corners, and I've had my share of half-shouted updates between open car windows. The flow of information also

they will be able to go to Ikea in Montreal. The federal government claims that it can stop and question people within 100 miles of a border. For anyone doing the math, the distance from Highgate Springs to Pittsford, for example, is 98 miles.

School leaders have many responsibilities to their students, the staff, and the community. Now, add to the list that schools have historically been swept up in immigra-

The federal government claims that it can stop and question people within 100 miles of a border.

happens in grocery stores, coffee shops, and waiting for pick up at the end of the school day.

Recently, I found another spot for "hot tea," as the kids like to call gossip these days. I was sitting in my gym's sauna when I struck up a conversation with someone who is a school leader.

I learned that the post-election anxiety many Vermonters are feeling is also showing up in schools among students, many of whom are worried about being deported as part of what's promised to be the "largest deportation program in American history."

To clarify, this isn't kids worrying about whether

tion enforcement efforts.

Despite this, a national publication recently pointed out that there have been few public statements from school leaders or, ahem, state government. There are levers within the state that can be pulled to help protect our vulnerable students. As the Legislature gets ready for session in January, elected representatives can prioritize this issue so schools can focus on teaching and learning.

My gym's motto is "You belong here." Vermont's education system should adopt a similar mission statement.

Steven Berbeco, Winooski
Berbeco is the editor of the 802 Ed, a newsletter on education policy and practice in Vt.

Keep pets safe this trapping season

Dear Editor,

The recreational trapping season in Vermont begins on the fourth Saturday of October each year and lasts through March 31st. For some animals, like otters and beavers, this season lasts for five long months. There are no limits on the number of animals a trapper may kill or on the number of traps that may be set, including on our shared public lands.

Leghold and body-crushing kill traps are non-selective, so a trap set for a bobcat or a beaver can just as quickly catch a dog or protected species like great blue herons. Every year, non-targeted victims are referred to as "bycatch" or "incidental takes." These captures should be published on Fish & Wildlife's website so that the public is aware. However, the only way we ever learn about these horrible incidents is through the Freedom of Information Acts submitted to Fish & Wildlife.

You might notice that Vermont Fish & Wildlife often refers to the trapping season as the "regulated" season, and what that means is that largely unregulated trapping occurs year-round if wildlife is deemed a nuisance by landowners or municipalities (under the statute title 10 VSA §4828). This means

that leghold and kill traps are not just a danger during the "regulated" recreational trapping season but year-round with little oversight in a largely unregulated open season. Unlike other states, Fish & Wildlife is not notified if landowners or towns set traps. They're not even notified after the trapping occurs, and animals are killed. The state has little knowledge of how many foxes, beavers, bobcats, and other animals are injured or killed yearly during an open season.

The public may also be surprised to know that even though Fish & Wildlife was required to change the trapping regulations under Act 159, these dangerous traps may be set on public lands with no required signage. Traps are baited with enticing items like animal carcasses and scent lures, placing any curious animal at risk. Traps are often hidden under leaf debris or dirt, making them virtually invisible. Wildlife advocates encouraged Fish & Wildlife to require that traps be placed a far distance from the public, but Fish & Wildlife refused, allowing traps to be set a mere 50 feet from heavily traveled hiking trails. For powerful kill traps that are placed in shallow

Trapping safety → 28

CAPITOL QUOTES

Since the November election, the incoming administration is already making waves with the announcement of several controversial presidential cabinet picks. The selection of U.S. representative Matt Goetz for the position of U.S. Attorney General created the loudest stir of opposition due to past allegations including the ongoing House Ethics Committee investigation into his potential sex trafficking crimes. Current Speaker of the House, Mike Johnson, plans to close the investigation and keep the findings secret from the public and Senate Judiciary Committee...

“The Senate has a constitutional duty to provide advice and consent on presidential nominees, and it is crucial that we review all of the information necessary to fulfill this duty as we consider Mr. Gaetz’s nomination. We thus request that you immediately provide to the Senate Judiciary Committee your Committee’s report and all documentation related to your investigation into Mr. Gaetz’s alleged misconduct,”

said **Senate Judiciary Democrats** in a letter to the House Ethics Committee.

“Goetz has a much better chance of having dinner with Queen Elizabeth II than being confirmed by the Senate,”

wrote Ohio Republican Senator **Max Miller** in response to President-elect Trump’s announcement nominating Goetz.

“Former Congressman Goetz is the least qualified person, and the most radical person, ever to be nominated to be Attorney General. While he is a lawyer, he practiced law for only a short time, and his congressional career has been distinguished by his extremism. For example, former Congressman Goetz has regularly called for eliminating the Justice Dept. that he has now been nominated to lead,”

said U.S. Senator **Dick Durbin** during a Senate floor speech on Monday, Nov. 18.

“But, really, the Dems’ opinions on Gaetz, that’s not really what’s interesting. The good ones are going to come by my colleagues on the other side, the GOP, on how they can justify voting for that j--- off,”

said U.S. Senator **John Fetterman** to an NBC News reporter in his reaction to Goetz’s nomination.

COMMENTARY

Before school budget talks turn to slashing expenses

By Angelo Lynn

Editor’s note: Angelo Lynn is the owner and publisher of the Addison Independent, a sister paper of the Mountain Times.

With 2024-25 education property tax rate hikes well into double digits last year, it’s little doubt school boards will be primed for holding costs to a minimum for their upcoming budgets. Already local boards are trying to find ways to keep their budget to the single digits, without knowing yet what the state will negotiate for teacher contracts and health care, which make up over 80% of district costs.

Holding budgets that tight will likely require significant cuts in staffing and programs. Increases in health care, for instance, are pegged at 11.9%; contract salary increases are projected to be around 6% for some local districts plus a 5% bump in base pay for teachers; and the Addison Central district expects a \$650,000 increase in special education costs.

We don’t envy the job school board members face. They’ll have to make decisions many of their friends and neighbors will oppose, and some will despise. For everyone involved inside the system — staff, teachers, students, parents and the community at-large — cutting school budgets is always a lose-lose proposition. That’s because we want our students to have the best education possible. The counterweight is its cost and the impact on taxpayers.

To that end, bringing the public into the conversation well before those cuts are made is the best tonic. Providing thoughtful, well-reasoned responses for the board’s proposed cuts — that look at both the short-term and long-term — will be essential.

Let’s also recognize there are minor cuts to programming (eliminating an elective class, for example), and major cuts, like school or grade consolidation.

Of the latter, specific studies demonstrating the proposed savings via a detailed spread sheet should be provided, as well as the probable costs in closing any school — not just in dollars and cents, but in costs to that community and the overall cost/benefit to the district. To that end, crafting these concerns into a grand plan — much like towns create 5-to-10 year master plans — would help residents understand the underlying issues facing our schools and how to reach solutions.

Part of that planning would be to factor in housing projections. Now that the state has finally recognized the creation of affordable housing as its top-priority — and Rutland City has a goal of bringing on 1,000 units in the next five years while Killington has a workforce housing development

planned that could bring in 300 plus to town — school districts should plan for that eventual reality.

Those area school districts must answer the question: When 300-1,000 housing units come online, how many new students will that bring to the district; and if 25-50 more come online each year (as some have suggested are needed to meet demand) where will they attend classes? Before we close district elementary schools we should consider how soon it could be before the district is faced with building new or expanded facilities to make room for more students? (I know that sounds like a fairy tale, but if the housing is there, there’s plenty of evidence to suggest people will come.)

At the very least, school districts would be unwise to prematurely shutter classrooms

Bringing the public into the conversation well before those cuts are made is the best tonic.

right at the time the state and local towns finally understand that creating more affordable housing is the linchpin to addressing many of the state’s underlying ills.

We’re not suggesting no consolidations be considered, just that they’re done with eyes wide open on the

short-term benefits versus long-range consequences and that the communities impacted have ample time to respond and prepare.

Educational outcomes of the students should remain central to the reasoning to consolidate. Parental involvement and sense of community is known to be a signature benefit of smaller elementary schools, so sacrificing that, if need be, has to be offset by a greater societal gain.

Granted, that’s all balanced by the necessity of lowering the high cost in Vermont. But cutting education costs within our schools should not be the sole focus. Health care costs play an outsized role in school budgets. Simultaneously, the state has an ambitious road map to overhaul the state’s unreasonably high health care costs, which in part, depends on building more housing for health care workers.

We are, in short, juggling many hefty balls in the air.

The caution is not to over-react.

In sizing up the national election on down to local elections, many observers have noted we’re all still reeling from the aftermath of the pandemic — which was a massive disruption still rippling through the world, the nation and our local schools. As we seek solutions, we should operate with the faith that more housing will be built, that health care costs will come down, that education costs will again reach a more even keel and the one thing we should avoid, as philosopher Francis Bacon famously said, is making the remedy worse than the disease.



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Housing:

from page 1

that we are retaining the population that we have and providing housing for everyone within their affordable range.”

The region’s home sales and rental costs rose steeply in the past few years, and people living in Rutland have felt this impact in their wallets, he said. The average one-bedroom rental cost in Rutland County jumped from \$780 in 2019 to \$911 in 2023, and the median home sale increased from \$150,000 in 2018 to \$229,000 in 2022, based on a housing needs assessment by the Vermont Housing Finance Agency conducted last year.

This has left about half of the renter households in Rutland County cost-burdened, according to federal standards—a quarter of renters paid between 30% and 50% of their income on rent, and 24% paid more than half their monthly earnings on rent in 2021.

Mary Cohen, executive director of the housing trust, said that while the trust is doing its best to contribute affordable housing, its capacity as a public developer is not enough to fill the city’s need for varied housing types.

“Rutland’s rents are not high enough to attract private developers who need assurance of a return on investment for housing projects,” Cohen said. “It can’t just be the affordable housing organizations that are doing this. It’s a lot of private developers that need to step to the plate as well.”

Recognizing that Rutland’s affordable housing organizations are already “neck-deep” in projects, Doenges has looked for ways to encourage more market-rate housing development and bring in private developers.

The mayor said that he sees his role as two-fold: to encourage and welcome new residents and to “get out of the way” of developers by helping to remove costs and zoning barriers that slow down projects.

Doenges worked with the Rutland Heritage Family Credit Union to spearhead a program called Roofs Over Rutland, which received \$8 million last month to provide low-interest-rate loans to developers.

Of that funding, which came from the state treasurer’s “10% in Vermont” local investment program, \$5 million will be designated for projects with five or more units. The other \$3 million will go towards smaller-scale projects. According to Doenges, more than a dozen housing development loan requests have been made since Roofs Over Rutland’s rollout.

“That’s very encouraging because it does prove the fact that there have been developers waiting in the wings for interest rates to come down, to reinvest and bring units online,” he said.

Other steps include reducing prohibitive permitting fees and wastewater water allocation permits, which have been lowered

from \$4 per gallon to 25 cents per gallon for residential developments, Doenges said.

Due to modernized zoning and existing development in the area, Neary said Rutland is also positioned to take full advantage of the recent loosening of Act 250 regulations through Act 181, passed by the Legislature in June. Doenges, Neary, and Cohen agreed this legislative change would cut costs and speed up developers’ operations.

The Rutland Regional Planning Commission also recently released a housing guide for developers, which Neary said has helped clarify the housing production process.

“We’ve heard from several developers that that guidance document has been monumental in removing some of the barriers, especially information barriers for accessing public money and incentives for housing development and really bringing resources directly to those developers’ fingertips,” said Neary.

The Board of Aldermen is also considering an ordinance to limit short-term rentals. Michael Talbott, the board’s president, said this would hopefully have the trickle-down effect of making more housing available in

“Housing doesn’t just pop up out of nowhere.

I think what is most critical is that the city of Rutland is really laying the foundation for significant housing growth,” said Neary.

Rutland. Other municipalities in Vermont that have regulated short-term rentals include Burlington, Stowe, Killington, Woodstock, Londonderry, Tunbridge, and Plymouth.

Talbott recognized the need to be more thoughtful about reining in the unfettered short-term rental market and protecting renters in Rutland.

“We have people who tell us their landlord evicted them, turned their long-term apartment that they liked and always paid for into an Airbnb,” said Talbott. “Obviously, we need short-term rentals in Rutland, but how many do we need, and where do we need them? Because we know we also need long-term rentals in a really significant way.”

