

VERMONT HOLIDAY FESTIVAL AT KILLINGTON



'TIS THE SEASON FOR HOLIDAY FESTIVALS
The Vermont holiday festival is Dec. 5-7 at the Killington Grand Hotel featuring a ballroom full of locally decorated trees, musical performances and breakfast with Santa. A season of holiday activities also begins this weekend at Billings Farm & Museum.

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OKEMO IS OPEN!

On Sunday, Dec. 1, Okemo Mountain Resort opened for the season. Lifts run daily with 22 runs reported open as of Tuesday.



By Paul Holmes

ROLLING SNOW

Killington Resort reported 21 inches of snow Thanksgiving day. Perfect for base, and snowman making!

The anticipated 'Dec. 1 letter' from the Vermont tax dept. projects 5.9% property tax increase

By Ethan Weinstein/VTDigger and Polly Mikula

Vermonters can expect a 5.9% average increase in education property taxes next year absent major changes, according to the annual forecast from Craig Bolio, Vermont's tax commissioner.

The news arrived Monday, Dec. 2, in the form of the "Dec. 1 letter," an annual projection required by law that represents the first public-facing estimate of expected education property taxes for the fiscal year starting July 2025. It relies on data from the state Agency of Education and local school districts, which are already engaged in their budget-making processes, and is produced in collaboration with the Vermont Legislative Joint Fiscal Office.

In a written statement, Gov. Phil Scott said that "with this projected increase, Vermonters will have seen a 33% increase in education property taxes in the last three years. This is the result of unsustainable costs, an aging

demographic, and smaller workforce."

Vermonters "simply cannot afford more," Scott said, calling on lawmakers to work with his administration to reduce the tax burden. He also thanked school administrators and school board members, who he said "have made difficult decisions" to prevent more substantial projected tax increases.

Last year's Dec. 1 letter forecasted an 18.5% education property tax increase. Ultimately, after local school budget revisions, new taxes and injections of one-time funds to buy down the surge, the average increase wound up at 13.8%. Health care costs, student mental health needs, ailing infrastructure and inflation all contributed to last year's increase.

For the next fiscal year, officials project education spending will rise by about \$115 million. The use of roughly \$69 million in

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Mountain Views SU discusses \$2.5 million budget cuts, tax impacts

By Polly Mikula

On Monday, Dec. 2, the Mountain Views Supervisory Union met to discuss a proposed \$2.5 million budget cut.

"These cuts were necessary to stay under the penalty threshold," Superintendent Sherry Sousa explained. "The proposed cuts are across all schools and the central office," she said.

The proposed budget is just below the threshold that would cause taxpayers to pay

\$2 for every \$1 raised over the mandated limit.

"The good news is that tax rates are projected to go down in nearly every town in the district," said Ben Ford, board vice-chair and chair of the finance committee.

The district serves students from Barnard, Bridgewater, Killington, Pittsfield, Plymouth, Pomfret, Reading and Woodstock operating five

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The Bus looks to scale back some Rutland routes, gaps in service hours remain

By Greta Solsaa/VTDigger

Chris Bannerman works with the organization Bridge to Rutland to help provide housing, legal aid, education, and other resources to asylum seekers in the region. She often sees people who lack transportation, making it difficult to find jobs and build new lives.

One asylum seeker who has held a job at Rutland Regional Medical Center for nearly a year uses public transportation in the morning but relies on Bridge to Rutland to get a ride home

at night. That's because The Bus, Rutland's main public transportation mode, does not operate during the evenings and on Sundays, Bannerman said.

"I just feel like we expect all these people to work, and yet we don't make it that easy," said Bannerman.

According to the 2020 census, 13% of Rutland City households have no car and no access to a private vehicle, while another 42% only have access to one car per

Bus routes → 6



By Glenn Russell/VTDigger

Riders board The Bus at Rutland's transit center downtown.



By Jerry LeBlond

Mikaela Shiffrin was seconds away from clinching her 100th World Cup win; then she crashed.

Shiffrin's crash hushed Killington's record-breaking crowd

By Polly Mikula

For the eighth time the women's Audi FIS Ski World Cup came to Killington Resort over Thanksgiving weekend. The first day of racing, a Giant Slalom on Saturday, was marked by a combination of jubilation and heartbreak as U.S. Ski team members Nina O'Brien and Paula Moltzan posted their best World Cup Giant Slalom finishes while Mikaela Shiffrin, on track for her record-extending 100th World Cup victory, suffered a dramatic crash near the finish that took her out of contention for the rest of the weekend's events.

Before the crash, the raucous crowd of 21,500 fans were all on their feet cheering loudly, ringing bells and jumping up and down as Shiffrin (who had posted a sizable lead after her first run and was the final skier down the course Saturday) began with gusto. When she crested the final pitch and came into view, the crowd at the finish grew even louder, cheering what looked

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one-time funds last year also added cost pressure, Bolio wrote in the letter, a figure slightly offset by about \$33 million of unused money from the current fiscal year, FY25.

Because lawmakers made a few changes to Vermont’s educational finance system last legislative session, and as cost pressures on schools have continued, stakeholders worried about a similar double digit spike this year. The worst fears appeared to be avoided, but officials cautioned the 5.9% increase is still substantial, especially on top of multiple years of escalation.

“We know Vermonters are already struggling to pay for this year’s unprecedented increase in property taxes, I expect another projected increase will be difficult to hear,” Bolio said in a statement alongside his department’s letter. “It’s important that we continue to work together to find solutions to make our education funding system sustainable.”

He also said the Scott administration “will propose a framework for discussion during the legislative session that builds upon prior proposals and recent statewide discussions.”

Scott’s team and Democratic lawmakers have sparred in recent years over whether the administration should develop new policy proposals or whether prior ideas remain as relevant as ever.

Rep. Emilie Kornheiser, D-Brattleboro, who chairs the tax-writing House Ways and Means Committee, said on Monday that the letter’s forecast would not change the work ahead for lawmakers.

“We’re going to need to look at new ways of doing things,” she said. “Certainly the number was not as high as some people’s worst fears, but that doesn’t mean that Vermonters can sustain continued increases.”

Senate President Pro Tempore Phil Baruth, D/P-Chittenden Central, said in a statement that the projected increase, though not the worst case scenario, is “not just unacceptable — it continues to constitute an evolving

	FY25 (for reference)	FY26
Homestead Property Yield	\$9,893	\$8,553
Income Yield	\$10,110	\$12,260
Statewide Non-homestead Property Rate	\$1.391	\$1.791

Courtesy Vermont Dept. of Tax

The state released its preliminary education tax estimates Monday, Dec. 2. The chart above shows the FY26 homestead and income yields and non-homestead rate.

emergency that the Legislature must make its first priority come January.”

Republican leaders in the Legislature, meanwhile, signaled they would pursue “tax relief” this session, calling on their colleagues to implement “fundamental systemic reform” to Vermont’s education finance system.

“Some have proposed that education tax increases can be averted by simply dedicating additional revenue to the Education Fund or cost-shifting,” said Rep. Scott Beck, R-St. Johns-

bury, who was recently tapped to lead Senate Republicans when he joins that body in January, and House Minority Leader Pattie McCoy, R-Poultney, in a written statement. “Others believe if we craft a correct system of penalties and thresholds, the problem can be solved. We strongly disagree.”

“The Administration believes achieving sustainability and reducing property taxes will require a strategy that focuses on how much we spend, and how we fund and deliver education services. The strategy will need to ensure high levels of accountability, transparency, and fairness for taxpayers and students across Vermont,” Bolio wrote. “Modernizing our education funding system is complex and will take a multi-phased approach that will be challenging, but will be worth it when we achieve a world class educational system that taxpayers can afford.”

Statewide adjustment

By January 1, the Dept. of Taxes will have completed its “Equalization Study” that determines the CLAs for each Vermont town. But unlike prior years, beginning in 2025 these CLAs

will not be applied to each town’s education property tax rates, according to the state at tax.vermont.gov. Instead, every town’s CLA will be divided by a single “statewide adjustment” and the result will be applied to each town’s education property tax rates.

“The statewide adjustment can

“The statewide adjustment can be thought of as the average level of appraisal of the entire state,” the state explained.

be thought of as the average level of appraisal of the entire state,” the state explained at tax.vermont.gov/statewide-adjustment. “For example, if a town has a CLA of 60%, but the statewide adjustment is 75%, then the adjustment factor applied to education property tax rates in that town will be 0.60 / 0.75 = 0.80 or 80%. All Vermont property will still be taxed at 100% of fair market value, but the factor applied to education property tax rates will be calculated differently,” the site explained by way of example, the actual SA is 72% according to the Dec. 1 letter.

“The statewide adjustment component is intended to help districts more easily predict the impact of the common level of appraisal on local education property tax rates,” the state dept of taxes noted in a presentation to town officials across the state at the Town Fair held in Killington, Oct. 14.

The table below shows how the SA is applied and how a sample town will see the same final tax rate using the new SA (75% in this example) as it would have under current law without the SA.

Component	Current Law	Starting July 1, 2025
School District Per Pupil Spending	\$15,000	\$15,000
Statewide Adjustment (SA)	N/A	SA = 75%
Homestead Property Yield	\$10,000	Yield * SA = \$10,000 * 75% = \$7,500
School District Tax Rate*	\$1.50	\$2.00
Common Level of Appraisal (CLA)	CLA = 60%	CLA/SA = 60% / 75% = 80%
Final Homestead Tax Rate**	\$1.50 / 60% = \$2.50	\$2.00 / 80% = \$2.50

Courtesy tax.vermont.gov/statewide-adjustment

School district tax rate is the school district’s per pupil spending divided by the homestead property yield. The yield is set annually by the Legislature. Final homestead tax rate under current law is the school district tax rate divided by the town’s CLA (common level of appraisal). Starting July 1, 2025, the final homestead tax rate will be the school district tax rate divided by the number resulting from dividing the town’s CLA by the new statewide adjustment.

Select Board considers ways to fix Quechee Road

By Curt Peterson

The Hartland Select Board has to make an important decision before the deadline to publish the Town Report and the articles for Town Meeting in March 2025.

The first rough estimate to rebuild Quechee Road, a major route from Hartland Three Corners to Quechee, was \$6.5 million. An engineering report from Pathways Consulting, LLC, of Lebanon, rated sections of the troubled road by how urgently they needed repairs or rebuilding.

Drivers on Quechee Road know the potholes, broken pavement, and sinking edges are, at best, annoying, and at worst, dangerous. Particularly when there is snow and/or ice adding to the challenge.

The posted speed limit is 35 mph on most of the road, but much of it requires a slower pace.

The Pathways report identified “good” sections that require only “overlayment” of pavement, and sections that need actual major reconstruction.

At the Dec. 2 meeting Scott Williams of Pathways clarified several parts of the report for the selectmen.

“Good sections may deteriorate over time, but are holding up well since their recent overlayment,” Williams said, adding what

is underneath those sections is unknown, so there’s no prediction of their longevity.

There are, he said, 3,000 to 3,500 feet of Quechee Road that suffer badly from drainage, slope and ditching issues, partly because ledge comes right up to the edge of the road and creates “ponding” damage during rain events.

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Town Manager John Broker-Campbell said \$4 million would cover the 3.2 miles of Quechee Road that need reconstruction.

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pre-K through 6th grade schools and one middle/high school.

But Ford cautioned that the numbers were preliminary and to “take it all with a grain of salt,” noting that the much-anticipated “December 1 letter,” which is the first public-facing estimate of expected education property taxes for the fiscal year starting July 2025, just came out a few hours before the meeting. “I did my best to incorporate the new estimates into these figures, but it’s important to remember that these are always just estimates,” he said.

This year’s projections give Mountain View SU a long term weighted average daily membership (TWADM) of 1,485 students compared to last year’s 1,520 (despite the fact that the district only lost four actual students, Ford noted). The TWADM is the weighted pupil count that takes into account how expensive certain students are to educate.

The current estimate for property yield is also down from \$9,893 to \$8,553 per TWADM. And health insurance is up 11.9%, or about \$300,000 for MVSU.

Also new this year is a statewide adjustment to the CLA (see page 2).

Calculations

MVSU’s per pupil spending is projected to be \$16,055 — calculated by dividing the district’s education spending

Projected FY25 Tax Rates Calculation							
	Barnard	Bridgewater	Killington	Plymouth	Pomfret	Reading	Woodstock
FY25 Est Equalized Tax Rate	\$1.6742	\$1.6742	\$1.6742	\$1.6742	\$1.6742	\$1.6742	\$1.6742
CLA	1.0457	1.1949	0.5235	0.6225	1.0053	1.0061	0.6365
FY25 Est Homestead Property Tax Rate	\$1.6010	\$1.4011	\$3.1981	\$2.6895	\$1.6654	\$1.6640	\$2.6303
FY24 Homestead Prop Tax Rate	\$1.9933	\$1.8759	\$2.4713	\$1.9765	\$1.4632	\$1.8425	\$2.0198
Increase (Decrease) from FY24	(\$0.3923)	(\$0.4748)	\$0.7268	\$0.7130	\$0.2022	(\$0.1785)	\$0.6105
Percentage Change from FY24	-19.68%	-25.31%	29.41%	36.07%	13.82%	-9.69%	30.23%

Projected FY26 Tax Rates Calculation							
	Barnard	Bridgewater	Killington	Plymouth	Pomfret	Reading	Woodstock
FY26 Est Equalized Tax Rate	\$1.8771	\$1.8771	\$1.8771	\$1.8771	\$1.8771	\$1.8771	\$1.8771
CLA Subject to Statewide Adjustment	1.3900	1.4900	0.6300	0.6800	1.2700	1.3600	0.7900
FY26 Est Homestead Property Tax Rate	\$1.3504	\$1.2598	\$2.9795	\$2.7604	\$1.4780	\$1.3802	\$2.3761
FY25 Homestead Prop Tax Rate	\$1.6010	\$1.4011	\$3.1981	\$2.6895	\$1.6654	\$1.6640	\$2.6303
Increase (Decrease) from FY25	(\$0.2506)	(\$0.1413)	(\$0.2186)	\$0.0710	(\$0.1873)	(\$0.2838)	(\$0.2542)
Percentage Change from FY25	-15.65%	-10.09%	-6.83%	2.64%	-11.25%	-17.06%	-9.67%

Courtesy Ben Ford, MVSU

The top chart shows the current year FY25 tax rates by district town; the chart below the projected rate calculations for the coming budget year FY26 with comparisons to the prior year.

(the proposed budget of \$23,838,871) by its TWADM (1,485).

That per pupil spending (\$16,055) is then divided by the adjusted property yield (currently \$8,553) to get the district’s equalized tax rate of \$1.8771 (top row of the FY26 chart above).

That equalized tax rate (\$1.8771) is then divided by each town’s Common Level of Appraisal (CLA) divided by the statewide adjustment of 72% (second row of the FY26 chart above) to give each town its tax rate (third row of the FY26 chart above).

So despite the equalized tax rate being 20 cents higher than last year, when the new yield and statewide

adjustment to the CLA are factored in, six of the seven district towns will see a decrease in homestead property tax rates.

“Our district was required to make significant budget cuts from FY25 due to the reintroduction of the excess spend threshold,” explained Ford. “As a result, we should see lower tax impacts than the statewide average [5.9% per the Dec. 1 letter].”

Proposed cuts

The district was able to trim the \$2.5 million needed to stay under the spending threshold by restructuring its debt, saving \$1.1 million.

The remaining \$1.4 million of proposed cuts are

spread between the five elementary schools (\$730,764), the middle/high school (\$332,990) and the central office (\$311,944).

The majority of Monday night’s meeting was dedicated to hearing passionate pleas from members of the MVSU district to not cut the Unified Arts programs/positions across the district to help achieve the necessary budget savings.

The district board voted in favor of a motion to find out how much keeping the current art programs would cost and would consider alternative savings before voting whether to approve the proposed budget cuts at its next meeting, Dec. 16.

