



NATIONAL PIZZA WEEK BEGINS SUNDAY

National Pizza Week begins Sunday, Jan. 12 and continues through Saturday, Jan. 18. Super Bowl Sunday (Feb. 9 this year) is the biggest day of the year for pizza sales. Over 5 billion pizzas are sold each year worldwide. Curious about local offerings? See our listings.

Page 25



MENDING WORKSHOP HELD SATURDAY

Billings Farm & Museum will host a hands-on workshop Saturday from 10-11:30 a.m. on transforming worn garments and textiles into revitalized pieces.

Page 20



Submitted
Andrew Titcomb was an early architect of Okemo ski trails and lifts.

OKEMO'S EARLY DAYS

What/who built Okemo?

Page 6

Rutland approves TIF Plan

The City of Rutland Board of Aldermen approved the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District Plan and its submission to the Vermont Economic Progress Council (VEPC) at its meeting Monday night, Jan. 6. This action comes after the Oct. 21, 2024, approval of the TIF District Letter of Intent.

If approved by VEPC, Rutland's TIF District will produce incremental revenue to fund critical public infrastructure improvements, including transportation, water, wastewater, stormwater, brownfields remediation, and streetscape upgrades. These enhancements aim to stimulate private investment

Rutland TIF → 12



By Jerry LeBlond

Hoar frost: ice crystals shimmer in winter

Hoar frost (aka radiation frost or pruina) a white, crystalline ice, blankets the banks of the White River in Rochester.

MVSU board approves district budget that keeps academic programs intact

Voters will be asked to approve budget March 4, most towns projected to see tax rates decrease

By Polly Mikula

After a narrow vote to save all unified arts (UA) programs and positions at the last school district board meeting, Dec. 16, the Mountain Views School District (MVSD) easily approved a revised budget Monday, Jan. 6, with a vote of 13-3.

The approved budget reinstated all UA programs and positions and made no other cuts to academics. It does, however, enact a 10% cut across "all sports and co-curriculars" (for a savings of \$71,495) and increases the tuition rate for non-district towns (including Pittsfield) by \$1,500 across all grade levels (which is expected to yield \$120,000).

MVSU serves about 995 students preK-12 from seven district towns (Barnard, Bridgewater, Killington, Pomfret, Plymouth, Reading and Woodstock) which will include the MVSU budget on their Town Meeting Day ballots, March 4.

The district had originally attempted to stay out of the penalty phase, which would have required \$3.3 million worth of cuts. In order to accomplish that, it proposed elim-

inating \$450,000 from UA programs among many other non-academic line items. (Unified Arts refers to art, music, world languages, STEM, makerspace and library programs.)

However, at the Dec. 16 meeting and in letters to the board prior, the community implored the board to reinstate those programs. The board voted 7-7 on whether or not to save UA programs. The tie-breaker vote in favor of saving the programs was cast by MVSU board chair Keri Bristow of Woodstock.

That vote mandated the finance committee to retool the budget to see what, if any, additional cuts could be made to offset at least some of the costs that would put the district into the penalty phase. The penalty phase — calculated as 118% of average statewide budgets, which will be adjusted as actual budgets are passed — means that spending past that threshold is assessed \$2 for every \$1 spent.

On Monday, Jan. 6, the finance committee presented seven different budget scenarios, ultimately recommending scenario 6, which

MVSU budget → 13

When is a cell tower a cell tower?

Hartland residents speak out about proposed 173-foot tower

By Curt Peterson

After the Hartland Select Board and planning commission each received notice that IT&W (Industrial Tower & Wireless) and/or Crown Coastal Inc. (a large NYSE listed corporation headquartered in Dallas) was proposing to erect a 173-foot tower with a 80-square-foot base on leased property next to Town Farm Road, Hartland residents began to ask questions — seeking answers, solutions, and greater details of the plans.

Resident Gary Trachier pointed out the elevation at the site is 1,319 feet, and others call the proposed tower one of the four tallest structures in the state.

Interested parties have until Jan. 15 to register objections, support or suggestions with the Public Utilities Commission (PUC). After that date, the applicants can file their official application to the PUC requesting a "certificate of public good," and begin applying for an Act 250 permit to construction the tower.

Once the application is filed, certain approved parties, including the Select Board and the planning commission, may provide more input to be considered by the PUC.

On the Hartland Listserv a couple of dozen residents bantered about whether the tower would mean improved cell phone service — the tower would be situated in a rather large "dead zone" where mobile communications are possible only with wifi assistance.

However, the assumption that the tower will provide any cell service at all is pure conjecture. Even calling it a "cell tower" is a misnomer, as the application is written.

Hartland tower → 6

Table of contents

Local news 2
 State 8
 Opinion 10
 Puzzles 15
 Events calendar 16
 Music calendar 19
 Arts, dining, entertainment 20
 Pets 30
 Horoscopes 31
 Columns 32
 Service directory 34
 Classifieds 35
 Real estate 36

Rene Sanchez named Superintendent of Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union

On Jan. 1, Rene Sanchez became the superintendent of schools for the Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union (RNESU). Sanchez, who previously held the position of interim superintendent, brings extensive experience and a vision of innovation and community-focused leadership.

Before joining RNESU, Sanchez served as superintendent of the Champlain Valley School District in Vermont, as assistant superintendent of operations in South Bend, Indiana, and a secondary principal in Houston and Austin, Texas. During his tenure as interim superintendent at RNESU, Sanchez prioritized elevating student achievement, strengthening community connections, and addressing the diverse needs of students, staff, and families.

"I'm honored and excited to be selected to serve as the full-time RNESU superintendent," said Sanchez.



Courtesy RNESU

Rene Sanchez

"Working with our staff, students, and community over the last six months has been truly rewarding. I look forward to partnering with our boards,

employees, families, and eight towns to support our students and help them achieve success in school and beyond."

Laurie Bertrand, chair of the RNESU board, expressed enthusiasm for the appointment: "The Board is thrilled that Rene is our permanent Superintendent. Since his time here, he has proven to be a team player, student-driven, and community-minded."

The decision to appoint Sanchez was guided by feedback from stakeholders during the 2024 superintendent search process. According to the search committee, his qualities and accomplishments as interim superintendent distinguished him as the top candidate among several applicants.

RNESU anticipates that Sanchez's leadership will continue to foster positive outcomes for the district's schools and communities.

MOUNTAIN TIMES

is a community newspaper covering Central Vermont that aims to engage and inform as well as empower community members to have a voice.

Polly Lynn Mikula Editor & Publisher
 Jason Mikula Marketing Manager & Co-Publisher
 Lindsey Rogers Marketing/Advertising Consultant
 Pat Wise Graphic Designer
 James Kent Publishers' Assistant
 Roger Rivera Distribution Manager

Call: 802-422-2399

Write to us:

For news: editor@mountaintimes.info
 For advertising: lindsey@mountaintimes.info
 For events: events@mountaintimes.info



©The Mountain Times 2024
 The Mountain Times • P.O. Box 183
 Killington, VT 05751 • 802-422-2399

mountaintimes.info

Hunters bag fewer bucks

By Klara Bauters/VTDigger

The Vermont Fish & Wildlife Dept. estimates that hunters in Vermont harvested more than 17,200 deer during fall 2024 — but the final tally won't be released until March.

That translates to roughly 3.4 million servings of venison, according to a Monday, Jan. 6, news release.

The buck harvest tally is expected to decline slightly in 2024, with hunters taking an estimated 9,200 bucks compared with 9,848 in 2023, and an average of around 9,500 in the previous three years. Officials attributed the drop to a slower November hunting season, which was down 10% from the previous year, according to the dept.

Nick Fortin, head deer biologist, said he wouldn't conclude that the population is declining solely from the preliminary hunting data.

"The change from one year to the next really doesn't mean a whole lot," Fortin said. "It's the lon-

ger-term trends that will be important."

Fortin said climate-related changes are playing a role in shaping deer populations and influencing hunting results. However, he emphasized that the decline in the buck harvest was likely driven by a combination of factors, with milder winter temperature only being one of them.

One other factor is that this year, the department prioritized harvesting more antlerless deer, issuing more permits than previous years. The total of harvested antlerless deer, a group primarily composed of females, is expected to reach around 8,000 — an increase from the previous three-year average of 7,188.

The reason for that change: "We're just trying to control deer numbers in response to those milder winters," Fortin said, adding that mild winters are good for deer as they have better food availability.



Building on the success of Rutland Mental Health's CCBHC site, four more sites are chosen

The Vermont Dept. of Mental Health, in partnership with the Vermont Dept. of Health's Division of Substance Use Programs has chosen four more community mental health agencies as demonstration sites for the Certified Community-Based Integrated Health Centers (CCBHCs) model. The CCBHC model provides mental health, substance use, and physical health services in one place. It serves individuals of all ages, locations, and abilities to pay. The model ensures better access to care regardless of an individual's circumstances.

The chosen agencies are Healthcare and Rehabilitation Services, which serves Windsor and Windham counties; Howard Center, which serves Chittenden County; Northeast Kingdom Human Services, which serves Caledonia, Essex, and Orleans counties; and Northwestern Counseling and Support Services, which serves Franklin and Grand Isle counties. These agencies will work toward full CCBHC certification by July 2026.

In fall 2023, Clara Martin Center and Rutland Mental Health were the first two agencies picked as CCBHC demonstration sites. They are currently under review, aiming for full certification by July 2025. Both agencies have reported significant improvements since adopting the model. These include:

- Expanded care coordination services
- Better client access to peer support and nursing services. These combine mental health, substance use, and physical health care
- Faster assessments and a quicker start to services
- Increased staff training opportunities, especially in evidence-based practices (EBPs)
- Greater focus and service for veterans and members of the armed forces

In July 2025, Vermont will officially begin participation in the federal CCBHC demonstration program.

KILLINGTON FOOD SHELF



We are stocked with nonperishable food, paper goods & cleaning supplies. Any person in need, please call to arrange a pickup. Donations accepted. Please call Nan Salamon, 422-9244 or Ron Willis, 422-3843.

Sherburne UCC "Little White Church," Killington, VT

GOLD SPONSORS:

SEASON SPONSORS:



UPCOMING SHOWS

New shows announced each month!

VISIT PARAMOUNTVT.ORG FOR THE COMPLETE LISTING

ALMOST QUEEN
A TRIBUTE TO QUEEN

HITCHER GROUND PRESENTS

FRIDAY, JANUARY 17 | 7:30 PM

Comedian BOB MARLEY

SATURDAY, JANUARY 18 | 8:00 PM

YONDER MOUNTAIN STRING BAND
2025 WINTER TOUR

SATURDAY, JANUARY 25 | 7:00 PM

COME ON DOWN...
YOU COULD BE NEXT!

the PRICE IS RIGHT LIVE

THURSDAY, JANUARY 30 | 7:30 PM

PARAMOUNT'S **LASER SPECTACULAR**
the music of **PINK FLOYD**
...AS YOU'VE NEVER SEEN BEFORE!

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1 | 7:00 PM

A TRIBUTE TO FOREIGNER & JOURNEY

Featuring **CONSTANTINE MAROULIS**

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8 | 7:00 PM

WANG CHUNG, **NAKED EYES**, **A FLOCK OF SEAGULLS**

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22 | 7:30 PM

The Fab Four
The Ultimate Tribute

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28 | 7:30 PM

GRAND **SHANGHAI CIRCUS**

SATURDAY, MARCH 1 | 7:00 PM

#IMOMSOHARD
Flashback

THURSDAY, MARCH 6 | 7:30 PM

Black Hawk

FRIDAY, MARCH 7 | 7:30 PM

NOAM PIKELNY AND FRIENDS
WITH CAILIN CANTY

FRIDAY, MARCH 28 | 7:30 PM

CHRIS JANSON

SATURDAY, APRIL 5 | 7:00 PM

GARRISON KEILLOR
"TONIGHT"

SATURDAY, APRIL 19 | 7:00 PM

iLUMINATE THE TOUR

TUESDAY, APRIL 22 | 7:00 PM

DRAGONS AND MYTHICAL BEASTS LIVE

FRIDAY, MAY 2 | 7:00 PM

HANK AZARIA
AND THE EZ STREET BAND

SATURDAY, MAY 3 | 7:00 PM

The Metropolitan Opera

ALL SHOWS AT 1 PM

HD LIVE ENCORE

Encore
METROPOLITAN
OPERA SERIES

PRESENTED IN HONOR OF

Kathy & Bill Harm

- AIDA (Verdi).....Tuesday, January 28, 2025
- GROUNDLED (Tesori).....Tuesday, February 25, 2025
- FIDELIO (Beethoven).....Tuesday, March 25, 2025
- LE NOZZE DI FIGARO (Mozart).....Tuesday, April 29, 2025
- SALOME (R. Strauss).....Tuesday, May 27, 2025
- IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA (Rossini).....Tuesday, June 24, 2025



New shows announced each month!



30 CENTER ST.
RUTLAND, VT
802.775.0903

BUY YOUR TICKETS AT: **ONLINE BOX OFFICE**

PARAMOUNTVT.ORG

Marble Valley Fire: Safeguarding businesses with safety solutions

By James Kent

As the new year begins, business owners must maintain their safety standards as they review goals for 2025. In Rutland and Windsor counties, Marble Valley Fire's fire safety equipment and services positively impact these efforts.

Marble Valley Fire's owner Mike Roy's commitment to fire safety is deeply rooted in his extensive background as a firefighter. He served over 25 years with the Rutland City Fire Dept., where he gained firsthand experience of the devastating consequences that can result from inadequate fire prevention measures.

Reflecting on his time as a firefighter, Roy recalled, "I saw the need for a fire extinguisher business, and while I was still working, I started Marble Valley Fire."

Roy's transition from firefighting to entrepreneurship was driven by a clear understanding of the community's needs.

"Within three years, it was getting to the point where I couldn't do both anymore, and it was time for me to move on from the fire department," Roy explained.

In June 2024, Roy made the final move to focus entirely on Marble Valley Fire, a timely decision as the business quickly grew to meet the rising demand for reliable fire safety services.

Comprehensive fire safety services

Marble Valley Fire offers various services crucial for maintaining a safe and compliant business environment. The company specializes in supplying commercial-grade fire extinguishers, conducting inspections, and maintaining kitchen suppression systems. These services are vital for restaurants, hotels, daycares, and other establishments

where fire hazards are a significant concern and compliance with safety regulations is critical.

Understanding the critical role that fire extinguishers play in preventing minor incidents from escalating, Roy emphasized the importance of regular maintenance. "Commercial fire extinguishers must undergo regular maintenance to remain functional," he stated. Marble Valley Fire provides inspections, maintenance, and hydro tests to ensure extinguishers are always ready.

Unlike the standard fire extinguishers available at hardware stores, Marble Valley Fire supplies commercial-grade extinguishers that meet stringent safety criteria. "Everything we sell is commercial grade because you can't go to Home Depot and get a first alert fire extinguisher and put it in a commercial application," Roy noted. This distinction ensures that businesses have reliable and effective tools in an emergency.

In addition to sales, the company offers on-site recharging and servicing. Roy explained, "We can recharge fire extinguishers on site, which means businesses don't have to wait for a replacement. Our goal is to keep your extinguisher with you, fully operational."

This approach minimizes downtime and ensures continuous protection, which is especially important for businesses that rely on their fire safety systems to remain operational. Marble Valley Fire also offers inspection, maintenance, and

"Preventative maintenance is crucial. It not only ensures compliance but also protects lives and property," said Roy.



By James Kent

Mike Roy and his Marble Valley Fire services trailer provide expert fire safety solutions throughout Rutland and Windsor counties.

replacement services for residential homes.

Kitchen suppression systems are a regulatory requirement

For commercial kitchens, having a reliable suppression system is a safety measure

and a regulatory requirement. Marble Valley Fire installs, services, and inspects these systems to ensure local and state regulations com-

pliance. Roy described the process: "Most people have heard of an Ansul system. It's designed to activate when a fire is detected by a certain temperature, automatically discharging suppressant over the cooking area to extinguish the flames."

Every commercial kitchen is required to have a suppression system in place, and Roy highlighted that Marble Valley Fire is a key provider in Rutland and Windsor Counties.

"We're pretty much the only company in this area offering these services," he stated.

This local focus allows the company to respond quickly to inspection requests and service needs without the added costs of long-distance travel.

Proactive maintenance and compliance

Roy's extensive experience as a firefighter has underscored the critical importance of preventive maintenance. He shared a poignant memory, "I've seen a Chinese restaurant where the grease and the hood were the reason they had a fire, and it totaled the whole building. Regular inspections help prevent such catastrophic events."

Preventative maintenance is a cornerstone of Marble Valley Fire's services. Regular inspections ensure compliance with safety regulations and protect businesses from potential fines and operational disruptions. Roy emphasized the importance of these inspections: "Insurance companies often require proof of regular fire extinguisher inspections. When a business sells

or undergoes a major change, it triggers another inspection from the state, necessitating updated certifications and stickers."

Marble Valley Fire plays a crucial role in safeguarding businesses and their employees by conducting thorough inspections and ensuring that fire safety systems are up to date. Roy emphasized, "preventive maintenance is crucial. It not only ensures compliance but also protects lives and property."

One of Marble Valley Fire's distinguishing factors is its commitment to exceptional customer service. As the primary provider in its region, the company offers personalized and timely services that larger, distant companies cannot match. Roy shared, "We receive numerous calls from businesses that previously had to rely on companies far away. Our clients appreciate that we don't charge for travel within an hour of our location, making our services more affordable and accessible."

Marble Valley Fire's dedication extends beyond routine inspections. In emergencies, such as when a suppression system is inadvertently triggered, the company is available on weekends and nights to resolve the issue promptly. "If a system trips, it can shut off a restaurant's gas supply, halting operations. We prioritize getting things back to normal as quickly as possible," Roy added.

In addition to its core services, Marble Valley Fire strongly emphasizes fire prevention education and extinguisher training. Roy explained, "We provide extinguisher training to ensure that businesses know how to use their equipment effectively."

With a strong foundation built on experience, dedication, and a commitment to the community, Mike Roy and Marble Valley Fire continue to provide indispensable fire safety services that help businesses thrive safely in the new year.

For more information, visit: marblevalleyfire.com.



By James Kent

Mike Roy demonstrated the process of refilling a commercial-grade fire extinguisher while inside his service trailer.

A trip most dads can only dream of...

Online free book details Castleton Professor David Blow's 22-day cross-country road trip with his gigging 22-year-old daughter

How many dads out there can say they spent 22-days and 5,000 miles in a minivan with their 22-year-old musician daughter as she gigged her way from coast to coast?

Well, journalist and college professor at Castleton David Blow can.

And now, after five years in the works having been derailed by Covid, Blow is hoping to take area readers along on that trip in his book entitled "Twenty-two: A lucky dad savors 22 days on the road with his 22-year-old gigging daughter."

After self-publishing two prior books, "Blow by Blow" and "Covid Chronicles," Blow decided to just give this one away on his website david-blow.com.

"Self-publishing is stressful and not that fun. And by doing it on my site and giving it away, I can do so much more with it, including adding tons of photos and videos — and I plan to do the introduction as an

It has highs, like the Clarksdale gig, and lows, like learning of the death of a friend the day after winning \$1,000 in a casino in Reno.

audio podcast-type entry into it," Blow said.

The story will take readers through gig stops in D.C., Nashville, Dallas, Amarillo and Breckenridge. But it also includes crazy events like an unplanned performance at a historic Mississippi juke joint in Clarksdale captured by a perfect picture by a music lover from England.

It's a story of bonding and reflection with his then recent college grad daughter through music, conversation, bad TV shows and more than a few beers.

The story will unfold mostly in a chronological fashion with breaks provided by chapters detailing misfortunes with Ubers, Airbnbs and the stressful attempt to sell the family minivan once they got to California.

It has highs, like the Clarksdale gig, and lows, like learning of the death of a friend the day after winning \$1,000 in a casino in Reno.

It's also a story about this really cool, vast country we live in and all the great people we encountered at every stop.

And it concludes with a chapter written by his daughter, Kirsti, detailing what the trip meant to her.



Courtesy David Blow
Author David Blow with his then 22-year-old daughter, Kirsti.

"That made me cry," Blow said.

The book will be released one or two chapters at a time on Blow's website starting Jan. 1.

"I just want people to read it and hopefully feel some of what I got to feel," said Blow.

"I just want people to read it and hopefully feel some of what I got to feel, both watching people react to her playing and singing and just feeling lucky to have been allowed along for the experience," Blow

said. "So much has changed in our lives since that trip, including Kirsti now being married and living in Spain, so I'm having a blast reliving that magical time through this book release."

For more information and to read the first chapter of the book, visit: david-blow.com.



Kirsti Blow performing gigs as she and her dad embark on a 5,000-mile cross-country journey, which he turned into a free book.



Courtesy David Blow

OBITUARY

Ray Garrett, 62

Ray Garrett was lost to the many who loved him on his 62nd birthday. He had a heart attack while kitesurfing in one of his favorite places in Brazil. It was a beautiful day with steady winds, and Ray was excited to be on the water with his dear friends.

Ray was born on Oct. 29, 1962, in Augusta, Georgia, where his dad, Jerry, was serving in the military. Ray's mother, Peggy, was a nurse (and he considered her a saint after having four boys and working in emergency rooms!)

Ray grew up in Delaware with his brothers Mark, Jeff, and Michael. The 4 "boys being boys" rode dirt bikes, played pranks on each other, and tried to stay out of trouble. In winter, the family traveled to Vermont and New Hampshire, where Ray learned to ski—a passion he had enjoyed for his entire life.

Raymond John Garrett II was named after his paternal grandfather, Pap, whom he adored. Ray loved all his grandparents deeply and was happy to talk and visit with them as often as possible. Family time was precious to Ray, and he never hesitated to drive to Delaware, Connecticut, or Pennsylvania for the next gathering.

At A.I. Dupont High School in Hockessin, Delaware, Ray was a talented wrestler, being a two-time state champion and even earning a medal at the junior world championships.

Being in and on the water was both exciting and soothing to Ray. He learned to sail and was always up for a new adventure with his friend John. Learning to windsurf became a passion that continued until he discovered kite surfing.

Ray graduated from UConn in 1987 and briefly worked in New York City. After the stock market crash in October, Ray decided to follow his windsurfing passion and go to Martha's Vineyard.



Submitted

Ray Garrett

On Martha's Vineyard, Ray worked in restaurants—ensuring his schedule allowed plenty of time for windsurfing with his buddy Mel at First Bridge and enjoying an after-session Andy's Lemonade.

In 1988, Mel invited Ray to come to Killington, Vermont, for the winter. That started the 35-year migration between MVY and VT (with one winter in Steamboat Springs, which was not enough vertical).

During his hospitality career, Ray took immense pride in his work and added to his cadre of true and lasting friends.

It was while working at the Navigator that Ray met Colleen. It was the days of hitchhiking, and if she missed the bus (which did not run as frequently in 1989!) Ray would sometimes drop her off on his way home after sharing a frozen mudslide.