Neary said despite the “slow roll,” the lessening of regulatory barriers in concert with programs like Roofs Over Rutland marks significant headway toward tackling the region’s housing woes. The city’s success, Neary continued, will be key to addressing the housing shortage in the county as a whole, which is estimated to need around 7,000 additional housing units for renters and homeowners by 2040, according to the housing finance agency study.

“Housing doesn’t just pop up out of nowhere. I think what is most critical is that the city of Rutland is really laying the foundation for significant housing growth,” said Neary.

WORDPLAY

WILDERNESSWORDSEARCH

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally and back

E	T	I	A	G	S	Z	E	Z	N	W	N	F	Y	N	V	K	R	T	I
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SOIL
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Solutions →22

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Level: Intermediate

GUESS WHO ?

I was a corporal in the United States Marine Corps born in New York on November 10, 1981. I was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for serving with the 3rd battalion 7th Marines during the Iraq War — the first Marine recipient of this commendation during that conflict.

Answer: Jason Dunham

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Solutions →22

CLUES ACROSS

1. Long piece of squared timber

5. Emaciation

10. "Bewitched" boss Larry

14. Combining form meaning "different"

15. Current unit equal to 10 amperes

16. Older

17. Large, stocky lizard

18. Ringworm

19. Actor Pitt

20. Indian hand clash cymbals

22. Data at rest

23. Jeweled head-dress

24. Indicators of when stories were written

27. Check

30. Cigarette (slang)

31. Arctic explorers (abbr.)

32. Yearly tonnage (abbr.)

35. Delivered a speech

37. A place to bathe

38. Postmen deliver it

39. Surface in geometry

40. More (Spanish)

41. ___ and Venzetti

42. Exclamation at the end of a prayer

43. Hawaiian dish

44. Aggressively proud men

45. Fellow

46. Mark Wahlberg comedy

47. Mock

48. When you expect to get somewhere

49. Songs

52. Pair of small hand drums

55. Play

56. Sword

60. Evergreens and shrubs genus

61. Filmed

63. Italian Seaport

64. Ancient kingdom near Dead Sea

65. Pores in a leaf

66. U. of Miami mascot is one

67. Snake-like fishes

68. Pretended to be

69. Body part

CLUES DOWN

1. Piece of felted material

2. Ancient Greek City

3. Aquatic plant

4. Potentially harmful fungus (Brit. sp.)

5. Body art (slang)

6. One who follows the rules

7. Ordinary

8. Honorably retired from assigned duties and retaining one's title

9. Relaxing space

10. Japanese socks

11. Indian city

12. Rip

13. Icelandic book

21. Satisfies

23. Where golfers begin

25. Small amount

26. Snag

27. Determine the sum of

28. A distinctive smell

29. Exposed to view

32. Stain or blemish

33. Small loop in embroidery

34. River herring genus

36. Large beer

37. Deep, red-brown sea bream

38. Partner to cheese

40. At a deliberate pace

41. Gurus

43. Of each

44. Angry

46. Popular beverage

47. Flower cluster

49. Blocks

50. Those who benefitted from

efforts of relatives (slang)

51. Polio vaccine developer

52. A (usually) large and scholarly book

53. Popular soap ingredient

54. NBAer Bradley

57. Popular movie about a pig

58. Musician Clapton

59. Not a sure thing

61. Recipe measurement (abbr.)

62. Father

got news?

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A Forest of Lights Opening Night

Friday @ 4:30

WED
11/20

S.E.A.T. Exercises

9-10 a.m. (Wednesdays) Godnick Adult Center, 1 Deer St., Rutland. \$6 per individual class or \$5 per class when paying for the whole month upfront. A brand-new, chair-based full body workout led by Melissa Cox. rutlandrec.com/godnick or 802-773-1853

Killington Active Seniors Lunch

11:30 a.m. (Wednesdays) The Lookout Tavern, 2910 Killington Road, Killington. \$5 donation towards the meal, the tip is covered by local donors. 908-783-1050

Gentle & Restorative Yoga

11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (Wednesdays) Wise Pines, 184 Hartland Road, Woodstock. \$15 or \$30 for three classes. Yoga class for seniors. wisepines.com/events

Diabetes Support Group

1-2 p.m. (Second Wednesday of every month) RRM Diabetes & Endocrinology Center, 160 Allen St., Rutland. Free. For patients managing diabetes, to discuss challenges, ask questions, and provide support. Hosted by Community Health and Rutland Regional Medical Center's Diabetes & Endocrinology Center. Contact Michele Redmond at 802-277-5327. chcr.org/diabetes-support-group

Public Skating

2-3:30 p.m. (Wednesdays) Union Arena, 80 Amsden Way, Woodstock. Adult \$8, Youth \$6, Seniors \$5, Child under 3 Free, Super Senior (70+) Free. Skate rentals \$7 (figure or ice hockey). unionarena.net

Bone Builders at the Chaffee

3:30-4:30 p.m. (Wednesdays) Chaffee Art Center, 16 S. Main St., Rutland. Free. Heather Wilson leads a bone-building class focused on weight training and balance exercises to increase strength, balance, and bone density. chaffeeartcenter.org

Cribbage for Adults

3-5 p.m. (Wednesdays) Hartland Public Library, 135 Route 5, Hartland. Free. hartlandlibraryvt.org/calendar or 802-436-2473

Learn to Skate

4:20-5:20 p.m. (Wednesdays through Dec. 19) Union Arena, 80 Amsden Way, Woodstock. \$140. Join Union Arena Skating Club for learn to skate lessons. Levels include Snowplow Sam (ages 3-5), Basic Skills (ages 6+), and Pre-Free to Free Skate levels. Helmets required. Register at uaskateclub.com

Diabetes Support Group

5-6 p.m. (2nd Wednesday of every month) Community Health Castleton, 261 Route 30, Castleton. Free. For patients managing diabetes, to discuss challenges, ask questions, and provide support. Contact Michele Redmond at 802-277-5327. chcr.org/diabetes-support-group

Shoulder Opening Stretch Class -

5-Week Course

6-7 p.m. Artistree Arts Center, 2095 Pomfret Road, Pomfret. Refer to website for details. This class, led by certified stretch coach Rob Lamprey, focuses on improving shoulder and neck health through targeted stretches and mobility exercises. hisawyer.com/artistree/schedules/activity-set/848288

'Wicked' (PG) film Premiere

6:45 p.m. Springfield Cinemas 3, 26 Main St., Springfield. Check theater for pricing. Starring Cynthia Erivo, Ariana Grande, Jonathan Bailey, and Jeff Goldblum. Catch the first showing in Vermont of the anticipated film adaptation of the Broadway musical. springfieldcinemas3.com

Film Screening: 'Happy People: A Year in the Taiga'

7-9 p.m. Stone Valley Arts, 145 E. Main St., Poultney. Suggested donation of \$5. Watch Dmitry Vasyukov's documentary about the self-reliant lives of Russian trappers and the native Ket people in the Siberian taiga. Discussion follows the screening. Supported by Kanopy and Castleton Free Library. stonevalleyarts.org

Disney's 'Beauty and the Beast'

7:30 p.m. Northern Stage, 74 Gates St., White River Junction. \$24-\$94. Opening night performance. Directed by Carol Dunne. northernstage.org

THURS
11/21

Essentrics Stretch and Strengthen

9-10 a.m. (Thursdays) Stone Valley Arts, 145 E. Main St., Poultney. \$10. No-weights, low impact workout combines principles from ballet, tai chi, and physiotherapy to restore flexibility and balance. Bring a mat and water. stonevalleyarts.org

Intermediate Line Dance

9:30-10:30 a.m. (Thursdays) Godnick Adult Center, 1 Deer St., Rutland. rutlandrec.com/godnick or 802-773-1853

Bone Builders

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

Survivors Support Group

10 a.m.-noon. (Thursdays) Godnick Adult Center, 1 Deer St., Rutland. Free. Fliers are available at the Godnick Center or call 802-775-3232. rutlandrec.com/godnick

Chaffee: Artery

Noon. (Thursdays) Adults. Connect and create with others. \$10-\$20. Painting in all mediums welcome. No set topic or instructor, attendees will work on their individual artwork. Must pre-register. chaffeeartcenter.square.site

Ukelele Group

Noon-1 p.m. (Thursdays) Chaffee Art Center, 16 S. Main St., Rutland. Free. Attendees will play a collection of sheet music. All levels welcome, ages 12+. Must pre-register by Wednesday at noon. chaffeeartcenter.square.site

Play Bridge!

2-4 p.m. (Thursdays) Norman Williams Public Library, 10 The Green, Woodstock. Free. Beginners are welcome to observe. normanwilliams.org or 802-457-2295

Stick & Puck

3-4:10 p.m. (High School Level) Union Arena, 80 Amsden Way, Woodstock. \$10 per session. Helmet required; other gear strongly recommended. unionarena.net

Women's Circle

5:30-7 p.m., Nov. 21, 251 West St., Rutland (white building at VT Farmer's Food Center). Free. Refreshments provided. Ages 18 and up. A welcoming, inclusive social and learning space for women and gender-expansive individuals. Engage in meaningful discussions, build connections, and be part of a compassionate community of changemakers. 802-342-5811 or info@socialtinkering.org

Adult Pour Painting

6-8 p.m. Chaffee Art Center, 16 So. Main St., Rutland. \$40. Learn the pour painting technique with instructor Lorrie Amerio Manieri. Includes all supplies. Must pre-register. chaffeeartcenter.org

Rutland Squadron Alumni Night

6-8 p.m., Rutland Squadron Building, Rutland Southern Vermont Regional Airport, North Clarendon Road, Rutland. Connect with past and current members of the Civil Air Patrol. facebook.com/groups/civilairpatrolRutland

Nurse Blake: 'Shock Advised' Tour

7 p.m. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St., Rutland. \$40-\$60. Age 16+. Enjoy an evening of comedy as Nurse Blake shares hilarious insights into life as a nurse. paramountvt.org

Movie - 'To the End'

Virtual screening available from 12:00 a.m. Thursday to 11:59 p.m. Friday. Sponsored by Sustainable Woodstock. Free. A documentary featuring U.S. Rep Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and activist Vashini Prakash. sustainablewoodstock.org/event/to-the-end-film-screening/

FRI
11/22

Movie - 'To the End'

Virtual screening available from 12:00 a.m. Thursday to 11:59 p.m. Friday. Sponsored by Sustainable Woodstock. Free. A documentary featuring U.S. Rep Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and activist Vashini Prakash. sustainablewoodstock.org/event/to-the-end-film-screening/

Bone Builders

11 a.m.-noon. (Fridays) Chaffee Art Center, 16 S. Main St., Rutland. Free. Heather Wilson leads a bone-building class that focuses on weight training and balance exercises to improve strength, balance, and bone density. chaffeeartcenter.org

Connections & Interconnections of Life Weekly Group

Noon-1 p.m. (Fridays) Chaffee Art Center, 16 So. Main St., Rutland. Free. A place to share thoughts, philosophies, spirituality, cultures, and more in a respectful way. All are welcome. Must RSVP: chaffeeartcenter.square.site

Xmas With a Difference Market

2-7 p.m., Norwich Congregational Church, 15 Church St., Norwich. Free. Handmade items from nonprofit organizations worldwide. Partneringlobalchange@gmail.com

Stick & Puck

3-4:10 p.m. (All Ages) Union Arena, 80 Amsden Way, Woodstock. \$10 per session. Helmet required; other gear strongly recommended. unionarena.net

Okemo Ski and Snowboard Swap

3-7 p.m. Round House at Jackson Gore Inn, Ludlow. Annual annual gear swap to benefit Okemo Mountain School. New and used equipment at great prices, including skis, snowboards, boots, bindings, helmets, and outerwear. Early buy hour from 3-4 p.m. is \$5 or free for Okemo employees. Free entry thereafter. kfoster@okemomountainsschool.org

A Forest of Lights - Opening Night

4:30-7 p.m. Last check-in at 6:30 p.m. Weekends and select weeknights through early January. VINS Nature Center, 149 Natures Way, Quechee. Adults \$13, Youth \$8, Children 3 & under Free. Stroll through magical light displays featuring the Snow Shower Tower, Snow Globe, Whimsical Woodland, and more. Campfire and snacks available for purchase. vinsweb.org