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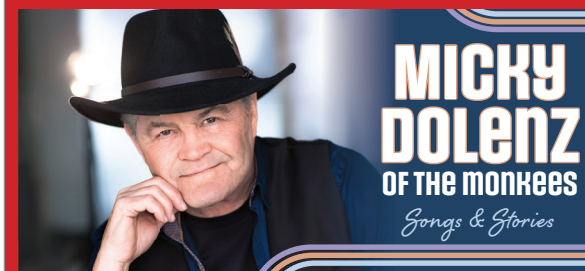
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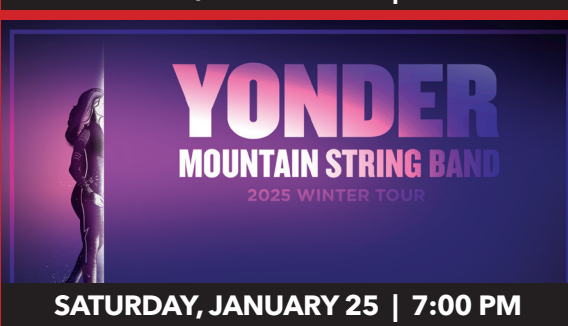
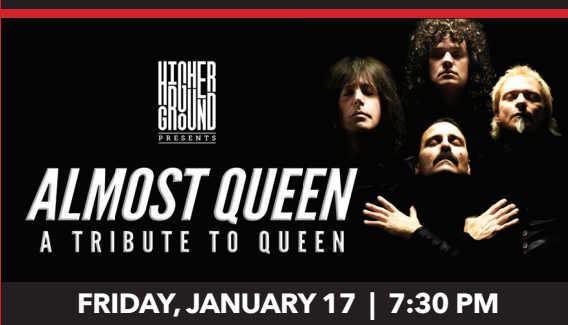
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By Jerry LeBlond

Top: The Giant Slalom podium: Sara Hector in first, Zrinka Ljutic in second and Camille Rast, third.

Bottom: The Slalom podium: Camille Rast in first, Anna Swenn Larsen in second and Wendy Holdener in third.



By Polly Mikula

All eyes (and phones) were on Shiffrin in the gate before her second G.S. run.



By Jerry LeBlond

Top: View of the Giant Slalom finish just below where Shiffrin crashed. Right: the Swiss team celebrates with Wendy Holdener (left) and Camille Rast (right) lifted with trophies.

← Killington Cup: from page 1

like it certainly would be her 100th World Cup win. She was within seconds of that victory when all hopes were dashed — thrills turning to chills of concern — as she careened off course busting through two gates and sliding into the netting in spectacular fashion. The crowd was immediately silent and eerily still as they waited for any reassuring sign that Shiffrin was ok.

The site of the crash was too far up the hill for anyone at the base area to make out what was happening. Shiffrin was eventually put on a ski patrol sled and taken by ambulance to Rutland Regional Medical Center where she was evaluated.

“She asked for the sled because she ‘was in shock, entirely unable to move, and worried about internal organ trauma,” Courtney Harkins, from the U.S. Ski & Snowboard Team posted to the media group chat. “There was no ligament damage that they have assessed — bones and internal organs look ok — There is a puncture wound into the right side of her abdomen and severe muscle trauma. She did not get stitches. They can’t stitch the puncture wound because it’s too deep and there’s a risk of infection. She is pretty sore,” Harkins wrote.

Shiffrin posted a video on Instagram Saturday evening from the hospital reassuring her fans that she’d be ok and congratulating her teammates. “Not really too much cause for concern at this point... I just can’t move, I have a

pretty good abrasion on my hip,” Shiffrin said. “Something stabbed me but all scans so far have come back clear. I’m so sorry to scare everybody... thank you for your support and concern and congrats to the winners and my teammates for their incredible performances,” Shiffrin said, adding that she’s still not sure what exactly it was that punctured her.

In a subsequent video, Shiffrin described the injury more bluntly: “I have a stab wound, basically... I was impaled.”

When asked when her estimated return to skiing may be, Shiffrin said it’d be multiple weeks and it was unlikely she’d race Beaver Creek, Dec. 14-15. A pair of earlier Giant Slalom races scheduled for Tremblant, Canada, Dec. 7-8 were canceled due to lack of snow.

With Shiffrin out, Sara Hector of Sweden claimed the Giant Slalom win, while Zrinka Ljutic of Croatia took second and Camille Rast of Switzerland, third. At the Slalom on Sunday, Camille Rast of Switzerland took her first career World Cup win, with Anna Swenn Larsen of Sweden in second and Wendy Holdener of Switzerland in third.

“It’s always a thrill to host the best female Alpine skiers at The Beast,” said Killington President and CEO Mike Solimano. “It takes a huge effort from the whole team and volunteers to pull off this event and I would just like to say thank you to everyone, especially the fans, for making this one to remember”

Paula Moltzan was the only member of the U.S. Ski Team

to make it to the second run in the Slalom event. However, she crashed in her second run and did not finish.

Harkin shared, Monday Dec. 2, that Moltzan had “dislocated her left shoulder but was able to reset it immediately. She sustained no fractures, and the shoulder is currently stable and will not need to undergo an operation. Right now she’s sore but looking forward to returning to competition iafter a couple of weeks of rehab.”

But the injury didn’t change Moltzan’s positivity for the Killington Cup. “This race specifically is my favorite race on tour for a number of reasons,” said Moltzan. “A: It’s in Vermont, B: My family can be here and C: the crowd for sure. Every athlete receives a huge welcome home in the finish line and you don’t always see that at World Cups. This is my favorite race on the tour for sure. I think we all hope it stays in Killington forever.”

The record-breaking crowds totaling 39,000 over the weekend began arriving on Friday with 7,500 attending the athlete bib presentation and fireworks display. Saturday, 21,500 folks filled the grandstands, vendor village and Great Gulf LiveKillington.com VIP tent to see if Shiffrin would hold onto her first run lead in the Giant Slalom and crack her 100 World Cup win record a day earlier than anticipated. Sunday, despite Shiffrin’s absence, 10,000 fans came to watch the 66 fastest female Alpine ski racers from 19 different countries descended Superstar. The Stifel Killington Cup was broadcast in more than 60 countries worldwide.

Live performances by Fitz and the Tantrums, Matt Quinn of Mt. Joy, Eve 6 and DJ Ross One punctuated the weekend.

Stifel Killington Cup: Celebrating women in winter sports

By Kristel Killary

Since 2022, the Stifel Killington Cup has been highlighting women in the snow sports industry through the Killington Cup HEROic Panel. The annual event celebrates women blazing trails and achieving success in their fields. Proceeds support the Share Winter Foundation, an organization committed to expanding access to winter sports for underserved communities.

At this year's panel, Constance Beverley, CEO of Share Winter, emphasized the importance of creating pathways for young people to enter snow sports. "We don't have a Little League to get people into the sport," she said. "Snowboarding gave me an identity and a pathway to find myself. We need to make sure people have that opportunity. It will make the sport richer and deeper. This sport is just magic, and everyone should have access to it."

This year's panel featured an impressive lineup of speakers. In addition to Beverley, the panel included: Amy Laramie, VP of brand marketing and events at Killington Resort; Corrine Prevot, rounder and CEO of Skida; Anouk Patty, chief of sport for the U.S. Ski & Snowboard Team; and host Sophie Goldschmidt, president and CEO of the U.S. Ski & Snowboard Team.

Highlighting the importance of women stepping into leadership roles and advo-

cating for change, Patty said, "As female leaders, we often have the power individually to make change. It's up to us to drive the change," she remarked. "Our coaching team was almost 99% men for the Olympics, and I just said no, it must be at least 50% women, and it so easily changed. It just sometimes takes women to push it. It's okay to do that. That's how change acts."

The evening concluded with the screening of two films celebrating the passion and stories behind the sport.

"Kindred," directed by Iz La Motte and Sara Beam Robbins, showcased the journey of U.S. Olympic teammates Devin Logan and Caroline Claire, both Long Island natives. The film captured their camaraderie and bold steps in their careers, blending raw honesty and the thrill of skiing from the half pipe to the backcountry.

"Moving Right Along," Season 3, Episode 1 featured six-time Killington Cup winner Mikaela Shiffrin. The documentary episode delved into Shiffrin's legacy, her leadership in inspiring the next generation, and her philanthropic efforts to provide snow sport opportunities for historically underserved youth. Reflecting on her 14-year World Cup career, the episode sheds light on her enduring impact on the sport.

Reflections: a World Cup of twists and turns; heartbreaks and triumphs

By Victoria Gaither

As sporting events go, the 2024 Stifel Killington World Cup had everything: heroes, drama, stories of inspiration, and community.

On Friday morning, Nov. 29, with snow falling, flags flying, wind gusts, and the sun trying to peek out, it was a perfect setting for the start of the Killington World Cup.

"Like I said, Killington is magic. If you look around, this could be a postcard," said Nancy Daniels. "Honestly, this view could be from a Hallmark ski movie," she said.

In this real-life story, the main characters are Mikaela Shiffrin, Paula Moltzan, Nina O'Brien, Elisabeth Bocoock, and six dozen more of the most accomplished female Alpine ski racers in the world.

But before any races could happen, first things first: with a foot of snow falling overnight on the mountain, snow had to be shoveled from the bleachers and the village where vendors will set up.

Jake Thomas was watching volunteers. "Everyone is working to get the job done," he observed.

Even Killington's President and CEO, Mike Solimano, shoveled snow from bleachers.

The Stifel Killington Cup event brings in thousands of fans — a record breaking

39,000 this year to be exact. The record crowds hoped to see if Mikaela Shiffrin would win her record-extending 100th race. But those hopes were dashed Saturday, Nov. 30, when Shiffrin crashed just a few seconds before securing her 100th victory.

All 21,500 fans were on their feet cheering as loudly as possible as Shiffrin held the lead. Then all when still and silent.

"You could hear a pin drop when it happened," said Sarah Costa. "I was in the stands. It was heartbreaking"

As the crowds stood stunned and eventually watched as the ski patrol brought Shiffrin down on the sled, she waved, indicating that she was okay. At that moment, for the Killington and ski community, chasing the 100th win didn't seem important because their hero was injured, and all wasn't right with the world until she gave a thumbs up.

"We wanted the 100th win at Killington, but Mikaela will get the win. She is the best, and we love her," said Costa.

Hundreds stayed after the race Saturday braving the cold weather to watch Fitz and the Tantrums perform.

"It has been a wild day! You can't find a better World Cup party. Can we talk World Cup 2025?" laughed Bruce Torres, waving his green stick in the dark.



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Bus routes:
from page 1

household. This means that an accessible public transportation system that works for the Rutland community is vital, said Ethan Pepin, transportation planner for the Rutland Regional Planning Commission.

“Oftentimes, when we’re thinking about transit, we’re not always thinking about folks ... that are not able to drive a car, and so if that’s the primary way to get around, then those folks can lose a lot of independence,” said Pepin. “For them, The Bus is really an essential piece of infrastructure just to live their lives.”

The Bus is looking to scale back some routes by the new year while it eyes expansion in the future. But, with its red and white retro-pop design reminiscent of the Beatles’ Yellow Submarine, the fleet will still run to the vast majority of stops, said Ron Euber, operations supervisor for The Bus.

“We’re just trying to be a little more efficient with minimum impact,” said Euber.

Operated by the Marble Valley Transit District, The Bus is planning to consolidate Rutland City’s south and south extension routes and modify its hospital route, Pepin said. Previous plans had overlapping stops, so the change will maintain 97.5% of ridership while cutting 33% of the service and saving \$100,000, he said.

Euber said he used his

The change will maintain 97.5% of ridership while cutting 33% of the service and saving \$100,000, Pepin said.

experience as a bus driver and working with The Bus for 17 years to help revise the suggested route to better meet Rutland’s needs.

The Bus and the Rutland Regional Planning Commission held a public meeting last week to seek input. The main concern was not with the consolidation but with the Bus’ service hours.

Rides are only available from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.,



Submitted

and The Bus does not run on Sundays, but people can request a ride from 6:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. on weekdays. Still, these hours are too limited for people commuting to and from work, said Bannerman.

Michelle Hoffman, a social work supervisor at the hospital, echoed that concern while crediting The Bus for being free to the public — a benefit to patients and staff. She said The Bus has worked with the hospital on scheduling trips for employ-

offer a program to transport qualified Medicaid recipients on request. Through this program, people broker trips regularly, often to Burlington or Dartmouth hospitals and once even as far as Oklahoma, according to Euber.

Along with the normal routes and arranged trips, Euber said The Bus provides transportation for significant events at Killington Mountain Resort that have “touched a lot of people.” The Bus helps move about 40,000 people each year at

According to the 2020 census, 13% of Rutland City households have no car ... another 42% only have access to one car per household.

ees on request during hours of operation.

Pepin said he hopes the savings from the consolidation could be put toward a micro-transit pilot program, versions of which already exist in both Middlebury and Montpelier. While in early phases of planning, the micro-transit model

the World Cup.

Through the program Everybody Rides, The Bus also partners with several community organizations in the Rutland area to provide seniors and people with disabilities with free trips upon request.

Diane Drake, executive director of Rutland Area Advocacy Resources Community, said the program is crucial to improving access to medical, professional, and social wellness opportunities for older adults with disabilities.

“Without them, our folks wouldn’t be able to get here, and they would be at a huge loss,” said Drake. “When you stop and think about people who do not have transportation readily available to them, and they’re isolated, and in some cases very, very lonely, and so when they don’t have access to transportation, those people are suffering.”

would allow people to request rides from The Bus through an app like Uber or Lyft. Pepin said that would help fill “gaps in the existing transit systems” and provide rides to people not served by the current schedule.

“We’re looking to try to optimize, as much as possible, our existing routes so we can try to expand service in the future,” said Pepin.

The Bus continues to

Are Hartland planners tilting at windmills?

Hartland Planning Commission takes prosed 9,000-square-foot Sunnymede market to state Supreme Court

By Curt Peterson

Miguel Cervantes, author of the Spanish classic novel “Don Quixote,” once said: “In order to attain the impossible, one must attempt the absurd.”

Cervantes’s Quixote, who had a questionable grasp of reality, donned a suit of armor and rode the countryside “tilting at windmills,” seeing them as “ferocious giants” threatening civilization.

In 2018 Aubrey Ferrao, owner of 600-acre Sunnymede Farm in Hartland applied for, and obtained, an Act 250 permit to build a “farm store” on Route 5 between Mike’s Store and I-91 Exit 9. The site was once the Lamb Farm, and the level land has been hayed since the farm buildings were leveled.

The three-member Act 250 state district commission, having evolved from responsibility for protecting local town plans, issued a permit for Sunnymede’s 9,000-square-foot market, selling the farm’s meat and produce and ancillary items, store-made sandwiches, deli products, wine and beer. Parking for 45 vehicles would include a dozen electric vehicle charging stations. Detailed plans were made public and Sunnymede representatives attended two public Select Board meetings to answer any questions about the project.

The Hartland Planning Commission (HPC) objected to granting the Act 250 permit, and filed an appeal in Environmental Court, claiming the proposed location was designat-

The issues will be limited to the lower court’s misinterpretation of the wording in the Hartland Town Plan, and definition of a “farm store.”

ed “rural residential” in the 2017 Hartland Town Plan, and the Sunnymede’s project, which was like a “strip mall,” was not a “farm store” — it was a retail store that didn’t qualify for the location.

The Environmental Court, a division of the Superior Court, denied the planners’ appeal, saying the project was a farm store, bore no resemblance to a strip mall, and that the Town Plan wording was “suggestive” and not enforceable.

The Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Commission (TRORC), had co-appealed the Sunnymede Act 250 permit based on their “Regional Plan’s” prohibition against



Submitted

The proposed Sunnymede market “farm store” continues to face local challenges. Battle is elevated to state Supreme Court.

“sprawl” — spreading commercial businesses into rural or other unsuitable areas. TRORC opted to withdraw their opposition to the project following the court’s decision.

The planners advised the Select Board to withdraw their appeal and they voted to do so, but 24 hours later, according to selectman Tom Kennedy, after a second vote the HPC decided to appeal of the Environmental Court’s rejection in the state Supreme Court.

The issues will be limited to the lower court’s misinterpretation of the wording in the Hartland Town Plan, and definition of a “farm store.”

However, publicly, HPC chair David Dukeshire depicts the commissioners as “saving the village.”

Kennedy said the Supreme Court will hear the case. No official date has been announced. Since the aborted withdrawal announcement, Select Board chair Phil Hobbie told the Mountain Times, there has been no communication from the HPC.

On Nov. 20 the HPC voted to write a press release to be distributed on the Hartland listserv. The Select Board found the release objectionable and divisive, requested some changes and an apology.

The release, signed by David Dukeshire, chair of the HPC was posted on the listserv Monday, Nov. 25.