Ray and Colleen married at the Old Whaling Church on Martha's Vineyard and had an amazing reception in their sun-filled backyard. The action-packed years flew by, working hard and traveling to New Zealand, the Outer Banks, Maui, and Brazil. Ray and Colleen had their 30th anniversary on Oct. 15.

Ray's pride and joy were his house and yard. He cheerfully tended to the lawn and flowers—often until dusk. Standing in his shed and watching the animals play in the grass and

Ray Garrett → 14

← Hartland tower: from page 1

Kevin Reed and his wife live across the road from the proposed tower site and are not connected to any of the parties involved. He said the notification “made no promises of better cell service from the tower,” which will serve their own [the applicants’] “not yet operational network with possibility of leasing use to others.”

“They are building the tower on speculation,” Reed pointed out, and feel the presence of the tower may someday attract suppliers of retail cell service to seek its use. Even if so, Dukeshire said, benefits may be selective, improving service only for folks using a carrier connected to the tower.

“I know people who live right next to a cell tower who can’t get a signal,” he said.

While the drawings accompanying the notification show cell-service like paddles attached to the structure, IT&W said they will not be installed until there is actual interest by a cell phone carrier. The IT&W documents state that their target customers are businesses, not residential or private cell phone users.

Planning commission chair David Dukeshire is inviting all interested parties to attend the regular planning commission meeting in Damon Hall on Jan. 8, when their comments and questions will be recorded for submission to the PUC on Jan. 15.

The Select Board is negotiating a joint meeting on Jan. 27 including representatives of the tower applicants and the public. But

since that will be after the Jan. 15 deadline for public comments to the PUC, the planners’ meeting is scheduled earlier.

After the application is filed, approved parties, having seen the application in detail, have 30 days to make additional comments before the PUC considers the application.

Public comments on the listserv in addition to those wishing for better phone service also had thoughts about the aesthetics. The current town plan limits the height of any tower to the level of the existing tree canopy, obviously well below the 173-foot mark, which is approximately equivalent to a 17 story building.

Suggestions include camouflage for the tower (but someone else called that “putting lipstick on a pig”), multiple smaller towers, and satellite connections instead of towers. One poster wondered if the Federal Communications Commission itself might be under threat of dissolution under President-elect Trump. Another worried Elon Musk might arbitrarily shut off satellite service as he admitted doing to the Ukrainian army to inhibit their ability to target Russian ships.

Rob Anderegg summed up his feelings about the tower’s effect on Hartland’s image, saying it would affect the town’s rural character, its blinking light would change the night sky, and that “the town expects aesthetic integrity.” Most of the respondents agreed the tower would change the image of the town, and not in a positive way.



Provided

The Inn at Jackson Gore debuted in December 2003. Merritt Bruce led a wagon ride out front.

Okemo, ahead of the pack

By Karen D. Lorentz

Editor’s note: This is Part 2 of a three-part series that explores how innovations at Okemo and Killington enabled them to become successful and popular ski resorts that also contributed to the growth of the ski industry in Vermont and the East.

Okemo Ski Area, which debuted Jan. 31, 1956, was built on a mountain that rose to 3,343 feet above the village of Ludlow, a town of 2,415 people. Immigrant Finns and Norwegians had introduced townspeople to skiing and ski jumping and made skis for them, so by the early 1900s skiers were already skinning up to ski down Okemo or engaging in ski jumping contests on its lower flanks. Several athletic clubs sponsored ski meets, winter dances, and carnivals in the 1920s and 1930s. Trains brought members of the famed Appalachian Mountain Club of Boston to the hills and lakes in Ludlow the week of Feb. 19-26, 1921, providing one of Okemo’s earliest President’s Day weeks at the slopes.

Vermont State Forester Perry Merrill added Okemo and the land around the mountain to the state’s holdings, seeing it as a potential recreation area for the Dept. of Forests and Parks. He also promoted skiing as an economic resource for the state by leasing mountains like Mount Mansfield, Killington, Jay Peak, Burke, Smuggler’s Notch, and Okemo to ski entrepreneurs.

The state had purchased 4,000 acres on Okemo in 1935. Avid sportsmen and local businessmen supported the idea of developing Okemo and predicted that Okemo would become the “Best Ski Ground in New England,” but naysayers in the Legislature opposed Merrill’s plans and the state’s spending money on ski areas during the Great Depression so only a few trails, an access road, and camp sites got built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s.

Then World War II came along to interrupt all ski area development.

In the 1950s, a group of Ludlow leaders eager to attract new business to the town pursued the idea of developing a ski area on Okemo Mountain, and Merrill leased state land on the upper mountain to them. The lower mountain had privately owned parcels that the founders were able to purchase.

Expert skier and architect Andrew Titcomb, who had raced for Otto Schneibis at Dartmouth College and on the 1937 FIS team and helped cut Hell’s Highway, the Taft Trail, and the first run at Sugarloaf, drew up plans for the first lifts and trails. He noted that Okemo’s snow-pocket location with a town at its base made “development of the mountain both appropriate and unique,” stating it was “one of five ski areas in the country with an existing town” at its immediate base. (Aspen, Cranmore, Steamboat, and Breckenridge were the others.)

Mountainside Village

Okemo’s method of funding was to sell stock. But while many areas were started with out-of-state investors, Okemo’s directors chose to sell stock to Vermonters, reasoning that it would be too expensive and time consuming to register with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Because there were limits to the amounts that could be raised via stock offerings, Okemo’s board of directors adopted a policy of buying land to sell for second homes in 1960.

Okemo’s early days → 11



TOWN OF KILLINGTON VERMONT

TOWN OF KILLINGTON VERMONT DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD NOTICE OF PUBLIC NOTICE

The Development Review Board will hold a public hearing on Thursday, January 16, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. at the Public Safety Building at 800 Killington Road with attendance available in-person and via videoconference (Zoom) to review the following application:

Application #SPR24-73 by Killington Mountain Dispensary seeking conditional use under Section 302 of the Zoning Bylaws for the placement of a retail/indoor cannabis establishment at 2384 Killington Road, which is located within the C-KB zoning district.

A copy of the application may be viewed at the Town Offices at 2706 River Road between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday by appointment by calling 802-422-3241.

A digital copy of the application may also be requested in portable document format (PDF).

Participation in this local proceeding in person, via videoconference (Zoom), or through written statement is a prerequisite to the right to make any subsequent appeal. It is requested that written statements be submitted at least seven (7) days prior to the hearing for review by all.

For participation via videoconference (Zoom), a meeting link will be posted 1-2 hours prior to the hearing on the Town Website Calendar (www.killingtontown.com).

Dated at Killington, Vermont this 30th day of December 2024.

Jim Haff, Zoning Administrator
Town of Killington, Vermont

Participation in the hearing by adjacent property owners is a prerequisite to the right to take subsequent appeal.

Agency of Ag launches on-farm bulk milk sampling program to combat dairy avian flu in cows

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets (VAAFAM) has initiated a monthly bulk milk sampling program to monitor for highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in dairy cattle to protect Vermont's dairy farms and the state's agricultural economy. This proactive measure aligns with a USDA mandate to test Grade A milk nationwide following the first detection of HPAI H5N1 in dairy cattle in Texas last March.

If a sample tests positive for HPAI, the farm will be promptly notified, and affected raw milk will be pasteurized or safely disposed of.

The sampling program aims to identify potential infections early, help contain the spread of HPAI, and safeguard animal health and Vermont's dairy industry. Although Vermont has not reported cases of the dairy cattle HPAI strain, the state has experienced isolated incidents of the avian flu strain in birds, including as recently as last month.

Monthly sampling for early detection

VAAFAM employees have already begun collecting unpasteurized milk samples from all Grade A milk-producing farms across the state.

These samples will be tested in a lab for the dairy cattle HPAI strain that has impacted herds in 16 states. The USDA funds the testing process, ensuring there are no additional costs to farms and no expected changes to farm operations.

Dairy farmers were informed of the program through letters and communica-

tion with dairy cooperatives and partners. Trained agency staff will visit each farm once a month to collect samples.

Protecting the food supply and public health

The program's primary goal is to detect and address any unknown infections, preventing potential disruptions to the food supply and mitigating risks to public health. Pasteurization has been proven effective in inactivating the HPAI virus, ensuring milk remains safe for consumption.

Infected cows, while typically producing "abnormal" milk that must be disposed of, generally recover without experiencing life-threatening illness.

If a sample tests positive for HPAI, the farm will be promptly notified, and affected raw milk

will be pasteurized or safely disposed of. The Vermont State Veterinarian and Animal Health staff will work closely with farms to prevent the virus's spread while supporting on-site care for affected cattle.

While the risk of HPAI transmission to humans remains low, farmers and others who work closely with raw milk or infected animals are advised to stay vigilant.

To date, only a small number of human infections linked to dairy cattle have been reported, most of which were minor.

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture emphasizes the importance of keeping the state's dairy farms HPAI-free to protect the industry's economic and cultural significance.

"Testing milk for HPAI is an important step to ensure early detection and effective response, keeping our farms and food supply safe," a VAAFAM spokesperson stated.

Hours of paid investigative leave received by state workers in Vermont since 2020



Number of state employees who have received paid investigative leave since 2020



Courtesy Natalie Williams/VTDigger, Vt Dept of Human Resources

Charts track hours (top) and number of state employees (below) that received investigative leave over the past five years. Data runs through Dec. 12, 2024.

'An anomaly?': Pay to state employees under investigation exceeds \$2.6m, up 60%

By Ethan Weinstein / VTDigger

State records show that since the start of 2020, taxpayers have funded more than \$9 million in wages for state employees on paid leave while under investigation for alleged misconduct.

According to Vermont Dept. of Human Resources records obtained through a public records request, the cost of paid investigative leave has increased by 60% this year, rising from \$1.64 million in 2023 to \$2.62 million as of Dec. 12. State Dept. of Corrections employees account for more than half of those on investigative leave.

"We're very much hoping the number we're seeing in 2024 is not the trend going forward," Human Resources Commissioner Beth Fastiggi said in an interview. "This year is definitely — hopefully — an anomaly."

A person may be placed on paid leave following an allegation that they've broken the state's employment regulations, such as by engaging in harassment or discrimination. Roughly half of misconduct investigations result in temporary paid relief from duty, according to state data.

Paid investigative leave for state employees has drawn the attention of press and investigators previously, including state Auditor Doug Hoffer.

"Not only is there a cost, but you're creating a burden on your colleagues who have to fill in for you because you're not there," Hoffer said, describing the problems caused by exten-

Investigation leave → 14



We're not just along for the ride.
We're Driven to Make a Difference.

Sustainability is the work we do every day.
It is the business we have built.

We create value by managing society's waste and transforming that waste into new resources.

**Each year we recover over 1.4 million tons from the waste stream.
By 2030, we aim to reach 2 million tons.**

We have been providing an essential service to society for close to fifty years.



Learn more about our sustainability initiatives by scanning the code or visiting casella.com/sustainability



State of Vermont launches MoneyBack program to return \$1.3 million of unclaimed property to Vermonters

On Dec. 18, Governor Phil Scott and Treasurer Mike Pieciak announced the launch of the MoneyBack Program, a partnership to proactively return unclaimed property to Vermonters whose identity and address can be verified via Tax Department data. The program will rightfully return a total of nearly \$1.3 million to over 5,000 Vermonters this holiday season.

The program matches data the tax department is allowed to share with the state's unclaimed property database to verify the identities of Vermonters with unclaimed property ranging from \$100 to \$500. Once verified, the state will mail a letter alerting recipients of the amount they will receive. Within a few days of receiving the letter, recipients will receive a check in the mail for their unclaimed property — no forms, no hassle.

The average amount returned to Vermonters through the MoneyBack Program this year is \$241.46.

“When our office returns unclaimed property to Vermonters, it delivers real support to working families and puts money directly back into our economy,” said Treasurer Pieciak. “As Vermonters face an affordability crisis,

the MoneyBack Program is putting hard-earned money back into Vermonters' pockets this holiday season, helping families focus on what matters most—spending time together.”

“This initiative proves when government thinks differently, we can work together to better serve Vermonters,” said Governor Phil Scott. “I appreciate the creative thinking, and the collaboration between my team at the Department of Taxes, the Treasurer and his team. It's always a good day when we can give back to Vermonters.”

Individuals with multiple unclaimed properties in the \$100 to \$500 range may receive more than \$500. The average amount returned to Vermonters through the MoneyBack Program this year is \$241.46.

The MoneyBack Program builds on a successful pilot program conducted last year by the Tax Dept. and the Treasurer's Office, which mailed checks ranging from \$200 to \$225 to over 300 Vermonters, returning over \$75,000.

The Treasurer's Office plans to make the MoneyBack program an annual occurrence each December, as Treasurer Pieciak continues to evaluate and launch other proactive ways to return unclaimed property to Vermonters. Earlier this year, Treasurer Pieciak partnered with Secretary of State Sarah Copeland Hanzas to return over \$150,000 to local nonprofits.

While the Treasurer's Office typically raises awareness about unclaimed property through paid media campaigns and outreach events, the state has taken a proactive approach this holiday season to reunite Vermonters with their hard-earned money.

“The MoneyBack program represents government working at its best, helping Vermonters make ends meet during the holidays,” said Treasurer Pieciak. “While our office is returning more claims than ever, the amount of unclaimed property held by the state continues to rise, recently totaling over \$130 million. And it's not just individuals—businesses, nonprofits, and even local governments can have unclaimed property. I encourage Vermonters to search missingmoney.com to check if they have missing money waiting for them.”

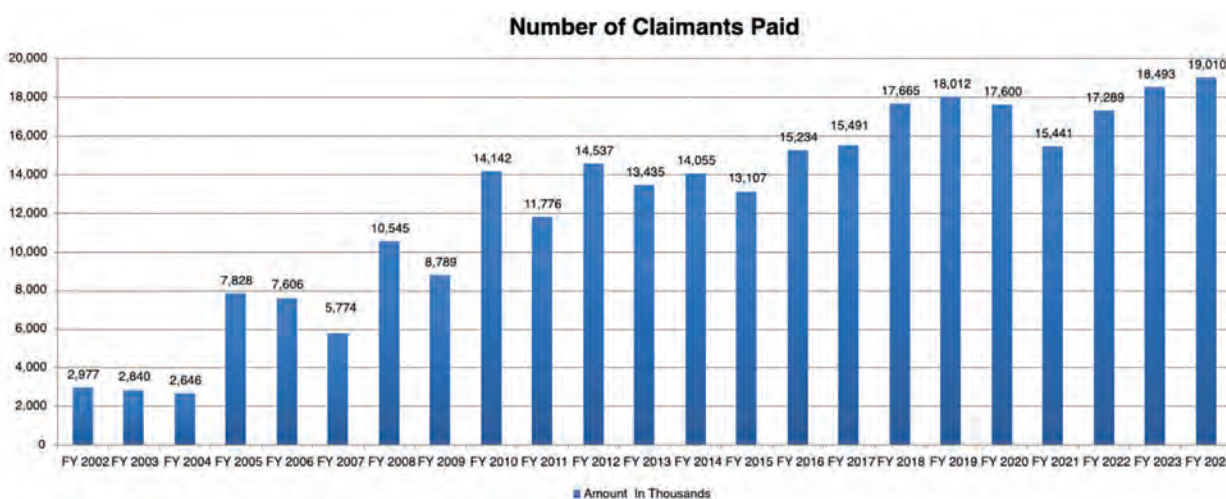
Unclaimed property includes forgotten assets like uncashed checks, security deposits, investments, insurance proceeds, and other financial property. Financial institutions annually report these properties and turn them over to the state. The Treasurer's Office safeguards assets until claimed by rightful owners or heirs.

“While our office is returning more claims than ever, the amount of unclaimed property held by the state continues to rise, recently totaling over \$130 million,” said Pieciak.

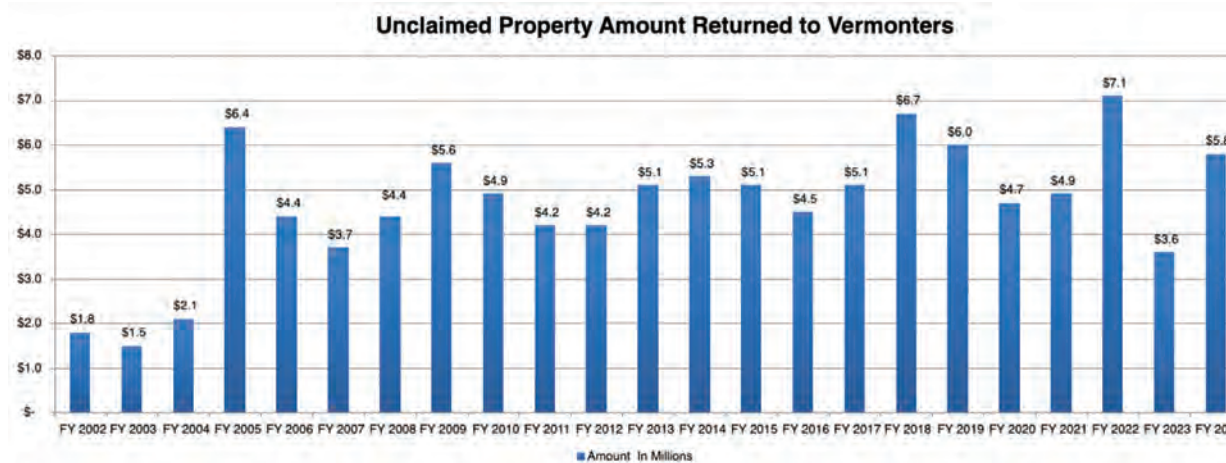
All Vermonters are encouraged to visit missingmoney.com to check for unclaimed property.

For inquiries regarding a claim or assistance with the claims process, contact the Treasurer's Office Unclaimed

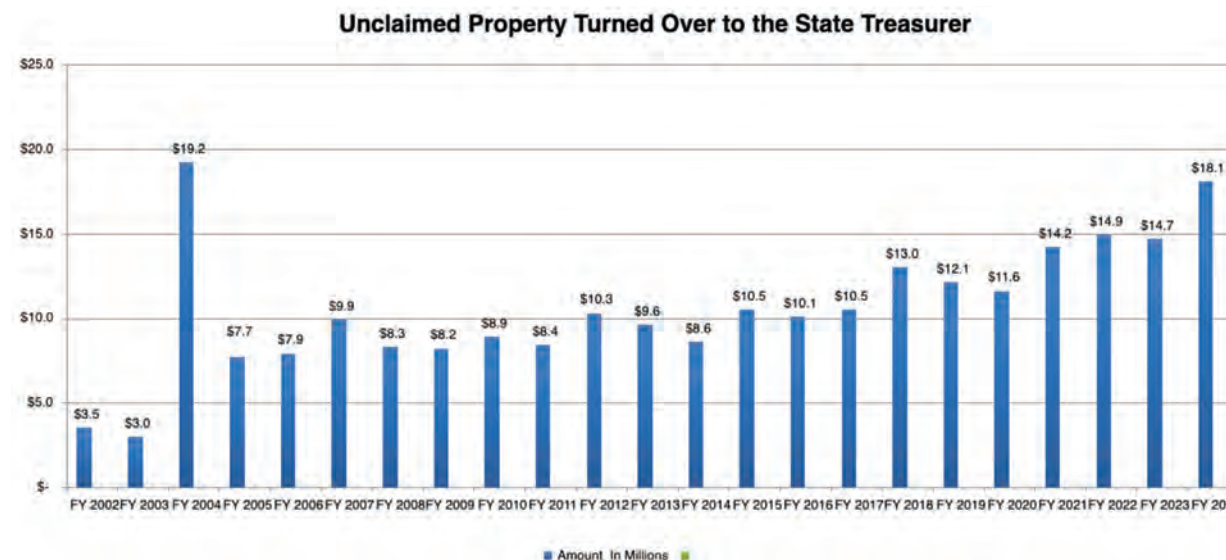
Property Division at (802) 828-2407 or visit: unclaimed.property@vermont.gov.



Courtesy Mike Pieciak
The chart shows the growing number of Vermonters who have received money back over the past two decades.



Courtesy Mike Pieciak
The chart shows the total amount of Unclaimed Property in dollars returned to Vermonters over the past two decades.



Courtesy Mike Pieciak
The chart shows the amount of Unclaimed Property turned over to the state has grown recently to near-record amounts.

'Vermont's most promising jobs' list features well-paying careers in need of at least 300 workers

Phil Scott, the Vermont Dept. of Labor (VDOL), and the McClure Foundation announced the release of Vermont's Most Promising Jobs list, featuring more than 50 occupations expected to pay a median wage above \$30/hour and have at least 300 openings over the next decade.

"We have tens of thousands of jobs available in Vermont," said Governor Scott. "It's more important than ever we make sure our kids, and adults looking for new careers, know about all the good paying, in demand opportunities here in the state."

The Dept. of Labor and the McClure Foundation, an affiliate of the Vermont Community Foundation, have partnered since 2014 to produce the Vermont's Most Promising Jobs eight-page brochure as a career exploration resource for students and job seekers across Vermont and for those interested in moving to the state.

"Vermont's workforce is the backbone of our state's economy, and ensuring Vermonters have access to resources like the Vermont's Most Promising Jobs brochure is essential in connecting them with opportunities to develop meaningful, high-pay career paths," said Commissioner

Michael Harrington. "To help with that journey, the Dept. of Labor has employment and training specialists across the state ready to connect job seekers and career advancers with opportunities that fit their experience and interests, as well as their dreams.

Thank you to the McClure Foundation for their ongoing partnership and active support in building Vermont's future workforce."

Every two years, the McClure Foundation facilitates distribution of the Vermont's Most Promising Jobs print brochure to area schools, organizations, and by request to individuals. Alongside the brochure, the Foundation offers easy-access mini-grants to schools, libraries, and community organizations using this information with job seekers and

young people.

"This resource serves as a simple, hopeful conversation starter for Vermont youth and job seekers to explore career pathways that work best for them," said McClure Foundation Executive Director Carolyn

Weir. "We are thrilled to partner once again with the Dept. of Labor to help Vermonters explore careers

that fit their interests, values, and lifestyle."

The Vermont's Most Promising Jobs brochure includes information on median wages, number of projected openings, and minimum education requirements. The data reveals that Vermont's promising jobs typically require training or education beyond high school — whether on-the-job training, a short-term credential such

as a certificate, a registered apprenticeship, an associate degree, a bachelor's degree, or beyond.

The featured jobs range from teachers to telecommunications and electrical line installers, from carpenters to computer support specialists, from registered nurses to real estate brokers, and from police officers to project management specialists. The full list of occupations is based on VDOL's Long-Term Occupational Projections, which was released in September 2024.