Holiday Exhibit & Shoppe Opening Reception

5-7 p.m., Chaffee Art Center, 16 South Main St., Rutland. Free. Annual holiday exhibit featuring handmade treasures, holiday music, and refreshments. chaffeeartcenter.org

West Coast Swing Dance Classes

5:30-6:30 p.m. Gymnasium, 11 Cottage St., Rutland. \$15 per class. Learn West Coast Swing with flexible registration options for individual nights or the full series. Pre-registration required. vtwestiebest@gmail.com



Calendar: Email events@mountaintimes.info.....
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Family Movie Night: 'Ratatouille'

6-8 p.m. Norman Williams Public Library, 10 The Green, Woodstock. Free. Enjoy a special screening of Pixar's "Ratatouille," an award-winning animated film about a rat aspiring to become a French chef. Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult. normanwilliams.org

DJ Skate Night

6:30-8:30 p.m., Giorgetti Arena, 2 Oak St. Ext., Rutland. \$5 for Rutland City residents, \$8 for non-residents, skate rentals \$5. Enjoy a night of public skating with music provided by Sunset Entertainment. rutlandrec.com/giorgetti

The Sharon Academy Presents: 'Footloose'

7 p.m. Chandler Center for the Arts, 71 N Main St., Randolph. \$12-\$16. Experience the dynamic musical "Footloose," based on the 1984 film, performed by The Sharon Academy students. chandler-arts.org

Live Concert: The Drop Offs with The Freeze

Brothers

7-10 p.m. Town Hall Theater, 31 The Green, Woodstock. \$15. A night of eclectic live music featuring The Drop Offs, a Woodstock-based band blending original compositions with covers from artists like The Rebirth Brass Band and The Band, and The Freeze Brothers, known for their melodic blues rock. pentanglearts.org

SAT
11/23

Holiday Pies Class

9 a.m.-noon. The Kitchen at Mission Farm, 316 Mission Farm Road., Killington. Choose from three holiday pies to bake and take home, along with recipes for all three options. Space is limited. Registration required. missionfarmkitchen.org

Norwich Farmers Market: Thanksgiving Market

9 a.m.-1 p.m. Tracy Hall, 300 Main St., Norwich. Shop from over 45 local vendors and producers as the market moves indoors for the winter season. norwichfarmersmarket.org

Holiday Market Craft Fair

9 a.m.-2 p.m. Seven Stars Arts Center, 5126 Route 14, Sharon. Local artisans, raffle baskets, bake sale, and holiday activities. Fundraiser for Sharon Old Home Day. sevenstarsarts.org

Pittsford Craft Fair and Basket Raffle

9 a.m.-2 p.m. Lothrop School Gym, 3447 US-7, Pittsford. A Christmas for kids craft fair. pittsfordvt.myrec.com

Rutland Youth Theatre Holiday Fair

9 a.m.-2 p.m. Rutland Recreation Community Center, 134 Community Dr., Rutland. Free. Holiday shopping with local vendors, kids' craft corner, raffle tickets, bake sale, and a sneak peek of the Winter 2024 performance. secure.rec1.com/VT/rutland-vt/catalog

The Gables Craft Fair

9 a.m.-2 p.m. The Gables at East Mountain, 200 Gables Pl., Rutland. Free. Shop handmade crafts, jewelry, art, and more from local artisans. Perfect for unique gifts or personal treasures. thegablesvt.com/calendar-events/

Loaded Turkey Rail Jam

9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Killington Resort, Lower Reason Park. \$25. Rescheduled date from Nov.16. Kick off the season with Killington's Loaded Turkey Rail Jam, where competitors vie for Thanksgiving-themed prizes. First place receives a frozen turkey, with other prizes for second and third. Competitors and spectators need a season pass or lift ticket; discounted tickets are available for competitors and parents/guardians. Day-of registration (if available) will be held 9-10 a.m. in the K-1 Lodge, credit/debit only. killington.com

Okemo Ski and Snowboard Swap

9 a.m.-5 p.m. Round House at Jackson Gore Inn, Ludlow. Free entry. Annual annual gear swap to benefit Okemo Mountain School. New and used equipment at great prices, including skis, snowboards, boots, bindings, helmets, and outerwear. kfooster@okemomountainschool.org

Presentation: 'Collecting Season is Never Over'

10 a.m.-1 p.m. BALE Commons, 35 S. Windsor St., South Royalton. Suggested donation \$20. Join wild food experts Nova Kim and Les Hook to explore the endless gifts of nature. Learn simple recipes using fir, spruce, and pine, along with other wild foods. No one turned away. balevt.org

Vermont Winter Farmers Market

10 a.m.-2 p.m. Vermont Farmers Food Center, 251 West St., Rutland. Free. Shop local produce, crafts, and goods every Saturday through May 10, 2025. vtfarmersmarket.org

Movie - 'Wicked,' (PG) Featuring a Costume

Contest and Sing Along

11:30 a.m.-2:45 p.m. Woodstock Town Hall Theater, 31 The Green #2, Woodstock. \$8-\$10. Film adaptation of the musical phenomenon. There will be a costume contest before the film for this first screening at the Woodstock Town Hall. pentangle-arts.square.site/movie-tickets

Art at the Chaffee: Drop N' Paint

Noon-2 p.m. (Saturdays)Chaffee Art Center, 16 So. Main St., Rutland. \$25 per person, instructor help optional with a fee. All ages. Supplies and images to paint are provided. Must pre register by Friday noon at: chaffeeartcenter.org

Xmas With a Difference Market

Noon-5 p.m. Norwich Congregational Church, 15 Church St., Norwich. Free. Handmade items from nonprofit organizations worldwide. Partneringlobalchange@gmail.com

Pot Luck Supper

1-3 p.m. Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St., Rutland. Enjoy a fall tradition with a shared meal. Bring your own place setting, utensils, and a dish to share. After dinner, Herb will present on hiking in the Cotswolds. rutlandfree.org

Screening of Jay Craven's 'Lost Nation'

3-5 p.m. Billings Farm & Museum Visitor Center Theater, 69 Old River Road, Woodstock. \$15, \$12 for members. Revolutionary War-era drama about Ethan Allen and Lucy Terry Prince, with Q&A by filmmaker Jay Craven after each screening. Advance ticket purchase recommended. billingsfarm.org/filmseries

Jay Nash & Brooks Hubbard

6-9 p.m. Stone Church at Mission Farm, 316 Mission Farm Road., Killington. \$10-\$50. An evening of songs, storytelling, and harmony in a stunning acoustic space. Locally sourced homemade pies and beverages available on a donation basis. missionfarmvt.org

Pentangle Arts 50th Anniversary Musical Revue

7 p.m. Woodstock Town Hall Theatre, 31 The Green, Woodstock. \$25. Celebrate 50 years of Pentangle Arts with songs, scenes, and interviews featuring past Executive Directors. pentanglearts.org

Celtic Music with Extra Stout

7 p.m. Stone Valley Arts, 145 E. Main St., Poultney. \$10. Traditional Irish music featuring the band Extra Stout. Tickets available at the door. stonevalleyarts.org

The Sharon Academy Presents: 'Footloose'

7 p.m. Chandler Center for the Arts, 71 N Main St., Randolph. \$12-\$16. Experience the dynamic musical "Footloose," based on the 1984 film, performed by The Sharon Academy students. chandler-arts.org

Karim Nagi Performance

7 p.m. North Chapel UU Church, 7 Church St., Woodstock. \$5-\$20. Egyptian multi-instrumentalist performs traditional Arab and fusion music as part of BarnArts Global Music Residency. barnarts.org/mainstage/karim-nagi

SUN
11/24

Mt. Tom Farmers Market

9 a.m.-1 p.m. Pomfret Town Hall, 5218 Pomfret Road, Pomfret. First of two winter markets. foxxfarm22@gmail.com

Okemo Ski and Snowboard Swap

9 a.m.-1 p.m. Round House at Jackson Gore Inn, Ludlow. Free entry. Annual annual gear swap to benefit Okemo Mountain School. New and used equipment at great prices, including skis, snowboards, boots, bindings, helmets, and outerwear. kfooster@okemomountainschool.org

Live Holiday Auction

12-5 p.m. Brandon Town Hall, 1 Conant Square, Brandon. \$1 per bid card. Friends of the Brandon Free Public Library annual holiday auction to benefit the library. Doors open at noon for previewing, socializing, and refreshments. Auction begins at 2 p.m. Auction items include wreaths, holiday decor, quilts, and original works by local artists. brandonpubliclibrary.org

Public Skating

11 a.m.-12:10 p.m. (Sundays) Union Arena, 80 Amsden Way, Woodstock. Adult \$8, Youth \$6, Seniors \$5, Child under 3 Free, Super Senior (70+) Free. Skate rentals \$7 (figure or ice hockey). unionarena.net

Screening of Jay Craven's 'Lost Nation'

3-5 p.m., Billings Farm & Museum Visitor Center Theater, 69 Old River Road, Woodstock. \$15, \$12 for members. Revolutionary War-era drama about Ethan Allen and Lucy Terry Prince, with Q&A by filmmaker Jay Craven after each screening. Advance ticket purchase recommended. billingsfarm.org/filmseries

Movie - 'Wicked,' (PG)

3:00- 5:45 p.m. Woodstock Town Hall Theater, 31 The Green #2, Woodstock. \$8-\$10. Film adaptation of the musical phenomenon starring Ariana Grande and Cynthia Erivo. pentangle-arts.square.site/movie-tickets

Upper Valley Partner Dance Tea Dance

5-7:30 p.m., Artistree Community Arts Center, 2095 Pomfret Road, Pomfret. \$15. Admission includes a beginner Texas two-step lesson and open dancing with various styles. Advance tickets available. artistreevt.org

SINGO Night

6:30-8 p.m., United Church of Ludlow, 48 Pleasant St., Ludlow. \$10 per card. Holiday-themed SINGO with live music by Sammy Blanchette and host Jane McGarry. Proceeds support disaster kits for the church's role as a community Disaster Hub. playingo.com

MON
11/25

Bone Builders

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

Monday Movie

1 p.m. (Mondays) Sherburne Memorial Library, 2998 River Road, Killington. Free. Contact the library for the title. sherburnelibrary.org/movie-monday or 802-422-9765

Stick & Puck

3-4:10 p.m. (All Ages) Union Arena, 80 Amsden Way, Woodstock. \$10 per session. Helmet required; other gear strongly recommended. unionarena.net

Calendar → 14



MOUNTAIN TOP RESORT

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Clay Bird Shooting - Horseback Riding
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Dining on Site (in our New Tavern!)