Sunnymede → 11

← Quechee Road: from page 3

Williams warned that attempts to save money by trying preservation by overlaying the bad parts (again) will only buy time. The town will face the same problem down the road.

“It will be better to do a full fix on the worst sections now, and the road will require less investment over the long term,” he said.

The “full fix” means ditching work and culvert clearing on the entire road, he said. Adding 18 inches of crushed stone in “bad sections” will bring the road up to Vermont local highway standards.

Town Manager John Broker-Campbell said \$4 million would cover the 3.2 miles of Quechee Road that need reconstruction. With a population of about 3,500, \$4 million amounts to \$1,171 investment by every man, woman and child in Hartland.

Broker-Campbell said he thought the Hartland road crew could do the ditching and culvert unclogging.

Selectman Trip Tancredi suggested raising the ledge side of the road edge would allow making a drainage swale with crushed stone in the difficult areas.

The Select Board is under pressure to decide on strategy choices, to determine an accurate estimate of cost for the chosen plan, and create an article to warn for voting at Town Meeting.

“I think the deadline’s in early January,” Select Board Chair Phil Hobbie told the Mountain Times. “Every decision we make will be in comparison with the original \$6.5 million estimate, which the town cannot afford.”

Hobbie said he is unaware of any available grants Hartland might use to finance the Quechee Road project.

At the next Select Board meeting on Dec. 16, Broker-Campbell will be presenting a report identifying the estimated cost of each option.

“There’s no money in the budget for this project. We have 65 miles of back roads we have to take care of. A bond will be the obvious way we’ll have to go,” Hobbie added.

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“There’s no money in the budget for this project... A bond will be the obvious way we’ll have to go,” Hobbie added.



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GUEST EDITORIAL

An answer to Vermont's housing crisis

By Peter G. de Krassel

Editor's note: Peter G. de Krassel is the founder of Breaking Housing Matters and the author of the newly released book "Custom Maid Housing for New World Disorder." He will host a book signing and presentation regarding innovative housing solutions at the Rutland Free Library on Thursday, Dec. 5 at 6 p.m.

In the recent election, Vermonters sent lawmakers a clear message: the state has become too expensive, and urgent action is needed to address issues threatening economic security. Chief among these challenges is the housing crisis.

Vermont's housing costs are soaring, making homeownership and rental opportunities out of reach for many. The median sale price of a home now exceeds \$400,000, while the average annual salary hovers just under \$75,000. You don't need to be a mathematician to see the problem: first-time homebuyers and working Vermonters face a near-impossible task in securing housing.

Add to this the fact that the Vermont Housing Finance Agency estimates that 40,000 new housing units will be needed by 2030 to meet demand—a daunting figure for a state with a population of just 645,000. Meanwhile, demographic trends paint an even bleaker picture.

Vermont's population is aging rapidly, with more than 20% of residents over 65 and over 35% older than 54—the typical age at which Americans begin to exit the workforce. The share of residents in their prime working years is alarmingly small.

A labor shortage is already here, with Vermont's unemployment rate at just 2.3% in October—nearly half the national rate. However, attracting new workers to Vermont is almost impossible without affordable housing options.

The data is clear: Vermont desperately needs affordable and workforce housing. While this is a daunting challenge, it is not impossible. With decisive, innovative action, this growing crisis can be addressed.

One promising solution is the Housing Subsidy Solution (HSS)—a public-private model designed to build affordable housing profitably. This approach would make housing accessible for homeowners and renters while ensuring developers and landlords earn a fair return on investment.

Here's how it works:

The HSS would operate as a partnership between the government and private sector, managed by private stakeholders. The principle is simple: no one should pay more than 25% of their income on a mortgage or rent, while developers and landlords receive a reasonable return. A subsidy fund would bridge the gap between actual costs and renters' or buyers' affordability.

Five stakeholder groups would drive HSS:

1. Government: City councils, state legislatures, and Housing Subsidy Solution → 9

The median sale price of a home now exceeds \$400,000, while the average annual salary hovers just under \$75,000. You don't need to be a mathematician to see the problem.

The TOPPER



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THE BUFFALO NEWS

Bills AFC East Champs by Adam Zyglis, The Buffalo News

LETTERS

We know healthcare is broken, a new report shows how we can fix it

Dear Editor,

Those seeking fundamental changes to our hospitals and healthcare systems—including us—were not surprised last month when the state's hospital trade group pushed back against a legislatively mandated report that concluded serious work needs to be done before our entire healthcare system collapses. In fact, the hospitals were so threatened by change that they demanded that the report be retracted and that regulators essentially should just leave them alone.

For the good of Vermonters, our healthcare, and the hospitals themselves, regulators held tight. They defended the report, which was the product of thousands of comments from Vermonters, testimony from hospital leaders, doctors, and other healthcare workers, and careful deliberation from healthcare regulators. In less than a week, when the hospitals were called on their false assertion that the report was based on "faulty

data," they even retracted their demand for a retraction.

And that's good news, as the report offers an encouraging roadmap for the state to follow in its quest to make healthcare more accessible, affordable, accountable, and equitable.

The report—presented to the Green Mountain Care Board by Dr. Bruce Hamory—paints a bleak picture of the current state of affairs. But it portends a much better healthcare future if we truly want it. As Dr. Hamory puts it, "The platform for healthcare in Vermont has burned and requires rebuilding in a modern form with more sustainable governance and funding methods." It would be foolish and irresponsible to ignore the existential urgency of his message.

As the leaders of unions representing educators and healthcare workers, we would be foolish and irresponsible not to join the fight for healthcare reform.

In fact, both of our unions—Vermont-NEA and the Vermont Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals/AFT-Vermont—have been leaders in this state's decades-long fight for systemic healthcare reform. Our combined membership confronts the realities of our broken system daily.

We also know we aren't the only ones who care about improving the cost and delivery of healthcare to every single Vermonter. More than 3,000 folks from across the state participated in the report's extensive engagement process, which the Legislature set in motion in 2022. Many spoke about their medical hardships and the financial burdens they lead to and offered ideas on correcting our healthcare system's deficiencies. Their contributions were solicited and received respectfully.

This report is focused broadly on improving the sus-
Healthcare fix → 9

A debate on the future of Vt's house leadership

Dear Editor,

As we look toward the 2025-2026 biennium, an important conversation is unfolding in Vermont about our state's leadership in the State House.

Previously, the speaker of the House position was selected internally and did not involve Vermont's voters directly. This year, however, the White River Valley Chamber - in conjunction with the Chandler Center and Representative Jay Hooper - is planning to host a public debate on Dec. 14 at the Chandler in Randolph to allow current Speaker Jill Krowinski (D-Burlington) and challenger Representative Laura Sibilia (I-Dover) to discuss their visions for the future of Vermont. Following the recent election that saw Vermonters vote out 18 Democrats in the house and 6 in the senate, this is a fresh opportunity for these representatives to speak directly to their constituents to ensure
Leaders → 9

CAPITAL QUOTES



On Monday, Dec. 2, President Biden pardoned his son, Hunter Biden, prior to his sentencing later this month for federal tax and gun convictions. While the move was not entirely unexpected, there was noticeable backlash due to the president's previous statements indicating he would not pardon his son.

“President Biden’s pardon of his son Hunter is, as the action of a loving father, understandable—but as the action of our nation’s Chief Executive, unwise,”

said U.S. Senator **Peter Welch** in a statement released on Dec. 2.

“He believes in the justice system, but he also believes that politics infected the process and led to a miscarriage of justice,”

said White House press secretary **Karine Jean-Pierre**.

“This is a bad precedent that could be abused by later Presidents and will sadly tarnish his reputation,”

said Colorado Gov. **Jared Polis** on the social media platform X.

“Does the Pardon given by Joe to Hunter include the J-6 Hostages, who have now been imprisoned for years?”

Donald Trump wrote in a post on Truth Social on Dec. 1. This statement hints at what many predict will be a sweeping pardon of convicted Jan. 6 insurrectionists by Trump after his inauguration on Jan. 20.

← Healthcare fix: from page 8

tainability and affordability of our healthcare system and strengthening the financial health of our hospitals. This effort entails reducing inefficiencies, lowering costs, improving the health of our population, reducing health inequities, and increasing access to essential medical and care services.

Its key findings suggest that if we—lawmakers, Gov. Phil Scott, healthcare providers, hospitals, and regulators—act now, we can unleash more than \$400 million of savings over the next five years, money that can be better used toward healthy outcomes for all of us.

Among the report’s significant findings: “All Vermont communities are facing significant challenges with health care access, equity and affordability.”

There is not a single hospital that is not facing financial jeopardy.

We must transform how our hospital system integrates, coordinates, and delivers care. Doing nothing or tinkering at the edges will only drive commercial premium increases to even higher levels and further compromise the health of Vermonters.

Savings from hospital

transformation initiatives are estimated at more than \$400 million over the next five years. Imagine what we could achieve if we reinvested a generous portion of these savings to rebuild our primary care, nursing, mental health counseling, therapeutic, and home health capacities and to recruit and retain qualified

The Green Mountain Care Board should no longer permit further increases in commercial insurance premiums for working Vermonters and their employers to subsidize hospital financial shortfalls.

personnel in these fields.

We must move as much healthcare as possible out of hospitals. Good medical care generally begins near or at home, and it should be provided to the greatest extent by doctors and other clinicians whose treatment protocols are anchored to prevention, care coordination, community access, and trusted, compassionate relationships with patients.

The Green Mountain Care Board should no longer permit further increases in commercial insurance premiums for working Ver-

monters and their employers to subsidize hospital financial shortfalls.

Additionally, regulators should begin implementing reference-based pricing (RBP) at certain hospitals at 200% of Medicare rates or less starting in 2025.

We pledge to support the Green Mountain Care Board and the Legislature

in crafting legislation and regulatory policies inspired by and informed by the report and the current needs of Vermonters and their employers.

We will also rally the backing of other unions to this critical effort and urge Governor Scott and his administration to declare healthcare reform a fundamental cornerstone of their affordability agenda.

Deb Snell is president of the Vermont Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals/AFT-Vermont, and Don Tinney is president of Vermont-NEA.

← Housing Subsidy Solution: from page 8

agencies would collaborate with the federal government to streamline and direct grants and benefits to HSS projects.

2. Philanthropy: Public and private foundations, philanthropic organizations, and other private entities would contribute financial support.

3. Developers and landlords: These stakeholders would dedicate a portion of their profits to the fund.

4. Financial institutions: Banks and lenders could allocate a small percentage of every loan to HSS, offer innovative options like reverse mortgages, and encourage their charitable arms to support the fund.

5. Houses of worship: Faith-based organizations enjoying tax-exempt status could allocate up to 50% of donations to support affordable housing initiatives.

It’s time to reimagine our approach to housing—building homes that are affordable for buyers and renters while ensuring profitability for landlords and developers. Vermont needs a paradigm shift to address the housing crisis, and the Housing Subsidy Solution provides a pathway to do just that.

By taking bold, collective action, Vermont can lead the way in building affordable housing today, creating a model for the rest of the nation to follow.

By taking bold, collective action, Vermont can lead the way.

← Leaders: from page 8

they understand the needs of everyday Vermonters.

Unfortunately, Speaker Krowinski has not yet agreed to participate after first consenting to the debate. If her decision stands, it would be an unfortunate turn of events for all involved, especially for the voters who have not felt well-represented by the legislature in recent years. As a native Vermonter, I’m encouraged by the possibility of this debate to learn more about the candidates, ask questions, and get more of our citizens involved in the legislative process.

Please support this initiative for a future where we all work together to ensure our state’s leadership reflects the needs of Vermonters.

Jamie Gage, Bethel



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

- ASSISTIVE
- BATHROOM
- CAREGIVER
- CHAIR
- CHORES
- CUSTODIAL
- DIRECTIVE
- FALLING
- GRAB BARS
- GUARDIAN
- HAZARDS
- HOMEBOUND
- HOME HEALTH
- AIDE
- INDEPENDENCE
- LIGHTING
- MEALS
- MEMORY
- MOBILITY
- MONITORED
- NONSKID
- REHABILITATION
- SAFETY
- SKILLED
- SLIP

Sunnymede:
 from page 7

"This Public Statement is intended to explain the [HPC's] reason for our appeal and to make future recommendations," the letter stated.

An HPC survey, sent in 2023 to all property owners and renters, was cited as, "the most common refrain [from respondents] was 'we like Hartland the way it is.'" However, less than 18% of those sent surveys responded. The HPC has relied on that survey for its actions.

"[The planners] are not trying to protect businesses from competition, but to locate businesses as specified in the Town Plan," the letter states, although it also says the 3-Corners Village has all the services it needs.

The document, Kennedy told the Mountain Times, is "a list of complaints and unsubstantiated suppositions, with no apparent goal. Frankly, it's an embarrassment"

A Supreme Court case requires the Town of Hartland be the litigant rather than the HPC, even though the governing body has taken no position on the farm stand issue. A few people familiar with Supreme Court litigation over zoning issues predict Hartland will lose the case, and have wasted a significant amount of money on legal fees — tilting at windmills, as Cervantes said.

Time will tell.

SUDOKU Solutions → 22

How to Play

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

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

Level: Intermediate

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Solutions → 22

CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Bar bills
- 5. Recipe measurement (abbr.)
- 8. Swiss river
- 11. Czech Republic capital
- 13. "Officially known as"
- 14. A French abbot
- 15. Having a strong sharp smell or taste
- 16. Local area network
- 17. Data transmission speed measure
- 18. Embarrass
- 20. When you hope to get there
- 21. This (Spanish)
- 22. Gives up
- 25. Churchgoer
- 30. Current
- 31. Slang for gun
- 32. Small drum
- 33. Vanished union bigwig
- 38. Rocker's tool of the trade
- 41. Dearth
- 43. 2024 Olympics host
- 45. Excess blood in the vessels
- 48. Afrikaans
- 49. Agreement between provider and customer
- 50. Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation
- 55. Ancient Syrian

- city
 - 56. Witch
 - 57. Celebrations
 - 59. Long period of time
 - 60. A team's best pitcher
 - 61. Current unit
 - 62. One-time aerospace company
 - 63. French/Belgian river
 - 64. Swedish rock group
- CLUES DOWN**
- 1. Yearly tonnage (abbr.)
 - 2. Genus of clams
 - 3. Remark
 - 4. Actor LaBeouf
 - 5. Ohio town
 - 6. Olympic sport
 - 7. Cure
 - 8. Behave in a way that belittles
 - 9. Shares a boundary with
 - 10. Give advice
 - 12. Promotional materials
 - 14. Assist or encourage, usually in some wrongdoing
 - 19. "Agatha All Along" actress Kathryn
 - 23. Small piece
 - 24. King of Camelot
 - 25. Parts per thousand (abbr.)
 - 26. Small Milky

1	2	3	4			5	6	7		8	9	10	
11				12		13				14			
15						16				17			
	18				19	20				21			
					22	23				24			
25	26	27	28	29									
30							31						
32								33	34	35	36	37	
					38	39	40		41	42			
					43			44					
	45	46	47										
48						49			50	51	52	53	54
55						56				57			58
59										61			
62						63				64			

- Way constellation
- 27. One who challenges authority (abbr.)
- 28. Equal (prefix)
- 29. Shawl
- 34. S. American wood sorrel relative
- 35. The end
- 36. Supervises interstate commerce
- 37. Yes vote
- 39. Officer of high rank
- 40. Church office
- 41. Tire pressure measurement
- 42. From a distance
- 44. Photographs
- 45. Industrial process
- 46. Nobel Prize-winning physicist
- 47. Map out
- 48. Mammary gland part of female mammal
- 51. Honorable title (Turkish)
- 52. Spongelike cake leavened with yeast
- 53. Speak incessantly
- 54. Poetry term
- 58. Relaxing space

GUESS WHO?

I am a singer/rapper born in Tennessee on December 4, 1984. As a youth, I got into trouble often and was arrested several times. However, I turned my life around with the help of my music career, which started by selling mixtapes out of my car. I'm now a CMT Music Awards winner for Male Video of the Year.