"This brochure highlights jobs that are expected to have numerous openings with competitive wages over the next two years," said VDOL Economic & Labor Market Information Director Mathew Barewicz. "The projected openings are based on several factors, including economic growth, technological changes, job transfers, and retirements. Many jobs represent the 'heroes' in our communities — such as teachers, nurses, police officers, and plumbers. Like the brochure, this small sample of four jobs showcases the variety of possible educational pathways that can lead to a promising job."

For more information, visit: mclclurevt.org/jobs.

"Many jobs represent the 'heroes' in our communities — such as teachers, nurses, police officers, and plumbers," said Barewicz.



Do you like **working with your hands or with machines** to make, fix, or build things?

	10-Year Projected Openings	Minimum Education Needed for Entry	Median Wage (hourly/yearly)
Carpenters	4,270	High School + Training	\$30/\$62,400
Chefs & Head Cooks	1,810	High School + Training	\$31/\$65,144
CNC Tool Operators	1,150	High School + Training	\$30/\$61,360
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	620	High School + Training	\$31/\$65,454
Plumbers & Pipefitters	930	Registered Apprenticeship	\$30/\$63,263
Electrical & Telecom Line Installers	550	Registered Apprenticeship	\$46/\$95,497
Dental Hygienists	410	Associate degree	\$49/\$100,924
Radiologic Technicians	330	Associate degree	\$41/\$84,594
Civil Engineers	760	Bachelor's degree	\$40/\$83,709
Mechanical Engineers	410	Bachelor's degree	\$50/\$104,221
Industrial Engineers	400	Bachelor's degree	\$50/\$104,951

Courtesy the Vt Dept. of Labor

Charts show jobs working with your hands or machines that will need workers and pay well.

Are you **organized and detail-oriented** and do you like to **work with lots of information**?

	10-Year Projected Openings	Minimum Education Needed for Entry	Median Wage (hourly/yearly)
Waitstaff	7,200	Training	\$31/\$64,148
Police Officers	730	High School + Training	\$34/\$69,946
Executive Administrative Assistants	700	High School + Training	\$32/\$66,892
Postal Service Clerks	320	High School + Training	\$30/\$61,648
Paralegals	750	Associate degree	\$32/\$65,830

Courtesy the Vt Dept. of Labor

Charts show jobs for organized and detail-oriented folks that will need workers and pay well.

Do you like to **work with people** and **use your creativity** to guide or persuade?

	10-Year Projected Openings	Minimum Education Needed for Entry	Median Wage (hourly/yearly)
Sales Representatives - Goods & Services	3,750	High School + Training	\$37/\$77,846
Fitness Trainers	2,290	High School + Training	\$34/\$69,901
Insurance Sales Agents	1,150	High School + Training	\$32/\$66,781
Real Estate Brokers	390	High School + Training	\$41/\$86,254
K-12 Teachers, incl. Special Ed. & CTE	7,460	Bachelor's degree	na/\$67,717
Human Resources Specialists	1,390	Bachelor's degree	\$35/\$71,871

Courtesy the Vt Dept. of Labor

Charts show jobs for those that are creative or persuasive that will need workers and pay well.

Do you like to **observe, learn, analyze, and solve problems**?

	10-Year Projected Openings	Minimum Education Needed for Entry	Median Wage (hourly/yearly)
Computer Support Specialists	1,660	Certificate program	\$32/\$67,025
Licensed Practical Nurses	990	Certificate program	\$32/\$66,538
Massage Therapists	850	Certificate program	\$48/\$100,659
Registered Nurses	4,570	Bachelor's degree	\$42/\$87,117
Software Developers	1,600	Bachelor's degree	\$58/\$119,799
Clinical Laboratory Technologists	480	Bachelor's degree	\$39/\$81,939
Environmental Scientists	360	Bachelor's degree	\$36/\$74,791
Architects	320	Bachelor's degree	\$43/\$89,838
Nurse Practitioners	710	Master's degree	\$63/\$131,837

Courtesy the Vt Dept. of Labor

Charts show jobs for problem solvers and analysis that will need workers and pay well.

GUEST EDITORIAL

Common ground: Working together to address Vermont's affordability crisis

By Amy Spear and Megan Sullivan

Editor's note: Amy Spear, Killington, is the president of the Vermont Chamber of Commerce. Megan Sullivan, Chittenden, is the vice president of government affairs for the Vermont Chamber of Commerce.

Each year, the Vermont Chamber of Commerce outlines its legislative priorities with one focus in mind: creating the conditions to advance the Vermont economy. This year, our goals align closely with those voiced by Vermonters at the polls: addressing affordability, fostering economic growth, and doing the hard work to solve Vermont's toughest challenges.

Affordability is at the forefront of these challenges. Vermonters are grappling with rising costs, driven by demographic pressures and systemic issues in areas such as education finance spending, housing, and healthcare. Based on data compiled by the Vermont Futures Project, Vermont must add an average of 13,500 people to its workforce annually through 2035 to keep the economy thriving in the face of demographic shifts. Meanwhile, meeting current housing demand will require tripling Vermont's housing output to produce 36,000 new units by 2029.

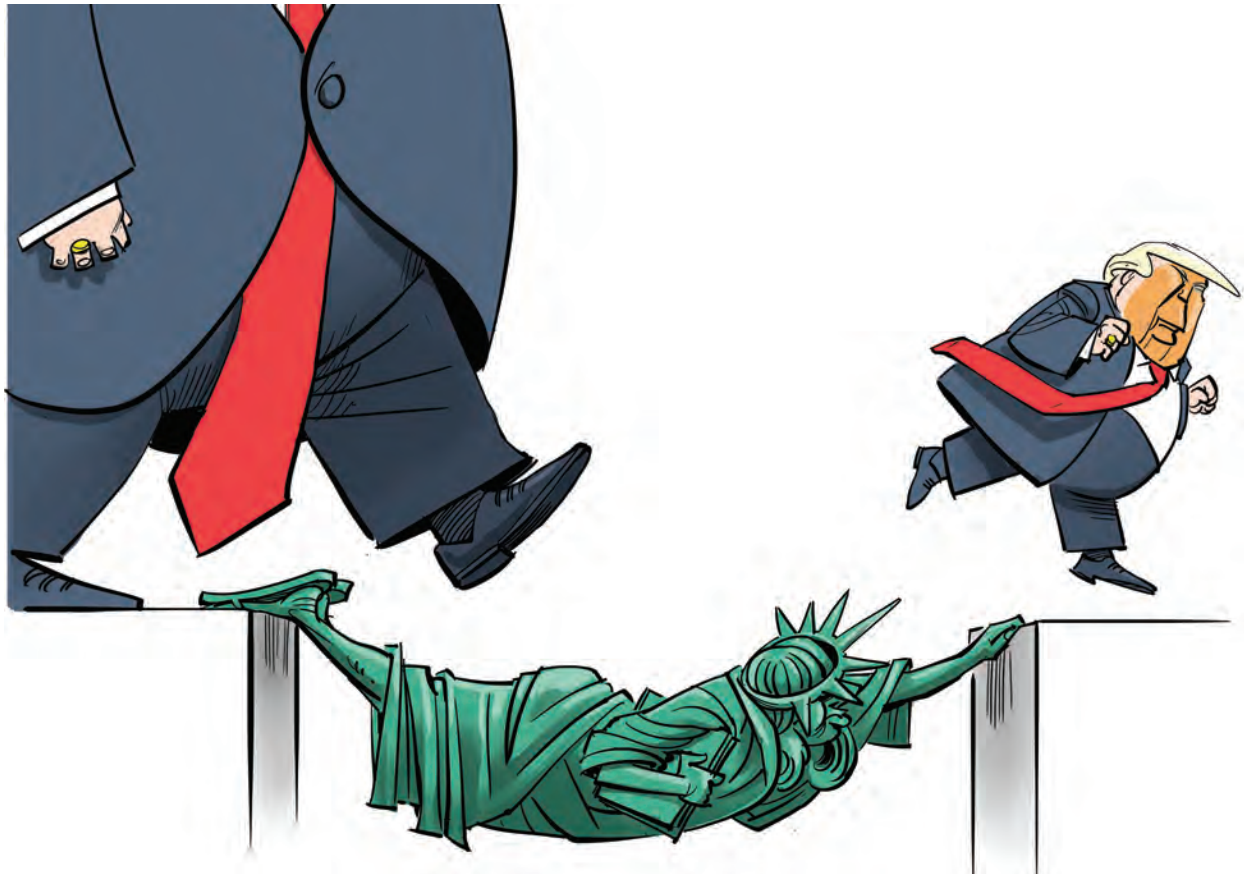
Addressing this level of need is even more pressing given Vermont's ranking as the third-highest state in the nation for tax collections per capita, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Property and individual income taxes remain Vermont's largest sources of revenue—placing additional stress on families and businesses already struggling with limited housing options and rising costs. While Band-Aid solutions might feel appealing, real progress requires honest conversations, a shared commitment, and a willingness to embrace compromise. We need solutions that tackle the root causes, not just the symptoms.

Last year's success in modernizing Act 250 demonstrated how stakeholders with historically opposing sides commit to working together, and in doing so, real progress can be made—even when the process is challenging, and compromises are required. By remaining fully engaged and working through disagreements, participants honored diverse perspectives and paved the way for continued collaboration, providing a blueprint for how to accomplish meaningful change. This model of purposeful engagement—where people listen to different viewpoints, set aside rhetoric, and remain focused on shared goals—must be a cornerstone of how we move forward in Montpelier and beyond. As we look ahead, whether in the State House, the boardroom, or around the kitchen table, we must prioritize this spirit of cooperation to address our affordability crisis and build a stronger future for businesses and communities across the state.

The Vermont Chamber will advocate for thoughtful, data-driven policies that reduce costs, grow our economy, and create opportunities for all Vermonters. Challenges, from

Meeting current housing demand will require tripling Vermont's housing output to produce 36,000 new units by 2029.

Affordability crisis → 14



The new Trump by Hajo de Reijger, The Netherlands

LETTERS

Vermont Saves makes saving for retirement an easy resolution

Dear Editor,

As we welcome the New Year, many Vermonters set resolutions to build new skills, improve their health, or spend more time with loved ones. This year, let's add a resolution that really pays off: saving for retirement.

Saving for retirement can be daunting, especially for Vermonters living paycheck to paycheck and struggling to make ends meet. While it can be difficult to know where or how to begin, it's crucial to start saving as early as possible, and saving a small amount regularly can add up significantly over time.

Studies show that individuals with access to a workplace retirement plan are 15 times more likely to save for their future, but nearly half of working-age Vermonters aren't offered a retirement plan through their employer. These rates are even higher among women, BIPOC Vermonters, and residents of our rural communities. Unfortunately, many of these workers aren't saving

anything for retirement.

To help Vermonters secure their financial future and retire with dignity, the Treasurer's Office recently launched Vermont Saves, a new retirement program for working Vermonters who aren't offered a retirement plan through their employer. The program is of no cost to Vermont employers.

Employers with 5 or more employees who do not currently offer a retirement plan will be required to register for Vermont Saves by the end of February 2025. Their employees will then be automatically enrolled in a Roth IRA account, with flexible options to save for retirement at their own pace.

Employees can set their contribution rate or use the program default, which is 5% of their pay. They can also choose from a menu of investment options or be enrolled by default in a target-date fund based on their age. Savers can always access their contributions or opt out of the program at any time.

Vermont Saves opened
Vt Saves → 12

We won't forget Vermonters

Dear Editor,

More than any post-election period that I can recall, Vermonters remain heavily engaged since November's election. So engaged that many want to know why the problems highlighted on Nov. 5 haven't already been fixed: education property taxes, housing affordability and availability, healthcare costs, public safety, and the Clean Heat Standard.

This urgency, like the election, is yet another indicator of the frustration and desperation that many Vermonters are experiencing. Families with budgets already underwater or slightly above are now questioning whether they can remain in Vermont. An end to the supermajority, while welcomed, is not an answer to a myriad of self-inflicted systemic problems facing Vermont.

The Legislature will be sworn in on Jan. 8 and then must quickly organize and get to work while waiting for January's revenue forecast, Governor Scott's proposed budget, and warned school district budgets. While these

fiscal clues will be relevant to solving Vermonters' near-term problems, the Legislature needs to continue to focus on the difficult work of passing systemic change.

For some, the most difficult part of passing systemic change will be confronting well-resourced special interest organizations that have been behind a myriad of self-serving policies and programs that do not serve Vermonters well and have caused countless negative unintended consequences. Vermonters must remain engaged with their legislators and continue to demand change that addresses Vermont's affordability and public safety crisis. Legislator voting records are publicly available and serve as a convenient scorecard.

Every election is important, and individually, they teach us different lessons. Nov. 5 was a stark reminder to many legislators that job one is to represent their constituents and that a voting record is a legislator's bond. Well-meaning attempts to make Vermont more affordable by making

Won't forget → 12

CAPITAL QUOTES

On Jan. 6, U.S. lawmakers came together to certify the results of the 2024 presidential election. The tone of the occasion was a stark contrast to the events four years prior when, on Jan. 6, 2021, supporters of the former and now-re-elected president stormed the nation's capital in protest over the unfounded and deliberate lie that the 2020 election was "rigged." Representatives from each party had different reactions to a day that many will never forget, and others wish never to remember.

"Four years ago, a violent mob desecrated our Capitol to overturn a free and fair election and upend our democracy. I was in the House chamber on that very dark day when law enforcement and others lost their lives and were injured over false allegations about the 2020 election—claims that Donald Trump perpetuated and has continued to repeat. This tragic anniversary is a reminder that the results of our elections must be respected, regardless of whether or not we like those results. Today, Congress rightfully certified the results of the election and respected the will of the American people,"

said Senator **Peter Welch**, D-Vt.

"Individuals entered the Capitol, took photos, and explored the building before leaving," and have since been hunted down and treated unjustly,"

said Representative **Mike Collins**, R-Ga., on X.

"In time, there will be Americans who didn't witness the Jan. 6 riot firsthand but will learn about it from footage and testimony of that day, from what is written in history books, and from the truth we pass on to our children. We cannot allow the truth to be lost,"

President **Joe Biden** said in an op-ed published by The Washington Post.

"Most likely, I'll do it very quickly. Those people have suffered long and hard. And there may be some exceptions to it. I have to look. But, you know, if somebody was radical, crazy..."

said President-elect **Donald Trump** in a recent NBC Meet the Press interview, regarding the all but certain probability he will pardon a majority of Jan. 6 attackers.

← Okemo's early days:

from page 6

The decision to establish an on-mountain bed base was part of a vision to create a year-round family resort. It made Okemo one of the first ski areas in the U.S. to promote trailside homes and begin a mountainside village with ski-in/ski-out access.

The first construction of five homes began in 1961 and was followed by the development and sale of lots, construction of a base area motel-style ski lodge, and the continuation of land purchases for lot sales. In an effort to balance bed base with expanding mountain capacity, four-bedroom townhomes were built in the 1970s for the mountain, and Trailside Condominiums were built by a private developer. (There were an estimated 200-plus homes and condos with upwards of 1,500 beds in 1978.)

In 1980, Okemo hired Sno-Engineering, a renowned resort planner, to develop a new

master plan for the mountain. The 1982 Master Plan noted Okemo's potential to become a "major destination resort" but also spelled out deficits (inadequate base lodge space and need for replacing Pomalifts with chairlifts) and the need for \$8 million in improvements. It also noted the possibility of \$2 million in land sales from a 45-acre trailside property the area had purchased!

However, after two notoriously low natural snow seasons, banks were not in the lending mood. Stymied, the board faced the challenge of standing still and losing Okemo's edge or moving forward with a new owner with the means to make the necessary changes. To go from a shareholder-owned ski area to a private one was seen by the majority of shareholders as a necessary sacrifice and the only way to fulfill the mountain's potential.

When Tim and Diane Mueller became owners of Okemo, they were aware of the potential for building more ski-in/ski-out condominiums and homes as spelled out in the 1982 Master Plan. With prior experience in building homes in Vermont as well as in operating and enlarging a beach resort in the Caribbean, the Muellers saw the potential for Okemo to be a major New England destination resort.

Undaunted by the \$8 million in needed improvements — a hefty sum for a pair of 32-year-olds who didn't own a golden goose and had never been in the ski business — they put their confidence, energy, and experience into making Okemo a successful resort. They also emphasized customer service to their staff. This resulted in Okemo leading the ski industry in placing a priority on customer service in the early 1980s and gave the area a leg up on the competition.

The Muellers also put a priority on snowmaking and grooming. The area increased its daycare options, expanded its family and ski school programs (one of the first to welcome snowboarding and include snowboard lessons), added more packages, and

catered to youngsters by building a halfpipe (the first in Vermont) and new terrain parks. When guests requested more high-speed detachable quads for areas like Solitude Peak and South Face, Okemo obliged.

With the aforementioned on-mountain housing focus, Okemo had built 1,012 units for a total of 6,900 beds on the mountain by 1996, and by 2006 that number had risen to nearly 1,500 units for a total of well over 10,000 beds on the mountain, a record not only in Vermont but in the East as well at that time.

The combination of new lifts and trails along with expanded snowmaking and better grooming, improved service, the addition of the Jackson Gore complex and summer activities, and a huge marketing effort worked in tandem with Okemo's long-term "family image" and kept skiers and summer guests

Profits from real estate fueled mountain growth.

coming. Families loved the area and the convenience of slopeside housing and the many children's programs from childcare to ski school.

Profits from real estate fueled mountain growth but

these weren't the only source of revenues as Okemo was profitable from operations, including its ski school, which was innovative and successful starting in its early years. Together, profits were continuously reinvested in the mountain for Vermont's biggest snowball effect — a meteoric rise to No. 2 in the East for skier visits.

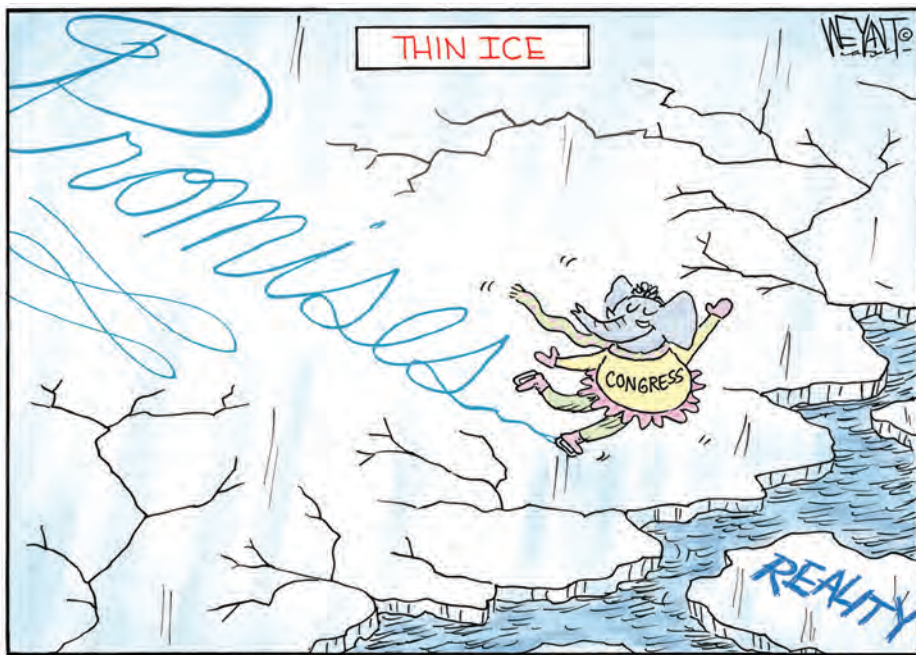
Okemo became so successful that it attracted the attention of Vail Resorts, which was looking to expand its family of mountain resorts to the East. Under Vail ownership since 2018, people have benefited from the Epic Pass and continued upgrades like new lifts.

Karen D. Lorentz is an author of books on Killington and Okemo. She is working on a history of Vermont skiing. Look for Part 3 next week, focusing on Killington.



Submitted
Instructor **Gordon Robbins** (aka *Grandpa Shred*) was among the first instructors to teach snowboarding at Okemo.

CARTOONS



GOP Congress skates towards thin ice by Christopher Weyant, CagleCartoons.com



The Thinker and Non-thinker by Pat Bagley, The Salt Lake Tribune, Utah



Trump threatens to annex Canada by Dave Whamond, Canada, PoliticalCartoons

← Won't forget: from page 10

it more expensive or solve world climate change in a small cold-climate state might sound great within the confines of Vermont's State House when chatting with lobbyists and advocates, but they don't look great when laid bare as a voting record at the feet of struggling Vermonters.

The lessons of Nov. 5 are real and were heard loud and clear by Vermont Senate Republicans. Vermonters have spoken; their voices deserve to be remembered and acted upon.

Scott Beck, St. Johnsbury
Editor's note: Beck is the Caledonia District state senator-elect and the incoming Senate Republican Minority Leader. He previously served 10 years in the Vermont House of Representatives.

← Vt Saves: from page 10

for enrollment in early December 2024 after earning unanimous support from the Legislature and Governor Scott in 2023. Our office has worked hard to launch the program ahead of schedule, expanding retirement access to Vermonters who have been historically left out and helping Vermonters start saving as soon as possible.

Eligible employers have already begun receiving information about enrollment, and many have already enrolled, enabling their employees to start saving. Importantly, Vermonters who are self-employed or work for an employer who isn't required to participate in the program may still be eligible to sign up for Vermont Saves directly.

The New Year is the perfect time to set goals and plan for the future. In 2025, I hope Vermonters will prioritize their financial well-being and save for a secure retirement.

No one should have to work their whole life and retire without savings. Vermont Saves provides an easy and affordable way for Vermonters to save for retirement, ensuring they can live with confidence and security in their golden years. I encourage all Vermonters to visit vtsaves.vermont.gov and, if eligible, participate in the program.

May your New Year be filled with joy, prosperity, and cherished time with loved ones.

Mike Pieciak, Vermont State Treasurer

← Rutland TIF: from page 1

in housing and commercial development. The TIF District is estimated to generate over \$58.4 million in new development value over the next two decades.

The TIF District Plan was spearheaded by the Rutland Redevelopment Authority (RRA) in partnership with White + Burke Real Estate Advisors.

Proposed TIF District projects include:

- **Downtown Hotel Development:** A seven-story, mixed-use hotel on Center Street that will add 99 hotel rooms, 26 residential units, and commercial spaces while addressing brownfields remediation, as well as water, sewer, and stormwater upgrades.
- **Lynda Lee Redevelopment:** This initiative will convert the historic factory site into a mixed-income housing development with ground-floor commercial units supported by infrastructure upgrades, brown-field remediation, and streetscape improvements.

"These investments will allow Rutland to address longstanding barriers to growth, including aging infrastructure, environmental remediation, and the high cost of redevelopment," said Ed Bove, planning director for the City of Rutland. "The TIF District is a critical tool to spur economic growth, attract new residents, and expand housing opportunities for all income levels."

The City anticipates VEPC's review and approval of the TIF District Plan by spring 2025, with initial infrastructure projects breaking ground in early 2026. Over the district's 20-year life, incremental tax revenue is projected to generate \$3.1 million for the City's General Fund and \$6.8 million for the

Education Fund.