195 Mountain Top Road, Chittenden, Vermont
802.483.2311 | mountaintopresort.com

 **Calendar:** Email events@mountaintimes.info from page 13

Movie - 'Wicked,' (PG)
7:30-10:15 p.m. Woodstock Town Hall Theater, 31 The Green #2, Woodstock. \$8-\$10. Film adaptation of the musical phenomenon starring Ariana Grande and Cynthia Erivo. pentangle-arts.square.site/movie-tickets

TUES
11/26

Metropolitan Opera Encore: 'Tosca'
1-4 p.m. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St., Rutland. \$20 + fees. Experience Lise Davidsons as Tosca in a live transmission of Puccini's masterpiece, featuring Freddie De Tommaso and Quinn Kelsey. Presented in honor of Kathy & Bill Harm. paramountvt.org

Handcraft Gathering
2-4 p.m. (Every 3rd Tuesday) Abbott Memorial Library, Library St., So. Pomfret. Bring your knitting, crocheting, embroidery, or mending projects. abbottmemoriallibrary.org

Alzheimer's Support Group
4-5 p.m. (Every 2nd Tuesday) Community Health, 71 Allen St., Suite 403, Rutland. Free. A monthly meeting for Alzheimer's caregivers and family members to share experiences and support one another. The group is run by participants with hands-on experience in caregiving. chcrr.org

Learn to Skate Lessons
5:30-6:30 p.m. Union Arena Community Center, 80 Amsden Way, Woodstock. \$140. Join Union Arena Skating Club for learn to skate lessons on Tuesdays, from Nov. 5 to Dec. 18, 2024. Levels include Snowplow Sam (ages 3-5), Basic Skills (ages 6+), and Pre-Free to Free Skate levels. Helmets required. Register at uaskateclub.com

Tiny Art Gallery Opening Celebration
5:30-7 p.m. Rutland Free Library, Fox Room, 10 Court St., Rutland. Free. Celebrate the Tiny Art Gallery featuring community-created artwork. Enjoy activities, including an art project with The MINT, and snacks. rutlandfree.org

Line Dance Classes
5:30-7:30 p.m. (Tuesdays) Bradford Methodist Church, 186 N Main St., Bradford. \$10. Easy line dancing at 5:30 p.m., perfect for novices, followed by a 6:30 p.m. beginner-level class. All ages welcome. Bring water and wear comfortable shoes. No need to register in advance. jeanbeanslinedancing@gmail.com

Rutland Area Toastmasters
6-7:30 p.m. (1st & 3rd Tuesdays) Courcelle Bldg, 16 N. St. Ext., Rutland. Develop public speaking, listening, and leadership skills. Guests welcome. 802-775-6929. toastmasters.org

ONGOING

Colorful Barn Quilts Created by Math Students
Through Dec. 1. Billings Farm & Museum, 69 Old River Road, Woodstock. Exhibition of barn quilts from the 6th and 7th grade students of Piermont Village School. billingsfarm.org

Disney's 'Beauty and the Beast'
Through Jan. 1, 2025. Northern Stage, 74 Gates St., White River Junction. \$24-\$94. Directed by Carol Dunne. northernstage.org

Holiday Art Market
Brandon Artists Guild, 7 Center St., Brandon. Free. A festive holiday art market featuring handcrafted ornaments, pottery, stained glass, jewelry, photography, fiber art, and gifts for all ages. Open daily throughout the holiday season. brandonartistsguild.org

UPCOMING
11/28

13th Annual Killington 5k Turkey Trot
9:30 a.m. Pickle Barrel, 1741 Killington Road, Killington. \$30 before race day, \$35 on race day. The 13th edition of the Killington 5k Turkey Trot Run/Walk welcomes participants of all ages. Proceeds benefit the Pico Ski Education Foundation. Race day registration begins at 8 a.m. at the Pickle Barrel. Register now at runsignup.com/Race/VT/Killington/Killington5KTurkeyTrot

18th Annual 5K Turkey Trot for Zack's Place
10 a.m. Woodstock Elementary School, 15 South St., Woodstock. \$35. All proceeds benefit Zack's Place. Participants can race in-person or remotely. T-shirts provided to participants who pre-register by Nov. 18. Post-race festivities include food, a band, and awards. No pets allowed. Main registration takes place on Nov. 27 from 3-5 p.m. or on race day from 8-9:30 a.m. zacksplacevt.org

11/29

KMS World Cup Kick-Off Celebration
3:30-5 p.m. The Foundry at Summit Pond, 63 Summit Path, Killington. \$30 advance, \$50 at the door. Celebrate Killington's World Cup weekend with an afternoon of music, drinks, and community hosted by Killington Mountain School. The first 50 guests receive a limited edition KMS swag item. Proceeds support the KMS Annual Fund. Pre-purchase tickets at kms.org

11/29-12/1

The Stifel Killington Cup
Celebrate the history and passion for Alpine ski racing and cheer on Mikaela Shiffrin, who is on track for her historic 100th win. Tickets on sale now. Killington.com

Loaded Turkey
Rail Jam
SATURDAY 9 A.M

Woodstock Vermont Film Series

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[MUSIC Scene]

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

WED
11/20

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

POULTNEY
7 p.m. Poultney Pub – Open Mic with Danny Lang

RUTLAND
8 p.m. Center Street Alley – Full PA/Backline Open Mic hosted by Josh LaFave

SOUTH POMFRET
6:30 p.m. Artistree – Acoustic Jam Session with host Kerry Rosenthal

THURS
11/21

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

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

6 p.m. Rivershed – Chris Pallutto

6 p.m. The Foundry – Liz Reedy

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

POULTNEY
6 p.m. Poultney Pub – Vinyl Night with Ken

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

SOUTH ROYALTON
5:30 p.m. Fable Farm Fermentory – Los Lorcas: Poetry in Concert with Special Guest Jakob Breitbach

FRI
11/22

BRIDGEWATER
8 p.m. Woolen Mill Comedy Club – Karaoke Night with Host Will Purpura

KILLINGTON
6 p.m. Rivershed – Sammy B

6 p.m. The Foundry – Music by Cooper

6:30 p.m. Still on the Mountain – Rhys Chalmers

7:30 p.m. McGrath's Irish Pub – Live Music

8 p.m. Jax Food and Games – Nick Bredice

LUDLOW
8 a.m. Okemo Mountain – Opening Day with music by DJ Dave

POULTNEY
6 p.m. Poultney Pub – Bird Mountain String Band

QUECHEE
5 p.m. Harry's Cocktail Lounge – Jazz with Peter Concillio, Grace Wallace & Bruce Sklar

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

RANDOLPH
7:30 p.m. Underground Listening Room - HiFi

RUTLAND
6 p.m. Stonehedge Indoor Golf – Duane Carleton

6:30 p.m. Giorgetti Arena – Sing and Skate with Sunset Entertainment

9 p.m. Center Street Alley – DJ EG

WOODSTOCK
7:30 p.m. Town Hall Theatre – The Drop Offs with special guest The Freeze Brothers

SAT
11/23

BRIDGEWATER
8 p.m. Woolen Mill Comedy Club – Comedy Night with Will Purpura

KILLINGTON
6 p.m. Rivershed – Liz Reedy & Nick Bredice

6 p.m. The Foundry – Aaron Audet

6:30 p.m. Still on the Mountain – James Joel

7:30 p.m. McGrath's Irish Pub – Live Music

8 p.m. Pickle Barrel – Mihalidaze

LUDLOW
2 p.m. Okemo Mountain's The Bull – Apres-Ski Dance Party with DJ Dave

7 p.m. The Killarney – Sammy B

PITTSFORD
8 p.m. Hilltop Tavern – Ladies Night with DJ Brian

QUECHEE
5 p.m. Harry's Cocktail Lounge – Singer/Songwriter Jenna Rice

5:30 p.m. Public House Pub – Psylas

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

WOODSTOCK
6:30 p.m. Ottauquechee Yacht Club – Radio Bear

7 p.m. North Chapel UU Church – Karim Nagi

SUN
11/24

BRANDON
3:30 p.m. Town Hall (Outside) – Lighting of Brandon's Memory Tree

BRIDGEWATER CORNERS
3 p.m. Long Trail Brewery – Nick Bredice

KILLINGTON
12 p.m. Rivershed – Brunch with Rhys Chalmers

6 p.m. Liquid Art – Tboneicus Jones

6 p.m. Rivershed – Trivia

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

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

LUDLOW
6:30 p.m. United Church of Ludlow – Singo with DJ Jane McGarry & Sammy B

QUECHEE
2 p.m. Harry's Cocktail Lounge – Chicky Stolz

RUTLAND
9 p.m. CJ's Suds South – Karaoke with Sunset Entertainment

SOUTH POMFRET
5 p.m. Artistree – Upper Valley Partner Dance Night

STOCKBRIDGE
7:30 p.m. Wild Fern – Rick Redington's Looping Mayhem

MON
11/25

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

LUDLOW
8:30 p.m. The Killarney – Open Mic Night with King Arthur Junior

RUTLAND
7 p.m. Angler's Pub – Trivia hosted by Sunset Entertainment

WOODSTOCK
6:30 p.m. Ottauquechee Yacht Club – Sammy B

TUES
11/26

KILLINGTON
6 p.m. Rivershed – Nick Bredice

7:30 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
7 p.m. Town Hall – Acoustic Jam

POULTNEY
7 p.m. Poultney Pub – Bluegrass Jam

QUECHEE
5 p.m. The Public House – Jim Yeager

RUTLAND
6:30 p.m. Vermont Tap House – Trivia Night

8 p.m. Center Street Alley – EDM Night with DJ EG, DJ Sims and Sunset Dreamz



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The VSO Jukebox Quartet delights with a show curated by fans

By James Kent

RUTLAND—On Saturday evening, Nov. 16, the place to be was at The Paramount Theatre. For those in attendance at the sold-out performance of the VSO's Jukebox Quartet, the vibe was one of a secret club that you felt honored to be a part of, for this was no ordinary concert, not even by the quartet's standards. It was a special night where Jukebox fans curated the music unleashed from the two violins, one viola, and one cello. These fans, who won a contest, chose music from a comprehensive list of past Jukebox performances.

The Jukebox, which leans on the eclectic, brought its A-game on Saturday night and started things off with a zesty performance of Elena Kats-Chernin's "Pink Breasted Robin." The audience of 100 people encircled the quartet in a horseshoe shape in seats arranged on stage, with the performers set on a raised platform. As people entered the theater, that exclusive feeling took shape as Paramount Theatre staff escorted people up a side entrance and onto the performance stage. It is a vantage point most uncommon for a concert-goer, leaving one with the sense that they were getting an exclusive peek behind the curtain.

These details were all foretold to the Mountain Times the week prior in an interview with Jukebox host and curator Matt LaRocca. He wasn't wrong. Still, to hear something described is one thing; to experience it is another.

After "Pink Breasted Robin," LaRocca took the stage to introduce the night's program, titled "A Little Help from Our Friends." Some people in the audience were surprised to learn about the genesis of the evening's program. I guess those are the ones who need only to know that the Jukebox Quartet is coming to town, and they're ready to purchase tickets no matter the theme. After experiencing this concert, I found it easy to understand why.

LaRocca introduced one of the guest curators to the second selection for the evening. Kris Karge went to the mic and explained her choice of Rhiannon Giddens' "At the Purchaser's Option." The song, written by singer/performer Giddens, came about after she saw a historical document of a slave auction where a slave woman's 9-month-old baby would be included in the sale or not, at the purchaser's option. Understanding the intentions behind this piece of music added a context that brought additional meaning to the piece, and it was a stunner. It was a haunting feeling, shooting through the audience as

if ghosts of the past were emanating from the strings of the quartet.

The third selection of the evening was a beauty of a performance, "Aheym" by Bryce Dessner. Dessner, an Ohio native and member of the band The National, designed a musical piece that is a proper workout for the strings. LaRocca joked about the piece's physicality and got chuckles out of the quartet, but after the intense 10-minute piece was over, the crowd's applause showed appreciation for the brilliant performance.

A noticeable thing about attending a Jukebox performance is the close relation in space between the audience and the quartet. When Brook Quiggin-Saulnier and Jane Kittredge are plucking strings on their violins at breakneck speed, or John Dunlop's face bears the emotion of the moment on his cello, or Stefanie Taylor bobs her shoulders left and right in time with every bow stroke on her viola, you (the audience) experience it. Every note is decipherable and assignable to the instrumentalist performing them. The wonder and mystique of music-making and those walls that separate spectators from spectacle vanish within this close-knit setting. For those who wonder, "Can I enjoy classical music," the answer becomes absolute in this environment: "Yes, you can. Yes, you can."

LaRocca switched up the program order after the musical workout of "Aheym" with something a bit more familiar, yet every bit as unexpected from an evening of strings: Stevie Wonder's "Signed, Sealed, Delivered, I'm Yours." What stands out about this selection is it was the second oldest piece on the setlist.

Composer Jessie Montgomery's 2006 piece, "Strum," was the following selection, another jaunty number that made a perfect selection for a string quartet. And it may have been after the quartet completed this piece that Kittredge spilled some water on her pants after a brief water break, adding a humorist and human moment to the evening that continued to seal the bond between these fine musicians and an appreciative audience.

The oldest selection played during this 65-minute concert was Peter Warlock's "Capriol Suite" from 1926. Out of all the selections, this one is the closest in similarity to the type of music one might expect to hear from a string quartet. However, its composer's legacy is anything but ordinary. LaRocca hinted at Warlock's nefarious past, and garnering a little history on the

VSO → 18



Courtesy of BarnArts Center for the Arts
Artist Karim Nagi will visit Upper Valley Schools as part of BarnArt's fall global music residency.

Karim Nagi Brings Arab music and culture to Upper Valley Schools with a public performance

BARNARD—Egyptian musician and educator Karim Nagi will visit schools across the Upper Valley during the week of Nov. 17-23 as part of BarnArts' fall global music residency. The program culminates in a public performance on Saturday, Nov. 23, at 7 p.m. at North Chapel UU in Woodstock.