Answer: Jelly Roll (Jason DeFord)

WED
12/04

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

Festival of Trees Bake Sale Drop Off

10:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Sherburne Library, 2998 River Road, Killington. Drop off your baked goods for Sherburne Library's bake sale table at the festival of trees Bake sale occurring during the Vermont holiday fest. Drop goods no later than EOD Wednesday. Sherburnelibrary.org

Killington Active Seniors Lunch

11:30 a.m. (Wednesdays) The Lookout Tavern, 2910 Killington Road, Killington. \$5 donation towards the meal. 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. (Monthly, 2nd Wed.) RRMC 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. chrcr.org/diabetes-support-group

'Fifty Years That Transformed Vermont'

2 p.m. Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St., Rutland. In person and online. Journalist and historian Chris Graff examines Vermont's transformation over the past 50 years, exploring its shift in politics, culture, and identity. Part of the Vermont Humanities Snapshot series, this hybrid event requires registration for in-person or online attendance. vermonthumanities.org/event/fifty-years-that-transformed-vermont/

Public Skating

2-3:40 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

Cribbage for Adults

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

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. chaffeeartcenter.org

Senior Solutions Annual Meeting

4-6 p.m. Hotel Coolidge, 39 So. Main St., White River Junction. Join Senior Solutions staff, volunteers, community partners, and older adults to reflect on the past year and present the annual Successful Aging Award. Coffee from 4-4:30 p.m. Featured speaker: Dr. Jill Bowen, Commissioner of DAIL. 802-885-2669 or seniorsolutionsvt.org

Winter Village Outdoor Market

4-8 p.m. 1 Carver St., Brandon. Enjoy an open-air market during Moonlight Madness with 20+ vendors, carolers, hot chocolate, and a visit from Santa (5-6:30 p.m.). Event held rain, snow, or shine. allevents.in/brandon/winter-village-in-brandon-dec-4and6/200027321748016

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. chrcr.org/diabetes-support-group

Silent Auction

5:30-7 p.m. Hartford Area Chamber of Commerce, 326 Main St., Norwich. Join an evening of community and giving to support local businesses and initiatives. Auction items include a Broadway package with tickets and cast meet-and-greet, tickets to Northern Stage, graphic novels, handcrafted goods, and more. Funds raised benefit local tourism and business education programs. hartfordvtchamber.com

Royal Caribbean Cruises Travel Show

5:30 p.m. Chaffee Art Center, 16 South Main St., Rutland. Learn about Royal Caribbean's cruise fleet and explore the most popular options. Sponsored by AAA Travel. RSVP: 802-775-1558 or rsvpnm@nne.aaa.com

Micky Dolenz in Concert

7 p.m. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St., Rutland. \$60-\$80. First time performing at the Paramount Theatre. Catch the Monkees lead singer Micky Dolenz, featuring hits like "Last Train to Clarksville" and "I'm a Believer." paramountvt.org

THURS
12/05

Gift of Life Marathon Blood Drive

9 a.m.-3 p.m., Rutland High School, 22 Stratton Road, Rutland. Join the community in donating blood and making a lifesaving impact. Organized by the American Red Cross. RedCrossBlood.org

Woodstock Union H.S Winter Greenhouse

9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Big greenhouse, behind the Woodstock Union High School, 100 Amsden Way, Woodstock. \$10-\$18. Shop poinsettias, wreaths, Christmas cacti, frosty ferns, and houseplants. A table of free plants and supplies will also be available. Proceeds support the WUHS/MS Agriculture Department. Cash or checks accepted.

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

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

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

Bone Builders

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

'A New England Christmas'

1:30 p.m. — Bugbee Senior Center, 262 No. Main St., White River Junction. Suggested donation: \$5 to support the performers. Enjoy a festive performance by the Pontine Theater. bugbeecenter.org

Holiday Tea

2-4 p.m. Castleton Community Center, 2108 Main St., Castleton. \$10. Celebrate the season with a holiday tea featuring a selection of teas and savory and sweet treats. 802-468-309

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

Lantern Walk

4-5 p.m. Abbott Memorial Library, 15 Library St., South Pomfret. Celebrate the coming winter solstice with a lantern walk. Pick up a lantern kit at the library in advance or bring a previously made lantern. The event begins with stories inside, followed by a walk on the hill behind the library. 802-457-2236 or abbottlibrary@gmail.com

Meet Santa Claus

4-7 p.m. Wonderfeet Kids Museum, 66 Merchants Row, Rutland. \$10 or new unwrapped toy donation. The Rutland County Parent Child Center hosts the 2nd annual meet Santa event. Donations support RCPCC's toy drive to brighten the holidays for local families. wonderfeetkidsmuseum.org

Vermont Holiday Fest: Killington Festival of Trees

5:30-8:30 p.m. Killington Grand Hotel, 228 E. Mountain Road, Killington. Community tree decorating party and KPAA holiday mixer. Enjoy live music by Chad Hollister, appetizers, silent auction items, a 50/50 raffle, and the announcement of the Community Member of the Year. VTHolidayFest.com

Discussion: Vermont's Housing Crisis

6-7:30 p.m. Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St., Rutland. Peter de Krassel, founder of Breaking Housing Matters (BHM), presents actionable solutions to Vermont's housing crisis and introduces his book, "Custom Maid Housing for New World Disorder." Includes a book signing and presentation. rutlandfree.org

Author Ellen Parent Debuts 'After the Fall'

6:30 p.m. Phoenix Books, 2 Center St., Rutland. Refer to website for details. Vermont author Ellen Parent presents her debut young adult novel, "After the Fall," a post-apocalyptic story set in a futuristic Vermont. The event includes a book reading and signing. phoenixbooks.biz/events

**CHRISTMAS AT
BILLINGS FARM**

SAT & SUN @ 10 AM



FRI

12/06

Woodstock Union H.S. Winter Greenhouse

9 a.m.-2 p.m. Big greenhouse, back of Woodstock Union High School, 100 Amsden Way, Woodstock. \$10-\$18. Shop poinsettias, wreaths, Christmas cacti, frosty ferns, and houseplants. A table of free plants and supplies will also be available. Proceeds support the WUHS/MS Agriculture Department. Cash or checks accepted.

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

St. Mary's Bazaar

3-6 p.m. — St. Raphael Parish Hall, 21 E. Main St., Poultney. Features basket raffle, traditional raffle, 50/50 raffle, food tables, Trash and Treasures, and vendor tables. Enjoy supper or lunch from the kitchen. Raffle drawings at 2 p.m. Saturday. For vendor information, call Claudia Stacey at 802-265-8049.

Vermont Reads: Ken Cadow Author Visit

4 p.m. Norman Williams Library, 10 The Green, Woodstock. Free. Join author Kenneth Cadow, National Book Award Finalist, for a reading and discussion of "Gather," the 2024 Vermont Reads selection. Themes include resilience, rural life, addiction, recovery, and community. normanwilliams.org

Winter Village Outdoor Market

4-8 p.m. 1 Carver St., Brandon. Open-air market during Moonlight Madness with 20+ vendors, carolers, hot chocolate, and a visit from Santa (5-6:30 p.m.). Event held rain, snow, or shine.

WRJ First Friday: Putnam's Ugly Sweater Holiday Party

4-10 p.m. Putnam's Vine/Yard, 188 S. Main St., Hartford. Celebrate WRJ's First Friday with Foodie Friday at Putnam's Kitchen (starting at 4 p.m.), live music by Tom Horton Davis & Chris Billiau (6:30-8:30 p.m.), and special treats from Knot Just Pretzels (5-8 p.m.). putnamsvineyard.com

Killington Vermont Holiday Fest: Festival of Trees, School Concert, and Vendor Village

5-8 p.m. Killington Grand Hotel, 228 E. Mountain Road, Killington. Performances by local school groups, lighted trees, and a vendor village. Silent auction items available for bidding. Free entry with a suggested donation to support the Killington Food Shelf. VTHolidayFest.com

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 from page 12

Train Museum Holiday Open House

6-8 p.m. 79 Depot Lane, Center Rutland. Visitors are invited to the historic Center Rutland Train Station to view the museum collection and two operating model train layouts featuring Christmas trains. facebook.com/p/Rutland-Railway-Association-100066761013097/

Ethan Setiawan and Fine Ground: A Bluegrass Quintet

7 p.m. Artistree Community Arts Center, 2095 Pomfret Road, South Pomfret. \$30. Enjoy an evening of innovative bluegrass with award-winning mandolinist Ethan Setiawan and his quintet, Fine Ground. artistreevt.org

Film Screening: 'It's a Wonderful Life'

7-9:10 p.m. Artistree Community Arts Center, 2095 Pomfret Road, South Pomfret. \$10 adults, \$8 children/seniors. Enjoy Frank Capra's 1946 classic starring James Stewart as George Bailey, who discovers his profound impact on Bedford Falls with the help of a wise angel. artistreevt.org

A Weston Winter Cabaret

7:30 p.m. Walker Farm, 705 Main St., Weston. \$35. Celebrate the season with Weston's seventh annual Winter Cabaret, hosted by David Bonanno. Enjoy music, mayhem, and holiday cheer with performances by past Company members. westontheater.org

SAT
12/07

Vermont Holiday Fest: Santa's Workshop and Breakfast Buffet

9 a.m.-Noon. Killington Grand Hotel, 228 E. Mountain Road, Killington. Family-friendly fun includes crafts, cookie decorating by Dream Maker Bakers, and photos with Santa. VTHolidayFest.com

Mt. Tom Farmers Market

9 a.m.-1 p.m. Pomfret Town Hall, 5218 Pomfret Road, Pomfret. Second of two winter markets. Fresh chicken and lamb legs available for holiday gatherings. foxxfarm22@gmail.com

St. Mary's Bazaar

9 a.m.-3 p.m. — St. Raphael Parish Hall, 21 E. Main St., Poultney. Features basket raffle, traditional raffle, 50/50 raffle, food tables, Trash and Treasures, and vendor tables. Enjoy supper or lunch from the kitchen. Raffle drawings at 2 p.m. Saturday. For vendor information, call Claudia Stacey at 802-265-8049

Stuff a Fire Truck

9 a.m.-5 p.m. Singleton's General Store, 356 Main St., Proctorsville. Black River Good Neighbors Service (BRGNS) seeks donations of essential items, including condiments, soup, coffee, sugar, pasta, cereal, personal care products, and cleaning supplies. Monetary donations are also welcomed, with checks payable to BRGNS. brgn.org

Brownsville Community Christmas Events

9 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Brownsville Town Hall and Community Church Pavilion, 66 Brownsville Hartland Rd., Brownsville. Christmas Bazaar featuring crafts, a bake sale (9 a.m.-2 p.m.), and a luncheon (11 a.m.-1 p.m.). Tree lighting at 4 p.m. with refreshments, a fire pit, and a possible visit from Mr. and Mrs. Claus. Concludes with a live Christmas Nativity at 5:30 p.m., featuring music and possibly live animals. ParrisHill@comcast.net

Thicket Adventure Pop-Up Shop

10 a.m.-2 p.m. Fruition Fineries, 56 Merchants Row, Rutland. Celebrate plus-size bodies at Thicket Adventure's first-ever pop-up shop. Explore plus-size outdoor apparel and Fruition's curated collections while promoting body positivity. thicketadventure.com

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

Christmas at Billings Farm

10 a.m.-4 p.m. Billings Farm & Museum, 69 Old River Road., Woodstock. Experience Victorian Christmas traditions with natural décor, candle dipping, pie crust crafting, and outdoor activities. Warm up by fire pits with hot cocoa and explore the Museum Gift Shop for unique, Vermont-made holiday gifts. billingsfarm.org

Santa's Workshop

10 a.m.-4 p.m. Wonderfeet Kids' Museum, 66 Merchant's Row, Rutland. \$35 (includes one adult and one child.) Enjoy a holiday experience with cookie decorating, hot cocoa, keepsake crafts, and a visit with Santa. Tickets are limited for each time slot. Proceeds support the museum's mission to keep admission affordable and offer reduced-priced memberships to families in need. wonderfeetkidsmuseum.org

Holiday Open House

11 a.m.-3 p.m. Calvin Coolidge State Historic Site, 3780 VT-100A, Plymouth Notch. Celebrate the holiday season with festive greenery, cookies, cocoa, and craft-making. Activities include a ukulele concert at 11:30 a.m., a tree lighting at 12:45 p.m., and caroling in the Union Christian Church. historicssites.vermont.gov/calendar

Hike & Hang 4.0

11 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Killington Resort, Reason Park and Snowshed Ballroom, Killington. Join Alex Hackel for a community-focused ski event featuring park warm-ups, a ski session with cash prizes, and an exclusive movie premiere. Open to all abilities, with prizes for learning tricks, participating, and having fun. killington.com

Holiday Open House

11 a.m.-5 p.m. Gallery at the Vault, 68 Main St., Springfield. Enjoy refreshments, music, and holiday shopping, along with cider and wine tastings from Eden Specialty Cider and Shelburne Vineyards from 12-3 p.m. galleryvault.org

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

Gingerbread Contest Opening Reception

Noon-2 p.m. Chaffee Art Center, 16 S. Main St., Rutland. Free. The Chaffee Art Center's annual gingerbread contest. Themed "BELIEVE," the event features cookie decorating, card making, sweet treats, and a "People's Choice" award voting. Gingerbread creations and holiday gifts will be on display through Jan. 4. chaffeeartcenter.org

Learn to Knit — Part 2

Noon-2 p.m. Green Mountain Fibers, 123 Main St., Rutland. \$30, includes the pattern. Designed for those with basic knitting skills. Covers circular knitting and knitting/purling in the same row while starting Tin Can Knits' Barley worsted hat. Participants need worsted weight yarn, a 16" US 6 circular needle, a 16" US 8 circular needle, and US 8 DPNs. greenmountainfibers.com

Movie - 'Wicked,' (PG)

Noon-2:45 p.m. Woodstock Town Hall Theater, 31 The Green #2, Woodstock. \$8-\$10. Film adaptation of the musical phenomenon. pentangle-arts.square.site/movie-tickets

Christmas in Castleton

11 a.m.-6 p.m. 629 Main St., Castleton. Christmas market, kids' crafts, a tree of remembrance lighting, a festive lighted parade, and a visit with Santa at the Castleton fire station. facebook.com/CastletonChristmasMarketVT

Okemo Valley INNdulgence Tour

Noon-5 p.m. Various locations. \$20. Visit nine participating inns in the Okemo Valley for a holiday open house featuring festive décor, treats, and tours. Participating inns include the Grafton Inn, Stone Hearth Inn, and more. yourplaceinvermont.com/inndulgenceour

Met Opera: 'The Magic Flute' (Mozart)

1 p.m. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St., Rutland. \$20. Experience the 2006 encore of Mozart's "The Magic Flute," the first Met Live in HD transmission featuring Julie Taymor's production. The abridged English-language opera stars Matthew Polenzani, Nathan Gunn, and René Pape. Presented in honor of Kathy & Bill Harm. paramountvt.org

Sustainable Crafting & Community Gathering

1-3 p.m. Taftsville Chapel Mennonite Fellowship, 25 Hillside Road., Taftsville. Enjoy an afternoon of crafting, hot cider, and a cookie potluck with activities like wreath-making, upcycled decoration creation, and beeswax wrapper crafting. Bring your own mug for cider and any extra crafting materials like ribbons or pine cones. sustainablewoodstock.org/event/sustainable-crafting-community-gathering/

Friends of NWPL Holiday Tea

2 p.m. Norman Williams Public Library, 10 The Green, Woodstock. Free. Donations appreciated. Enjoy a festive holiday tea hosted by the Friends of the Norman Williams Public Library. normanwilliams.org

Documentary Screening: 'Driver'

3 p.m. Billings Farm & Museum, 69 Old River Road, Woodstock. \$15, \$12 for members. Explore the lives of female truck drivers in this documentary following long-haul driver Desiree Wood and her tight-knit community as they confront challenges on the road. A Q&A with director Nesa Azimi will follow the screening. Part of the Woodstock Vermont Film Series. billingsfarm.org

Vermont Holiday Fest: Festival of Trees and Vendor Village

3-7 p.m. Killington Grand Hotel, 228 E. Mountain Road, Killington. Storytime with Santa and the VHF elves, live music, raffles, and the festive trees and vendor booths. VTHolidayFest.com

Public Skating

3:30-5 p.m. 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



Holiday Toy Drive

4 p.m. The Foundry at Summit Pond, 63 Summit Road, Killington. Teddy Arbo's holiday toy drive to support local charities. Each unwrapped toy includes admission and a raffle ticket.