TIF District project timeline:

- Spring 2025: Approval of the Master TIF District and first-phase projects are reviewed and approved by the Board of Aldermen.
- June 2025: Submit first phase projects to VEPC
- September 2025: Obtain first-phase approval
- November 2025: City-wide bond vote for infrastructure funding
- Winter 2025 / 2026: Incur first infrastructure project debt
- Spring 2026: Commencement of public infrastructure projects

What is Tax Increment Financing (TIF)?

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is an economic development tool designed to catalyze private development by removing key infrastructure barriers and using incremental tax revenues to cover the cost. In the communities that have implemented it thus far it has fostered the types of development Vermont has been encouraging for years and in the places it is wanted — such as downtowns, industrial parks, and compact village centers.

Rutland 360

Residents may have also heard these development initiatives referred to as "Rutland 360," which is the City's branded initiative dedicated to providing updates, resources, and information about the TIF District and related development projects. It's meant to serve as a one-stop hub for residents, businesses, and stakeholders to track progress, access documents, and stay informed about key milestones.

For more information, visit: rutlandvt-business.com/tax-increment-financing.

	<u>Barnard</u>	<u>Bridgewater</u>	<u>Killington</u>	<u>Plymouth</u>	<u>Pomfret</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Woodstock</u>
FY26 Est Equalized Tax Rate	\$2.0145	\$2.0145	\$2.0145	\$2.0145	\$2.0145	\$2.0145	\$2.0145
CLA	1.3900	1.4900	0.6300	0.6800	1.2700	1.3600	0.7900
Homestead Property Tax Rate	\$1.4493	\$1.3520	\$3.1976	\$2.9625	\$1.5862	\$1.4812	\$2.5500
FY25 Homestead Prop Tax Rate	\$1.6010	\$1.4011	\$3.1981	\$2.6895	\$1.6654	\$1.6640	\$2.6303
Increase(Decrease) from FY25	(\$0.1518)	(\$0.0491)	(\$0.0005)	\$0.2730	(\$0.0792)	(\$0.1828)	(\$0.0804)
Percentage Change from FY25	-9.48%	-3.51%	-0.02%	10.15%	-4.75%	-10.99%	-3.05%

Courtesy Ben Ford

The MVSU board approved its budget at its meeting, Jan. 6. The new budget keeps all academic programming, while trimming \$2.4 million from the budget and keeping tax rates flat or lower.

← MVSU budget:

from page 1

the board passed. That budget cut \$2.4 million of the \$3.3 million original goal, which means about \$900,000 will likely be assessed in the penalty phase, but it prevents cuts to academic programming.

Spending is flat, tax rates decrease for most

The MVSU board approved budget equates to lower tax rates in six of the seven district towns compared to the current fiscal year FY25. Only Plymouth, which is lagging in CLA and its reappraisal, will see an increased rate.

This is a welcomed change from last year's budget, which saw 29%, 30%, 36% increases in Killington, Woodstock and Plymouth, respectively.

But the tax rates and year-over-year comparisons don't tell the full story, Ford explained. "For towns who have done recent reappraisals, your tax rate is going to be applied to a new home value. For the towns who've done those reappraisals, I think it's four of our towns with Killington being the fifth planned for this year, the increases to property value are far more meaningful than the decreases to tax rates. So... even if you've got a decrease to the tax rate, that increase to home value will cause an increase amount of taxes that a homeowner would need to pay."

The actual budget change from the current FY25 budget of \$30,429,153 to the FY26 proposed budget of \$30,773,078 is \$343,925 or a 1.12% increase.

The FY26 per pupil spend is estimated to be \$17,278.57 — up \$235.16 or 1.38% from FY25.

About \$300,000 increase in health care costs plus contractual staffing obligations (which make up about 80% of the total budget), contributed to making this year's budget \$3.3 million over the newly implemented penalty threshold this year, before the \$2.4 million in reductions were implemented.

Sports and co-curricular reduction

The 10% reduction to all sports and co-curricular budgets garnered little discussion from the board, except to explain that the \$71,495 projected savings was coming from a total combined budget of about 714,950 (10%) that is currently allocated across all sports and co-curricular activities middle through high school. The football budget, for example, is about \$7,000; the field hockey budget is \$1,100.

"That \$1,100 is for middle school through varsity," said Leanne Tapley, the Varsity field hockey coach who lives in Woodstock and has kids in seventh and ninth grade. "That gives me enough to get uniforms every three years... So it's a very small budget. We do mostly fundraising. We bake sale at every game. We do crazy amounts of fundraising just to get a program every year," she

added, emphasizing the important role sports play in education not only as a resume builder for college application but also as a draw to Woodstock from across the region. "I think you will find that a lot of students come to Woodstock High School

for athletics, and not so much fourth grade Spanish," she concluded.

Tuition increase

The MVSU board had approved a tuition rate for FY26 of \$21,010 for high school students in November. The \$1,500 increase voted on Jan. 6 now makes that rate \$22,510. For elementary school the rate will increase from \$18,180 to \$19,680. For Pre-K it would be \$12,120.

Monday night was the first time the board had discussed raising the tuition by \$1,500.

Ben Ford, MVSU board member from

Woodstock and chair of its finance committee, explained: "Looking at what's allowable for the school district to set our tuition rates, and recognizing that our taxpayers

have been hit hard by these tax increases over the last several years, we thought we could share that burden with the choice towns who would send students to our district," he said, adding that the increase would result in about \$120,000 in additional local revenue, which would in turn, "reduce taxes in that amount once we enter the formula."

"Those tuition dollars are public dollars, tax dollars paid by the towns who send students to our schools," he clarified. "It's not private tuition. It doesn't come [directly] out of a family's budget."

Ray Rice, who represents Pittsfield but is not a voting member of the MVSU board,

requested the board consider reducing the increase to \$1,000. That suggestion was not taken up for discussion.

Tough decisions, balance and compromise required

"My main takeaway on all this is that when you're in a budget constrained situation, you need to make compromises," said MVSU board member Anne Karl from Killington in an interview Tuesday. "I think the goal was to try to preserve as much of the academic programming as possible, while also keeping rates flat for taxpayers. And we got there. Is it the perfect solution? I don't know, but we did achieve those goals of protecting the academic program and keeping tax rates flat. So that seems like a win," she said explaining why she voted yes for the proposed budget.

"There are also so many formulas and changes that could happen late in the game that will have impacts," Karl continued. "I understand that the system is designed to be incredibly fair across districts, but it is so complicated that it just makes it very difficult for the school district and for the taxpayers. It creates this challenging situation where, even when you're doing your absolute best to balance student needs with the needs of taxpayers, it's hard to know if you're hitting the right mark, because there are so many wild cards from the state."

"We're trying to balance competing

needs, and it's tough," Karl summarized. "That's always tough, and you have to make compromises. This felt like a reasonable compromise."

Katie Reed, the other MVSU

board member from Killington, was one of three that voted against the proposed budget. The other two members were Josh Linton of Plymouth and Heather Lawler from Barnard.

While Reed did not explain her choice during Monday's meeting, she did in an interview Tuesday: "The reason I voted against the budget last night is fundamentally I cannot support a budget that takes the town into a penalty phase. It's incredibly cavalier for people to come forward and say it's not that big a deal... it doesn't sit very comfortably with me putting that additional burden on our taxpayers," she said.

"I actually feel very good about the conversations that we had at our December meeting and much of that was reflected in Option 6... 10% cut to athletics while your knee gut reaction is 'oh my god, that sucks,' we already have systems in place to offset some of that. There's already booster clubs... I think the example given at the meeting last night was an \$1,100 field hockey budget, 10% is \$110, I think we can find ways to cover that," she added.

When asked what she would support cutting to get the budget down \$900,000 and out of the penalty phase, Reed said, "That's not an easy thing to say, because cutting our way is not viable. I think that we're in the process of the snowball effect if we keep cutting... it's really forcing families to make difficult decisions about where they live, according to their taxes and according to the quality of education their kids receive. I don't think a viable option is cutting UA, and I agree 100% with putting that back in but I do think there are plenty of other ways to cut."

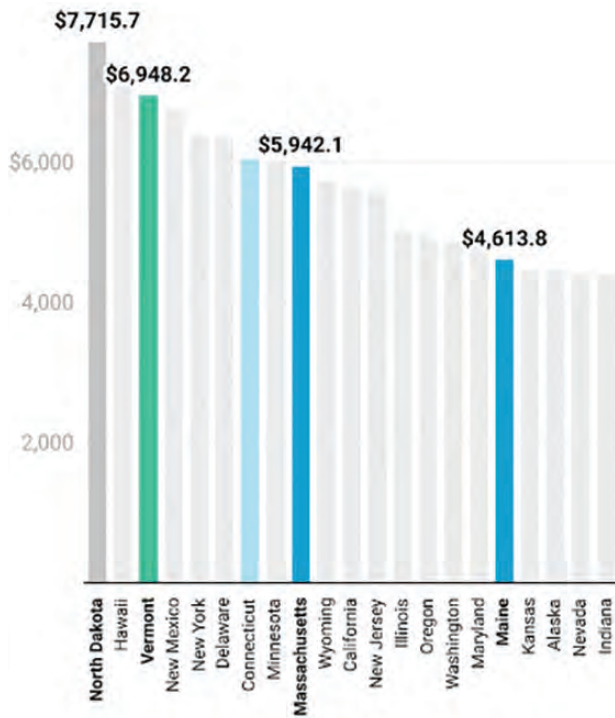
"I thought that the cut to athletics, like I mentioned, was definitely a step in the right direction, and I appreciated that compromise... So what I would support is continued discussions on other ways that aren't teaching positions... I think that we could be more economical and how we use the facilities that we have," she said.

Reed also acknowledged that the difference in Killington's tax rate from the budget proposal Dec. 16 that cut \$450,000 from UA to the one adopted Jan. 6, was just 3%.

"Yes, it's important to remember that the budget still does include a good amount of cuts [\$2.4 million] which includes an entire Pre K classroom from Killington," Reed concluded.

Brian Manion, a father of a 1-, 2-, and 3-year-old from Woodstock who was attending the meeting remotely along with about 40 others, spoke up in support of the approved budget and its commitment to educational excellence. "I think that scenarios is absolutely the best course forward," he said. "I can say just from personal experience (we moved here about a year ago) that one of the major reasons why we decided to move to Woodstock was because of the quality of the education."

Voters in the seven MVSU district towns will ultimately have the final say on whether to support or reject this budget on Town Meeting Day, March 4.



Submitted
Vermont ranks third in the nation for tax collections per capita, with property and individual income taxes being the largest sources of revenue. Most New England states rank in the top half, except New Hampshire, which is the lowest in the U.S.

← **Affordability crisis:**
from page 10

housing shortages to healthcare costs, do not rest on the shoulders of any one party, organization, or community. Making meaningful reforms will require all stakeholders—legislators, administration officials, advocates, businesses, and individuals—to engage in difficult conversations and embrace compromise. Only through a shared sense of responsibility—and shared accountability for the outcomes—can we create the conditions for inclusive and forward-thinking problem-solving. Blame and partisanship must give way to open-minded discussion and creative ideas that improve Vermonters’ lives.

Blame and partisanship must give way to open-minded discussion and creative ideas.

As we begin the new legislative session, we call on our leaders to remain engaged in discussions, continue the dialogue, and keep conversations focused on results. It’s time to move beyond rhetoric and engage in the real work of making Vermont more affordable and sustainable for all. By doing so, we can ensure our state’s economy remains vibrant, our communities remain livable, and our future remains bright.

← **Ray Garrett:**
from page 5

trees gave him peace.

In Killington, Ray found a tremendous tribe of friends and enjoyed every day in the snow. For 35 years, Ray worked as a boot fitter, becoming a certified pedorthist. Ray developed exceptional skills and tremendous patience, allowing him to help people enjoy their time in the snow.

Ray is survived by his wife, Colleen; mother, Peggy (James); brothers, Michael

(Leah), Mark, and Jeff; nieces Maddie (Nick), Tyler, Erin, and Claire; nephews, Ian, Nathan, and Adam; great-nephews Garrett and Alaric; and his in-laws, Jeannie, Johnnie, Susan, Heather, and Tom.

There will be a Remembrance of Ray on Jan. 12 from 4-7 p.m. at the Killington Grand Hotel in Killington. A June 1 gathering is also being planned on Martha’s Vineyard.

← **Investigation leave:**
from page 7

sive paid leave. While wages paid by the state have stretched above \$2.6 million this year, additional benefits like health care add substantially to the overall cost.

Data suggests that many investigations find allegations to be unsubstantiated, and very few result in termination. Yet the total hours of paid investigative leave — more than 86,000 by mid-December, or about 16 weeks per employee under investigative leave — suggest that employees regularly spend months getting paid to sit at home.

Hoffer’s office audited paid leave for state employees during misconduct investigations about eight years ago. He said he was disappointed that, since then, there appeared to be little legislative appetite for addressing the phenomenon.

“I found it frustrating, to be very honest, that the Legislature didn’t seem particularly interested,” he said.

Temporary relief from duty can end in a variety of ways. An employee may be reprimanded or suspended. They could reach a negotiated agreement with the state. Or, as has occurred in a plurality of cases in recent years, the investigation could determine the alleged misconduct is unsubstantiated.

Fastiggi said she’s never seen her department undertake as many investigations as it has this year. Part of the increase comes from a June 2023 change in policy that expanded the types of incidents supervisors have to report from harassment and discrimination to include all forms of alleged misconduct.

Data shows that the overall number of misconduct investigations — not all of which lead to paid leave — has increased steadily since 2020 but even more quickly since June 2023, following the updating of personnel policy.

Fastiggi said human resources investigations involve interviews with witnesses, the complainant, and the person who allegedly committed the misconduct. Staff review emails and other documents, culminating in a report with recommendations. Ultimately, the agency or departmental “appointing authority” — a commissioner, a secretary, or their designee—decides how or whether to reprimand an employee.

The state’s human resources department has an investigative team of six, according to Fastiggi, with about 30 “field staff” who can also assist in misconduct investigations.

When serious discipline is considered—demotion, suspension, or termination—the employee receives written notice and has the opportunity to meet with their department or agency’s appointing authority. Employees also have the opportunity to grieve their punishments, and eventually, cases can reach the Vermont Labor Relations Board.

The Dept. of Human Resources’ data indicates the spike in the cost of paid leave is driven more by the length of leave than the number of employees on leave, though both have increased.

As has long been the case, the Dept. of Corrections has the highest number of employees on leave at the greatest overall cost, with 73 employees on investigative leave at various points this year. That is 7.9% of the department’s total employees, and their investigative leave wages cost more than \$1.35 million as of Dec. 12.

According to employee counts from the state Agency of Administration, the Vermont Veterans’ Home, which has had 11 employees on investigative leave this year, has a nearly identical rate of paid leave as the corrections department, at 7.9% of the staff there.

Hoffer, the state auditor, discovered similar trends in his 2017 reports.

Steve Howard, executive director of the Vermont State Employees’ Association, said the biggest complaint he hears about investigative leave is the length of the process, which he called a “morale-killer.”

“They want the investigation to be done as soon as possible,” Howard said of his union’s members.

Howard said that in some instances, employees remain on leave even after investigations are completed. According to Howard, resolving conflict directly between an employee and manager could speed up the process and prevent conflict from escalating, an improvement over the centralized human resources system currently in place.

Given staffing shortages across state government, Howard said it was incumbent on management to resolve investigations quickly. That’s especially true for corrections staff, Howard said, who are particularly overworked.

“They’re under very strict, maybe undue, scrutiny because they’re in one of the most difficult, challenging jobs in all of state government,” he said.

And while Howard wasn’t aware of this year’s spike in investigative leave, he said he’d heard from union members that the Dept. of Human Resources was becoming “very aggressive on discipline.”

Fastiggi didn’t point to one single factor behind 2024’s increasing cost. She noted that the Department of Corrections was “driving” the number of staff on paid leave and that overall volume and the length of investigations were likely factors.

While the Dept. of Human Resources didn’t provide data on the average length of an investigation, the total number of investigations and total number of hours suggests an average of about 640 hours per employee on leave in 2024 — equal to 80 days, or 16 weeks of work. That’s up from about 63 days in 2023.

The length of investigations is increasing slightly faster than the overall number of paid leave investigations, which rose from 113 in 2023 to 135 by mid-December 2024.

By Dec. 12 of this year, 68 investigations involving paid leave had been resolved in 2024, according to the department. Of those, 25 resulted in unsubstantiated findings, 19 led to supervisory feedback, and three fell under the category “termination/involuntary.” Other resolutions included suspensions, oral reprimands and stipulated agreements (six instances) — negotiated resolutions between employer and employee.

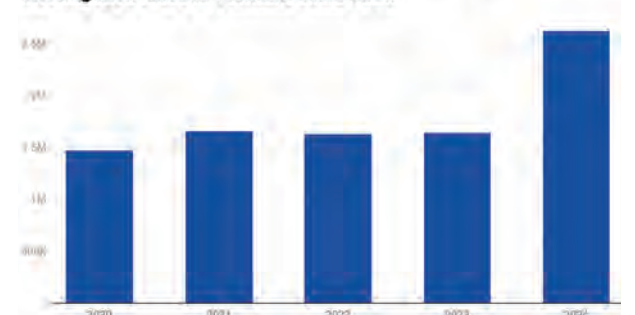
Former Secretary of Human Services Mike Smith tried to do away with stipulated agreements within his agency’s departments around 2020. They’ve since been used with much less frequency, data indicates.

Fastiggi didn’t point to one single factor behind 2024’s increasing cost. She noted that the Department of Corrections was “driving” the number of staff on paid leave, and that both overall volume and the length of investigations were likely factors.

But investigations take time, and the more serious allegations take longer to investigate and adjudicate, according to Fastiggi.

“We want to make sure all employees have due process, as well as ensuring we have safe workplaces for our employees,” she said.

Amount of money distributed to state workers for paid investigative leave in Vermont since 2020



Courtesy Natalie Williams/VTDigger, Vt Dept of Human Resources
Chart shows the amount of money distributed to state employees that received investigative leave over the past five years since 2020. Data runs through Dec. 12, 2024.

WORDPLAY

DOG TRAINING WORD SEARCH

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally and backwards

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

- ACQUIRE
- ADAPTATION
- AGGRESSION
- ALPHA
- ANXIETY
- AROUSAL
- BARKING
- BEHAVIOR
- BEHAVIORIST
- CLICKER
- COLLAR
- CONDITIONING
- DESENSITIZATION
- DISTRESS
- DOMINANCE
- ENVIRONMENT
- FEAR
- FOCUS
- INHIBITION
- LEAD
- MODIFICATION
- POSITIVE
- REINFORCEMENT
- TRAINER

SUDOKU

Solutions → 30

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.

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

Level: Intermediate

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Solutions → 30

CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Hand (Spanish)
- 5. Siskel and ___ critics
- 10. Seaman
- 12. Chemical weapon
- 14. One who eliminates
- 16. They precede C
- 18. Baseball stat
- 19. Americans' "uncle"
- 20. Cassia tree
- 22. Surround
- 23. Crisp and Pebbles are two
- 25. A sudden very loud sound
- 26. Affirmative
- 27. Disadvantage
- 28. Corpuscle count (abbr.)
- 30. OJ trial judge
- 31. New York art district
- 33. Become more bleak
- 35. Upstate NY city
- 37. Clarified butters
- 38. One who witnesses
- 40. Condemn
- 41. ___ juris
- 42. Natural
- 44. Prohibit
- 45. Swiss river
- 48. Greek war god

- 50. 5 iron
- 52. New Zealand mountain parrot
- 53. Scandinavian surname
- 55. Follows sigma
- 56. Doctor of Education
- 57. Spanish be
- 58. One that feeds on bugs
- 63. Tooth issue
- 65. Get into
- 66. Lumps of clay
- 67. Overly studious student

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Variety of Chinese
- 2. Boxing's GOAT
- 3. Japanese classical theater
- 4. Prayer
- 5. Inspire with love
- 6. Ballplayers' accessory
- 7. Retailer payment system
- 8. More raw
- 9. Atomic #81
- 10. Fencing sword
- 11. Hostilities
- 13. Sea dweller
- 15. Resinlike substance secreted by certain insects
- 17. Businessmen
- 18. Rest here please (abbr.)
- 21. Loud devices

		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				60	61	62			
	63	64						65						
		66						67						

- 23. Make a soft murmuring sound
- 24. One point west of due south
- 27. Trout
- 29. Type of grass
- 32. South American plant
- 34. Letter of the Greek alphabet
- 35. Not secure
- 36. Traveler
- 39. Sweet potato
- 40. Period after sunrise and before sunset
- 43. Some are choppy
- 44. Asian country
- 46. Genus of mosquitoes
- 47. Cool!
- 49. Shri!l, wailing sound
- 51. A baglike structure in a plant or animal
- 54. Within
- 59. Unhappy
- 60. Decorate a cake with frosting
- 61. Videocassette recorder
- 62. Largest English dictionary (abbr.)
- 64. It cools a home

GUESS WHO?

I am a member of the British royal family, born in England on January 9, 1982. I studied art history as a student, and I met my future husband at school. We dated for nine years before getting married in 2011. I am known for supporting a number of charities.

Answer: Catherine, Princess of Wales

LOCAL PEOPLE. LOCAL SERVICE.

HOME COMFORT ALL SEASON LONG!

- **HEATING** - Boilers, Furnaces, Space Heating
- **Heat pumps**
- **Water heaters**
- **Generators**
- **Smart Home**
- **Fuel Stops**
- **Fuel storage tanks**
- **Propane & Fuel Delivery**
- **Tank monitoring**
- **24/7 Emergency Service**



Call us now at 866-395-7220

WED
1/8

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.

Guided Snowshoe Hike

10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Park Forest Center, Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park, Woodstock. Free. Join a Park Naturalist for a snowshoe hike to explore winter trails and nature's wonders. All skill levels welcome. Pre-registration required. Equipment rentals available at Woodstock Nordic Center. nps.gov/mabi/events.

Michelob ULTRA Ski Bum Race Series

10 a.m.-2 p.m. Wednesday through March 12. Highline ski trail, Killington Resort, Killington. \$60 per individual. Open to skiers, snowboarders, and telemark skiers ages 21+. Compete weekly for Ski Bum glory, followed by après parties with food, drink specials, and prizes from 4-6 p.m. Training course available 10 a.m.-noon. Registration required. killington.com/ski-bum-race-series.

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.

The Role of an End-of-Life Doula

1 p.m. Bugbee Senior Center, 262 North Main St., White River Junction. Free. Kasey March, a trained end-of-life doula, discusses the challenges of end-of-life care and how to navigate them. Learn about the support a death doula provides during this important stage. bugbeecenter.org.

Diabetes Support Group

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

Public Skating

2-3:40 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.