Nagi's weeklong residency includes performances and workshops at Braintree Elementary, Barnard Academy, Maple Avenue Elementary, Hartford Memorial Middle School, Woodstock Elementary, Randolph Union High School, Prosper Valley School, and the Hanover Ray School. These workshops focus on Arab musical instruments, folk dancing, and traditions, which provide an engaging way for students to explore diverse cultures. Students who participate in the workshops receive complimentary tickets to Saturday's public performance.

A lifelong advocate for diversity in education, Nagi has worked with over 500 schools across the United States. His efforts aim to break down harmful stereotypes through the joyous and welcoming nature of Arab music and dance. Nagi's extensive musical career includes 14 albums spanning traditional Arab music to electronica. He has also presented a TEDx talk showcasing tambourines as instruments of diplomacy.

The BarnArts Global Music Residency, launched in April 2022, has recently welcomed seven international artists. This program brings world-class performers to K-12 schools in Vermont and New Hampshire for workshops and performances, reaching over 1,500 students each season. Nagi's residency is supported by a Canadian Family Charitable Trust grant, which aims to expand the program's duration, content, and accessibility. Additionally, the Woodstock Economic Development Commission (EDC) funded Nagi's visit to Woodstock, which included workshops and a public performance.

For more information and tickets, visit barnarts.org.



By James Kent

The VSO Jukebox Quartet performed at the Paramount Theatre in Rutland on Nov. 16.

Chaffee Art Center opens holiday exhibit & shoppe

Friday, Nov. 22, 5-7 p.m. — RUTLAND — The Chaffee Art Center invites the community to kick off the holiday season at the annual Holiday Exhibit & Shoppe opening reception. Held in the historic 1890s Queen Anne Victorian mansion at 16 So. Main St., the event will feature holiday music, a wine and hot cocoa bar, holiday sweets, and an array of unique handmade treasures perfect for gift-giving. Admission is free.

The exhibit, which runs through early January, showcases the work of talented local artists and artisans. This all-member show celebrates creativity in the community, with items on display and available for purchase. Visitors

can also enjoy the Gallery Shoppe, which offers additional handcrafted items.

Guests will have the opportunity to mingle with artists, explore the history and beauty of the Chaffee mansion, and start their holiday shopping in a festive atmosphere. The Chaffee Art Center also encourages attendees to join as members to support its mission of inspiring creativity and fostering community vitality through the arts.

The Chaffee Art Center's winter hours are Wednesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., with private appointments available upon request.

For more information, visit chaffeeartcenter.org.



Courtesy of Chaffee Art Center

The Chaffee Art Center's Holiday Exhibit & Shoppe opens Friday, Nov. 22, from 5-7 p.m. at its historic Victorian mansion showcasing local art, handmade gifts, and a festive atmosphere; the exhibit runs through early January.

A night of Celtic music with Extra Stout

Saturday, Nov. 23 at 7 p.m. — POULTNEY — Stone Valley Arts invites Celtic music enthusiasts to an evening of traditional Irish melodies with Extra Stout, a well-loved band from Rutland County. The event will occur in the first-floor gallery space at Stone Valley Arts. Tickets are \$10 and will be available for purchase at the door.

Extra Stout, comprised of Mary Barron, Marcos Levy, and Helen Mango, has performed together for over 25 years. The band's repertoire spans the vibrant spectrum of Irish music, from lively drinking songs to soulful ballads and haunting airs to spirited reels, jigs, and polkas. Audiences can expect a dynamic performance featuring a range of instruments, including guitars, fiddle, and drums, alongside engaging vocals.

Attendees will enjoy the music and have the opportunity to explore the art showcased in Stone Valley Arts' Member Exhibit, adding a visual element to the evening's festivities.

For more information, visit stonevalleyarts.org.



Submitted

Extra Stout brings a night of traditional Irish music to Stone Valley Arts in Poultney on Saturday, Nov. 23, at 7 p.m.

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'A Different Man' exposes the masks we wear on the inside

A couple of weeks ago, I wrote about "The Apprentice," where actor Sebastian Stan had to put on the mask of an egomaniac for two hours. Here I am, a couple of weeks later, reviewing another film where Sebastian Stan has to wear a mask of sorts. This time around, the film's far more successful.

"A Different Man" is a darkly comic film from writer/director Aaron Schimberg, a relative newcomer who makes a big splash with this film. The movie, shot on 16mm film, resembles an independent feature from the early '90s, and while it is difficult to place the exact timeframe of the story, it seems to be set somewhere during this decade as well.

Stan plays Edward Lemuel, a struggling New York City actor with neurofibromatosis type 1, a disfiguring facial condition. Stan, completely unrecognizable here under layers of impressive, award-worthy makeup, is shy, awkward, and socially stifled by his condition. He desires to live a life of what he considers normalcy. However, judging from Lemuel's interactions with others throughout the early part of this film, no one seems to be bothered by his affliction, certainly not to the degree he is.

The story moves fast. Lemuel's run-down NYC apartment is a character in itself, and there is a growing, festering leak in the ceiling that menaces him. Lemuel's new neighbor, Ingrid Vold, is a Norwegian transplant trying to become a playwright. She befriends Lemuel, sees past his disfigurement, and wants to know the person inside. Confidence is a feeling Lemuel's never known, and he doesn't trust Vold could have romantic intentions.

Along comes the first of several intriguing twists that send "A Different Man" on an odyssey of Charlie Kaufman proportions. Lemuel receives an opportunity to participate in a breakthrough medical study and procedure, which teases a potential miracle cure for his neurofibromatosis. Lemuel doesn't seem interested initially, but the thought of becoming a different man with a so-called "normal" face and maybe finding romance with his next-door neighbor proves too compelling to deny, so he signs up.

In the grand body-horror tradition of such recent thematic parallels as the movie "The Substance," Lemuel's transformation from disfigurement to the handsome actor looks of the person

playing him, Sebastian Stan, emerges through some grotesque sequences. And when the transformation is complete, timed with the grand collapse of Lemuel's ceiling, he decides the only way to move forward with this new face is to kill off Edward Lemuel.

Thematically, this act catapults the story into an exciting place. A new face was not enough for Stan's Lemuel; he doesn't trust his personality, although the Edward Lemuel we, the audience, were getting to know seemed like a splendid individual.

Instead, Edward Lemuel becomes the more confident and sophisticated real estate personality "Guy Moratz." Guy Moratz is everything Edward Lemuel dreamt of being but did not feel he could be unless he put on a new mask of personality. So, who is the real Edward Lemuel? Is it this guy "Guy?" It's a heady philosophical question that writer/director Schimberg has fun with as he toys with the conventional plot narratives film audiences typically navigate.

Before long, Stan's new persona, Moratz, stumbles upon a small off-broadway theater where his old neighbor (Guy Moratz has moved into a much swankier NYC apartment situation) Ingrid Vold is casting a play, which is a thinly veiled version of her relationship with Edward Lemuel.

Yes, this movie is getting pretty meta at this point, and things get even crazier when Stan shows up to audition for the part that he was 'literally' born to play because, in essence, the main character is him. To audition, he wears a mask made from the mold of his original face, created at the start of his medical treatment.

So, yeah, this movie is one of those films. You can either come along for the ride or not. But if you are along for the ride, plenty more twists and turns will come. Moratz gets the part in the play, and he even gets the girl for a while. He and Vold, played with charm by Norway's Renate Reinsve (the star of "The Worst Person in the World"), begin an affair, and it is unclear if she knows that Guy Moratz is Edward Lemuel, but there appears to be some part of her that suspects something very odd is going on with the situation.

All expectations regarding what's coming next in this film are entirely thrown out the window in the final stage of the movie when a character named Oswald enters the scene.

Screens and Streams → 21



Screens and Streams
By James Kent

All expectations regarding what's coming next in this film are entirely thrown out the window in the final stage of the movie when a character named Oswald enters the scene.

← **VSO:**
from page 16

composer lends a bit of intrigue to the piece performed.

The final selection of the night came from another on-hand curator, Alexis Scangas, whom the Times interviewed in our Nov. 13 issue. Scangas chose David Balakrishnan's "Spider Dreams," a piece written for the Turtle Island Quartet. Scangas, an instructor at STARBASE, a Rutland STEM education program, elegantly spun and wove her appreci-

ation for "Spider Dreams" into a tale of Greek mythology, setting the stage for a perfect finale from the quartet.

After the event, those who wished to speak with the performers and LaRocca could. The appreciative and accessible foursome and LaRocca proved another bonus of attending a Jukebox concert. The Jukebox series returns to the Paramount Theatre this spring with "Heavy Metal Springs."



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← Killington opens:
from page 1

for getting us up and running for the 24/25 season,” said Mike Solimano, president and CEO of Killington Resort and Pico Mountain.

The K-1 Express Gondola and North Ridge Quad provide access to Rime and Reason for skiers and snowboarders; it’s advanced terrain. From the top of the K-1 gondola skiers and riders are able to ski to the North Ridge trails thanks to increased capacity with a new fleet of low energy snow guns. However, walking is currently required on the Peak Walkway to return to the gondola and base area.

Early season conditions exist, and snowmaking and other on-mountain operations may progress throughout the day on open terrain. The Killington Parks crew has also set up features on Reason and will continue to build out that park as the early season rolls on.

Stay tuned to the conditions page at killington.com/conditions for updates.

In honor of the opening day, the resort provided a \$5,000 donation to the Share Winter Foundation. Through grantmaking, community building, and advocacy, Share Winter supports organizations that provide learn to ski and snowboard opportunities for youth who would otherwise not ski or ride.

“We are very excited to get back to skiing and riding and thrilled to support the Share Winter foundation with a donation in honor of those who join us for opening day,” said Solimano.

For more information, visit Killington.com.

Historical opening dates at Killington Resort

- 2024/25: Nov. 14
- 2023/24: Nov. 3
- 2022/23: Nov. 17
- 2021/22: Nov. 5
- 2020/21: Nov. 20
- 2019/20: Nov. 3
- 2018/19: Oct. 19
- 2017/18: Nov. 8
- 2016/17: Oct. 25
- 2015/16: Oct. 18
- 2014/15: Nov. 3
- 2013/14: Oct. 23
- 2012/13: Oct. 13
- 2011/12: Oct. 29
- 2010/11: Nov. 2
- 2009/10: Nov. 7
- 2008/09: Nov. 2-6, Nov. 19
- 2007/08: Nov. 16
- 2006/07: Nov. 23
- 2005/06: Oct. 29-30; Nov. 19
- 2004/05: Nov. 9;
- 2003/04: Nov. 10
- 2002/03: Oct. 25
- 2001/02: Nov. 6
- 2000/01: Oct. 29
- 1999/00: Oct. 25
- 1998/99: Oct. 22
- 1997/98: Oct. 1
- 1996/97: Oct. 4
- 1995/96: Oct. 17
- 1994/95: Oct. 3
- 1993/94: Oct. 1
- 1992/93: Oct. 1
- 1991/92: Oct. 21
- 1990/91: Oct. 27
- 1989/90: Oct. 10
- 1988/89: Oct. 13
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'Wicked' arrives in theaters this weekend

The smash Broadway musical "Wicked" makes its long-awaited film debut in movie theaters this weekend. The film, which stars Ariana Grande as Glinda and Cynthia Erivo as Elphaba, premieres in two local area cinemas. The Woodstock Town Hall Theater begins showing "Wicked" on Saturday, Nov 23., with a special 11:30 a.m. show, including a costume contest and sing-along. The Springfield 3 cinemas, also playing the film, will have a special early screening on Wednesday evening, Nov 20.

For more information and tickets, go to pentanglearts.org and springfieldcinemas3.com.



Courtesy of Universal Pictures

Screens and Streams: from page 18

Oswald shows up to rehearsals one day, and he, too, has neurofibromatosis and looks strikingly similar to how Edward Lemuel appeared before his surgery. Only differences? The actor playing Oswald, Adam Pearson, in real life has neurofibromatosis. He's not wearing prosthetic makeup effects. And the second difference? Oswald possesses all of the charm and personality Edward Lemuel wished for. Oswald is unfazed by the neurofibromatosis, and from the moment he arrives in the film, Oswald will slowly but surely take everything away from Guy Moratz, simply through his utter charm and wit.