Tree of Remembrance Lighting

5 p.m. Castleton Free Library, 638 Main St., Castleton. Join the Castleton Woman's Club and Castleton Free Library for the annual Tree of Remembrance Lighting, preceding the Tractor Parade. Gather at 4:45 p.m. to honor loved ones. The library will serve as a warming station throughout the day with cookies and hot chocolate. To honor or memorialize someone, submit names and donations to support local scholarships and charities. Forms available at the library. 802-265-7913 or castletonfreelibrary.org

Film Screening: 'It's a Wonderful Life'

7 p.m. Stone Valley Arts, 145 E. Main St., Poultney. \$5 suggested donation. Frank Capra's 1946 classic It's a Wonderful Life, courtesy of Kanopy and the Castleton Free Library. Refreshments provided. Donations support SVA programming and building expenses. stonevalleyarts.org/support

The Quality Ski Film Tour

7 p.m. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St., Rutland. \$18. General admission. First Stop Board Barn presents the Quality Ski Film Tour powered by Salomon, featuring three ski films, a cash bar, and raffle prizes. A portion of ticket proceeds benefits Vermont Adaptive Sports. firststopboardbarn.com

A Weston Winter Cabaret

7:30 p.m. Walker Farm, 705 Main St., Weston. \$35. This performance is SOLD OUT. Call the box office at (802) 824-5288 to be added to the wait list. Celebrate the season with Weston's seventh annual Winter Cabaret, hosted by David Bonanno. Enjoy music, mayhem, and holiday cheer with performances by past Company members. westontheater.org

Tim Meadows Headlines Vermont Comedy Festival

8-10 p.m. Woodstock Town Hall Theatre, 31 The Green, Woodstock. \$45. Renowned comedian and actor Tim Meadows brings his celebrated humor to Woodstock as the headlining event of the Vermont Comedy Festival. pentanglearts.org

SUN
12/08

Holiday Craft Fair

9 a.m.-4 p.m. Dec. 8, Vermont Farmers Food Center, 251 West St., Rutland. Shop from over 60 vendors offering Vermont-made goods, including maple popcorn, baked treats, CBD products, honey, holiday décor, artisan crafts, and more. Free parking available. vtfarmersmarket.org/markets/special-shows

Holiday Baking Workshop

10 a.m.-noon. South Royalton Market, 222 Chelsea St., South Royalton. Learn to make chocolate-dipped crescent shortbread cookies, including traditional and gluten- and sugar-free versions, with local baker Siobhan Kizis. Free for mature youth accompanied by an adult. soromarket.coop/community-workshops

Woodstock Vermont Film Series

DEC 7 & 8
Filmmaker Q&A Saturday



DRIVER



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SHOWINGS AT 3:00 PM • SAT & SUN
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 802.483.2311 | mountaintopresort.com

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

Holiday Craft Fair
 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Middletown Springs Elementary School, 15 School House Road., Middletown Springs. Shop fine arts, crafts, and culinary delights from local vendors, including woodwork, maple products, honey, jewelry, wreaths, and knitted goods. The Middletown Springs Historical Society will provide soups, drinks, and sweets. 802-235-2734 or 802-287-9408

Christmas at Billings Farm
 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Billings Farm & Museum, 69 Old River Road., Woodstock. Experience Victorian Christmas traditions with natural décor, candle dipping, pie crust crafting, and outdoor activities. Warm up by fire pits with hot cocoa and explore the Museum Gift Shop for unique, Vermont-made holiday gifts. billingsfarm.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

Okemo Valley INNdulgence Tour
 Noon-5 p.m. Various locations. \$20. Visit nine participating inns in the Okemo Valley for a holiday open house featuring festive décor, treats, and tours. Participating inns include the Grafton Inn, Stone Hearth Inn, and more. yourplaceinvermont.com/inndulgenceatour

Documentary Screening: 'Driver'
 3 p.m. Billings Farm & Museum, 69 Old River Road, Woodstock. \$15, \$12 for members. Explore the lives of female truck drivers in this documentary following long-haul driver Desiree Wood and her tight-knit community as they confront challenges on the road. Part of the Woodstock Vermont Film Series. billingsfarm.org

Holiday Pops with the VSO Chorus
 3-5 p.m. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St., Rutland. \$10-\$39. Enjoy the Vermont Symphony Orchestra and its 70-voice chorus, conducted by José Daniel Flores-Caraballo. The program includes traditional sacred pieces, sing-along carols, and festive selections with a touch of Spanish influence. Audience members are encouraged to bring canned food donations for Black River Good Neighbor Services. vso.org and paramountvt.org

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

Randolph Singers Holiday Concert
 4 p.m. Chandler Center for the Arts, 71 N. Main St., Randolph. Free; donations accepted. Enjoy a festive program featuring classical works, holiday favorites, and songs by John Lennon and Paul McCartney. The Chandler Children's Chorale will perform, followed by a Christmas carol sing-along. randolphsingers.org/fall-concert

Rutland Railway Association Holiday Open House
 6-8 p.m. Center Rutland Train Station, 79 Depot Ln., Center Rutland. Free. Visit the historic station to view the museum collection and two operating model train layouts with festive Christmas trains.

MON
 12/09

Woodstock Union H.S. Winter Greenhouse
 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Big greenhouse, back of Woodstock Union High School, 100 Amsden Way, Woodstock. \$10-\$18. Shop poinsettias, wreaths, Christmas cacti, frosty ferns, and houseplants. A table of free plants and supplies will also be available. Proceeds support the WUHS/MS Agriculture Department. Cash or checks accepted.

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

Sound and Gemstone Healing
 5:30-7 p.m. The Open Door, 18 N Main St., White River Junction. \$40. Experience a healing session combining sound therapy and gemstones. Pre-registration required. Heide.Scheurer@gmail.com

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
 12/10

Woodstock Union H.S. Winter Greenhouse
 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Big greenhouse, behind the Woodstock Union High School, 100 Amsden Way, Woodstock. \$10-\$18. Shop poinsettias, wreaths, Christmas cacti, frosty ferns, and houseplants. A table of free plants and supplies will also be available. Proceeds support the WUHS/MS Agriculture Department. Cash or checks accepted.

Gift of Life Marathon Blood Drive
 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Rutland High School, 22 Stratton Road., Rutland. Join the community in donating blood and making a lifesaving impact. Organized by the American Red Cross. RedCrossBlood.org

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

Alzheimer's Support Group
 4-5 p.m., (Monthly, 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. chcr.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 North St. Ext., Rutland. Develop public speaking, listening, and leadership skills. Guests welcome. 802-775-6929. toastmasters.org

ONGOING

A Forest of Lights
 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

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 Exhibit
 Through January, 2025. Chaffee Art Center, 16 South Main St., Rutland. Free. Annual holiday exhibit. chaffeeartcenter.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

Vermont Comedy Festival
 12/5-12/8. Various locations, Woodstock. Four days of live comedy featuring comedians from around the world, video sketch screenings, and networking events. Headlined by Tim Meadows, this festival serves as the unofficial kickoff to Woodstock's Wassail Festival. See website for tickets and details. vermontcomedyfestival.com

UPCOMING
 12/12

Killington Holiday Cookie Party
 5-8 p.m. Grey Bonnet Inn, 831 Route 100N, Killington. \$10 donation. Donations accepted via cash, check, or Venmo. Bring six dozen cookies of the same kind to exchange, or simply join for an evening of fun with friends. Proceeds benefit the New Story Center, formerly the Rutland County women's shelter. Killington.com

12/13-12/15

Wassail Weekend
 Join Woodstock in celebrating its most anticipated weekend of the year. pentanglearts.org

[MUSIC Scene]

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

WED

12/4

KILLINGTON
6 p.m. Rivershed – Sammy B

LUDLOW
6 p.m. Off the Rails – Learn to line dance

POULTNEY
7 p.m. Poultnery Pub – Open mic hosted by Danny Lang

QUECHEE
6 p.m. The Public House – Chris Pallutto

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

THURS

12/5

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

BRIDGEWATER
8 p.m. Woolen Mill Comedy Club – Vermont Comedy Festival: 1 minute stand-up battle followed by a DJ Dave festival kick off dance party

KILLINGTON
2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Chris Pallutto

5:30 p.m. Grand Hotel – Vermont Holiday Festival: Community tree decorating party & KPAA mixer with music from Chad Hollister

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

6 p.m. Rivershed – Chris Pallutto

6 p.m. The Foundry – Nick Bredice

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

RUTLAND
8 p.m. Angler Pub – A Sound Space open mic

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

SOUTH POMFRET
7 p.m. Artistree – Open mic night

FRI

12/6

BRIDGEWATER
8 p.m. Woolen Mill Comedy Club – Vermont Comedy Festival early show

10 p.m. Woolen Mill Comedy Club – Vermont Comedy Festival late show

Midnight. Woolen Mill Comedy Club – Vermont Comedy Festival midnight show

CASTLETON
6 p.m. Blue Cat Bistro – On Tone Music

KILLINGTON
2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Rhys Chalmers

3 p.m. Still on the Mountain – Nick Bredice

5 p.m. Grand Hotel – Vermont Holiday Festival: School concert night

6 p.m. Rivershed – Rhys Chalmers

6 p.m. Still on the Mountain – Vermont Comedy Festival: Stand-up comedy

7:30 p.m. McGrath's Irish Pub – Burn Moore's Bridge

LUDLOW
8 p.m. Eight Oh Brew – Sammy B

POULTNEY
6 p.m. Poultnery Pub – Mean Waltons

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

9 p.m. Center Street Alley – DJ EG

SHREWSBURY
7 p.m. Russellville Schoolhouse – Silas Hamilton and Willie Clemetson Duo

SOUTH POMFRET
7 p.m. Artistree – Ethan Setiawan and Fine Ground: A Bluegrass Quintet

WOODSTOCK
6 p.m. Ottauquechee Yacht Club – Vermont Comedy Festival: Stand Up Comedy

SAT

12/7

BRIDGEWATER
10 p.m. Woolen Mill Comedy Club – Vermont Comedy Festival late show

Midnight. Woolen Mill Comedy Club – Vermont Comedy Festival midnight show

BRIDGEWATER
CORNERS

4 p.m. Long Trail Brewery – Vermont Comedy Festival: Apres comedy

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

3 p.m. Still on the Mountain – Jim Yeager

6 p.m. O'Dwyers Public House at the Summit Lodge – Rambletree

6 p.m. Rivershed – Nick Bredice

6 p.m. Still on the Mountain – Vermont Comedy Festival: Stand-up comedy

7 p.m. North Star Lodge Star Lounge – Ally and Adam

7:30 p.m. McGrath's Irish Pub – Burn Moore's Bridge

9 p.m. Pickle Barrel – Aaron Audet Band

LUDLOW
2 p.m. Okemo's The Bull – Better Days Band

POULTNEY
6 p.m. Poultnery Pub – Mr Moose & Friends

QUECHEE
5:30 p.m. Public House Pub – Sammy B

RUTLAND
8 p.m. Angler Pub – Karaoke with Sunset Entertainment

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

WOODSTOCK
4 p.m. Ottauquechee Yacht Club – Vermont Comedy Festival: Stand-up Ccomedy

8 p.m. Town Hall Theatre – Vermont Comedy Festival Presents: Tim Meadows

SUN

12/8

BRIDGEWATER
7 p.m. Woolen Mill Comedy Club – Vermont Comedy Festival Presents: The Nadia Quinn show

9 p.m. Woolen Mill Comedy Club – Vermont Comedy Festival: Best of the fest

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

4 p.m. Long Trail Brewery – Vermont Comedy Festival: Apres comedy

KILLINGTON

Noon. Rivershed – Brunch with Jeremiah Strauss

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Chris Pallutto

6 p.m. Liquid Art – Tboneicus Jones

6 p.m. Rivershed – Trivia

6 p.m. Still on the Mountain – Vermont Comedy Festival: Stand-up comedy

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

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

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

MON

12/9

KILLINGTON
2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Duane Carleton
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

TUES

12/10

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 Yakaits

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

PITTSFIELD
7 p.m. Town Hall – Acoustic Jam

POULTNEY
7 p.m. Poultnery 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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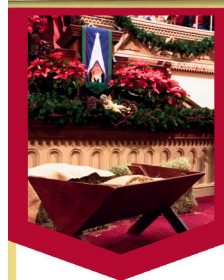
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3:30 pm / 7 pm RAC Performs Handel's *Messiah* (*no tickets)

Dec. 17 7 pm Longest Night Service: Join us in the Chapel for a time of inspiration and encouragement.

Dec. 22 10 am Family Christmas Service with Festival Brass & Timpani, Choir and Nativity

Dec. 24 8 pm Candlelight Christmas Eve Service with Musical Prelude at 7:30 pm

Grace Congregational UCC
8 Court Street, Rutland, VT
gracechurchvt.org



Experience the holiday season at Billings Farm & Museum

Saturday, Dec. 7 through Saturday, Jan. 4—WOODSTOCK—This December, Billings Farm & Museum in Woodstock transforms into a holiday haven with an array of festive events and activities for all ages. Visitors can immerse themselves in the charm of Victorian Christmas traditions, enjoy horse-drawn sleigh rides, and explore the spirit of community through seasonal programming. Here's what you can experience this month:

Christmas at the farm

Dec. 7-8 and Dec. 21-Jan. 5 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Step back into a Victorian Christmas with Billings farm, adorned for the season with twinkling lights and natural décor. Explore the 1890 Farm Manager's House, complete with 19th-century decorations, on a self-guided tour. Families can enjoy activities like candle dipping, pie crust crafting, and seasonal walks on the Billings Loop, weather permitting. Warm up by outdoor fire pits with hot cocoa or coffee, and browse the Museum Gift Shop for unique Vermont-made holiday gifts.

Woodstock Vermont film series

"Driver" — Dec. 7-8, at 3 p.m. Saturday screening and Q&A with filmmaker Nesa Azimi of "Driver," a documentary about resilience and determination in the trucking industry. Tickets are \$15 or \$12 for members.

"The Cowboy and the Queen" — Dec. 21 & 22, at 3 p.m. Explore the unique bond between horse trainer Monty Roberts and Queen Elizabeth II in this documentary. Tickets are \$15 or \$12 for members.

Both films are part of the Woodstock Vermont Film Series, which continues through February 2025.

Pre-K story time: 'Wonderful Winter'

Dec. 11, from 9:30 to 11 a.m. Preschool-aged children (ages 3-5) and their adult companions

can enjoy a wintry story, make hot cocoa, and visit the farm's sheep and goats. Registration is \$12 per child, \$10 for members.

Wassail Weekend at Billings Farm

Dec. 13-15, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Celebrate the 40th annual Wassail Weekend with Victorian Christmas traditions, candle dipping, and holiday story time. Enjoy wassail punch by the fire and take festive photos. Horse-drawn wagon or sleigh rides will be offered on Friday and Sunday, and the farm's draft horses will participate in the iconic wassail parade on Saturday at 2 p.m.

Horse-drawn sleigh rides

Dec. 15, 26, 28, 29, 31, and Jan. 2 & 4. Weather permitting, enjoy an old-fashioned sleigh ride through the farmstead for \$5 per person in addition to admission. Private sleigh rides are also available by reservation.

Homeschool club: Winter Solstice

On Dec. 19, from 10 to 11:30 a.m., children ages 7 to 11 can learn about the astronomy behind the winter solstice and explore how wildlife adapts to winter with a Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park ranger. Registration is \$20 per student, \$15 for members.

Holiday shopping

The museum gift shop offers a variety of Vermont-made products, from handcrafted items to Billings Farm Cheddar. Admission is not required to shop, making it easy to find the perfect holiday gift.

Billings Farm & Museum is open weekends and select days through February 23, 2025. Admission includes access to the Animal Barns, Vermont Farm Life exhibits, and the 1890 Farm Manager's House

For more information about events, programming, or tickets, visit: billingsfarm.org.



Courtesy of Billings Farm & Museum
Christmas at Billings Farm & Museum occurs Dec. 7-8 and Dec. 21-Jan.5.



Courtesy of Greenwich Entertainment.
Woodstock Vermont Film Series, "The Cowboy and the Queen," shows on Dec. 21 and 22.



Courtesy of Billings Farm & Museum
Santa and spectators wave to onlookers at the annual Wassail Weekend parade in Woodstock.



Courtesy of Billings Farm & Museum

Nothing can compare to an old-fashioned sleigh ride to capture the holiday spirit of Vermont.