Cribbage for Adults

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

Public Skate

3-5 p.m. Giorgetti Arena, 2 Oak St. Ext., Rutland. \$5 for city residents, \$8 for nonresidents, and \$5 skate rentals. rutlandrec.com/giorgetti.

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.

Diabetes Support Group

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

Learn to Curl

8-8:30 p.m. Giorgetti Arena, 2 Oak St. Ext., Rutland. Check site for pricing and details. rutlandrec.com/giorgetti.

THURS
1/9

Riding with Researchers

8 a.m.-4 p.m. Vermont Institute of Natural Science (VINS), 149 Natures Way, Quechee. General Public: \$125, VINS Members: \$112. Join the VINS Research team for a day-long exploration of Addison County, Vermont's winter raptor hotspot. Participants will search for hawks and owls, observe trapping and banding efforts, and learn about raptor ecology and field identification. Registration required makeup date is Jan. 10. vinsweb.org.

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.

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.

Lunchtime Skate

11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Giorgetti Arena, 2 Oak St. Ext., Rutland. Discounted admissions and skate rentals. Check site for pricing and details. rutlandrec.com/giorgetti.

Chaffee: Artery

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

Ukelele Group

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

Play Bridge!

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

Trivia Night

7-9 p.m. Norman Williams Public Library, 10 The Green, Woodstock, VT 05091. Free. Join this BYOB trivia night hosted by Pub Geeks, featuring questions on pop culture, sports, history, and books. Teams can win bragging rights and a spot on the digital display board. Snacks provided; donations appreciated. Registration optional at Programs@NormanWilliams.org. normanwilliams.org.

INTRODUCTION TO TROUT FISHING THROUGH THE ICE

SATURDAY @ 8 A.M.



Stick &

7:45-9:15 p.m. Giorgetti Arena, 2 Oak St. Ext., Rutland. \$5 for city residents, \$8 for nonresidents, and \$5 skate rentals. rutlandrec.com/giorgetti.

Puck

FRI
1/10

Friends of the Rutland Free Library Book Sales

10 a.m.-2 p.m. Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St., Rutland, VT 05701. By donation. Browse thousands of gently used books, CDs, DVDs, puzzles, and rare selections. Proceeds support library programs and projects. Limit two grocery bags per family; no book dealers. rutlandfree.org.

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.

Women's First Fridays - Wellness

11 a.m.-2 p.m. Jackson's Gore Courtyard, 77 Okemo Ridge Road, Ludlow. Join this women-focused event for a Group Ski and Ride at 11:30 a.m., followed by a yoga fitness class from 1-2 p.m. at the Spring House. A valid 24-25 Season Epic Pass or paid lift ticket is required for the ski portion. Registration required. okemo.com.

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.

Stick & Puck

1:30-2:50 p.m. Union Arena, 80 Amsden Way, Woodstock. \$10 per session. Helmet required; other gear strongly recommended. unionarena.net.

Stick & Puck

3-5 p.m. Giorgetti Arena, 2 Oak St. Ext., Rutland. \$5 for city residents, \$8 for nonresidents, and \$5 skate rentals. rutlandrec.com/giorgetti.

West Coast Swing Dance Classes

5:30-6:30 p.m. West Rutland Town Hall (upstairs), 35 Marble St., West 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.

Movie Night: 'Little Women'

6 p.m. Artstree Community Arts Center & Gallery, 2095 Pomfret Rd., South Pomfret. Adults 18+: \$10, Children/Seniors: \$8. Enjoy an evening of knitting, tea, and the film "Little Women". Bring your craft project and join fellow crafters for a movie night with complimentary teas and treats. All ages welcome. artstreecommunityartscenter.thundertix.com/events/239170.

RIDING WITH RESEARCHERS

THURSDAY 8 A.M.-4 P.M.



Calendar: Email events@mountaintimes.info from page 16

Public Skate

6:30-8:30 p.m. Giorgetti Arena, 2 Oak St. Ext., Rutland. \$5 for city residents, \$8 for nonresidents, and \$5 skate rentals. rutlandrec.com/giorgetti.

SAT
1/11

Introduction to Trout Fishing Through the Ice

8-11 a.m. Knapp Pond #2, 1426 Knapp Pond Road., Cavendish. Free. This hands-on clinic covers ice fishing techniques for trout, including safety, equipment, and best practices. Registration required. register-ed.com/events/view/222279.

Billings Backyard Workshop: 'Visible Mending'

10-11:30 a.m. Billings Farm & Museum, 69 Old River Road., Woodstock. \$15/person, \$10/member. Learn creative mending techniques with local fiber artist Tiana St. James. Transform worn garments into revitalized pieces using sewing, darning, and decorative stitching. Workshop includes a 30-minute Q&A. Registration required. billingsfarm.org/billings-backyard.

Friends of the Rutland Free Library Book Sales

10 a.m.-2 p.m. Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St., Rutland, VT 05701. By donation. Browse thousands of gently used books, CDs, DVDs, puzzles, and rare selections. Proceeds support library programs and projects. Limit two grocery bags per family; no book dealers. rutlandfree.org.

Vermont Winter Farmers Market

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

Rutland Railway Association & Model Club

11 a.m.-3 p.m. 79 Depot Lane, Center Rutland. See an operating HO scale model railroad set up and displays of hundreds of rare or antique model trains, photographs, signs and more. facebook.com/p/Rutland-RailwayAssociation-100066761013097/.

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.

Opening Reception: 'Hiding in Plain Sight'

2-3:30 p.m. Mezzanine Gallery, Norman Williams Public Library, 10 The Green, Woodstock. Free. Meet artist Amy Schachter at the opening reception of her "Hiding in Plain Sight" exhibition. Enjoy light refreshments and engage in a Q&A session. normanwilliams.org.

Ride Another Day: Chauncy Johnson Meet-Up

3-5 p.m. K-1 Lodge, Killington Resort, 4763 Killington Road, Killington. Free. Meet Snow Angel Foundation founder Chauncy Johnson and learn about the Ride Another Day campaign, promoting safety in snow sports. Includes a raffle to benefit the Snow Angel Foundation. snowangelfoundation.org.

'New Dances Dawning'

4 p.m. Casella Theater, VT State University Castleton, 62 Alumni Dr., Castleton. \$15-\$25, children under 10 Free. The Marble Valley Dance Collective presents an evening of live dance featuring original choreography in styles such as modern, tap, jazz, and contemporary. Tickets available at the door or at marblevalleydancecollectivevt.

Public Skate

4:15-5:45 p.m. Wendell A. Barwood Arena, 451 Highland Ave., White River Junction. \$5 per person; skate rentals and sharpening available for \$5 each. Season passes also available. Enjoy public skating at this family-friendly venue. hartfordvt.vtrec.com.

Stick & Puck

5:30-7 p.m. Giorgetti Arena, 2 Oak St. Ext., Rutland. \$5 for city residents, \$8 for nonresidents, and \$5 skate rentals. rutlandrec.com/giorgetti.

SUN
1/12

Stick & Puck

9:40-10:50 a.m. Union Arena, 80 Amsden Way, Woodstock. \$10 per session. Helmet required; other gear strongly recommended. unionarena.net.

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.

Open Mic Poetry

2 p.m. Phoenix Books, 2 Center St., Rutland. Free. Enjoy an afternoon of poetry by reading, listening, or both. Sign up to read at the door. Hosted by Bianca Amira Zanella, a Vermont-based performance poet and poetic medicine healer. Registration requested. phoenixbooks.biz.

MON
1/13

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.

Forestry and Forest Ecology in Vermont

5:30-6:30 p.m. Fletcher Memorial Library, 88 Main St., Ludlow. Free. Join County Forester Hannah Dallas for an overview of Vermont's forestry and forest ecology. Learn about historical landscape patterns, forest management goals, and techniques that mimic natural disturbances. Submit questions in advance to hannah.dallas@vermont.gov. fmlnews.org.

Drop-in COED Hockey

7:45-9:15 p.m. Giorgetti Arena, 2 Oak St. Ext., Rutland. \$5 for city residents, \$8 for nonresidents, and \$5 skate rentals. rutlandrec.com/giorgetti.

TUES
1/14

Intro to Cabochon Stone Setting

1-4 p.m. Tuesdays through Feb. 4. CraftStudies Studio & School, 87 Maple St., Hartford, VT 05001. \$250. Learn to add gems to your jewelry in this four-session class. Beginners will complete a pair of earrings, while returning students can enhance previous projects. Includes bench time and basic materials. Registration required. craftstudies.org.

Stick & Puck

1:30-3 p.m. Union Arena, 80 Amsden Way, Woodstock. \$10 per session. Helmet required; other gear strongly recommended. unionarena.net.

Handcraft Gathering

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

Alzheimer's Support Group

4-5 p.m., (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. chcrr.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. (Monthly) Courcelle Bldg, 16 North St. Ext., Rutland. Develop public speaking, listening, and leadership skills. Guests welcome. 802-775-6929. toastmasters.org.

DROP-IN COED HOCKEY

MONDAY @ 7:15 P.M.



Cuban Partner Dance

7:15-9 p.m. Tuesdays in January. St. Barnabas Church, 262 Main St., Norwich, VT. Beginner: \$25/4 weeks or \$10/class. Intermediate: Free with beginner class or \$10/class (instructor approval required). Learn the elegant Cuban dance "casino" in a welcoming community. No partner needed. Mini social dancing between classes. Bring clean shoes. uvcasineros.square.site.

ONGOING

Cooking Classes at Mission Farm

Check website for classes and registration. The Kitchen at Mission Farm, 316 Mission Farm Road, Killington. Learn to cook, host an event, or teach a class in Mission Farm's open kitchen space. missionfarmkitchen.org.

Okemo Innkeepers Race Series

Mondays, January - March, 10 a.m.-noon. Wardance slope, Okemo Mountain Resort, Ludlow. The 43rd annual race series welcomes skiers and snowboarders of all skill levels, ages 18-80, competing as teams or individuals. Enjoy a fun, competitive league with awards at season's end. Social gatherings follow on Monday evenings, 5-7 p.m., at local establishments. Contact Ken at okemoracing@gmail.com.

Skating Lessons

Tuesday Jan. 8 - March 5, 5:30-6:30 p.m., and Wednesdays, Jan. 9 - March 6, 4:20-5:20 p.m. Union Arena Community Center, 80 Amsden Way, Woodstock. Skating lessons for all abilities, including Snowplow Sam (ages 3-5), Basic Skills (ages 6+), and Pre-Free to Free Skate levels. Winter session includes participation in the Annual Ice Show on March 9. Registration and details at uaskateclub.com.

UPCOMING

Almost Queen: A Tribute to Queen

Jan. 17. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St., Rutland, VT. Tickets: \$45-\$65. Experience the music of Queen with Almost Queen, a band that captures the legendary group's iconic sound and energy with four-part harmonies, authentic costumes, and a meticulously curated setlist. Presented in partnership with Higher Ground Presents. paramountvt.org.

'Faces in Harmony' Exhibit

Jan. 24 - Feb 28. Chaffee Art Center, 16 South Main St., Rutland. Artwork submissions deadline is Jan. 10. Photo submission deadline is Jan. 18. chaffeeartcenter.org.

'Squid Game 2' continues its brilliant examination of class warfare

South Korea's limited series, "Squid Game," became a national sensation when it debuted in the U.S. in the fall of 2021. Its combination of hyper-violence and reality show meets "The Hunger Games" proved the perfect blend of entertainment for an audience still dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic and feeling that life's many challenges placed their odds for success at an off-kilter scale weighed heavily against them in favor of the wealthiest in society. Series creator Hwang Dong-hyuk tapped into something that resonated beyond his home country, and the result was an all-too-relatable tale of Goliath vs. David, with the decks stacked immeasurably in Goliath's favor.

For fans of the first iteration of "Squid Game," you'll remember that season ending with Seong Gi-hun, the divorced father and heavily indebted gambling addict, the sole survivor of a brutal series of games designed to test the limits of a struggling class of players' insatiable need and desire to keep participating in a contest designed to kill them, all for the chance to win a potential USD \$31 million. That amount won't put you on par with the Elon Musks of the world, but it will dig you out of most financial holes.

Along the way, Gi-hun learns valuable lessons. The most important: the best way to win at Squid Game is not to play. By the series' first season's end, Gi-hun makes it his mission to put a stop to these games once and for all.

When we pick up the action in "Squid Game 2," several years have passed since Season 1, and Gi-hun is no closer to finding the elite responsible for these nefarious games. Gi-hun devotes his amassed Squid Game fortune to hunting down the people involved and the mysterious and

elusive "Front Man," who, under a mask and black outfit, is the seeming current mastermind of the games.

Also on the hunt for the Front Man is Hwang Jun-ho, a police officer who, in searching for his lost brother in season 1, discovers the truth that his brother is the Front Man. The Front Man shoots Jun-ho towards the end of the first season, but we all knew he would survive his fall off a cliff into the ocean depths. And he does.

It doesn't take long in Season 2 before Jun-ho and Gi-hun meet up and join forces to take down the creators of the game. And it takes equally less time for their plans to go up in smoke, invoking the old adage, "The house always wins." And trying to beat the house is where the fun comes when watching "Squid Game 2."

Show creator Dong-hyuk makes a wise decision here. The novelty of the original season is gone. The audience knows what to expect or believes they know what to expect. And I suppose Dong-hyuk could have followed the exact blueprint and got an audience to tune in and enjoy by giving them nothing more than a new cast to root for and against. However, exploring the same territory twice would get old, and what makes "Squid Game 2" so entertaining is how Dong-hyuk subverts expectations and leans into darker themes. When Gi-hun re-enters the Squid Game (I'll leave how this occurs up to your viewing, but did you think he wasn't going to find a way back into the games?) he has a seeming advantage—he's played it and won. So, his first order of business is to try to save as many lives as possible for the other members playing.

The first game is the same red-light, green-light contest from season one, but this time, Gi-hun knows how to fool the game makers, and despite some of the other contes-

tants' reluctance to follow Gi-hun's lead, those who do make it across the finish line with their lives intact.

Much of the tension and drama of Season 2 comes between contests when the surviving players can decide if the games should continue or if the winning pot gets divided amongst those left. Gi-hun tries to warn the other contestants what will happen to them, and his belief in humanity tricks him into believing that, armed with information about how stacked the deck is against them, the players will wisely choose to opt-out. But as those elitists at the top have already figured out, people at the end of their rope will risk even their own lives for a shot at a financial windfall. This new crop of Squid Gamers has so much debt that it would take surviving several rounds of the game to amass a pot large enough to bail them out of their glum circumstances.

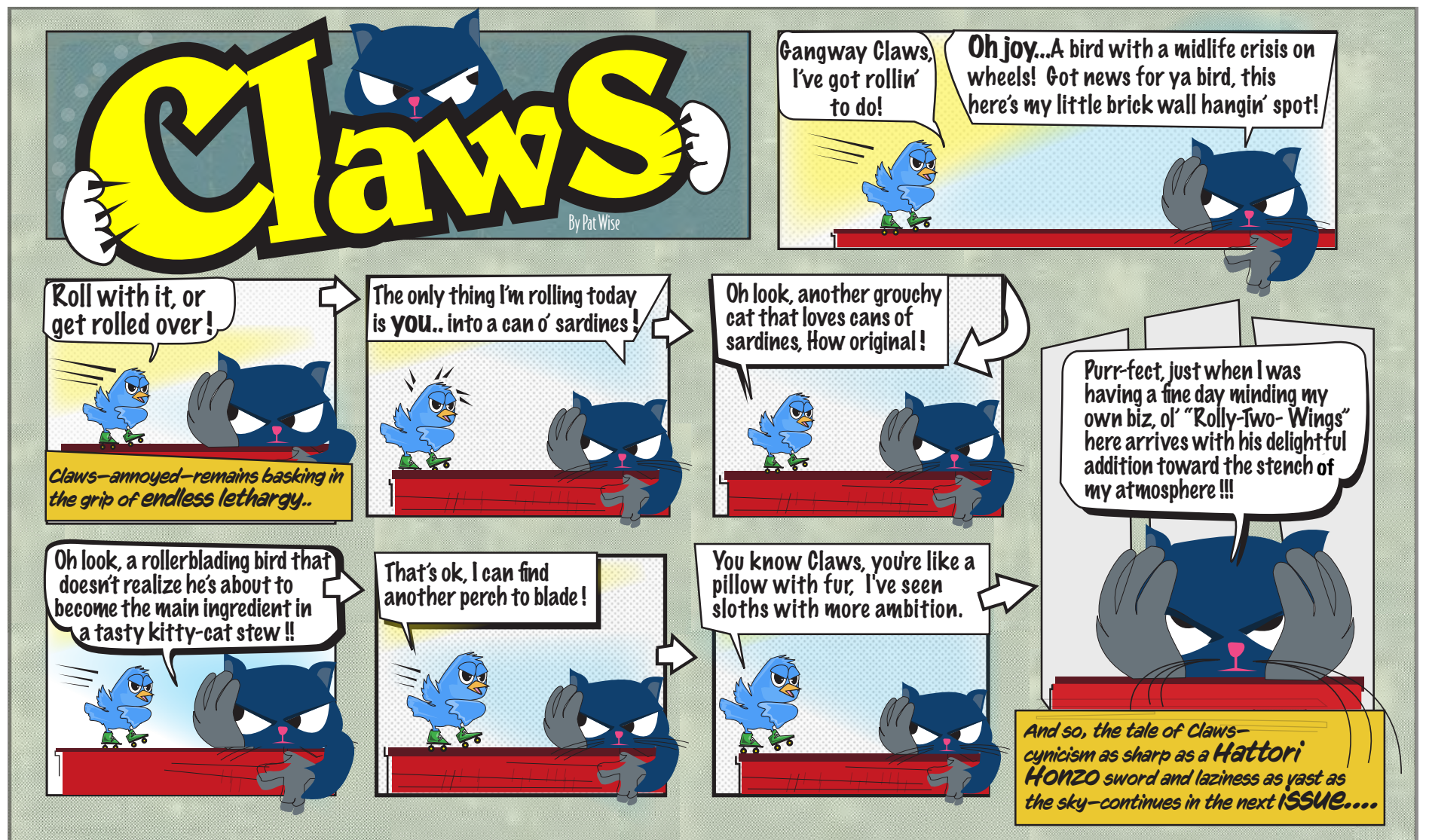
As an audience, we want to watch these players' poor decision-making with an air of disbelief, but we cannot. We recognize that the decision-making of those so desperate that they'd gamble their life for a chance to turn their fate around is all too prevalent in our society. We've seen how the masses in our country were willing to vote against their best interests, and for an upcoming administration who will have scarcely those interests in mind when they execute policies that will largely benefit the wealthy and the powerful, all for the remotest chance that they will somehow be the beneficiary of their cast ballot. What economic windfall are they hoping or expecting? It is unknown, but understanding such irrational thinking and behavior lends enormous credibility to buying in on the circumstances unfolding over these seven episodes. Yes, it may be cynical, but creator Dong-hyuk understands his audience of home viewers are willing to sit through

Screens & Streams → 27



Screens and Streams

By James Kent



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

WED
1/8

KILLINGTON

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge- Rhys Chalmers

6 p.m. Rivershed – Sammy B

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

LUDLOW

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

POULTNEY

7 p.m. Poultney Pub – Open Mic hosted by Danny Lang

QUECHEE

6 p.m. The Public House – Kim Wilcox

RUTLAND

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

THURS
1/9

BRANDON

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

KILLINGTON

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Chris Pallutto

2 p.m. Pico's Last Run Lounge – Daniel Brown

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

5 p.m. North Star Lodge Star Lounge – Nick Bredece

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

6 p.m. Rivershed – Rhys Chalmers

6 p.m. The Foundry – Liz Reedy

7 p.m. Pickle Barrel – Kashmir: The Spirit of Led Zeppelin

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

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

7 p.m. Off the Rails – Sammy B



POULTNEY

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

QUECHEE

6 p.m. Public House Pub – Trivia with Questionable Company

RUTLAND

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

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

WOODSTOCK

6 p.m. Ottawaquechee Yacht Club – Jim Yeager

FRI
1/10

CASTLETON

6 p.m. Blue Cat Bistro – Live Music

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

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Daniel Brown

2 p.m. Pico's Last Run Lounge – Chris Pallutto

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

4 p.m. The Foundry – Just Jamie

6 p.m. Rivershed – Rob Pagnano

7 p.m. Still on the Mountain – Nick Bredece

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

7:30 p.m. The Foundry – Marc Edwards

8 p.m. Pickle Barrel – Turning the Tide

9 p.m. Jax Food & Games – Just Jamie

9 p.m. Wobbly Barn – Changing Lanes

POULTNEY

6 p.m. Poultney Pub – Liz Reedy

QUECHEE

5 p.m. Harry's Cocktail Lounge – Peter Concilio Jazz Trio

5:30 p.m. Public House Pub – Rebecca Turmel

RUTLAND

6 p.m. Stonehedge Indoor Golf – Duane Carleton

9 p.m. Center Street Alley – DJ EG

WEST RUTLAND

7 p.m. American Legion – Karaoke with Sunset Entertainment

SAT
1/11

BRIDGEWATER

8 p.m. Woolen Mill Comedy Club – Comedy Show with headliners Jill Weiner & Rachel Lenihan

KILLINGTON

1 p.m. Bear Mountain Base Lodge – Nick Bredece

1 p.m. Pico's Last Run Lounge – Live Music

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Rhys Chalmers

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

4 p.m. Pickle Barrel – Jamie's Junk Show with special guest opener Jenny Porter & Krishna Guthrie

4 p.m. The Foundry – Carl Anton

5:30 p.m. Killington Wine Bar – Rick Webb

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

6 p.m. Preston's – Pete Meijer

6 p.m. Rivershed – Rob Pagnano

6:30 p.m. Still on the Mountain – Liz Reedy

7 p.m. North Star Lodge Star Lounge – Micah Iverson from The Voice

7 p.m. The Foundry – Jenny Porter

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

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

9 p.m. Pickle Barrel – Turning the Tide

9 p.m. Wobbly Barn – Changing Lanes

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

LONDONDERRY

2 p.m. Black Line Tavern at Magic Mountain – Sammy B

6 p.m. New American Grill – Nick Bredece

LUDLOW

9 a.m. Okemo's Sunburst Six Bubble Chair – Lift Line Dance Party with DJ Dave

2 p.m. Jackson Gore Courtyard – Après Afternoon with Dustin Marshall

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

PITTSFORD

8 p.m. Hilltop Tavern – DJ Dance Party

QUECHEE

5 p.m. Harry's Cocktail Lounge – Celtic with High Drive (Beth Telford & Justin Park)

5:30 p.m. Public House Pub – Arthur James

STOCKBRIDGE

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

WOODSTOCK

6:30 p.m. Ottawaquechee Yacht Club – Sleeveless Tease

SUN
1/12

BRIDGEWATER

CORNERS

3 p.m. Long Trail Brewery – Nick Bredece

KILLINGTON

Noon. Rivershed – Brunch with Rob Pagnano

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

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Chris Pallutto & Liz Reedy

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

6 p.m. Liquid Art – Tboneicus Jones

6 p.m. Rivershed – Trivia

6 p.m. Still on the Mountain – Open Mic hosted by Psylas

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

7 p.m. Pickle Barrel – Bermuda Search Party

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

LUDLOW

11 a.m. Okemo's Solitude Lift – Sunday's with Sammy B

QUECHEE

2 p.m. Harry's Cocktail Lounge – Jim Yeager

STOCKBRIDGE

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

MON
1/13

KILLINGTON

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Duane Carleton

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

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

6 p.m. The Foundry – Blues Night with John Lackard

8 p.m. Jax Food & Games – Rhys Chalmers

TUES
1/14

LONDONDERRY

6 p.m. New American Grill – Sammy B

LUDLOW

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

RUTLAND

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

WOODSTOCK

6:30 p.m. Ottawaquechee Yacht Club – Bluegrass etc. Jam with Ben Kogan

KILLINGTON

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Nick Bredece

6 p.m. Rivershed – Live Music

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

POULTNEY

6 p.m. Poultney Pub – Bluegrass Jam

RUTLAND

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



Blues Duo
You on acoustic guitar & me on harmonica

MR BLUES (802)775 3546
Music Help Wanted

Blues from the 1920's & 30's era...thru today

Great Breakfast & Brunch
MTWTF: 7-12 | Sat, Sun: 7-1

BACK COUNTRY CAFE

EGGS • OMELETTES • PANCAKES • WAFFLES
TAKE-OUT AVAILABLE
923 KILLINGTON RD. 802-422-4411

LOVE IS ON A ROLL

SUSHI YOSHI
CHINESE GOURMET HIBACHI STEAKHOUSE

Mid-way up Killington Access Rd.
Open for Indoor Dining, Take-Out and Delivery
vermontsushi.com • 802.422.4241

HIBACHI | SUSHI | ASIAN

Visible Mending workshop offers a creative and innovative approach to sustainability



Courtesy Billings Farm & Museum

Learn how to revitalize fabric items at Billings Farm's "Visible Mending" workshop on Saturday, Jan. 11.