This movie is crazy. British actor Adam Pearson, who audiences may remember from a scene-stealing moment in Jonathan Glazer's "Under the Skin," is a flat-out miracle in

this movie. One cannot help but be fascinated by him. When Pearson is on screen, he owns the film. His performance ranks as one of the best supporting performances of 2024. And Sebastian Stan continues to seek out roles that allow him to explore new facets. He triumphs here.

There's much more to the story than I am sharing because I have to leave some surprises for readers seeking this film out. But if you are a moviegoer who likes provocative filmmaking with a bit of a darkened satirical edge, you won't want to miss "A Different Man," now available on-demand.

James Kent is the publisher's assistant at The Mountain Times and the co-host of the "Stuff We've Seen" podcast at stuffweve-seen.com.

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Crossword

Solutions from page 11

B	E	A	M		T	A	B	E	S		T	A	T	E			
A	L	L	O		A	B	A	M	P		A	G	E	D			
T	E	G	U		T	I	N	E	A		B	R	A	D			
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O	R	A	T	E	D			T	U	B		M	A	I	L		
T	O	R	U	S			M	A	S		S	A	C	C	O		
A	M	E	N		P	O	I			M	A	C	H	O	S		
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M	O	A	B				S	T	O	M	A			I	B	I	S
E	E	L	S				P	O	S	E	D			N	E	C	K

Sudoku

Solutions from page 11

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

Rutland County Humane Society



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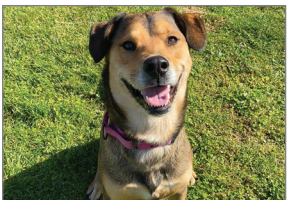
Merica—1-year-old. Female. American.



Aries—3-year-old. Neutered male. American Staffordshire Terrier.



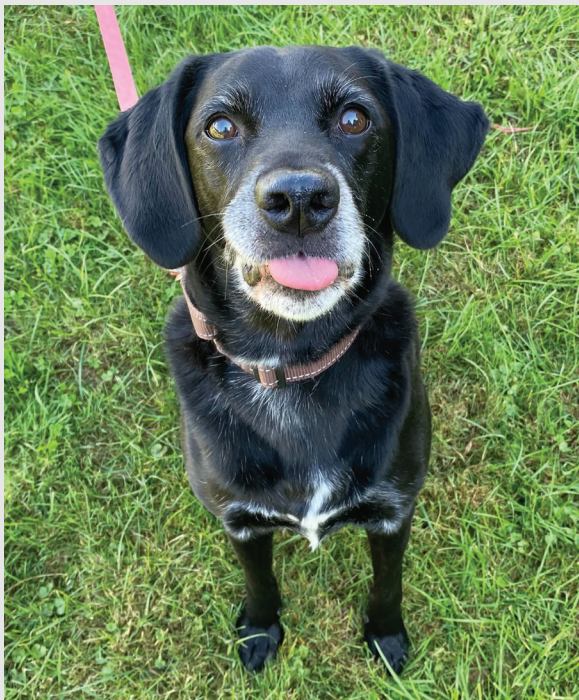
Silver—1-year-old. Spay date set. Pit bull.



Gypsy Mae—5-year-old. Spayed female. Husky/rotti.



Molly—6-year-old. Spayed female. Domestic shorthair.



JUNIOR

Ariel—8-month-old. Spayed female. Domestic shorthair.



Jack—2-year-old. Neuter date set. American Staffordshire Terrier.



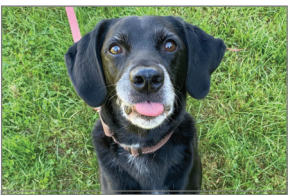
Velma—5-year-old. Spayed female. American Staffordshire Terrier.



Daphne—2-year-old. Spayed female. American Staffordshire Terrier.



Phoenix—1-year-old. Female. Guinea Pig.



Junior—7-year-old. Neutered male. Black Labrador Retriever mix.

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Cosmic Catalogue

By Cassandra Tyndall

Aries March 21 - April 20

Finding your tribe is important for you now. There's a lot of talk about tribalism being a bad thing, but it isn't. We are all at our best when we are with our kin and clan, and there is nothing wrong with that. The difference is when we block ourselves from that which is different. When we close off other perspectives and are in lockstep with what the tribe says, it's problematic. If you have to be like them to be one of them, then maybe this is your defining moment.

Taurus April 21 - May 20

Sometimes, the shots we don't take are the ones that lead to victory. Other times, you have to swing from the fences to get those points on the board. Right now, you're in a period where you have to choose to either swing the bat or let things slide through to the keeper. When you must make these choices, make them from a place of authenticity. Even a short-term loss now will mean a longer-term win later. Win the match or win the season – it's your call.

Gemini May 21 - June 20

Once you see something, it's impossible to unsee it. A changed perspective really can become a changed life. Your curiosity and ability to ask questions will open up new pathways you can't even imagine. Your only challenge is to stay on said path rather than become distracted. The change you long for may feel so far in the distance, but soon enough, your defining moment will arrive, and you won't recognize your life anymore. Enjoy the slower pace for now because it won't last.

Cancer June 21 - July 20

Everything you've ever wanted is readily available. The only issue is you'll find it in the last place you're willing to look. We all have our fears and phobias, and they've probably served us well up until now. However, if you want real and lasting change in your life regarding partnership, finance, and intimacy, you have to peel back the layers and discover what holds you back. It's a scary and daunting prospect, but ask yourself, what have you got to lose?

Leo July 21 - August 20

Your relationship status is under the cosmic radar. It matters not what you put on Facebook, but it's the way you perceive true love to be. Are you single and want not to be? Are you partnered and wondering how long you will be? Whatever it is, you need to really transform your idea of what love and marriage actually are. Would you take on a job without understanding the job description? Every relationship has its role and function. Understand your part within it and your life will become so much more rewarding.

Virgo August 21 - September 20

It can be your tendency to forever be the apprentice or student and never the master. Right now, you've got some choices to make that will either keep you where you are or they will take you to your next level. In order to get to your next level, you're going to have to take some risks. This may also involve you having to disappoint someone too. It's either that, or you stay where you are and disappoint yourself. A hard choice made now will lead to making easier choices down the track. Change or stay the same.

Libra September 21 - October 20

A lot of people move through life with many preconceived ideas about how it will turn out. This is very much the case when it comes to romance, relationships, and children. Just when you think you've got it all figured out, things can change very quickly. It's almost as though one day, you meet someone, and everything is so very different. Your defining moment is to let go of everything you thought life would be and embrace it for all the things it could be.

Scorpio October 21 - November 20

What does family and your domestic life mean to you? What does being secure mean to you? For some Scorpio, it might mean having a loving spouse and a tribe of kids at home. For others, it may be a thriving real estate portfolio knowing that all your financial needs are taken care of. It could even be a combination of the two! Whatever it is that will provide you with a deep and profound foundation in life is what you need to relentlessly pursue now. Let that choice be your defining moment.

Sagittarius November 21 - December 20

It's never enough for you to skim the surface of things. Out of all the Zodiac signs, it's you who is passionate when it comes to seeking the truth. If something has been piquing your curiosity for some time now, it may be time for you to consider diving right in. What is it that you want to know more about? What is it about your daily life you want to become more meaningful and magical? Please don't discount the little things and the power they have to compound over time to really change your life.

Capricorn December 21 - January 20

It's been a long and arduous journey for you since 2008. This week, you can finally breathe a sigh of relief that that chapter has closed. Now, your mission is to take all those lessons, including the pain and ecstasy those entailed, and turn them into gold. Some financial choices need to be made now. This could be an investment, an expense, or a bet on those skills and talents you've been refining for decades. Action combined with confidence will make you unstoppable now.

Aquarius January 21 - February 20

If you read the weekly overview above, you'll know we are in a potentially era-defining moment. For you, you are most definitely in a defining moment. I'm not going to lie and say the journey you've been chosen for is going to be all sunshine and roses because it isn't. However, you're going to discover that silver linings are indeed everywhere. Do you want to know where those silver linings and a reservoir of strength can be found? Right from within you! Decide who you want to be and become it.

Pisces February 21 - March 20

It's so simple, but if you change your thoughts, you can change your life. That said, what do you do with the thoughts, dreams, and realities you've entertained for your entire life? Do you pretend they aren't even real or valid anymore? In some cases, that may be necessary. If you feel deep within you that something is no longer real, seems to work, or is even the truth, then you must discover why. The deep existential questions about life now need to be answered.

Where were you when...



Cosmic Catalogue
By Cassandra Tyndall

Every now and then, there is a moment in time that defines an era. Those moments are rare. When they do happen, we tend to look back saying, "Where were you when..."

Where were you when heard about the planes crashing into the Twin Towers? Where were you when Kurt Cobain died? How about John Lennon? JFK? Yes, I'm pointing out sad or shocking events — this seems to be the way the human psyche works. When these defining

moments happen, especially the ones with devastating consequences, the light of the human spirit dispels the dark.

It's these dark yet defining moments when people band together, share in common grief, and support each other. It's through the worst times that we get the best times. Only sadness can make us appreciate joy. Only the coldest Winter can make us appreciate Spring.

Will it take another dark yet defining moment for people to come together again? To put ego to one side and remember their humanity? To move beyond their ideological capture and entertain another point of view? All this and more is possible, though it will take some time. How long exactly is up to the power of each individual. We can make it sooner rather than later if we choose to.

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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.

A boxelder for Terry

My friend Terry Gulick, who passed away earlier this year, used to tease me about my favorite yard tree. Terry did a lot of gardening jobs when he wasn't mentoring kids, and he was amused and a little offended by what I'd allowed to grow up in my former vegetable patch. It was bad enough that I was letting a tree take over prime soil, but did it have to be a boxelder?

"It's a trash tree," he told me, shaking his head.

Boxelder (*Acer negundo*) — also known as ash-leaf maple, elf maple, Manitoba maple, and other less printable names — is the misfit cousin of the Acer family. It's the only maple species that won't sprout in shade, and you're more likely to find specimens growing in a scraggly line along a road or riverbank than deep in a forest. It's also the only dioecious maple, meaning that every tree produces exclusively male or female flowers. Its leaflets look like nothing you'd find on the side of a syrup bottle or — despite the tree's alternative name — on an ash tree. They're toothy, with a strong resemblance to poison ivy leaves.

Unlike the stately sugar maple, which can endure for more than four centuries, the boxelder's typical lifespan, from seed through senescence, is on a human scale; a 75-year-old boxelder is already an old tree. It grows quickly — in good soils, more than 2 feet in height each year — and this trait, along with its toughness, has made boxelder a popular choice for erosion control and windbreak plantings.

"Trash" seems a harsh epithet for a tree, but the species surely inspires a lot of trash talk. One reason is the low value of boxelder wood. On the plus side, carvers appreciate its softness and its occasional pink-to-red staining. However, the wood is too weak to be useful for most construction and manufacturing purposes. It's also low density, which makes it a poor choice for firewood beyond the kindling stage.

The most intense criticisms of boxelder come from people like Terry, who have spent hours cleaning up after it. A U.S. Forest Service profile of the species notes its reputation as a "dirty

tree," and if you skim through field books, you'll find numerous disparaging references to the species' vulnerability to rot, its complicity as a host of home-invading boxelder bugs, its tendency to scatter wind-snapped twigs, and the way it spread seeds with bunny-like abandon.

For Terry, boxelder's voluminous seed production was its greatest sin. Sure enough, just as he warned me would happen, my female tree was already bearing seeds by its eighth year, and every autumn since it has produced a bigger crop. As I write this, thousands upon thousands of samaras are dangling in clusters. I think they're pretty. And birds love them.

Because many samaras linger on their stems late into winter, they offer easily accessible food for year-round resident birds and cold-weather visitors who fly down from Canada. For instance, the evening grosbeak, which breeds in Canada and has been in steep population decline, is partial to boxelder seeds. If for no other reason than to help this threatened bird, the tree deserves space in my yard.