Courtesy KPAA

The community tree-decorating party helps kick off the Vermont holiday festival at the Killington Grand Hotel on Dec. 5.



Courtesy KPAA

The Vermont holiday festival runs from Dec. 5 through 7 at the Killington Grand Hotel.

KPAA's Vermont holiday festival celebrates 20 years of holiday magic

Thursday, Dec. 5 through Saturday, Dec. 7. —KILLINGTON— The Vermont holiday festival returns to the Killington Grand Hotel from Dec. 5 to 7, bringing holiday cheer, community spirit, and family fun to Killington. Now in its 20th year, the festival offers an expanded schedule of activities, including live music, themed tree decorating, vendor shopping, and festive fun for all ages.

Kickoff night: Dec. 5

The celebration begins with the community tree-decorating party and KPAA mixer from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Local businesses will showcase their creativity by decorating themed trees for the annual Festival of Trees. Guests can enjoy live music by Chad Hollister, appetizers, a silent auction, bake sale, and a 50/50 raffle. The evening will also feature the announcement of the community member of the year.

Festival highlights: Dec. 6

On Friday evening, the festival of trees

and vendor village runs from 5 to 8 p.m. Visitors can enjoy performances by local school groups, browse a variety of vendor booths, and bid on silent auction items. Entry is free with a suggested donation to support the Killington Food Shelf.

Family fun: Dec. 7

Saturday morning brings Santa's Workshop and Breakfast Buffet from 9 to 11 a.m. Families can enjoy crafts, cookie decorating by Dream Maker Bakers, and photos with Santa. The festival of trees and vendor village continues from 3 to 7 p.m., featuring storytime with Santa and the Vermont Holiday Festival elves, live music, raffles, a bake sale, and more holiday fun.

The Vermont holiday festival is a cherished community event showcasing local businesses' creativity and generosity while supporting important causes.

For full event details and ticket information, visit: VTHolidayFest.com.

The Gift of Life Marathon blood drive continues in Rutland County

Dec. 5, 10, and 11—RUTLAND— Eight years ago, Summer Stoutes, principal of Clarendon Elementary School, decided to donate a kidney. That brave act inspired her to make additional lifesaving contributions. A year after her organ donation, Stoutes discovered she was eligible to give blood and decided that if she could donate an organ, she could certainly donate blood.

Since 2016, Stoutes has donated 12 pints of blood and now volunteers at American Red Cross blood drives. Though she has never needed blood herself, she knows its critical importance, having seen its lifesaving impact on family and friends.

Now, Stoutes is encouraging community members to donate blood at this year's Gift of Life Marathon Blood Drive, one of the region's most impactful donation campaigns.

Upcoming blood drives include:

Thursday, Dec. 5: 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at Rutland High School, at 22 Stratton Road.

Tuesday, Dec. 10: 9 a.m.-4 p.m., at Rutland High School

Wednesday, Dec. 11: 11:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. at Elks Lodge #345, 44-46 Pleasant St., Rutland.

The Gift of Life Marathon provides an opportunity to make a profound difference in the lives of patients in need.

Help make this holiday season a time of giving that truly saves lives.

To schedule an appointment, visit redcross-blood.org, call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767), or use the Blood Donor App with sponsor code GOLM2024.



New Year's Eve in Woodstock

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An adults-only party with glitz, glam, and 2025! Dress up to dance in the Rockefeller Room to live music by A House on Fire, smile for snaps in the photobooth, and celebrate with drinks and chef's splendid party bites!

\$150 per person (+ tax & gratuity)
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Adults (21+) only.



Family Glow Party

Let's GLOW 2025! This family party in the Ballroom will light up the new year with glow sticks, glow face painting, and fun party favors. Tunes for dancing and exciting ball-drop countdowns (at 9pm & midnight) will get everyone celebrating!

\$25 per person (+ tax & gratuity)
Cash bar and snacks available for purchase.

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Killington Market

Take breakfast, lunch or dinner on the go at Killington Market, Killington's on-mountain grocery store for the last 30 years. Choose from breakfast sandwiches,

hand carved dinners, pizza, daily fresh hot panini, roast chicken, salad and specialty sandwiches. Vermont products, maple syrup, fresh meat and produce along with wine and beer are also for sale. killingtonmarket.com 802-422-7736 or 802-422-7594.



Choices

Upscale casual and family friendly Choices Restaurant & Rotisserie has been a Killington, VT favorite for over 35 years. We offer a 40-item menu

that features fish and seafood, hand-cut steaks and filets, sandwiches and home-cut fries, and house-made fettuccine. Try an item from our Rotisserie menu that includes chicken, tri-tip steak, and stuffed pork with prime rib on most weekends. Join us at our wraparound bar with 20 wines by the glass, signature cocktails, and craft beers. Finish off your dining experience with our baked in-house desserts.



Soup Dog

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Inn at Long Trail

Looking for something a little different? Hit up McGrath's Irish Pub for a perfectly poured pint of Guinness, live music on the weekends and delicious food. Casual dining at Rosemary's Restaurant. Visit innatlongtrail.com, 802-775-7181.



Liquid Art

Relax in the warm atmosphere at Liquid Art. Look for artfully served lattes from their La Marzocco espresso machine, or if you want something stronger, try their signature cocktails. Serving breakfast, lunch and dinner, they focus on healthy fare and provide you with a delicious meal different than anything else on the mountain. liquidartvt.com, (802) 422-2787.



Mountain Top Inn

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



Killington Wine Bar

At Killington Café and Wine Bar, we believe that wine tasting should be a journey of both enjoyment and learning, all within a relaxed and inviting setting. Inspired by some of the best boutique wine bars across the country, we're passionate about making fine wine accessible to everyone. Whether you're a seasoned connoisseur or a curious newcomer, our diverse selection and knowledgeable team are here to guide you.



Sugar and Spice

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



Lookout Tavern

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



Sushi Yoshi

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'Conclave': The peculiar and political process of picking a pope

Edward Berger's follow-up to "All Quiet on the Western Front" is a splashy, fun potboiler with plenty of twists and turns

By James Kent

Catholicism and its many mysteries and secret rituals are on full display in "Conclave" (in theaters and on-demand.) The pope is dead. And the process of transferring the powers of God from one human vessel to another begins.

Depending on one's faith and knowledge of the subject, that process, the subject of "Conclave," based on the 2016 novel by suspense author Robert Harris, gets a thorough and detailed examination through the expert direction of a German film director that may come as a surprise for some to learn the details of choosing a successor to the pontiff of all pontiffs. All the rituals and practices are in play here, and those details are an added layer to the story that proves undeniably fascinating, even for those who aren't of the Catholic persuasion.

In lesser hands, those details could prove tedious, but the screenplay by Peter Staughan is a crackling yarn that keeps the intrigue moving as the high-pressure stakes game of jockeying for loyalty and votes continues.

Ralph Fiennes gets a role he can sink his acting teeth into as Cardinal Lawrence, an unambitious server of the faith, who, according to the recently passed pope, is an excellent manager. Therefore, it falls upon him to run the conclave, where the College of Cardinals gather at the Vatican to cast ballots, in secret, to choose the next pope.

The atmospheric cinematography by Stéphane Fontaine, an intense score from Volker Bertelmann, and the brilliant recreations of the Vatican from production designer Suzie Davies all serve director Berger's vision to take this (what is most assuredly not an exciting or dramatic process) and turn it into a high-stakes game of power for the future direction of the Catholic church.

There are groups, or factions, within this gathering of cardinals who each has a man who they seek to wear the Papal tiara. Fiennes' Lawrence backs the more liberal-minded Bellini, played by Stanley Tucci. The moderate but fiercely political and cunning Cardinal Tremblay, played by John Lithgow, it appears there isn't a length he won't go to for the job. And as the votes continue, Fiennes begins to uncover just how far those ambitions of Tremblay's are willing to take him.

There are the more conservative factions of the cardinals, each with its champion, the Italian traditionalist Cardinal

Tedesco, and the popular, although arch-conservative, Nigerian candidate, Cardinal Adeyemi. Lawrence, himself, unexpectedly, and to the detriment of votes for his friend Bellini, receives a handful of votes that grows with each voting cycle. And then, there is the wild card.

A new cardinal, Cardinal Benitez, a Mexican archbishop, appears at the conclave. The pope recently and secretly sent him to Kabul. This mystery man receives one vote at the first session and continues to garner support throughout the proceedings.

It would be a sin (wink, wink) to spoil all of the details of this entertaining thriller, but I had a fun time going through the layers of plot twists through the final reveal. Isabella Rossellini plays an essential role as the cardinals' head caterer and housekeeper, Sister Agnes. She remains mainly on the sidelines, observing and listening, but becomes a critical character late in the film during one of the brewing scandals emerging at

the conclave.

Thematically, the story "Conclave" tells us that man's sin extends to men of the cloth, and none of these cardinals is innocent. If one looks carefully enough, each of them has flaws and skeletons in his closet. Whoever takes the position as the holiest Catholic of them all likely does so with things in the past that are best kept secret. And those secrets are what this film has the most fun uncovering. Fiennes' Cardinal Lawrence goes on a journey and is somewhat in a crisis of faith, trying to do the right thing while getting caught up in his unintentional quest for the job. And when the dust settles, the person who does get the job may turn out to possess the biggest secrets of them all.

There have already been lots of online debates regarding the events of the movie's final act. And again, I decline to spoil or even hint at those twists and reveals. Let the debaters quarrel. I'll just say that this story about trying to push one's candidate over the goalpost is two hours of delight that reminds one of the sophisticated adult thrillers that used to pack the multiplexes not so long ago, and if first-rate entertainment is what you seek, "Conclave" is worth your time.

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



Screens and Streams

By James Kent



Ralph Fiennes' Cardinal Lawrence walks a tight-rope of intrigue in the new film "Conclave."

Courtesy Universal Pictures

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First Stop Board Barn brings the Quality Ski Film Tour to Vermont

Saturday, Dec. 7 at 7 p.m.— RUTLAND—The inaugural Quality Ski Film Tour, powered by Salomon and hosted by First Stop Board Barn, will take center stage at the historic Paramount Theater on Saturday evening. This special event supports a meaningful cause, with a portion of ticket proceeds benefiting Vermont Adaptive Ski & Sports, an organization dedicated to empowering athletes of all abilities.

An evening of adventure and inspiration

The Quality Ski Film Tour features three exhilarating films that showcase incredible skiing adventures from around the globe:

“Camp Blank” by Blank Collective: Follow the Blank crew on a journey to the legendary Camp Blank, where they capture thrilling skiing adventures across Alaska, Japan, Europe, and Lake Tahoe.

“<-OPEN-” by Départ Team: This debut film highlights a fresh, playful perspective on freestyle skiing, featuring urban landscapes, backcountry runs, and side hits.

“FIFTY+ The Pursuit of New Classics - Northstar Couloir, Alaska” by Cody Townsend: After completing 46 of the 50 classic ski descents of North America, Townsend creates a new collection of

modern classics, taking viewers deep into Alaska’s breathtaking terrain.

A vision rooted in community and ski culture

First Stop Board Barn Brand director Randy Elles reflected on the personal significance of hosting this event:

“Growing up in Killington, ski films were a source of inspiration, fueling my dreams of exploring far-off mountains. This event allows me to share that inspiration with others while giving back to Vermont Adaptive Ski & Sports, which has empowered so many—including my brother and close friends—to experience the joy of skiing.”

The perfect venue

This event, set in the beautifully restored Paramount Theater, brings ski culture to an iconic location near Vermont’s renowned ski areas, including Killington, Pico, and Okemo. Built in 1912-13, the Paramount Theater provides the ideal setting for what organizers hope will become an annual tradition.

“Ski movies are a timeless tradition that unites the community,” Elles said. “This is just the beginning, and I’m excited to see this event grow into something even bigger in the years to come.”

For more information and tickets, go to: paramountvt.org

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Vermont Comedy Festival returns with Tim Meadows headlining

Thursday through Sunday, Dec. 5-8 at various locations (see below.) The Vermont Comedy Festival brings four days of laughs to Woodstock, featuring comedians from around the world, video sketch screenings, and networking events. This year's festival marks the unofficial kick-off to the Was-sail Weekend, blending comedy with Vermont's craft beer, cuisine, and scenic charm.

This year's event schedule:

**Thurs 12/5
Bridgewater**

- 5 p.m. Kick off party at Ramunto's Pizzeria
- 8 p.m. One-Minute stand up battle at Woolen Mill Comedy Club
- 10 p.m. DJ + festival kick-off dance party, presented by Plymouth Cheese at The Bridgewater Mill

**Fri 12/6
Bridgewater**

- 8 p.m. Main stage show @ Woolen Mill Comedy Club
- 10 p.m. Late show @ Woolen Mill Comedy Club
Midnight. Late late show @ Woolen Mill Comedy Club

Killington

- 6 p.m. Stand-up comedy at Killington Distillery
- 6 p.m. Stand up comedy at Ottauquechee Yacht Club

**Sat 12/7
Bridgewater**

- 10 p.m. Late show at Woolen Mill Comedy Club
Midnight. Late late show at Woolen Mill Comedy Club

Bridgewater Corners

- 4 p.m. Apres show at Long Trail Brewery
- 6 p.m. Stand-up comedy at Killington Distillery
- Noon - 2 p.m. Industry event for talent and VIPs at 506 On The River
- 4 p.m. Stand up comedy at Ottauquechee Yacht Club
- 8 p.m. Tim Meadows headlines Vermont Comedy Festival at Woodstock Town Hall Theatre

**Sun 12/8
Bridgewater**

- 7 p.m. The Nadia Quinn show at Woolen Mill Comedy Club
- 9 p.m. Best of the Fest stand-up show at Woolen Mill Comedy Club

BridgewaterCorners

- 4 p.m. Apres show at Long Trail Brewery
- 6 p.m. Stand-up Comedy at Killington Distillery

For tickets and additional info, go to: vermontcomedyfestival.com.



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Solutions From page 11

Crossword

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

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

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PHOENIX

1-year-old. Female. American Guinea pig.

MERICA

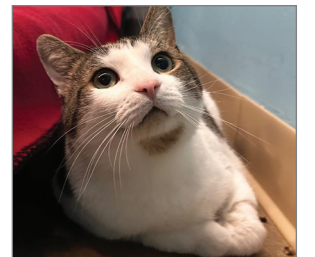
1-year-old. Female. American.



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



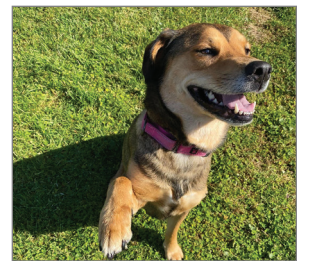
Saturday—2-month-old. Neutered male. Domestic shorthair.



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



Docker—1-year-old. Neutered male. Domestic shorthair.



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



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Cosmic Catalogue



Cosmic Catalogue
By Cassandra Tyndall

Who needs soapboxes?

Some things can't be hidden, such as the Moon, the Sun, and the stars. Try as it might, the truth also cannot be hidden, at least not forever.

This is very much about this new era. As the systems and structures embedded in society's fabric increasingly reveal their irrelevance, we will all handle this period differently. Some people want to burn it all down, no matter the cost, while others only care about protecting the system that protects them. In the middle are people like you and me, trying to live our lives while observing the madness of it all.

Rather than getting whipped up into the frenzy of it, your best bet really is to sit back, watch, observe and even be slightly amused by it all. Can you change any of this? Probably not! However, you can always change your reaction. Be curious. Be open. Be fascinated. Most importantly, don't get yourself into the position that you have to be wrong for someone else to be right. More soapboxes are probably the last thing anyone needs right now.



Aries

March 21 - April 20

The pace of life is quickened in a way that is hard to fully comprehend. As such, the chances are high that you've put so many personal passions and pursuits on the back burner. As Mars, your patron planet, starts to head backward in your recreation zone, consider what it is you may like to re-create. What is life if there isn't a pet project you can dive into that motivates and inspires you? Do something you enjoy, just because.



Leo

July 21 - August 20

Be prepared for everything to start to go a little bit haywire. One day, you'll be unstoppable, while the following, you'll feel like you've been hit by a bus. That is the nature of Mars retrograde, even more so when it is in your sign. Be prepared to feel constantly tested when it comes to your desires, energy, and things out of life that you want. The Universe isn't telling you no; it's just testing how bad you want it.