Jan 11, from 10 to 11:30 a.m.—WOODSTOCK—Billings Farm & Museum invites the community to join local fiber artist Tiana St. James for a hands-on workshop, "Visible Mending," on Saturday from 10 to 11:30 a.m., followed by a 30-minute Q&A session. Part of the Billings Backyard Workshop series, this session focuses on transforming worn garments and textiles into unique, revitalized pieces through creative repairs.

The workshop encourages participants to embrace the art of repair rather than discarding items, teaching practical skills like sewing, darning, appliqué, and decorative stitching. St. James will demonstrate techniques to patch holes, add intricate embellishments, and extend the life of treasured clothing and textiles. Participants are encouraged to bring a needle, thread, scissors, and an item they wish to mend, learning ways to save money and reduce textile waste in landfills.

"This workshop is about more than repairing clothing—it's about embracing sustainability and turning wear-and-tear into an opportunity for creativity," said St. James, a skilled interpreter and educator at Billings Farm & Museum.

About the instructor

Tiana St. James, an Upper Valley native, has been an interpreter and educator at Billings Farm & Museum for nine years. Her expertise spans every stage of the wool and flax-to-linen process, and she has led various workshops, including felted soap-making, hand-dyeing yarn, and quilting. St. James also develops and teaches textile craft classes at Aker Fiber Farm in Enfield, New Hampshire, and frequently represents the farm at fiber arts festivals.

About Billings Backyard Workshops

Billings Backyard Workshops teach sustainable living skills to adult participants, offering hands-on demonstrations and practical steps to incorporate these skills into daily life. The series is underwritten by a grant from the SprinRiver Private Foundation Trust. The session is \$15 per person and \$10 for museum members.

Pre-registration is required for "Visible Mending." For more information or to register, visit: billingsfarm.org/billings-backyard.

Ranking the Best Movies and TV of 2024: Jared Rasic's Top Picks

By Jared Rasic

Because I don't live in L.A., New York, or some larger market like that, I don't get to see a lot of the big releases before they open wide in theaters. This usually means that by the end of the year, many of the big awards contenders haven't opened near me, so I have to build a list without having watched everything buzz-worthy.

I'm happy with the movies I have seen. Still, this list might look completely different in February. How we view art changes constantly, and when we compile these lists, it's not so much a marker of what movies are objectively better than others but a look at the people we were at this specific time in history and the art shaping our social moment.

It was another powerful year for television, with streaming services dominating the landscape again.

"The Bear" Season 3 may have been its weakest season so far, but it was still better than most shows. Netflix's adaptation of "One Hundred Years of Solitude" is sumptuous and gorgeous, finding the novel's soul and expanding it in surprising and inevitable ways.

"Shogun" was intense and epic, yet it also managed to be fun and exciting in ways many shows forget to be. Nothing felt dragged out. It moved like a sword through grass. "Black Doves" and "Slow Horses" were both handily the best spy shows on television, proving once again that the United Kingdom has that genre on lock.

My favorite new shows in 2024 were MAX's "The Penguin," which basically set "The Sopranos" in the world of "Batman" (more fun than it sounds), and "Say Nothing," Hulu's uncompromising and electric limited series set in Belfast during The Troubles. If "Say Nothing" was a movie, it would be my favorite film of the year.

Here are my Top 15 movies of 2024:

15) "Inside Out 2" —Any animated movie that tries to teach children how to deal with low self-worth and anxiety is a classic in my book.

14) "Strange Darling" —A fractured cat and mouse chase told non-chronologically featuring an all-time great performance by Willa Fitzgerald and gorgeous, grimy cinematography from Giovanni Ribisi. Insane.

13) "The Outrun" —Saoirse Ronan has long been an actress of limitless depth and empathy, but her turn as an alcoholic rediscovering herself on the Orkney Islands while searching for a rare bird was an absolutely soaring achievement.

12) "Rebel Ridge" —With an instant movie star performance from Aaron Pierre, "Rebel Ridge" turns what could have been a dull retread of "First Blood" into an action-packed, blisteringly angry social commentary about police corruption and the power of family.

11) "Sing Sing" —This prison movie treats the bars like walls to a human soul more than the outside world. The movie refuses to wallow in po-faced pity, instead filling every frame with hope.

10) "Anora" —This drama is simultaneously a meet-cute romantic comedy and a deeply humane unpacking of the toll sex work can take on a soul.

9) "Challengers" —Sexy, fun, and genuinely surprising, "Challengers" is not just the best movie I've ever seen about tennis, but it beautifully carries the best love triangle since "The Notebook"

8) "The Substance" —Deliriously disgusting body horror is held in check by a boldly fearless script that acts as a primal scream for a new kind of feminism that protects all women. It's genuinely stunning.

7) "Do Not Expect too Much From the End of the World" —A pitch black Hungarian comedy that takes the piss out of late-stage capitalism while it spits in the face of the corporations that grind the working class to death, it's both hilarious and devastating.

6) "Queer" —This film takes the drug-addled loneliness of "Naked Lunch" and plops it down in 1950s Mexico City, with seminal work from Daniel Craig and a scene-stealing Jason Schwartzman.

5) "Ghostlight" —This truly exceptional work of humanity ruminates on the healing power of artistic expression with grace, beauty, and breathtaking empathy. Remarkable.

4) "Conclave" —Who knew a bunch of old men voting for a new pope would feel like a glossy Hollywood thriller? Ralph Fiennes gives career-best work here, and that's saying something.

3) "I Saw the TV Glow" —Still a movie I think about at least once a day, this dark and dreamlike fairy tale opens a young man's lonely spirit and searches for ways to help him heal. Every viewing changes what I think this film means.

2) "The Beast" —This 3-hour French mind-bender only makes sense in your dreams. Bertrand Bonello is a master filmmaker, and this might be his best film yet.

1) "His Three Daughters" —Carrie Coon, Natasha Lyonne, and Elizabeth Olson play three estranged sisters who reconnect in their father's small New York City apartment to take care of him across his final days. Perfect in every way, it deals with grief so honestly that I found myself crying without really knowing why.

While I am looking forward to seeing several more 2024 offerings, I can't wait to uncover what films 2025 brings.



Courtesy A24

"I Saw the TV Glow" was one of the top 15 movies of 2024, according to freelance entertainment critic, Jared Rasic

'A Complete Unknown' effectively channels the essence and mystique of Bob Dylan

James Mangold's biopic features a stand-out performance by Timothée Chalamet as Bob Dylan

When a musical bio-pic like "A Complete Unknown" comes along, movie red flags always rise.



Screens and Streams

By James Kent

Are we going to get another cookie-cutter, a paint-by-numbers retelling of a famous musician, lined with "magical moments" of inspiration behind the music numbers we know so well, heightened by a performance that is more mime than realistic by an actor who somewhat resembles the real person, but never quite enough that an audience can get past the prosthetics and pretend? I'm happy to report that director James Man-

gold ("Walk the Line," "Ford Vs Ferrari," and "Logan") avoids many of the pitfalls that strangle such offerings and presents audiences with one of the best musical biopics since 1980's "Coal Miner's Daughter."

In 2007, director Todd Haynes gave us an experimental take on Dylan with his ambitious, if fractured, "I'm Not Here." At the time, it seemed possibly the only way to tackle a subject as complex and enigmatic as Bob Dylan was through Hayne's series of episodes utilizing multiple actors standing in to represent different facets of the Dylan persona. It isn't a bad film but leaves the viewer wanting more. And yet, how do you approach a person who transformed the music landscape, is still with us, and has a career of over 60 years?

Mangold makes a wise decision with "A Complete Unknown." Rather than taking viewers on a stroll down Memory Lane and spending five minutes a scene on highlights spanning an entire career, Mangold drills down on one specific period, the years between 1961 and 1965, when a young Bob Dylan reaches New York City, explodes onto the folk music scene, elevates the genre into mass appeal, and then blows it to smithereens through reinvention and transformation into the changing landscape of the times by going electric.

For the younger viewer, who may be just discovering Bob Dylan and his music, it may prove challenging to understand how earth-shattering a moment it was when Dylan threw out the folk music playbook at the 1965 Newport Folk Festival and played an abbreviated set that was met by, let's say less than an enthusiastic response from a crowd that felt betrayed by the man they viewed as the messiah of the folk movement. But, as Dylan himself said, "The times, they are a changing."

Misunderstood is a label often applied to Dylan, and Mangold doesn't shy away from that term or try to demystify the man. Dylan, the mystery, is still intact throughout this film, but he is not a character kept at arm's length by the audience. Through Timothée Chalamet's uncanny channeling of Dylan's spirit, we get an introspective Dylan who is a sly observer, frequently ironic and funny and doesn't seek or appreciate fame as much as he wishes to be a musician.

The film shows Dylan's two central romantic relationships during this period. The first is with Suze Rotolo, who, per Dylan's wishes, is changed to Sylvie Russo (played by Elle Fanning) for this tale, and fellow folk singer Joan Baez (played by Monica Barbaro.) These relationships don't add a ton to the story. Still, they are fascinating to explore and leave one with the impression that these two women were significant to Dylan years after his romantic relationship with them ended. Barbaro's appearance doesn't quite match the look of the real Baez, but her singing sure does, which keeps the illusion alive.

Two other critical relationships explored in the movie are with Dylan's folk mentors, Woodie Guthrie (played by Scoot

McNairy) and Pete Seeger (played by Edward Norton in an excellent supporting performance.) The film begins with Chalamet's Dylan visiting Guthrie in the hospital (Guthrie was hospitalized with Huntington's Disease from 1956 until his death in 1967.) There, Dylan meets Seeger, who recognizes the young singer's talent and helps him get established in the Greenwich Village coffee house folk scene.

The effectiveness of exploring Dylan's early career falls on Mangold's decision-making in executing the drama and creating believability. When doing a musical biopic, there are only two routes: lip-synch the hits using the actual artist's voice and song tracks, or have the actors do the singing. If you go with the first approach, the result may sound exactly like the original, but you lose a sense of believability. Go with the second option, and you could find your audience tied into knots, weighing how well/not well the actor did pretending to be the actor.

In "A Complete Unknown," all actors play instruments and sing the songs. Chalamet's chameleon-like ability to not only look and sound like Dylan in the film's non-singing scenes is doubled by his uncanny ability to approximate Dylan's singing voice. Is it just like listening to a Dylan album? No. Of course not. Still, it's pretty darn close, and the eerie approximation gels the illusion and allows the audience to sink into this story, get caught up in the drama, and lose themselves for

2 1/2 hours of screen time. Chalamet, who has already shown the potential of his acting abilities through films like "Call Me by Your Name," and the "Dune" series, crafts his best performance to date as Dylan. If his performance doesn't floor, there is no movie, just a poser "Blowin' in the Wind," but Chalamet delivers something so electric here, the movie should introduce a new audience to Dylan and his music, and remind others of his greatness.

For those in the know who love to see visual retellings of famous rock anecdotes, Mangold and co-screenwriter Jay Cocks provide a searing moment ripped from the annuals of music lore when musician Al Kooper sits in on Dylan's "Like a Rolling Stone" recording session, and delivers the inspirational organ track we know so well.

Throughout the movie, we see Dylan's rise to success, his increasing discomfort with fame, and those musician handlers who want to keep him confined within the same folk musical genre until there is no more money to be squeezed out of it. Dylan has other plans, and as he begins a full-assault breakaway from the acoustic-driven playing of folk with his "Highway 61 Revisited Album," the climax of the film comes at the 1965 Newport Folk Festival, where Dylan meets his challengers head-on.

Newport Folk '65 is not the end of Bob Dylan's story, but it is a perfect place to end "A Complete Unknown." We, the audience, have taken the journey and got what we came for, but are left willing and wanting to see where Dylan's road continues. Could James Mangold and Timothee Chalamet re-team to tell the next chapter in Bob Dylan's storied career? I don't have those answers, but if they should, I will eagerly await the opportunity to purchase a ticket.

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



Regional music recap: Highlights and trends from the 2024 music scene

2024 was another excellent year for music in our region. Always check the listings to see where our incredible local talent is playing because it's all so good. We also have some fantastic national touring acts coming through our area. The year started with a great show and time at Rivershed Killington and their Wintersong Festival. This all-female concert leaned heavily on talent and was on full display. Returning favorites Kylie Sackley and Tiffany Goss performed with new additions to the Killington music scene, Erin Enderlin and Olivia Rudeen. I finally saw Kara Tondorf, the owner of Rivershed, perform, and she didn't disappoint. Nobody did—it was a fantastic night. These women have written songs for Willie Nelson, Reba McEntire, and many more, and even their originals that didn't go to someone famous were awesome.

February at the Pickle Barrel featured one of the season's best shows with Roots of Creation (original reggae) and Grateful Dub (reggae-infused tribute to the Grateful Dead). The place was packed, and the show was killer—Roots of Creation had the place reggae rockin', and Grateful Dub had the place jammin'. My favorites from Grateful Dub were "Fire on the Mountain" and "Turn on Your Love Light." I couldn't stop moving; nobody could. This show returns Jan. 23, and you won't want to miss out.

February also saw one of the best shows at Killington Resort, the Yonder Mountain String Band, part of Subaru Winterfest. Yonder are bluegrass phenoms from Colorado. It may have been cold out, but that was a hot show. You couldn't stop moving, jumping, and dancing to every song. The show was awesome from start to finish. You can catch them on Jan. 25 at the Paramount Theatre in Rutland.

March kicked off with a rescheduled (from November) Railroad Earth show at the Paramount Theatre. I was glad the timing worked out so I could see them. I've seen them a few

other times, but it had been years. It was a great show. We had the upper box, filled with people dancing the whole show. John Skehan, who I interviewed for the Mountain Times, is a monster on the mandolin. You also have a guitar, keys, upright bass, banjo, slide guitar, fiddle, and drums. That combo plays absolutely amazing music.



Rockin' the Region
By Dave Hoffenberg

April was a real treat at the season finale party at the North Star Lodge's Star Lounge. On top of food and drink specials, there was incredible music from The Chunky Seltzers and Andrew Dimarzo. The whole night filled my ears with a fantastic array of music. Andrew did so many great songs; I wanted to film it all. The Chunky Seltzers, led by Big John's nephew, Jake Palatine, and his incredible, soulful voice provided both chill and upbeat. They tore it up for all of it. They return this Jan. 24–26.

In May, I traveled to Waterbury to the Zenbarn to see my favorite band on the planet, Andy Frasco and the U.N. I heard barn in Zenbarn and thought it was a big place. That couldn't be further from the truth. Still, no matter how small it is, the shows there are killer because the music is right in your face. From start to finish, this show was balls to the wall, nonstop high energy, and absolutely incredible.

I've seen Andy Frasco and the U.N. a bunch. They shine because each member is a monster player and great to watch. There was a great opener, too, with Ryan Dempsey and the Young Nocturnals; those guys rip. The drummer's got some chops. What was really cool was Mike Gordon from Phish sat in with Andy to play bass on Nirvana's "Smells Like Teen Spirit." I'm pretty sure I'll never see something like that again. Good times the entire night.

June was a local's party in Killington, aka the infamous Block Party. This party is a night traditionally filled with all the incredible musicians in this area. I look forward to this every year; the music never disappoints, plus you have me deejaying and Steve Finer, the Magic Man. The bands playing the awesome music

were BAK'n, Eddie Turnpike, The Idiots, Squirrel Stew, Last Chair Band, Nick Bredice, Liz Reedy, Justin Burgess and Aaron Normand Band, and The Mojo Birds from Colorado, who put on a banger of a show.

Every July, you should head to Brandon for the Basin Bluegrass Festival. This festival was my third one, and the music never disappoints. What's cool about it is that most of the music is jug-style, old-school bluegrass. I saw Larry Efaw and The Bluegrass Mountaineers (I interviewed Larry),

Seth Sawyer Band, Remington Ryde, High Peaks Bluegrass Band, and Canaan's Land Bluegrass. They were all great, but some shined. Larry and his grandson were a highlight; his band is incredible. There are so many amazing pickers. The fiddlers and banjo players were crazy good. Remington Ryde ended with a salute to U.S. Vets, which was heartwarming and cool. The show ended with some blazing tunes from Canaan's Land.

I'm looking forward to their 30th Annual show this July 10–13.

Aug. 3 was the annual Taps and Taste Festival at Okemo Mountain Resort. I DJ'd it alongside the Chris Pallutto Trio, who play great rock 'n' roll music. The Remember Jones set

was fire. What an awesome mix of tunes. I loved it; the crowd loved it, and my 16-month-old son Judah loved it, which made me love it even more. I looked forward to this show because it was my first time sharing the stage with them and seeing them outside. They didn't disappoint. They're one of my favorite bands to see live. The whole show is high energy mixed with the coolest covers and incredible originals. They have costume changes and dance moves; it's a show.

On Oct. 11, I finally saw Chad Hollister's big nine-piece band. I've been friends with Chad for 25 years and have seen all his lineups except this one. I'm psyched I got to attend this astonishing show at the Woodstock Town Hall Theatre. What an incredible show. It was extra special that this fell on the anniversary of my mother's passing since Chad Hollister is all about family, and it warmed my heart to see Barbara Poremski, aka Prima, watch her son Jeff Poremski, aka Primo, absolutely rip. I loved the performance by Kris Gruen, who opened the show. They played a 15-minute version of "This is Life" that I filmed. It's my longest filming to date, but it was so worth it. They ended with my all-time favorite song of his, "Wake Up." It's an oldie but definitely a goodie. I told Chad, my favorite music is music that moves you, and this whole night did that. Every song moved me. It's honestly one of my all-time favorite shows.

November brought the Women's World Cup back to town, and this year, it featured Fitz and The Tantrums, who played their hit song "Hand Clap." That's the one most people know, but the whole show was filled with high-energy music that had everyone dancing along to it. It was cold outside, but they made you forget that. They played some covers like "Sweet Dreams" and several originals. The show was phenomenal, representing the best musical act the World Cup has had. Later that day, G. Love played at the Pickle Barrel for the World Cup Rebels Apres Ski Party for charity. Mihali joined G for most of the show. I've seen G Love a lot; this was the best he's ever been. He was having a blast on stage, and everyone in the sold-out crowd was having a blast with him. They did some amazing covers of "You Say He's Just a Friend," "Going up the Country," and "Casey Jones." Of course, he did a lot of his sweet originals, too. I Can't say enough great things about this show.

December was not about music but about comedy. The 3rd annual Vermont Comedy Festival (Dec. 5–8) showcased comedy performances all over Killington, Woodstock, and Bridgewater. This year kicked off with a 50-comedian one-minute stand-up battle, which was absolutely hilarious. It was a laugh-a-minute, pun intended. The audience picked the winner, Max Higgins, but it was tough to decide because everyone was funny.



Kara Tondorf (left) and Tiffany Goss (right) performed at Rivershed for Wintersong on Jan. 26, 2024.

By Dave Hoffenberg

Care tips, varieties, and growing secrets for streptocarpus

Streptocarpus (*Streptocarpus*) is commonly known as cape primrose, but don't confuse it with the common primrose (*Primula vulgaris*), a perennial plant that you may have grown outdoors at home. While the two share some physical similarities, their care requirements are quite different.

The common primrose in your garden is hardy in United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Plant Hardiness Zones 4 to 8 (<https://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov>). On the other hand, streptocarpus is hardy in USDA Hardiness Zones 9 to 11, so they won't survive year-round outdoors in cooler climates like ours.

Streptocarpus is native to tropical regions in southern Africa, where it grows in wooded areas in the mountains. It prefers warmer temperatures and moderate or indirect light. While you could grow this plant outdoors in warmer weather, be sure to bring it indoors before temperatures drop below 50 degrees Fahrenheit.

Like many other tropical perennials, streptocarpus is marketed as a houseplant. It is related to African violets and thrives with similar care and conditions. It is easy to grow and can provide colorful blossoms, even during the cold winter months.

Because they don't require bright light, they're ideal for growing near a sunny window. Just be sure to avoid a direct southern exposure because strong sunlight can damage the leaves.

Don't allow the soil to dry out completely. Likewise, don't overwater. Water when the top layer of soil is dry, and avoid getting water on the leaves.

Feed with a flowering plant fertilizer or one intended for African violets according to package directions.

As needed, remove damaged leaves, faded flowers, and

stems. Leaves can also be trimmed to remove minor damage.

Streptocarpus are compact plants. Their long, velvety, green leaves grow in a rosette, with trumpet-shaped flowers rising above the leaves. Flower colors include shades of red, purple, blue, white, yellow, and variegated combinations.

This houseplant can put on a flowery show for months at a time.

Mature plants grow to between 6 and 12 inches high and from 18 to 30 inches in diameter, depending on the variety. They will do well in a 5- or 6-inch pot.

Repot when the plant fills its container. Choose a light, well-draining potting mix such as one intended for African violets.

At that time, plants with multiple crowns can be divided. Separate the crowns by gently easing them apart and potting each section individually.