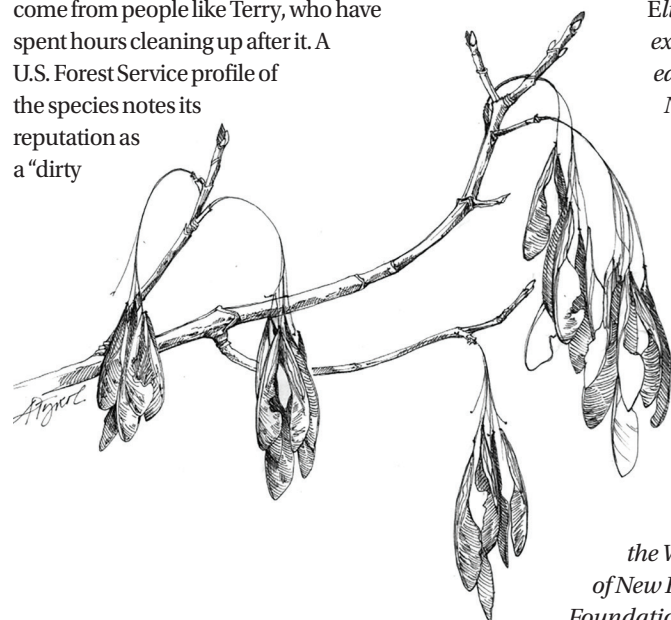
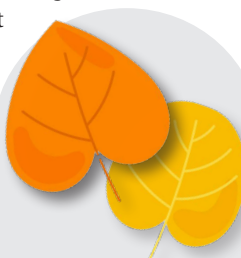
There are other personal reasons I love this tree. The boxelder appeared in my daughter's first year, soon after I gave up the garden. And it has grown vigorously, just as she and her younger brother have, the pencil marks on the kitchen door tracking their rising heights. The boxelder's forked trunk, which split into a trident two feet off the ground, formed just the right holds for small hands and feet.

Terry was good to my kids and to other people's kids who needed him more. He taught children who had a lot of sadness in their lives how to pitch tents, climb trees, and roast s'mores on the fire. When I asked about these experiences, he'd deflect and ask how I could sleep at night, knowing that was growing in my yard. But the joke's on him. When I look at my crooked, scrappy tree, its samaras metallic in the low November light, I hear

Terry's voice and remember his kindness.

Elise Tillinghast is the past executive director and editor of the Center for Northern Woodlands Education and is currently editor-at-large for "Nature and the Environment" at Brandeis University Press. Illustration by Adelaide Murphy Tyrol. The Outside Story is assigned and edited by Northern Woodlands magazine and sponsored by the Wellborn Ecology Fund of New Hampshire Charitable Foundation: nhcf.org.

The Outside Story By Elise Tillinghast



What Killington was like in 1965

Killington was in the town of Sherburne in 1965. I remember going to the Sherburne Town Meeting in March of 1966. The ski area shut down until noon as the men all attended the morning portion of the meeting. It was mainly devoted to the highway department. A lengthy debate occurred about whether the town should buy a gasoline-powered or diesel-powered plow truck.

Meanwhile, the women cooked the noon meal, which everyone enjoyed. After that, the men went back to work, and the women tended to the afternoon part of the meeting, which was devoted to the school. I remember a flatlander who had run for the school board and had an impressive educational background. The incumbent director was not nearly as qualified academically but looked after the school morning and night, making sure the heat was on and so forth. The incumbent was reelected.

Outside Operation

Operations engineer was a 24/7 job, and there was no handbook. To help figure out what we should be doing, a small group of us would ski at another ski area on a mid-weekday off. We would bring a letter of introduction and obtain complimentary day tickets. I would seek out the outside operations manager and get a tour of his operation. I would compare notes and bring back any information with which I could improve our operation.

It turns out my administrative mili-

tary experience was more useful than I expected, as my first order of business was to reorganize the Outside Operation. I instituted lift preventive maintenance. I assigned each snowcat to a sole operator and instructed the operator that he was to be fully responsible for the care and operation of his snowcat. When the cats continued to experience drive failure and needed constant repair, I figured out that the Tucker snow cats ran on cleat-driven pontoons designed to "float" in deep western snow, not the hard frozen

granules of the Northeast. Emmitt Tucker himself made a trip from Oregon to visit us. He was astonished at the way we were using his inventions. Unfortunately, there was no other option at the time, and we continued to make the best of it.

As I started to implement changes, it became clear that as a 25-year-old newcomer in charge of a crew of much older Vermonters, my ideas would need to work. The more outside operations improved, the more I gained their trust.

The key people running the outside operation were all local Vermonters who were significantly older than me. They were:

- Ray Billings in charge of lift and vehicle maintenance, assisted by Paul Bessette.
- Ed McDonald in charge of the upper lifts — Killington 1, Snowden, and the three Poma platter surface

Slippery Slopes → 27



Slippery Slopes By James Kachadorian

Sunday Funday

As I wake up much earlier than I was supposed to, much earlier than my alarm, I am greeted with the rays of a brand new day. I get myself together and start going through the pile of messages from friends, looking to spend time with me or go to the show together that night. I am able to get myself in the car just safely enough to grab some liquid motivation and breakfast from LA (Liquid Art).

I take time that morning to go for a walk and ground myself, to do some writing and clear my mind, and to find a way to make time for the people in my life who are eager to see me. I get everything done and eat my breakfast and get a message from my friend asking to come hang out.

This friend knows me well enough to know how much I value in-person time together. They also said a lot of sweet things and know how much I like being reminded

of my worth to someone. We had a nice time exploring our friendship and getting to know each other better. We shared a small bite to eat before they had to head home and I had to get ready for the concert.

One of my old roommates from a few years ago, reached out and was going to the show that night. They met at my place and we visited for a while before heading to the show. I grabbed a quick dinner from Baja and visited with Tom and Marissa. After I had a little dinner, we got on the road for the show. I carefully selected the soundtrack as '90s throwback

dance songs. In between pumping up the jams, I had to ask myself: what is love?

Upon entering the show, I noticed how friendly the staff is at the Paramount Theatre. I am grateful to have a venue like this locally where the most eclectic of us can feel comfortable. Where we can feel like we fit in.

Dream in Color → 29



Dream in Color By Will O'Donnell

'The Lost Children'

The more things change

I'd like to say that I don't mind change (simply because it's the one constant in life, so there's no sense fighting it), but the reality is that I'm not a big fan. I've constructed my life so that I'm very comfortable with how things unfold on a day-to-day basis. Therefore, any deviation from my intended game plan generally makes me uncomfortable.

For instance, I love going on vacation, but I need a certain amount of time to adjust to the proposition. When my wife suggests a trip to the Caribbean, my first reaction is not, "That sounds awesome, let's go!" It's, "How many things do I have to get in order to pull this off effectively?" (The ironic part is that once I'm on vacation and get into a rhythm, I find it very hard to return to my regular life.)

I have a friend who will drop everything at a moment's notice and fly to Vegas or Mexico for the weekend. I get anxious when he tells me about these excursions. By Tuesday of an average week, I usually have 15 things on my to-do list to accomplish over the upcoming weekend. I'd have to look ahead at least three or four weeks before I'd have a legitimate shot at clearing my schedule enough for that kind of disruption.

Maybe it's my age, but I enjoy my routines, mostly because I'm also an efficiency nut. For every routine event I undertake, I have likely spent years breaking it down to its core constituents to run the process as smoothly and efficiently as possible.

Every time I take a shower, I follow the same pattern from beginning to end without deviation. First, I wash my hair, then I wash my body, then I floss, then I brush my teeth, then I shave, and then, finally, I wash my face. I've been approaching showers this way for decades without any divergence. The only thing that would get me to change is the realization that there is a more efficient method I didn't realize prior.

One of the reasons I do this is that once I get the process down, there's no need for conscious thought. I get into the shower, and everything just happens. Mentally, I can be a world away in thought or reflection, and the next thing I know, my shower is complete.

I suppose work is the one area where I don't mind things getting thrown into flux. I've become accustomed to late-minute meetings that require me to rearrange my

schedule. I think the fact that all these scenarios fall under "work time" is what makes it more manageable. In my mind, I've given up that portion of my day to my career so those hours can be used as needed.

There are also moments when life throws you an epic curveball, those scenarios where the universe just completely laughs at your plans. I went through that experience on the day I was diagnosed with cancer. In one conversation with my doctor, I went from totally healthy to hearing the words, "Without immediate intervention, you will be dead in a year."

Talk about upending your plans!

I was on my way to Florida to begin chemotherapy and radiation treatments only a few weeks after that first conversation. My job stopped, my coaching stopped, my routines stopped, my relationships stopped. In a nutshell, my entire life stopped, and it didn't get back to normal for over a year.

I remember thinking how unfair the whole thing was. I had things to do, work to finish, fun to have, and a son to raise. I didn't need cancer to walk in and upend everything! But it did, and as much as I didn't like it, I had to deal with it.

But I realized something important over that year: Sometimes, you need to be thrown out of your comfort zone so you can grow in ways you never dreamed possible. We may not understand why these things happen or how they may help us, but if you're patient, the realization will unveil itself at some point in the future.

In this week's feature, "The Lost Children," we're introduced to a story of change so unbelievable that it's hard to believe it actually happened.

"The Lost Children" is a documentary about four Indigenous children who survive a horrific plane crash in the Colombian Amazon that kills all the adults aboard. What follows is the unlikely partnership of local communities and a distrustful military who band together for the common good. Add in the exotic forces of nature, and you've got an incredibly compelling film.

Check this one out if you need a reminder that humanity is still good at its core. This documentary is a remarkable story with a special message and a heart-warming ending.

A bewildering "B+" for "The Lost Children," now available to stream on Netflix.

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



The Movie Diary

By Dom Cioffi



The return of ski season in Killington brings winter rejoice

It feels like we waited forever, but now I can barely remember the time before the mountain opened. We stared at the weather report for weeks, trying to figure out when the wet bulb would match the requirements for the guns to turn on. It felt like Mother Nature had abandoned us, the Killington faithful, to the realm of the other ski areas. Like she was no longer going to bless us with an early ski season — especially when we already knew we would get cut short at the spring end.

It wasn't cold. It hadn't snowed. What could we possibly have done to make Mother Nature so angry at us? She couldn't be angry that we had purchased 500 new tower guns or four new fan guns. She couldn't be angry that some long-time second homeowners had stolen the mountain away from the evil corporate

monsters. We, the Killington faithful, still loved and worshipped her. So why had she forsaken us?

But now the mountain is open, and I barely remember feeling so despondent. We've been heading up to meet the Two O'Clock Club every day, skiing until patrol pulls the rope across to mark the end of the day and diligently making our way up the walkway without complaint. In fact, we are grateful for the walkway's maintenance. The repair and replacement of the mats have not

gone unnoticed, and the gravel across the catwalk has made a remarkable difference.

Perhaps we will start to see more of these little changes over the next year. Have you noticed the carpets at the bottom of the lift instead of the plastic STOP pieces? They feel awesome underneath my skis and will definitely help on those

Living the Dream → 26



Living the Dream

By Merisa Sherman



By Merisa Sherman

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← **Living the Dream:**
from page 25
slippery days.

Those are little things that will go a long way to helping everyone have a better time.

And can we talk about how Great Northern was open from the top? How awesome was that? Nothing is worse than watching greedy and selfish folks shove older and slower folks out of their way as they race down the staircase first thing in the morning. It is obnoxious and hurtful and has no place on our mountain. With the Great Northern open, everyone can ski at their own pace, enjoying the lower-angle terrain momentarily, soaking in the view as you float around the goat turn.

I love that moment. As you swing around, the mountains roll out before you, and the view becomes encompassing. Until that moment, you haven't really made it onto the mountain, but then "bam," there it all is. You are in it. You are floating, and now the sliding really begins.

I love that it's winter up here and nowhere else. You take a gondola ride from autumn into winter. A ride to a magical land where everyone smiles and slides around like children, where the real world fades away. A magical place...

You have a chance to notice the mountains surrounding you, and then as you approach the FIS/GN intersection, you swing your head back into focus and send it around until you get to Double Dipper, and you can glance about again.

I love that moment when the Glades Triple (or North Ridge Quad, whatever) comes into view. You can see Pico in the distance, the snow underneath, and later in the day, stripes of color above and below. It's a moment. The white below and the blue above, with a brownish-green in the middle, remind us that the snow is only painted, and everywhere else in Vermont, it is hunting season.

But I love that it's winter up here and nowhere else. You take a gondola ride from autumn into winter. A ride to a magical land where everyone smiles and slides around like children, where the real world fades away. A magical place where there seems to be no consequences or law. Our very own Pleasure Island.