Sagittarius

November 21 - December 20

The week begins with a renewed sense of passion, purpose, and motivation. That being said, sometimes you must draw your bow back further than you think to ensure you get your aim right. You might be deciding that in 2025, you've got some big goals you want to hit. This week, you may have to start giving some thought as to what these might be. The world really is your oyster; it's just up to you to seize it.



Taurus

April 21 - May 20

Right now, you've got two options when it comes to handling your domestic life. One is to dig your heels in and get your way. Two, tap into your calm and serene nature and let things run their course. The reality is that a combination of both may be what eventuates. However, the more you can consider the perspectives of others, the more you can gain their compliance. Choose your battles wisely this week.



Virgo

August 21 - September 20

You can choose to stress over a problem you don't really have the capacity to change. Another option is to do your best to go with the flow and let the cookie crumble where it may. You see, the more you choose to let go of the things that take your energy unnecessarily, the more capacity you'll have to solve the problems that can be solved. This week, remember that how you think about things can be more of a problem than the problem itself.



Capricorn

December 21 - January 20

There are times when progress happens faster than we expect. Then, there are times when it's painfully slow. Right now, it may be helpful for you to take heed of the following idea - the sooner you fall behind, the longer you'll have to catch up. For now, your best bet may be to relax, meditate, and dream up your ideal life. Get behind your biggest desires if they are what you want to manifest. Start being the person you'd be if you already had your dreams come true.



Gemini

May 21 - June 20

When life feels like it is pulling you in all directions, you have a choice to make. You can gain more facts, opinions, and general input, but eventually, you will have to decide. As Mars moves in reverse, you may need to put your own desires to the top of the list and let the other areas of life sort themselves out. That said, you really also need to keep the longer term in mind, too.



Libra

September 21 - October 20

This week, you may need to reassess where you're putting your social energy. A lot of people may want a piece of you as the silly season is in full swing. However, you may not want to spend your time, energy, and resources on certain people or situations. They say the five people you spend the most time with will determine the direction of your life. You may need to ponder this idea over the next several weeks.



Aquarius

January 21 - February 20

Relationships may be a battlefield for the next little while. However, with every problem you encounter, there is also an opportunity to make the connection stronger. Your mission is to learn how to fight the problem and not fight each other. One way or another, sparks are likely to fly. You want to ensure that it is the exciting kind rather than the problematic kind of sparks you are igniting. Choose your battles wisely.



Cancer

June 21 - July 20

You have a very rare opportunity to totally redo the way you do money. It's not just about your bank account, either. The process you're now in is about prosperity and abundance in all areas. Ask any successful person how they got to where they are and they'll tell you they had an unshakable confidence in their desires. For the next little while, start fine-tuning your desires. What do you want? - is more of a loaded question than most people realize.



Scorpio

October 21 - November 20

At this time of year, it's normal to start basking in the year's achievements that's almost over. At the same time, you may also be considering the direction you want to take next year. You've got some big goals in terms of your career and your life direction overall. It may take a little time to get things rolling; however, the more time you spend strategizing, the more likely you'll hit the target you've got your eye on.



Pisces

February 21 - March 20

You might be getting to the point where you're overworking. You've set some pretty big goals for yourself, and the work is far from over. This phase you're entering this week may be more about learning to rest when you need to rather than give up. As we approach the holidays, you might take this opportunity to think about how you can improve your work/life balance for the rest of 2024 and beyond.

Empowering you to lead a divinely inspired life.

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

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Keeping winter coats clean

Standing on the berm of a small pond, I watch the resident beaver leave its lodge, a silhouetted nose moving through the water. It disappears briefly and returns with a branch in tow. The beaver clammers over the edge of its dam along a muddy path, a branch bouncing along behind. Despite the muddy trail, the muddy dam, and the overall muddiness of the pond, I've never seen this – or any other – beaver caked in mud.

After making similar observations of another furry animal (his dog), Andrew Dickerson, a researcher in fluid dynamics at the University of Tennessee, wondered if fur had characteristics that help it to stay clean. He was especially curious about fur that is regularly exposed to water, including the coats of semi-aquatic animals such as beavers and otters.

What Dickerson and his team found and reported in the *The Royal Society Journal Interface* is that hair's ability to flex and move is an important factor in its proclivity for staying clean.

American beavers (*Castor canadensis*) and North American river otters (*Lontra canadensis*) remain active through winter and have evolved many physiological and behavioral adaptations to live through freezing weather. Beavers stockpile food and body fat for the winter, and their metabolism slows, so they don't eat that food too fast. Otters eat a high-calorie diet of fish and other prey during winter, allowing them to maintain a comfortable body temperature and a high metabolism. One critical component of the survival strategy for both is their winter coats. Both species grow thick coats comprising a layer of long, robust guard hairs on the outside and short, dense underfur below.

The many hairs that make up beaver and otter coats are thin and flexible fibers of keratin, a multi-purpose protein that also contributes to diverse mammal features such

as hooves, fingernails, and whale baleen. Keratin is tough and insoluble in water, naturally contributing to fur's durability and water resistance.

The factors that influence how dirt accumulates on an underwater hair fiber are complex, and researchers are still working to better understand them. Dickerson's research suggests that some characteristics of hair fibers—how curved their surface is, their cross-sectional shape, roughness, and the shear stress they experience—contribute to their ability to remain clean. Other factors that affect hair cleanliness for aquatic mammals include how long they are submerged, how dirty the water is, and how fast it is flowing.

Using various terrestrial and semi-aquatic species samples, Dickerson first tested single guard hairs' tendency to become debris-covered. To do this, he fixed the hairs at both ends to a plastic mount and then subjected them to a flow of water containing titanium dioxide particles for 24 hours. These particles are non-toxic and so tiny that they stick very well to all kinds of surfaces.

After the hair fibers were exposed to this "dirty" water, Dickerson moved them to clean water and measured how much titanium oxide came off. He found that hairs from semi-aquatic mammals stayed clean better than terrestrial fur and synthetic fibers. Since fur has multiple, inter-related characteristics that influence how it becomes fouled, it is difficult to list exactly which characteristics most help it to stay clean. On average, however, the hairs of the semi-aquatic animals tested were thinner, smoother, and more oval in cross-section than other hairs in the study.

Next, Dickerson tested the hair fibers with one end clamped and one end hanging free, similar to how an individual hair grows out of an animal's skin. He again exposed these

The Outside Story → 30



The Outside Story
By Rachel Sargent Mirus



Upgrades and chairlift improvements

One of our employees wrecked our panel truck. The truck was totaled, but we were able to salvage the engine and transmission. We decided to mount them atop the lift house as auxiliary power for the new Snowshed #3 lift. We connected the engine to the main drive shaft with a chain link connector. A cam clutch allowed the electric motor to drive the lift under normal operation, but the auxiliary engine could be immediately engaged when the main electric drive failed. We shifted the transmission to higher gears to increase the speed and agreed this was a better solution than lowering skiers one at a time out of stalled chairs. We spent that following summer adding auxiliary power to all our chairlifts. This and Barry Leete's new controls allowed for a much safer and fail-safe operation.

Martel Wilson Jr. arrives

It is said that the person who controls the money controls the company. In the spring of 1966, that person arrived at Killington. His name was Martel Wilson Jr., or Marty as he was known. Wilson was hired on as Killington's first comptroller. Armed with a master's degree in finance from Cornell University, Wilson quickly became a significant force in Killington's history. Some of us measured time as BMW or AMW (Before Marty Wilson or After Marty Wilson). He was charged with moving Killington's financial acumen to the next level—and he had as much of a job ahead of him as I did.

Spring, summer, and a nearly fatal fall – 1966

In addition to the lift renovations, building a new ski trail (Escapade) and Snowshed 3 lift, we tore down the Snowshed lodge for an expanded new lodge replete with a sun observation deck and upscale dining room. If you look up the Killington 1 lift line, the Cascade and Escapade trails form the letter "K." I would tell my kids that I left my initials on the mountain. Lee Ward from Bethel and his boys cleared and logged off the new trail. Ward was an original Vermonter. He loved to reminisce about shooting trout in the stream behind his home (Shooting fish is legal in Vermont.)

Wilson asked me, "Where's Lee's contract?"

"There isn't one," I responded.

"How are we going to know how much this work is going to cost?" Wilson asked.

"Marty, Lee has always done trail clearing for us. Right now I'm just happy to get the work done. I'll let you know when to cut him a check."

Wilson's assistant referred to me as God. "God said to pay this bill," or "God said to hold off!"

After we had set all the towers for Snowshed 3, we began attaching the chairs. I had instructed the crew to load only the lift's

uphill side and stop when the first chair reached the top. Paul Bessette and I hiked up the slope to observe the first chair go around the top bull wheel. All went well, and after a few chairs had safely rounded the bull

wheel, Bessette and I loaded ourselves onto a downward-bound chair for a ride to the bottom. Shortly after we began our ride downward, we heard and felt a loud rumble in the lift. Then, silence and another loud rumble. We quickly saw the problem. Because there were no chairs attached to the cable ahead of us, the cable had popped off the sheave train and was riding in the U-shaped cable catcher

outside the sheave assembly. As the newly attached chairs approached the cable catcher, they were sheared off and plummeted 40 feet to the ground below. With every sheared chair, we got closer and closer. We were in trouble because we could not communicate with Fred Smith, who was operating the lift from the base station. As we rode steadily toward the problem tower, Bessette and I discussed our options, including jumping off before our chair got severed. Fortunately, Smith had figured out something was wrong and shut the lift down quickly. Henry Biathrow showed up in a snowcat and roped us off the lift. That was a close call, but other things would go wrong with the new lift.

The final step in getting the official tramway approval certificate necessary to run the lift was to load the chairs with concrete blocks and run the lift. With the tramway board present, we did just that and watched from the bottom terminal as the loaded chairs passed over the first break-over tower. But there was a problem: Once the chairs reached the first horizontal span, they sagged, almost scraping the ground below. Poma, the lift's manufacturer, had miscalculated the size of the counterweight necessary to keep the cable taut. The counterweight was ½ the weight it should be. Luckily, the sagging occurred just out of sight of the tramway board, watching from the bottom of the lift. They seemed satisfied and certified the lift. After conferring with Poma, we operated the lift during the first Thanksgiving holiday by loading every other chair. But now what? It was December and freezing—far too cold to pour concrete to augment the counterweight, which sat at the top of the lift. Even if we could figure out how to make it warm enough for concrete to set, how would we get a concrete truck to the top of Snowshed in December?

Based in Woodstock, Bill Alsup was the head of Poma's United States operation. Since all of Killington's lifts were Poma's, I was in constant contact with Alsup. We had a personal and business relationship. Unfortu-

Slippery Slopes → 31



Slippery Slopes
By James Kachadorian

The light of my life

I have a friend who lives just outside of a major city in the South. He's done well for himself; he drives a nice car, has a lovely wife and kids, has carved out a successful career in the insurance world, and lives in a beautiful home.

Recently, we had a conversation about getting older and sustaining injuries. I brought up my snowboarding shoulder predicament from last spring (which still haunts me today) while he discussed a knee issue resulting from a nasty fall on the tennis court.

During the conversation, I mentioned that it was time to decorate my home for the holidays and how, as I grow older, I like climbing ladders less and less, especially with a bum shoulder. He concurred but admitted that his ladder-climbing days were officially over. He explained that if he couldn't get one of his sons to do it, he'd hire it out.

I'm not there yet.

Maybe I'm too cheap, or maybe it's my Vermont blood, but if there's even a slight chance I can pull off an activity around the house on my own, I'm going to do it.

A few days after we talked, I got an email from my friend with a .pdf attachment labeled "Holiday Estimate." He told me to review the file for "a good laugh." He had a holiday decorating company come to his home to make suggestions on exterior decorating ideas and provide a cost estimate for installation. The following are quotes for the various decorations the rep suggested.

To cover one roof line with white lights was over \$800. To hang lighted balls from a single tree in his front yard was just shy of \$1,000. To wrap the trunk of the same tree with lights was nearly \$500. To cover the seven large hedges that encircle his house would cost a whopping \$6,000. And finally, to have a fully decorated Christmas tree brought into his home, set up, and removed after the holidays would be an astonishing \$7,000.

I was dumbfounded. I decorate my house every year, and it's a lot of work, but it's not \$15,000 worth of work. I'm not even sure it's \$1,000 worth of work. And yet, people apparently pay these sums.

I'm not saying I love the decorating process. It's a whole day of physical work, but I try to make the best of it. I put on Christmas songs and do my best to envelop the spirit of the season. Inevitably, what starts out as a begrudging task eventually turns into a prideful experience. Knowing that my family appreciates it makes it worth every second.

For many years, I tried to outdo myself from the previous Christmas. I've stopped that simply because I was running out of storage space in my attic for all the decorations. I also try to keep my decorating at a classy level. I only use white lights on draped fluffy garlands on the exterior windows, highlighted with large red bows. It's subtle, refined, and looks particularly good against the white brick façade. I also hang five lighted balls from the one large tree in my front yard.

It's not overwhelming or gaudy but reflects a sense of holiday sophistication.

When I'm out on my runs, I tend to assess the decorating prowess of the homes I pass. I believe that most people put little thought or effort into the process. It seems that it's common practice to throw out any number of lighted holiday widgets into your yard with little thought or concern for structure or theme.

And then you have the homes with an almost poetic style. The decorations are graceful and refined, suggesting that the person who set them up cared a great deal about the projection of their home.

Or, as previously mentioned, they have a lot of money.

This week's feature, "Red One," starring Dwayne Johnson and Chris Evans, made a lot of money during its opening weekend, but that doesn't mean it's a film worth attending. In fact, it might be worth avoiding if you're looking for a fun and lighthearted holiday film.

"Commercial" and "formulaic" are two words that come to mind when watching this movie. Sure, it has the big-name stars and the fancy digital effects, but underneath is where the story lies, and if the story isn't valid, no amount of glitz and glam can salvage a lackluster production.

That said, many people are finding this film enjoyable, mostly because of the eye candy and over-the-top production. Personally, I can't recommend this movie, but plenty of viewers do.

Check this one out if you're willing to take the risk. Just remember that I told you so.

A puckish "D" for "Red One," now playing in theaters everywhere.

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



The Movie Diary
By Dom Cioffi



Every turn, a trip down memory lane

We floated along Upper Royal Flush, enjoying the fresh, all-natural snow beneath our feet. It feels so good, this marvelous gift of nature. Soft, rotary turns as we kept our skis flat on the snow. Using lateral ankle flexion, we can adjust our edge angle to the terrain, letting our bases float over the snow. This way, we can go as slow as humanly possible and make sure we get every little inch of the fresh, soft stuff. It's so much easier on green terrain; you can just enjoy the moment.

As we come down to Great Northern, we can see a friend of ours standing by the small opening in the rope. Simultaneously, we look at each other and smile. There was no need to ask the question, and our grins got bigger as we rolled over the transition without pause. You need to float down those first couple of turns — the rocks there can be brutal, even on a big powder day. So you take a deep breath as your tips hit the lip and make yourself as light as possible. Maybe the shoulders and elbows come

up, lifting yourself away from the surface.

But oh, how I've missed you, Royal Flush. As I find my spots and bring my speed under control, I can get the maximum amount of float and get the deepest. I love feeling the snow up by my knees. If I can do anything to make that happen, I will ski weirdly to get that feeling. I take a deep breath and adjust my approach for Racer's Edge. It's another rhythm change followed by a rocky, thin cover section. I like to take the middle, cut diagonally through the rocky section, and take skiers to the right. And I suck it up every time. The skier's right is not my friend. But I get stuck there, I can never figure out the damn treeline, and the next line over is usually all wonky.

What I want to do is go left, take the high side, and ride out the top of the wave while looking at the mess down below. That bottom left side just rolls over so nicely, controlling the speed through the terrain change as it rises up to the top of

Living the Dream → 30



Living the Dream
By Merisa Sherman

Celebrating the final month of the year

"December is a month of enormous potential. It's a time we can all give and receive. A time when the spirit of humanity shines the brightest," said Michael Josephson.

Thanksgiving weekend 2024 was one we will not forget. At least 18 inches of snow, along with the excitement of World Cup will create stories for years to come. Mikaela Shiffrin did not win race 100 here at Killington but we are thankful she is ok and will return to the medium she dearly loves very soon.

Because of the weather, the company I was expecting did not come, but I cooked a turkey anyway.