Like African violets, streptocarpus can also be propagated from a leaf, although the method is slightly different.

Prepare a small seed-starting tray with a light, soilless potting mix that has been moistened.

Select a healthy leaf. You can either trim off a 2-inch piece of leaf while still on the plant or harvest the entire leaf and cut it into 2-inch sections.

Draw a furrow in the potting mix and place each section into it, with the lower cut edge beneath the surface. Firm the soil around the leaf section.

Place the container in a plastic bag or under a clear cover and put it in a warm, well-lit spot in indirect light. Open the container to allow excess humidity to escape, or add water if needed.

Over the next four to six weeks, tiny plantlets should form along the leaf at the soil surface. Be patient and allow them to form leaves and roots before separating from the mother leaf.

Streptocarpus is native to tropical regions in southern Africa, where it grows in wooded areas in the mountains.

When ready, put them into 2-inch starter pots.

With their easy care and long-lasting, showy display of flowers, streptocarpus may become your new favorite plant in your indoor garden.

Deborah J. Benoit is a UVM Extension Master Gardener from North Adams, Massachusetts, part of the Bennington County Chapter.



By Deborah J. Benoit

The first step to propagate streptocarpus leaves is to cut each leaf into two-inch sections.



By Deborah J. Benoit

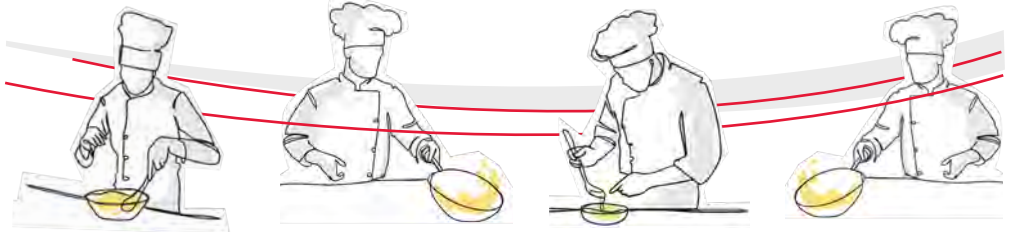
Streptocarpus, or cape primrose, is an attractive, easy-to-grow houseplant that propagates well.



By Deborah J. Benoit

Trimmed streptocarpus leaf sections should be placed in a moistened potting mix for propagation.

Indulge your taste buds



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.



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.



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.



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.



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.



Lookout Tavern

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



Back Country Café

The Back Country Café is a hot spot for delicious breakfast foods. Choose from farm fresh eggs, multiple kinds of pancakes and waffles, omelets or daily specials to make your breakfast one of a

kind. Just the right heat Bloody Marys, Mimosas, Bellini, VT Craft Brews, Coffee and hot chocolate drinks. Maple Syrup and VT products for sale. Check Facebook for daily specials. 802-422-4411.



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. mountaintopin.com, 802-483-2311.



Sushi Yoshi

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

www.vermontsushi.com 802-422-4241.

MOUNTAIN TOP RESORT

Gary Hall

One of Vermont's Best Views Including:
Spa & Salon | Horse Drawn Sleigh Rides
Restaurant & Tavern Dining | Luxurious Accommodations
XC Skiing & Snowshoeing

Gold Wing Photo

802.483.2311 | mountaintopresort.com

CHOICES

RESTAURANT & ROTISSERIE

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.

MAPLE SUGAR & SPICE

VERMONT

Come to our sugarhouse for the best breakfast around! After breakfast, check out our gift shop for all your souvenir, gift, and maple syrup needs. We look forward to your visit!

Dine-in or Take-out available.

Serving Breakfast & Lunch
7a.m. - 2p.m. daily

Check out our menu online!

Sugar & Spice Restaurant & Gift Shop
Rt. 4 Mendon, VT
802-773-7832 | www.vtsugarandspice.com

Southside STEAKHOUSE

RESTAURANT WEEK BEGINS APRIL 24!

SouthSide SteakHouse

Southside provides a modern approach to a classic American steakhouse. Join us for an inviting, upbeat atmosphere featuring thoughtfully crafted food made with the highest quality steaks & chops, fresh seafood, and seasonal produce. We offer dinner and drink service in our dining room, bar & lounge, and on our seasonal patio, weather permitting. (802) 772-7556 southsidesteakhouse.com

LIQUID ART RESTAURANT

ESPRESSO | GALLERY | COCKTAILS

BREAKFAST ●● LUNCH ●● DINNER

MONDAY 8AM - 3PM THURS - FRIDAY 8AM - 9PM
OPEN MIC 6PM THURSDAY

SAT - SUN - 7AM - 9PM LIVE MUSIC SUNDAY (6PM)

KILLINGTON, VT ● 802-422-2787 ● LIQUIDARTVT.COM

Celebrate National Pizza Week at your favorite pizzeria

Bridgewater
 Ramunto's Brick & Brew Pizza

Chester
 Pizza Stone VT

Killington
 iPie Pizzeria
 Domenic's Pizzeria

Ludlow
 Goodman's American Pie
 Ludlow Village Pizza
 Off the Rails

Pawlet
 Mach's Market

Poultney
 Poultney House of Pizza

Rutland
 Olympic Pizza
 Ramunto's
 Ted's Pizza Shop
 Uncle Tony's VT
 Vermont Tap House
 Cara Mia's
 Hop'n Moose

Randolph
 Randolph Village Pizza

South Royalton
 Royalton Village Pizza

Windsor
 Pizza Chef

Woodstock
 Pizza Chef
 Amato's Xpress

The Ransom Tavern

White River Junction
 C&S Pizza
 Pizza Chef of Quechee

Bethel
 Cockadoodle Pizza Cafe

Brandon
 Morningside Bakery Wood-Fired Pizza
 Brandon House of Pizza



Rutland County Humane Society welcomes new executive director

PITTSFORD—The Rutland County Humane Society (RCHS) Board of Directors announced Jennifer Perrigo as the shelter's new Executive Director. Perrigo assumed her role on Dec. 23, 2024, bringing extensive experience in animal welfare and nonprofit leadership.

Perrigo previously served as Adoption Center Manager for the North Shore Animal League America in Glens Falls, N.Y., where she oversaw daily operations, developed new protocols, and managed financial planning. Her career also includes roles as an Adoption Coordinator with the Animal Protective Foundation and a veterinary assistant at Adirondack Animal Hospital. She holds a B.S. in Nonprofit Leadership.

Perrigo expressed her enthusiasm for the role: "The history and accomplishments of RCHS embody several passions of mine, and it is a privilege to be part of the organization's dedication to advocating for and working toward a responsible and humane community."



Submitted

Rutland County Humane Society



Inn at Long Trail

McGrath's Irish Pub

Pub Open Thursday- Monday

LIVE MUSIC
 FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS
CRAIG EDWARDS

Dinner Specials
 Thurs-Sun

Rte. 4 between Killington & Pico
 802-775-7181
 innatlongtrail.com 
 Rooms & Suites available

Grab the Beat! Feel the Rhythm

DRUM JOURNEYS OF EARTH

Reserve your spot in one of our classes!

West African Afro-Latin
Heart & Ritual of the Medicine Drum

Other forms of ethnic percussion w/
private instruction available!

Classes held at Building #5, Howe Center, Rutland
Contact Gary @ 802-282-2581



By Dave Hoffenberg

Remember Jones played a lively set at the Taps and Taste Festival at Okemo Mountain Resort.

Southside STEAKHOUSE



A modern approach to the classic American Steakhouse.

Join us for an inviting, upbeat atmosphere, featuring thoughtfully crafted food made with the highest quality steaks & chops, fresh seafood, and seasonal produce.

- southsidesteakhouse.com
- (802) 772-7556
- 170 S Main Street, Rutland, VT

Recap: from page 22

I also caught an Apres Ski show at the Long Trail Brewery on Dec. 8. Over 10 comics performed, with Mike Toohey being my favorite, but all were great. The highlight and headliner of the festival was a show by Tim Meadows at the Woodstock Town Hall Theatre on Saturday Night, with openers Collen Doyle, Matt Vita, and Holly Johnson. What a hilarious night. Collen gave an on-point impression of Chris Farley, which was funny as heck. Matt had a solid set. Holly

was hilarious from start to finish. Tim Meadows was freakin' awesome. His "I love weed" bit was so funny I was crying laughing.

I know all the shows I mentioned represent only a fraction of the great music featured in Vermont over the year, mostly in the Killington and Rutland areas, but our entire state is filled with great music. So do yourself a favor in 2025 and get out and see some.

killington **ATM** **LOTTERY**
market
GROCERY
 MEATS, PRODUCE & SEAFOOD
 beer and wine
 DELICATESSEN

Baked Goods & Breads
 Pizza ~ Maple Syrup

SUN-THURS
 6:30 AM - 10 PM
 FRI & SAT
 6:30 AM - 11 PM

WINE
 Champagne
 VT CRAFT
 BREWS
 CIDERS

TAKE-OUT CONVENIENCE:
 BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

2023 KILLINGTON ROAD

LOOK OUT TAVERN

KILLINGTON VERMONT'S
BEST FOOD + DRINK **KIDS MENU**

HOMEMADE SPECIALS STEAK BURGERS
 BEST WINGS CHILI
 SANDWICHES BBQ RIBS

NFL HEADQUARTERS

EV SUPERCHARGERS
 RENOVATED GAME ROOM
 8 LOCALLY CRAFTED BEERS ON DRAFT

POUDLY SERVING LOCAL BEERS FROM **FIDDLEHEAD**

FIDDLEHEAD BREWING COMPANY
 DUBLIN, VERMONT

SCAN TO ORDER

OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK 11:30 A.M. - 9 P.M.
 2910 KILLINGTON ROAD | 802-422-LOOK | LOOKOUTVT.COM

← Screens & Streams:

from page 18

violent escapades in the first place, and he is going to pour that Heinz 57 sauce of retribution all over the television screen.

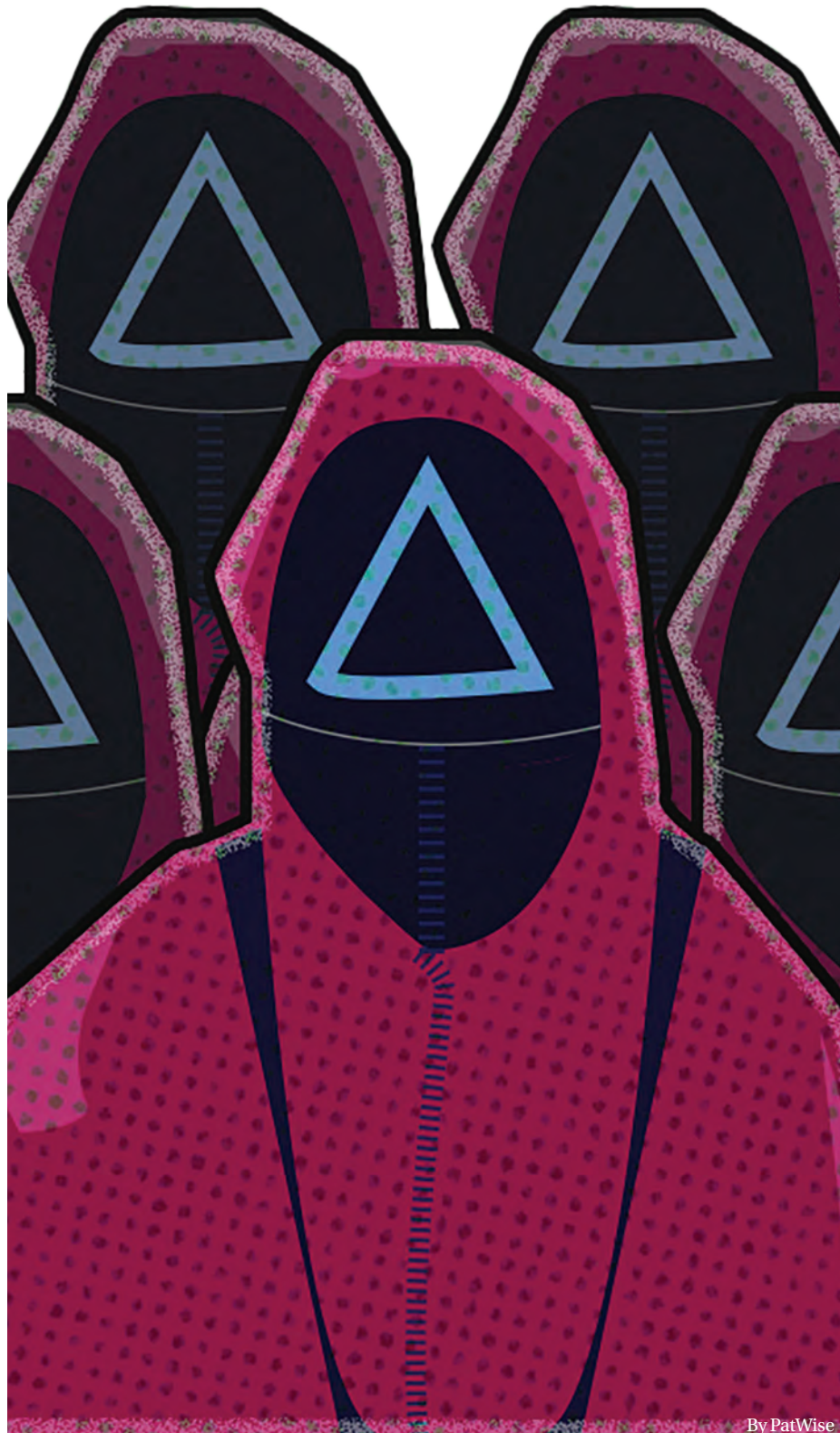
By the end of Episode 3, Dong-hyuk throws in a sizzling twist that brings together a whole new dynamic between Gi-hun and his nemesis, the Front Man. I'll avoid spoilers, but the plot developments make for some engaging and intense viewing over the final 4 episodes of Season 2.

Throughout the season, Gi-hun is put into the meat grinder once more, and he needs to learn plenty of lessons. Again, the most important is that the house always wins. By the end of Season 2, Front Man relishes teaching Gi-hun this lesson. There is a fascinating interplay between both men and in classic Asian film tradi-

tion, a yin-yang duality forms between these two men, battling wits for control and the soul of the Squid Games.

A spoiler for those who wonder why there are only seven episodes in Season 2 vs. the 10 in season 1: This season ends on a cliffhanger. It's annoying, and I'd have preferred just one extra-long Season 2, but that is the way. Netflix craves viewership, and they want to give people a reason to tune into a third and final season. In this case, Netflix is the house, and the house always wins. They are promising Season 3 later this year, so at least we don't have to wait another three years to find out how it all ends.

James Kent is the publisher's assistant at The Mountain Times, and author of "Parental Guidance Suggested."



By PatWise



**Killington Sherburne
United Church of Christ**
An Open & Affirming Congregation

STARTING SUNDAY JAN. 5, 2025
SUNDAY SERVICES WILL BEGIN AT 10:00 AM

*Killington Little White Church
on Route 4*

CHOICES
RESTAURANT & ROTISSERIE

Dine in or take out:

2820 Killington Rd
802.422.4030
ChoicesVT.com



In-house made pasta, breads, and desserts



21+ Wines by the glass



Chef owned

Open 6 nights a week

(Closed Wednesdays)
5:00 - 9:00 PM



LOCAL



Welcome
to Godnicks
Vermont's Largest Furniture Store



Godnicks
Grand Furniture

In business since 1926

Known for Quality, Service & Integrity

Godnicks Grand Furniture is a family-owned quality Furniture, Mattress, Living Room, Dining Room, Bedroom, Home Office and Accents store based in Rutland, VT.



And many more names you know and trust

259 N. Main St., Rte. 7, Rutland, VT | (802) 775-7000 | Open Mon.-Sat. 8:30-5:30, Sunday Hours 11-4
www.godnicksfurniture.com



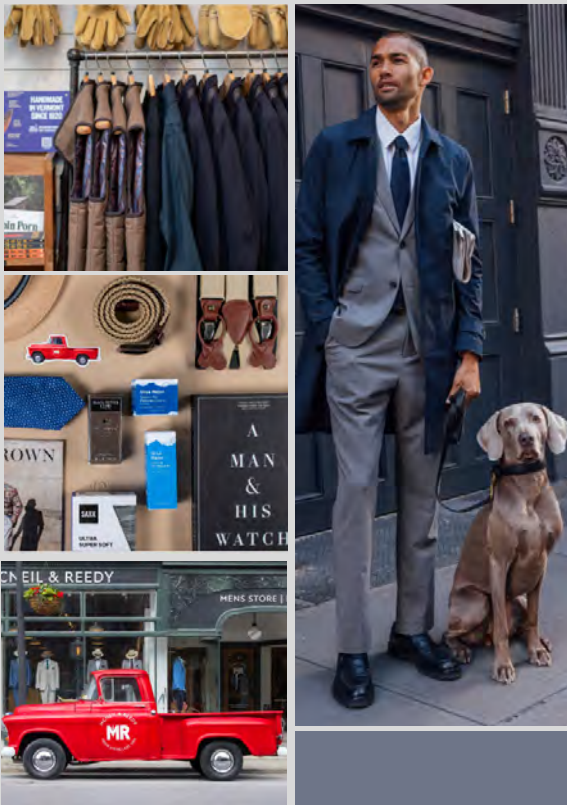
DOWNTOWNRUTLAND.COM

DOWNTOWN RUTLAND



VERMONT

VERMONT'S PREMIER MENSWEAR DESTINATION
Quality menswear and exceptional customer service for three generations



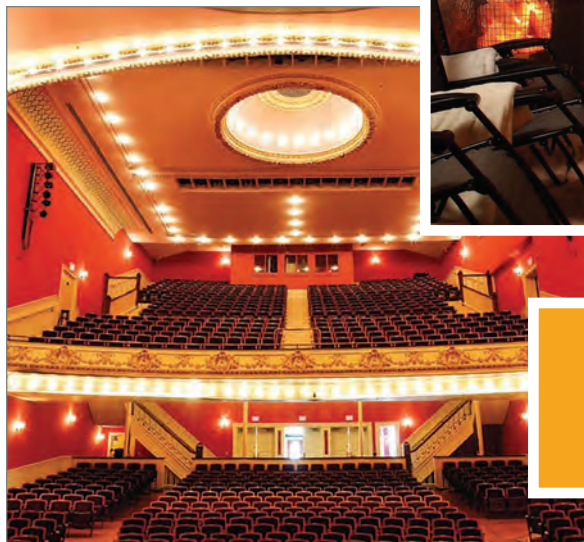
DOWNTOWN RUTLAND, VT
Monday - Saturday 9AM-5PM
(802) 773-7760
www.mcneilandreedy.com



Wonderfeet Kids' Museum
Interactive exhibits & events dedicated to the lifetime love of learning & discovery for children.



Pyramid Holistic Wellness Center
A unique salt cave experience, guided meditations, sound and light rooms, reiki, and more.



Paramount Theatre
Paramount hosts national and world-renowned performances in a Victorian-era opera house setting.



DIVINE



"A BOUTIQUE FOR THE SENSES"
25 CENTER STREET, DOWNTOWN RUTLAND



ALISON MCCULLOUGH
Real Estate

Home *Sweet* Home

Real Estate • Real People • Real Results

802.747.8822

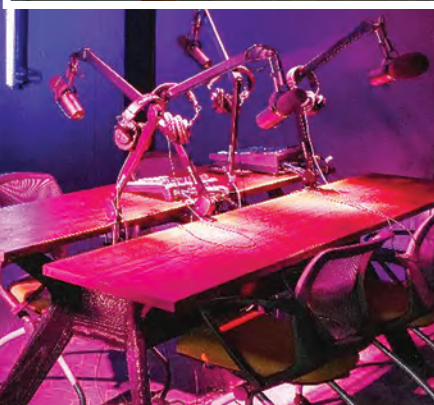
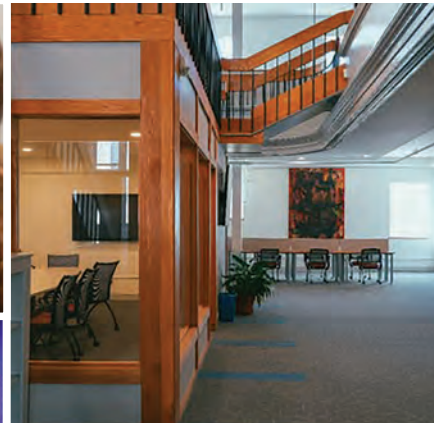
www.alisonmcculloughrealestate.com

29 Center Street, Downtown Rutland



MURALS • SCULPTURE TRAIL • EVENTS • KID'S MUSEUM • LIVE THEATRE & MORE !

Discover the charm of Downtown Rutland! From Vermont's largest year-round farmers market to the historic 1912 Paramount Theatre, there's plenty to explore. Enjoy public art, a dynamic children's museum, and more. Many buildings are listed on the National Register as part of the Rutland Downtown Historic District. Plus, with nearby outdoor adventures like the Long Trail, Killington and Pico Mountains, and Pine Hill Park, there's always something exciting to do. Visit DowntownRutland.com to learn more!



THE HUB
CO WORKS

The Hub, in downtown Rutland, is more than just a co-working space — it's a hive of creativity and connection. Housed in 24,000 square feet of the restored Opera House building in the heart of the city, it blends historic charm with modern amenities. On any given day, you'll find a mix of freelancers, remote workers, and small business owners. There's a collaborative energy created in the space, while also offering quiet spaces for focused attention, conference rooms to discuss ideas with high-tech presentation technology and private zoom rooms.

The high speed internet, self-serve coffee, and elegant spaces make the hub an ideal co-working space. This could be your office! Come check it out. Located at 67 Merchants Row on the 2nd floor.

For more information, call: 802-549-6136 or visit our website at thehubcoworks.com.

WILD
KIND
TOYS

Thoughtfully
made TOYS
that inspire
creative play!

Stop in
or shop
online



wildkindtoys.com
31 Center Street
Downtown Rutland



MURALS • SCULPTURE TRAIL • EVENTS • KIDS' MUSEUM • LIVE THEATRE & MORE!

For the latest on new businesses, event information, and downtown news, visit

DOWNTOWNRUTLAND.COM |  

Solutions From page 15

Crossword

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

Sudoku

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

Eat Shop
Drink Local

Catamount Pet Supply Company, inc.

296 U.S. Route 4 East
Rutland Town, VT 05701 | 802-773-7642

OPEN
MON. - FRI. 10am - 6:30pm & SAT. 10am - 5pm

Grooming by appointment | 802-773-7636

Rutland County Humane Society



Chili—2-year-old. Neutered male. Cattle Dog Mix.



Carly—8-month-old. Female. Hound Mix.



Nova—2.5-year-old. Female. Husky Mix.



Emma—1-year-old. Female. Terrier Mix.