Is the mountain Pleasure Island? Will we all be turned into donkeys, foolish, selfish creatures who end up with nothing but our greed and ignorance? I have seen it happen. Just look at the walkway on opening day. As the season starts and we all fall back into our obsession with the mountain, I remember a quote shared with me by a ski sister decades ago: "In winter, it's easy to give up on everything, everything I've planned, everything I've accomplished, everything I believe."

And that's one of the many reasons that I ski in the afternoon. I start my day in the gym and then at my desk, review my planner, and ensure that everything that needs to be done happens.

For myself, for my clients, and my home. Only once my chores are done do I risk taking an hour or two out on the mountain to play and reconnect with nature. Because as soon as my car turns into that parking lot, it's wintertime. All I want to do is turn left and right as I slide down the mountain with a smile on my face. So I better be ready.

Merisa J. Sherman is a long-time Killington resident, global real estate advisor, and coach PomPom. She can be reached at Merisa.Sherman@SothebysRealty.com

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Slippery Slopes: from page 24

- lifts.
- Royal Biathrow in charge of the lower lifts — Snowshed 1 & 2 and Rams Head.
- Henry Biathrow in charge of trail grooming.
- Gardner Taylor, our electrician, assisted by Mel Harshberger.
- Ray Tarleton (The plumber) in charge of the snow-making operation. Ray and his son, Steve, also groomed trails at night.
- George Wesson in charge of the ski patrol and summer construction.

Reorganization

I decided dividing the lift and vehicle maintenance operations would be essential. I put Paul Bessette in charge of lift maintenance and gave Ray Billings the motor pool. Billings was furious with me and didn't speak to me for at least a month. Henry Biathrow asked Billings if I had cut his pay. Since I hadn't, Biathrow asked him what he was complaining about.

Biathrow remained in charge of trail grooming and maintenance. I instituted a program requiring the ski patrol to submit a daily report indicating which trails needed grooming. These reports became the trail groomers' nightly marching orders. Royal Biathrow remained in charge of the "lower lifts," and Ed McDonald remained in charge of the "upper lifts." George Wesson remained in charge of the ski patrol. These organizational measures had an immediate positive effect as the outside operation started to run more smoothly. These tough, older Vermonters began to accept their new, younger boss. Deep down, we all wanted Killington to operate smoothly, and we began to come together as a team.

Oren Bates

Helen and her husband, Oren Bates, owned 1,000 acres of hay fields and woodlands extending out from their farm. Oren Bates, who died in 1982, was a Sherburne selectman, State Legislature representative, and early ski resort supporter. He sold their farmhouse and 70 acres to Killington founder Preston Leete Smith in 1956 for \$3,000, and the house is still there today, now the headquarters of Killington Valley Real Estate Inc. The fire

station in Killington was named after Oren.

When I first moved to Killington, I rented a chalet from Hank Huntoon, a businessman from Rutland. It was a nice bachelor pad, but my living arrangements would change when I got a call from my father and his brother, Carnick, telling me that Carnick had a 10-foot-wide

house trailer that I should buy (much nicer than the smaller, 8-foot-wide option). The house trailer had become available due to a tenant leaving my uncle's trailer park in Salem, New Hampshire. I paid \$2,000 for it. However, there was a slight problem: I had nowhere to put it. I figured Bates was the best guy to ask about finding a place for it. Bates said he could fix a spot to accommodate the trailer and that he had already driven a water well on the site. (I never did get an explanation as to why he had a driven well on an empty piece of land.) He said he didn't know how much rent to charge but would see what "they" were getting in Rutland. He came up with \$25 per month. Okay, deal.

We agreed on a date when the site would be ready, and I arranged to have the 10-wide trucked up to Killington. When the day arrived, Bates wasn't ready for it, so I parked the trailer

on the side of the road. Eventually, he instructed me to show up after work so we could set the trailer. Bates' teenage son, Truman, operated the bulldozer while he and I placed concrete blocks under the trailer, precariously teetering on the lot's downward part. To make matters worse, it started to pour rain. It was late in the fall, and soon, we were working in pitch dark as the temperature plunged toward freezing. As the rain poured off Bates' wide-brimmed hat, he turned to me and said, "Be more comfortable if it wa'n' rainin'."

With that, I knew Bates had accepted me. Little did I know that the \$25 per month included his nightly visits, snow plowing, and backblading the Roaring Brook Road during mud season. When I left Killington, Bates bought the trailer for \$2,500. He said his daughter needed it.

Slippery Slopes is an ongoing series written by James Kachadorian about the early days of Killington. Look for future installments each week in the Mountain Times.



Courtesy of James Kachadorian
James Kachadorian hard at work in Sherburne.



Ed costs: from page 6

was proposed following the Vermont Supreme Court's 1997 *Brigham* decision, the landmark case that led to the state's current funding formula.

"It's really the 'Brigham decision alternative No. 2, option not taken,'" Chittenden said.

The current system, according to Chittenden, "doesn't reward frugality as much as it should."

In addition to a funding formula change, Chittenden said he'd support shifting costs like universal school meals and mental health support out of the education fund and into the state's General Fund. He also said lawmakers should consider taxing second homes differently than other properties that aren't primary residences, like rental units and businesses.

And while Chittenden expressed some concern that a foundation formula would benefit some kids more than others, he said the status quo might not be better.

"I just don't know if it's going to guarantee every kid has access to equal educational opportunities in the state," Chittenden said, "but our current system isn't doing that either, right?"

A push for a radically new education funding formula is likely to receive pushback. For Vermont's teachers union, the problem isn't how much the state spends on education but how it pays for that spending, said Colin Robinson, Vermont-National Education Association political director.

While education funding will no doubt be a "top priority" this legislative session, Robinson said there's "a clear distinction between education funding and the cost of education."

Moving from a property tax to an income tax would "make the wealthiest pay their fair share," he said, rather than putting the burden on the middle class.

Robinson pushed back on the idea of a foundation formula, though he acknowledged that without a specific proposal on the table, it's hard to know what such a formula would entail.

"What is best for kids is usually best determined by local communities, and that's why we have local control," he said.

Regardless of what happens under the Golden Dome, education stakeholders will also be plotting the future elsewhere.

The legislative session coincides with the ongoing Commission on the Future of Public Education in Vermont. The commission was chartered by lawmakers last session to grapple with the biggest questions facing Vermont's schools, such as how to improve student performance and address ailing infrastructure.

A finance subcommittee is slated to deliver short-term cost containment ideas next month. Complete recommendations from the commission aren't expected until 2025.



The building of Lodge 3 (also known as Snowshed Lodge), circa 1966, was a large endeavour.

Courtesy of James Kachadorian



183 Birch Lane offers the ultimate mountain retreat, nestled on nearly 2 acres of mostly wooded land with a fully fenced dog play yard and breathtaking views of Killington Peak -visible right from your hot tub plus the Superstar trail! This spacious multi-level home features 4 bedrooms and 4 bathrooms, thoughtfully designed with both open-concept spaces for gathering and cozy nooks for quiet relaxation. Expansive windows flood the home with natural light, create a connection to the outdoors, and invite stunning starry skies into your evenings. The detached two-car garage, complete with overhead storage, adds convenience and versatility and the whole house generator assures you will remain comfortable despite any power outage. Situated just off the access road, this property is a short drive to dining, entertainment, and world-class skiing, making it the perfect blend of seclusion and accessibility. Whether you're looking for a primary residence, vacation home, or investment opportunity, 183 Birch Lane calls you to embrace Killington mountain living!



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Courtesy Vermont Fish and Wildlife

← **Trapping safety:**.....
from page 8

streams and culverts, there are no trap setbacks at all! As someone who walks in the woods with my dogs and children, these new regulations are far from adequate.

Another inadequate regulation change is that Fish & Wildlife still allow exceptionally cruel methods of capturing animals. Despite Act 159's attempt to make trapping less inhumane, steel-jawed leghold traps are still the trap of choice for trappers. So-called "best

management practices" (BMP) for trapping still inflict tremendous suffering on animals. If your dog or cat is unlucky enough to find themselves ensnared in a steel-jawed leghold trap or, worse, a body-crushing Conibear trap, releasing them safely or at all is not easy. Last year, a dog was trapped in a kill trap set for beavers in Castleton. The dog was a large German Shepherd, and the dog's size saved his life. A smaller dog would've died. Another dog wasn't so lucky. She

lost her life to a kill trap in Underhill. You won't ever hear about these tragedies because the state knows it's horrible P.R. for trapping.

But the question we should really be asking ourselves is why any animal, wild or domestic, should be allowed to be tortured in traps in the name of recreation and tradition. If an animal is to be trapped, it should be for a very good reason, not for a recreational hobby.

Sophie Bowater, N. Middlesex



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← **Dream in Color:**.....
from page 24

I saw a bunch of people that I knew, but very few friends. I saw my ex, who looked great, and gave me a hug and said a few sweet things to me, but when I tried to send a text, I could not get through. It made me miss her a ton, but I know nothing has changed or will change.

The show was fantastic. The lighting at Disco Biscuits shows is one of a kind. It takes you into a whole new world. The vibration of the bass in your chest. The crowd moving in unison. The electricity as the band shifts gears from a spacey moment to a four on the floor, jumping dance section. The feeling of the sound and light washing over you and baptizing you. The opportunity to dance yourself clean and start over. The entire room flowing in unison

and sharing the same vibe and energy. The electric roar of the crowd as the band finishes a 30 minute section of the show.

Then the hum on the street after the show concludes as people get back home safely.

This was the kind of experience that reminds me that everything will be OK

be OK. That I have my own friends and people who love me. That I can have my own experiences without people from my past. That I can let loose and be myself with the people I choose to keep in my life. That there are people who care about me out there, even if they aren't nearby.

That the cleansing felt from music is all I need to keep going. Can't wait to do it again this weekend for Mihali at the Pickle. See ya there!

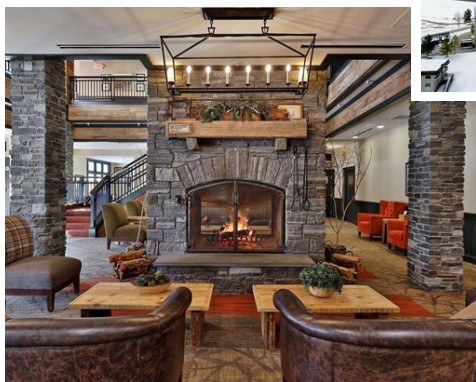


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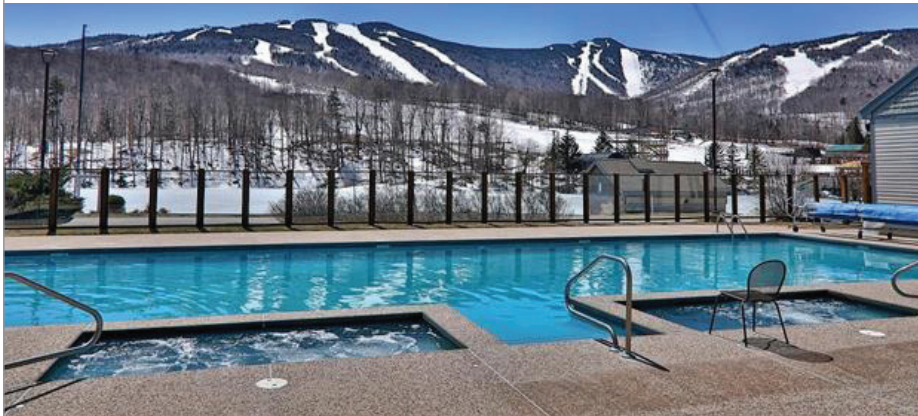


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Killington community donated winter wears at Mission Farm coat drive

BROC Community Action was the beneficiary of the Mission Farm Veteran's Day coat drive event in Killington. BROC received a significant donation of new and lightly used winter coats from the coat drive. These coats are essential to keeping area friends and neighbors warm during the cold winter months.

If anyone is looking to contribute, BROCC Community Action is seeking new warm winter gloves and children's snow pants.

For more information, visit:
BROC.org



Submitted

Vicki Loomis, the development and marketing specialist at BROC Community Action, stood in front of new and lightly used winter coats donated by the Killington community at Mission Farm's annual Veteran's Day coat drive last week. Donations are still being accepted for neighbors in need.

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