Someone please remind me the next time I get this bright idea of the pile of pots and pans and work it is to cook a turkey dinner for one. However, the bright side is I can have turkey tetrazzini soon and I already have a big pot of turkey soup for the next snowstorm expected again this Thursday.

Jeannie turns 93, shares tips

Do any of you remember the TV show "I Dream of Jeannie?" Barbara Eden, who played Jeannie, turned 93 this past summer and shared her secrets. According to Eden, the secret to a long life is work, weights and guilty pleasures. Eden loves sweets. She makes it all sound easy but I'm sure she has a trainer, a cook and a host of other people to help maintain her lifestyle. Or maybe there really was some magic in that bottle she

jumped out of all the time. We don't have a magic bottle but we can follow guidelines suggested by doctors who study aging and how to deal with it. I know it's only December and not time for New Year resolutions but here are some suggestions. We may as well start now.

- Move your body: This is important regardless of age. We probably can't run a mile anymore or stand on our feet all day but we can walk, do simple exercises and do some resistance training.
- Challenge your brain: Crossword puzzles, reading, Wordle or maybe a new hobby.
- Stay social: Apparently there is a loneliness epidemic happening across the country. We are social beings and need to maintain positive social connections.
- Manage stress: Stress is a fact of life and some can actually be helpful. Stress can also take its toll on our hearts so take time to rest and find things that bring you peace.
- Stay on top of your appointments: Prevention is key but early detection of health problems is important.
- Spend time outdoors: We need to be in the sun to get vitamin D. It's known to boost your overall physical

Senior Scene → 30



Senior Scene
Gerrie Russell



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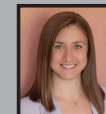
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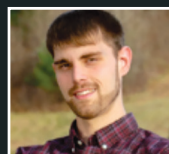
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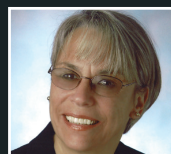
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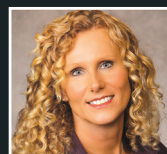
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← **Living the Dream:**
from page 25

the wave. And then, instead of being at the bottom of the slight diagonal fall line, you can cut straight across the trail following the line. It's glorious when you hit it just right.

I like to think that it's like swirling down a toilet bowl. You have to constantly switch sides of the trail, first left, then right, then left again, in a spiral motion that resembles the act of flushing. It's a spectacularly named trail. The name is actually directions for how to approach the trail, at least for me. A bunch of diagonal fall lines coming into the canyon. I love it.

And then you can look up to your right, and you're in what can be the most peaceful place on earth. I love sitting at the bottom of the canyon after dropping a great line down Double Dipper and chatting away near the chair tower. I am angry that I cannot remember the tower number right now. But you know the spot. The spot where you spot, because you realize that holding a flat ski on the runout might be more exhausting than pulling deep compression short radius, turns down Dipper. That's when the shaky shakies begin.

To be reunited with an old friend. My favorite moments of this time of year. Every new trail is a trip down memory lane, remembering every nuance of each trail. Where the bend goes, how it rolls

into the next section, making adjustments for fall line and snow quality. Because you've skied these trails so many times, your body automatically makes the adjustments. You don't have to think. I know how North Star turns to the left, and then you always forget that the bike trail crossings are then, and then you come up to them and growl, making your adjustments accordingly as my body still follows the old pattern.

We came down Chute to Great Bear, skating back up to middle Chute. It's annoying, but I prefer that minor skate to taking the bottom of Great Northern. Those few steps are worth the effort for Middle and Lower Chute. But there's also this beautiful pause as you slow down and really notice your surroundings. I love this intersection, the Chute/Great Northern intersection. I sighed to myself today, caught in the moment, decided I was a weirdo, and went back to skiing. That left line, where all the snow gets pushed, because there is nothing like that skier's left line of Middle Chute, it rides just right.

Merisa Sherman is a full-time Killington resident, global real estate advisor, Coach PomPom, and town official. Have a Killington moment you'd like to share? Reach out to Merisa.Sherman@Sothebys-Realty.com.

← **Senior Scene:**
from page 25

and mental health.

- Eat nutritious food: Avoid the highly processed foods that tempt us. Stay simple with fruits, vegetables and a little protein.

Upcoming events for seniors

This coming weekend The Festival of Trees will be at the Killington Grand Hotel. It's fun to see how the various businesses in town decorate their trees and the best part is you can win one and bring it home. There will be other vendors selling their wares and breakfast with Santa along with fun things for kids to take part in. Sherburne Library will be there as they are raffling off a beautiful hand made quilt made especially for the library. They are also having a bake sale. So there are two ways you can help with this. Please bake something for the sale and drop it off at the library on Wednesday, Dec. 4. Then come to the Festival and just imagine all the places in your home this beautiful quilt will enhance.

All proceeds from this effort go to finance the annual Fairy Tale Festival in the fall.

The Book Club will meet on Wednesday, Dec. 4. The book to be discussed is called "The Turner House" by Angela Flournoy. All are welcome whether you have read the book or not. The discussions are lively and truthful and one always learns something new during the discussion.

Movies continue on Monday afternoons and if you have a request, please ask our librarian about it and she will do her best.

The Little White Church is also hosting a Holiday Sing-a-Long on Sunday, Dec. 15 starting at 4 p.m. This is such a fun time with all of our favorite songs the program for the night. Come and bring your friends and then after singing we can all meet downstairs for hot chocolate and cookies.

The Little White Church continues to support any needy families in town. This year turkeys and pork roasts along with all the trimmings and a little extra has been provided for Thanksgiving and Christmas. If you would like to donate to this endeavor please email me: grussell40@yahoo.com.

Reflections on aging

A friend sent me an overview of getting old and I hope it will make you smile. Do you realize that the only time in our lives when we like to get old is when we are kids. If you are less than 10 years old, you're so excited about aging that you think in fractions. How old are you? I'm 4½. You're never 36½. You're 4½ going on 5. That's the key... you get into your teens and now they can't hold you back. You jump to the next number or even a few ahead. How old are you? I'm gonna be 16.

And then the greatest day of your life... you turn 21. Even the words sound like a ceremony. You become 21. Yessss!! But then you turn 30. Ouch, what happened there. Makes you sound like bad milk.

He turned, we had to throw him out. There's no fun now. You're just a sour dumpling. What's wrong? What changed? You became 21, you turn 30, then you're pushing 40. Whoa!!! Put on the brakes. It's all slipping away. Before you know it you're 50 and your dreams are gone. But wait, you make it to 60.

You didn't think you would. If you become 21, turn 30, push 40 and reach 50 and make it to 60 you've built up so much speed that you hit 70. After that it's a day by day thing. You get into your 80s and everyday is a complete cycle. You hit lunch, you turn 4:30, you reach bedtime. Into your 90s you start going backwards. I was just 92. Then a strange thing happens. If you make it over 100, you become a little kid again. I'm only 100½.

May we all make it to a healthy 100½!!!!

You may have missed any mention of a "Holiday" party this year. That's because we were not able to make arrangements. However, the plan is to celebrate Valentines Day with a special dinner. Things will not be quite so busy then. I wish all of you a wonderful, beautiful and happy holiday season. Remember to reach out to each other. Love who you can. Help who you can and give what you can.

A very Merry Christmas and Happy Hanukkah.

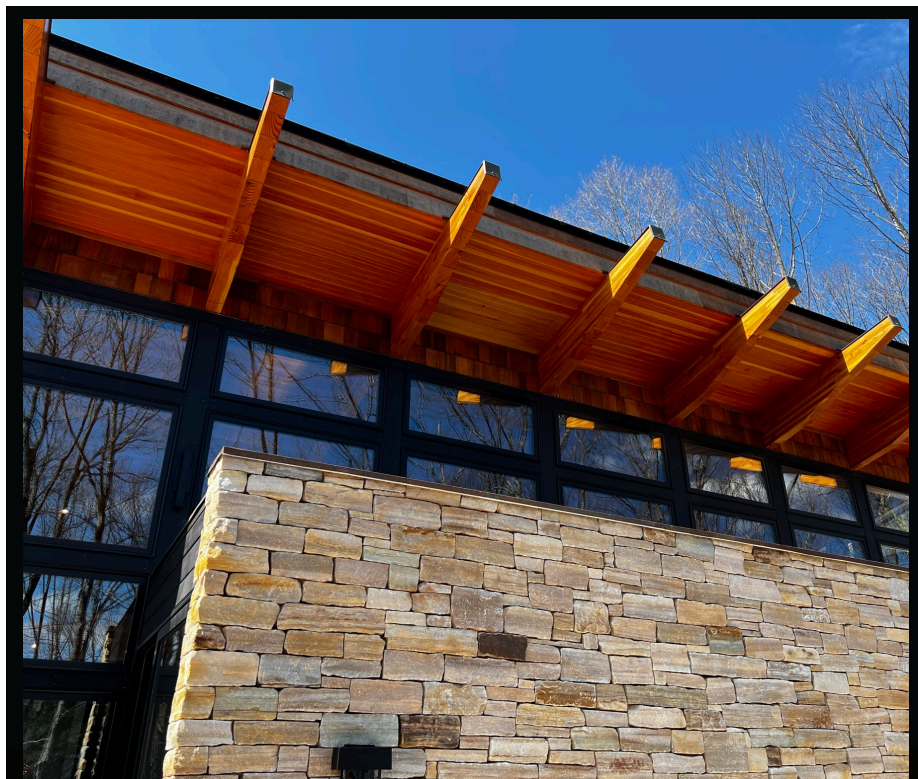
← **The Outside Story:**
from page 25

hairs to water laden with titanium dioxide and then measured the accumulation of particles. He found that when hairs are anchored at one end, the free end flutters and waves in the cross current. That flutter helped the hairs stay cleaner by shaking off titanium dioxide particles.

Dickerson's research suggests that there might be an optimal length for fluttering as a self-cleaning property of hair. Shorter hairs, whether from terrestrial or aquatic animals, didn't flex as much as - and were dirtier than - longer hairs, but very long hairs bent and curved into line with the cross-flow of Dickerson's experimental currents, reducing their flutter, and presumably their self-cleaning potential. He also pointed out that an animal's hairs are packed tightly together, so they may clean each other by rubbing together.

"I want anybody who looks at my work to get a greater appreciation of how nature works and how wonderfully multi-functional fur is," Dickerson said. Beavers, otters, and their semi-aquatic comrades rely on their fur to help them stay warm through the winter. But those coats do more than insulate against cold and wet; they're also dirt resistant - and self-cleaning.

Rachel Sargent Mirus is a teaching artist and writer. 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.



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← Slippery Slopes: from page 24

nately, Aksup recently passed away while operating his crane in a western ski area. He died with his boots on! Back to the problem: How were we going to fix this issue, and what were we going to tell the tramway board? We decided to explain to the board that we had received skiers' complaints about an alarming vibration in the lift and that Poma had suggested we add weight to the counterweight. They bought it. I devised a plan to use the ski lift to transport bags of dry Sakrete cement to the top. We could pull water to mix the concrete from the snowmaking lines. We constructed a large tent and heated it with a portable heater, placed a cement mixer on top of the existing counterweight, and added the required concrete bag by bag.

The next problem we needed to address was more reliable communication from top to bottom of the lifts. Our electrician, Gardner Taylor, was the keeper of a book, and he had kept track of the assembly of communication wires that ran top to bottom of each lift. Some cables were attached to the lift, and some were strung through the adjacent woods. The book was Taylor's job security as only he could decipher the patchwork of wires. The blue wire that started at the bottom might have been cobbled up and connected to a yellow wire when it finally reached the top. This could be chalked up to Yankee Ingenuity, making do with what was available at the time. Taylor and his book had to be located if a lift stopped working to sort out the control wiring.

My solution was negotiating a deal with one of the country's last privately run telephone companies. The owners agreed to supply and install telephone communication cables up each lift and in each lift shack. We were to provide and weld brackets on top of each tower onto which a telephone terminal would be attached. This meant that a workman could climb any tower, attach his headset, and call anywhere in the world. Killington needed only to pay a fixed fee for each terminal, a great deal. Over the following summer, before the installation took place, the private telephone company was sold to Ma Bell. They tried to get out of the deal but eventually conceded that the contract to install the cables and terminals had to be honored.

Not long after we solved the counterweight problem, a chair fell off the Snowshed 2 lift. The connection where the chair was attached to the cable had failed. I immediately got a hold of Alsup. He said he could take 25 chairs at a time off the lift and weld a safety strap over the top of the connection to the grip. I analyzed the broken chair and found a deeper problem. When I met with Alsup, I told him what I'd learned: that the chair support system was constructed out of pipe. From an engineering perspective, the pipe is intended to transport water and is not designed to be used structurally. I suggested that Poma change their chair design to use structural tubing. If you look carefully at any chairlift today, you will see chairs are made out of rectangular structural tubing—another example of the type of cooperation that existed as the ski business matured.

The Snowshed lodge was scheduled to be rebuilt that same summer. Wilson had insisted we couldn't spend any money until after July 1st, as that was the beginning of the fiscal year. I explained to him that this was a steel frame building and that Vermont Structural Steel said it would six to eight weeks to fabricate and deliver the steel beams and columns. 6 - 8 weeks! That meant they would be delivering the steel when we had to have the building completed and ready for occupancy. Wilson refused to budge, and now I had another problem to solve.

I called Dave Mac of Mac Equipment and Steel and remembered he was a Killington

As the newly attached chairs approached the cable catcher, they were sheared off and plummeted 40 feet to the ground below.

stockholder. I explained how many steel beams we needed and carefully wrote the proper designations. He said he could get raw steel beams to us in two weeks. We would still need to figure out how to cut them to size and drill the holes necessary to bolt the beams and columns together. The drilled holes had to be exact. The connections could fail over time if they were even a sixteenth of an inch off. I found a welder from Fairlee, VT, with a special drill magnetically attached to the steel. Sure enough, the steel started rolling in. Every night, I would come back to work after dinner to draw out the fabrication details the welder needed for the following day. The magnetic drill seemed to be doing the trick.

We hired Mac's truck crane to set the trusses on the base lodge, but that was only one job on our list. We also needed to set the towers and sheaves for the Snowshed 3 chairlift. Seeing

as we had a crane sitting on our property, we chained a bulldozer to the front bumper of Mac's truck crane and figured we'd tow it up the mountain and use it to set the towers and sheave trains. The operator asked if Mac knew about this. I assured him that Mac knew, and we proceeded to drag the truck crane up the Snowshed 3 lift line. I remember the truck crane operator's look of fear when the front wheels of his truck occasionally left the ground. With the help of that crane, we set all the towers and their sheave trains in one day. The next day, Mac visited us and looked around the base lodge for his crane.

"Jim, where's my crane?" Mac asked.

"Oh, Dave, I forgot to tell you we used it to set the lift towers," I replied.

"You dragged my crane up the ski slope?"

"Dave, it worked perfectly."

"How am I going to get my crane back?"

"Don't worry, there's a work road we can use to haul it out to the access road."

Dave was unhappy with me, but fortunately, it did not ruin our friendship.

By late August, the new lodge construction was far behind schedule. We put all of our secretaries to work calling any and all contractors in New England, offering them the high rate of \$5 per hour and free lodging to come to Killington to help us complete the building. It worked. The lodge became a swarm of activity. I remember two finish carpenters from Connecticut pulling me aside and asking "What's going on here? Are a bunch of kids running this place?" I guess that was true. It was all hands on deck. Preston Leete Smith, who had come from a carpet business background, laid the carpet for the building. It was a can-do attitude, and "we can't" wasn't included in the vocabulary.

We started the 1966-67 ski season with all our lifts running smoothly, new controls and communications, and a new Snowshed base lodge complete with an observation sun deck and upscale dining room. I had the lift operators keep a log of any downtime experienced during the operating season. It was less than 20 minutes for all lifts combined for the winter of 1966 - 1967, quite a change from when I first arrived in the fall of 1965. With a little bit of urging, I was given a substantial raise.

Killington is known as the "Beast of the East" for its challenging runs, but the real money maker was the Snowshed novice area, which featured a great ski school run by Karl Pfeiffer, a ski shop, a white tablecloth restaurant, constant, reliable groomed snow conditions, and other amenities.

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.



(l) The Snowshed Lodge underwent construction in 1966. (r) Dave Mac's crane reached the top of Snowshed to place the Snowshed tower in 1966.

Courtesy of James Kachadorian

Killington



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