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

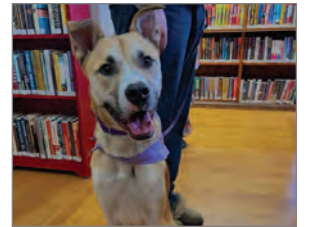
Rutland County Humane Society
765 Stevens Road, Pittsford, VT • (802) 483-6700
Tues. - Sat. 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Closed Sun. & Mon. • www.rchsvt.org

MOANA

Moana—1-year-old. Female. German Shepherd Mix.

KANE

Kane—5-year-old. Male. Pit Bull.



Graham—1-year-old. Neutered male. Great Dane/Pit Bull Mix.



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



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



Daisy—3-year-old. Spayed female. Pit Bull Mix.



Lucy Mackenzie Humane Society
4832 VT-44, Windsor, VT • (802) 484-5829
*By appointment only at this time. lucymac.org



Springfield Humane Society
401 Skitchewaog Trail, Springfield, VT • (802) 885-3997
*Open by appointment only. spfldhumane.org

Cosmic Catalogue

Aries March 21 - April 20

There comes a time where, one way or another, you have to accept your domestic life – past or present, for exactly what it is. It's not always easy, but that is the only way you can change it. If you're stuck in a loop wondering why X, Y, or Z is or isn't happening, change that "why" to "what." Some questions can never be answered, but that doesn't have to stop you from taking the action you need to.

Taurus April 21 - May 20

In order to change your course of action, you do need to change your mind. This is the tricky part for you. Your challenge now is not to dread the change but to embrace it. When you change how you feel about something, you can change the outcome. Sometimes, it's really that simple to embrace a shift of feeling that will eventually lead to everything being very, very different. At best, you could at least embrace things from a "why not" perspective.

Gemini May 21 - June 20

Your self-confidence could take a hit as Mars moves in reverse through Cancer. Do what you need to push through any blocks, emotions, or attachments to past experiences that have made you think you're not good or worthy enough. If you find yourself reacting or retreating to a situation that presses your buttons, see that as an opportunity to choose a different response and take affirmative action. Start building your confidence and cash flow now. Work done now will repay you threefold.

Cancer June 21 - July 20

Everyone gets to a point in life where the coping mechanisms that got you thus far will no longer get you where you want to go. If you feel blocked, stuck, or agitated, then that is the point! What you need to do is notice what comes up for you, and rather than choose your default response, choose another. This is an opportunity for you to heal and understand yourself better. Once you do this, amazing blessings will eventually arrive.

Leo July 21 - August 20

While the direct pressure you've been experiencing may have receded somewhat, be aware that old ghosts from the past may reappear. Old feelings, emotions, or experiences you still cling to – consciously or not, may come into the forefront of your mind. Avoid the temptation to renumerate on this. Instead, let go of all of it. Make peace with it. Move on. Make room for more joyous, happy, and meaningful memories by embracing what's possible without the past tainting your future.

Virgo August 21 - September 20

You may start noticing that your shifting personal priorities – as well as your energy, may change your attitude towards some people. It could be your professional colleagues, those within your social circles, a group or community online, or in real life. You might not be in the mood to tolerate anyone who is too high maintenance. Start to notice if you don't think certain people will be a part of your future. Someone from the past may also reappear.

Libra September 21 - October 20

You may notice that your personal energy and focus return after a personal 18-month cycle of cleansing and renewing. Now, it's your career or your overall life direction that needs your attention. Where would you like to be in another 18 months' time? Start formulating the plan and take action on it. Face the fears that prevent you from having everything in life you ever wanted – personal, professional, or otherwise. Just avoid letting your feelings dictate your actions.

Scorpio October 21 - November 20

It's not enough to just go through the emotions in life. While it can be done, it lacks meaning and purpose. If you feel as though you've been stuck in a rut, then you will benefit from asking yourself a deep and profound question, "What do I want?" It seems simple in theory, and you may know the answer. The tricky part comes when you say you want one thing, but your actions or beliefs say otherwise. Do what you need to do in order to fix that.

Sagittarius November 21 - December 20

In order to move forward in life, sometimes it is necessary to look back. This isn't what you want to be doing right now, I'm sure. However, to fully receive the blessings heading your way, you'll benefit from understanding the motivations and emotions that led you to the place you currently are. When you do that, you can fully free yourself from the past and embrace a bright and prosperous future. While you're peering at the past, don't get stuck there.

Capricorn December 21 - January 20

Relationships of all kinds will feel like a battleground for the next little while. Other people, in general, in your professional and personal life, could all be projecting their problems or issues onto you. Maybe you need to do some personal reflection about your attitudes in relationships as well. Whatever is going on, do embrace your cool, calm, and collected nature. The best thing you can do now is release your need to control.

Aquarius January 21 - February 20

If you have a goal related to abundance that you'd like to achieve, then you will have to work for it! I didn't say work harder, though! In fact, you may have to work less. Do think about all the tasks that chew up valuable time but may be of little benefit to the big picture. Can you delegate or delete those? Prosperity may also mean focusing on your fitness and health goals. Time is a precious commodity; spend it wisely.

Pisces February 21 - March 20

It's time for you to really up the ante in terms of your personal wants, desires, and ambitions. Do spend some time figuring out what your top priorities are and build your attention, energy, and focus from there. Fun, romance, and frivolity may need to go on the back burner for just a little while until you've got all your ducks in a row. At the least, don't waste your energy on those not respecting your goals or personal boundaries.

Facing the past to move forward



Cosmic Catalogue
By Cassandra Tyndall

We've finally arrived at the point on the astrological timeline many would prefer to avoid: Mars retrograde in Cancer.

Not unlike any other astrological occurrence, you can choose to meet this head-on and remain open to the learning opportunity it provides. Another option is to whine and moan about it and eventually complain that nothing has improved for you.

You see, if you don't face your stuff, you'll continue to stuff your face! The question begs, what are you stuffing your face with? Trapped emotions from the past? Fear of moving forward because of the emotions you attach to certain situations?

Do you run, avoid, and deny? Are you distracted? Social media? Meaningless relationships? Alcohol? Food? Gaming? Netflix? Pleasures of the flesh? Everyone has some of these to a point, but the next few months invite you to cut, sever, burn, or separate from the repetitive emotional loops that keep you from having what you really want.

The gift of Mars retrograde in Cancer is that when you take the charge out of a situation, then you can be in charge. Again, if you are stuffing your face, you need to face your stuff. Do the work now. You won't regret it!

RUTLAND'S PREMIERE YOGA & PILATES STUDIO



TRUE YOGA
VERMONT

22 WALES STREET, RUTLAND

Go online to see our full schedule:
trueyogavermont.com @trueyogavt



LIMITED TIME INTRO SPECIAL:

\$10 FOR 10 DAYS UNLIMITED CLASSES

SCAN CODE LINK:



CONVENIENTLY LOCATED WHERE THE KILLINGTON ACCESS RD MEETS US-4
2363 US-4, KILLINGTON | 802-558-0547 | KBCKBC.COM | KILLINGTONBOOTCAMP@GMAIL.COM

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.

Bark helps trees weather winter

When I think about winter survival, my mind first goes to wildlife: field mice curling up in nests, chickadees flocking to bird feeders, and amphibians burrowing into the mud. Rarely do I think about the adaptations of our northern species that can't grow thicker fur, fluff up their feathers, or go underground. Trees, for instance, face the same freezing temperatures, wet weather, and harsh winds—all with the added challenge of being unable to move. One way trees endure winter is through adaptations in their bark. With the deciduous leaves long gone, the winter forest has been laid bare, giving us the perfect conditions to attune ourselves to the strategies of tree bark.

Paper birch (*Betula papyrifera*) is one of the most familiar characters on a walk in the win-

ter woods. Its distinctive bright white, straight trunk stands out against the blue sky on clear days, and it's easily distinguished by its bark that peels off in horizontal curls. It is also one

of our northernmost hardwoods. Ranging across Canada and the northern United States and occasionally found as far south as North Carolina, the paper birch is notable for surviving nearly to the tree line in the Arctic, a place where few hardwoods can reach. Part of its success lies in its white bark: though it may be counterintuitive, the bark reflects heat and prevents the tree from warming up too much, protecting it against damage from temperature changes.

This adaptation is especially important in winter when fluctuations are extreme between dark, cold nights and sunny days with no cover. Regulating temperature is essential

The Outside Story → 39



The Outside Story
By Catherine Wessel



Submitted

Starting seeds early is a great way to ensure a vibrant spring garden.

Growing plants and veggies from seed

Well, the holidays are behind us and hopefully you enjoyed that special time of year.

Once January rolls around, my mind gravitates toward spring and gardening. I want to forget that it's winter. My apologies to those of you who still want to be skiing while I am tending to my daffodils! As many of us local seniors say, "They can have all the snow they want on the mountain... just not down here in the valley!"

What can a gardener do in January when you live in Vermont? Although you may not be able to "play in the dirt" you can browse through garden books and magazines for ideas on different flowers and shrubs to plant in the summer. You can also check out the garden layouts to see what will work in your own yard.

Local garden centers usually have seed sales in January. I always try to "buy local" so I prepare my list in alphabetical order by the name of the flower or veggie that I am looking for. The seed packets are arranged in that format making it quick and easy to find what you want and nothing will be forgotten.

The internet is great for browsing and researching the choices that you have for your growing area. Local stores can't carry everything so when you want to try something different check the data online. I like to try at least one flower each year that is new to me. This year I will buy fruit punch poppy seeds. The Rutland area is Zone 4, which is a match for this particular flower. It's a perennial and 50 seeds cost under \$2. It's worth a try!

Perhaps this is the year for you to try growing plants from seed in a heated tray with grow lights. This is probably the most reliable method to assure that you have success growing from seed. I haven't ventured

into that technique but would try it if I had enough space to do so.

I have had success with containers that have a plastic dome. I plant the seeds in mid-April and use a spray mister to keep the starting mix moist. I spray the soil in the morning and evening. When the seedlings start to grow close to the top of the dome I transfer each seedling to a small pot and place them on shelves in an east and south window. The shelves were made for me many years ago by my handy husband, Peter. They rest on brackets that can be moved as the plants grow. By the middle of May the seedlings are ready to spend some gradual time outdoors... shade for a few days and then gradual exposure to full sun. They will be ready to go into the ground by Memorial Day.

I grow tomato plants in a different manner. I start them in mesh peat pellets in a container with a plastic dome. I remove the dome when the plants grow close to the top. Then it's time to transfer each seedling to a small pot. As the plants grow I transfer each plant to a larger pot so the roots can grow more deeply. Harden them off as described above.

"Moral of the story:"
Try the various methods that are available for seed-starting and see what works best for you. Part of the fun is trying the options and watching a tiny seed that is no bigger than a freckle turn into a plant.

Winter is also a great time to read garden books. Joe Lamp'l, who has a gardening show on the Create Channel, is a good source for recommendations. He often mentions a helpful book title on his show and has written a few books himself. His show is one of my favorites.

If you are a skier "think snow." If you are a gardener think "spring!"



Looking Forward
By Mary Ellen Shaw

Part of the fun is trying the options and watching a tiny seed that is no bigger than a freckle turn into a plant.

What did you do on New Year's?

I have always stayed awake on New Year's Eve to watch the ball drop in Times Square. No matter where I am or what I'm doing, for that final minute, I'm going to be glued to the television. It's been a tradition of mine since I was a young child, and as far back as I can remember, I've never missed the event.

I have a faint memory of one such New Year's Eve when I was a very young child. My parents were having a small party involving several family members. I was sitting on the couch in our living room, wrapped in a blanket, staring at the television, likely confused by all the commotion. When the ball finally dropped, everyone broke into song, belting out a raucous rendition of "Auld Lang Syne."

I'm confident the sugar` subsequent adrenaline made the formation of this memory more enduring, but I was absolutely gleeful at how happy everyone seemed at that moment.

The experience didn't involve money, fame, or material items. It was just a moment in time wallpapered with pure joy. Because of that memory, I've always looked for another scenario where that joy would arise again.

Visiting Times Square on New Year's used to look appealing to me as a life experience.

In fact, at one time, attending the event was high on my bucket list. However, my interest has waned over the years. Suffering through the traffic, drunkenness, crowds, and over-priced cuisine convinced me long ago that I'd feel more fulfilled in my cozy living room, bourbon in hand, watching the event on my 65" 4K flat screen.

I'm also a big fan of New Year's resolutions. For some reason, I've always felt that I'd have a better chance at succeeding with my Jan. 1 goals if I was fully present at the moment of inception. Therefore, as the ball slides down the pole during the countdown, I am fully committing myself to whatever goals I've made for the following year.

In the days leading up to this New Year's Eve, I asked my son if he had made any resolutions. He replied that he wanted to eat better and stop swearing, which I agreed were valid resolutions. He then asked me what my resolutions were. I sheepishly admitted that I didn't have any specifics, and instead, I was opting for a broad brush-stroke resolution of simply trying to be a

better man than I was the previous year.

I guess at this stage of my life, I've tried all the obvious resolutions, so now I'm merely trying to improve upon the final product (kind of like buffering out the scratches on an antique car).



The Movie Diary
By Dom Cioffi

Last week, as midnight was approaching, I found myself alone in my living room. My wife's interest in staying awake on New Year's diminished years ago, so she was fast asleep in our bedroom. My son, obviously from a different generation, had little interest in ringing in the holiday and preferred to hang out on the phone with his long-distance girlfriend while playing video games with his buddies.

I rarely watch network television, but on this night, I scanned the channels for the most interesting New Year's Eve events. I eventually found the three major shows being aired and switched back and forth between them.

However, as extravagant as the shows tried to come off, most of what I watched

bored me. I've a bit aged out of pop culture, so while I'd heard of most of the singers and performers being featured, my familiarity and interest in them were minuscule at best.

Eventually, the big moment arrived. I felt forlorn about the solitude of my New Year's when I heard my son's bedroom door open. He came careening down the stairs during the final minute of 2024, announcing that he couldn't think of anything better than ringing in the New Year with his dad.

That was, admittedly, a pretty special moment.

This week's feature, "The Fall Guy," starring Ryan Gosling and Emily Blunt, fell short of being pretty special, but it did succeed in being a big-budget thrill ride.

Action comedy is not an easy genre to pull off, but "Fall Guy" was successful in its effort. Add in the fact that it included a viable love story that didn't alienate viewers with cheesiness, and you've got a winner. Gosling and Blunt, thankfully, had enough chemistry and charisma to make a flippant storyline more enticing.

Check this one out if you're in the mood for an amusing and exciting (albeit meaningless) couple of hours. The story isn't worth much, but it's sure fun working through it.

An enthusiastic "B+" for "The Fall Guy," now streaming on Amazon Prime Video.

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



Fun signs

We came in early, which, if you know anything about Team PomPom, is a miracle within itself because we are usually about 15-20 minutes late. As much as I love coaching 5- and 6-year-olds, it is extremely difficult to move them about the mountain in a timely fashion. Bathroom breaks, emergency snacks, bloody noses... they all control our movement more than the lifelines do.

But they are awesome and will ski anything—well, almost. After skiing with me for one month, they have become a wee bit snobbish about their choice of trail. They are not interested in the beautifully groomed, wide-open terrain that the grownups like. They are looking for the fun signs.

What is a fun sign, you might ask? Part of it is me taking advantage of their inability to read words like caution. The other is appreciating the fine work that Ski Patrol does of marking trails for our benefit. When you see two sticks of bamboo crossed with a yellow circle on it, that's a fun sign. If it has two yellow circles (Caution & Thin Cover), that means "double fun" and is a trail we should never miss at all, whatsoever.

And so, we don't. If we see a fun sign, we

will ski it. We love the mix of moguls and bare spots as much as the next kid, even if we come to a dead stop when we hit the grass. We are learning, and that's okay. Last week, we learned to rub snow on our pants to remove the mud, a valuable lesson that

they will remember into adulthood when they crash into the mud on Superstar in June.

We are learning to put the patches together and find the snowy line through the mess of green and brown. This will transfer easily when the brown patches become trees as we head into the woods. We are learning to see the trail, to see the variety in the terrain, and to find the best, snowiest line through. Although they don't realize it, they'll be able to find the fun route on the groomies, too.

Balance becomes essential as the terrain is constantly shifting. We are perfecting one perfect turn that will hinder us into a pattern. We are blowing up that pattern and will be able to adapt our technique to anything. Your balance has to be just a bit further back on the grass so you have room to get caught and swing forward. You have to adjust your stance, get your hands

Living the Dream → 39



Living the Dream
By Merisa Sherman

Agency and fear in the New Year

For thousands of years, the transition into the new year sees people take a moment for self-reflection. Traditionally, people come up with a resolution for something they would like to improve upon, bring with them, or leave behind them with this year's fresh start.

The Latin origin of the word *resolve*, *resolvere*, has a few meanings, such as: to loosen, to cancel, to undo, to settle, to dispel or to pay back. We have taken a few of those meanings into today's English definition, but it also carries several other meanings in the fields of science, medicine, computer technology and music. Whether it is a Babylonian king vowing to be a better ruler, or one of us in 2025 committing to finally clean out the garage, the tradition remains mostly the same and focused on having a better year.

Unfortunately, it is also well documented that new year's resolutions are often ineffective and that many Americans have begun stepping away from the tradition.

Keeping with the theme of growth, taking personal responsibility/ownership, and making things better, I have been reflecting specifically on two factors that can influence change: agency and fear.

Agency is the drive, motivation, will-

ingness and desire to act. Without it, a commitment to change is a painfully empty promise. Agency can form due to necessity

or pressure from outside forces, but it can also be encouraged through healthy habits and goal setting. For example, I have an exercise where I take time to assess my priorities in an effort to recalibrate and direct my focus toward what will help me grow in this period. Quantifying all of the things on my plate: The good, the bad and the gray. Taking a moment to investigate what motivates me to accomplish the things that I am getting done.

Then looking for ways to try and attach those motivators to the things I am struggling to deal with. From there, figuring out what roadblocks or challenges the unfinished tasks are presenting me, and if there is any way to remove them that I haven't tried. Ultimately, agency begins and ends as our own responsibility, and we make genuine time for the things that we value. Whether we act or do not act, regardless of other factors, it is our own responsibility.

Fear is a feeling of danger, or a threat. Fear can also be used to express feelings of apprehension and anxiety, or even remorse and apology. Fear can show up in several ways in our lives and sometimes can be tough to rec-

Dream in Color → 38



Dream in Color
By Will O'Donnell



MOUNTAIN LUMBER & HARDWARE
KILLINGTON, VERMONT

OFFERING EXPERTISE & VISION FROM START TO FINISH



NEW BRAND, NEW NAME, SAME SERVICE AND QUALITY

802-422-3469
MOUNTAINLUMBERVT.COM

Imprint of: 



PLUMBING + HEATING

Professional Service You Can Trust

802-770-8088 LICENSED & INSURED

www.JWplumb.com



Professional Handyman Services

General Maintenance • Painting • Drywall
Plumbing • Electrical • Fencing • More

Andrew Lenius, Owner | (802) 242-1600
andrew@sdhi-llc.com | Sdhi-llc.com

HillTop Cleaning Service

Hillary Goetz
tel. (802) 779-4079
hillarygoetz@icloud.com



*Cleaning & Home Health Aide
*Free quotes
*5 Stars

Hubbardton, VT

Green Mountain Water Treatment Co.

Iron & Sulphur Removal • Water Pressure Tanks • Water Softeners
UV Light Systems • Arsenic & Radon Removal

FREE ESTIMATES

Jeffery L. Leonard, Proprietor
Professional Service Since 1983

Professional Solutions to your Water Quality Problems

(802) 236-0426



Saint's Accounting

Let's Run the Numbers
Samantha St. Marie, EA & Owner

TAX PREPARATION & SMALL BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

(802) 774-8869
saintsaccounting.com

Plumbing and Heating, Inc.

Michael J. Belanger

Residential/Commercial/ Backflow Testing

VT Master Plumber
Serving Central VT
802-797-8292



Professional Service, Professional Results
For All Your Plumbing & Heating Needs
Specializing in Home Efficiency & Comfort

24 Hour Emergency Service
(802) 353-0125



Style and service for every budget.

Start the New Year Out With a **WOW!**
25% Off

CALL OR TEXT FOR DETAILS.
802-417-0020
WE BRING THE SHOWROOM TO YOU!
•Blinds •Drapes •Shutters •Shades •Home Automation



Your Trusted Local Resource!!

Want to submit a classified?

Email classifieds@mountaintimes.info
or call 802-422-2399 by Monday at 4 p.m.

Rates are 50 cents per word, per week.

SINCE 1875



Clifford Funeral Home

2 Washington Street • Rutland, VT 05701
(802) 773-3010
Gary H. Clifford • James J. Clifford



VISION BUILDERS
Custom Homes & Renovations

Free Estimates | Fully Insured | All Calls Returned

- Preventative Maintenance
- Siding
- Framing
- Structural Repairs
- Decks

Eric Schambach | (802) 342-6026 | visionbuildersvt.com



THE KILLINGTON GROUP
REAL ESTATE SERVICES

#1 RENTAL AND MANAGEMENT OFFICE
IN KILLINGTON FOR 45+ YEARS

- VACATION RENTALS
- PROPERTY MANAGEMENT
- CLEANING SERVICES

KILLINGTONGROUP.COM
KILLINGTON ROAD - (802) 422-2300

K&N | Kitchen and Bath Design, LLC

- Cabinets
- Countertops
- Flooring
- Hardware
- Plumbing Fixtures
- Installation

Kelly & Nick | 802-245-4474
125 Valley View Drive, Mendon, Vermont
kndesigns125@gmail.com

WASHBURN & WILSON AGENCY, INC.

144 Main St. • P.O. Box 77 • Bethel, VT 05032
Providing Insurance for your Home, Auto or Business

Short Term Rentals • High Value Homes
Free Insurance Quotes



Call Mel or Matt 802-234-5188
www.washburnandwilson.com



Regular & Specialized Cleaning Services, for residential and commercial properties

- Carpet Cleaning
- Tile and Grout
- Upholstery
- Water Loss
- Appliances
- Wood floors
- And so much more!



Red Duck
REFUSE & RECYCLING
"We Refuse No Refuse"

Year Round • Seasonal • On-Demand • Bulk Pick-Up
Residential Trash Pick Up Service to fit your needs

Serving all your cleaning and refuse needs since 1998. Call Today: 802-422-2230

Employment

VERMONT CRAFT IS hiring servers and food runners! We are located in the Mountain Green Resort
(802) 267-4144

Real Estate

KILLINGTON PICO REALTY Offering professional buyer and seller representation in Killington and the surrounding communities since 2013. Looking to sell? With our unique marketing plan, your property will be promoted in print and online. Ready to buy? Our full-time Realtors have special training in buyer representation to ensure you have a positive buying experience. Call us today to learn more. 2814 Killington Road (next to Choices Restaurant). 802-422-3600 www.KillingtonPicoRealty.com

KILLINGTON VALLEY REAL ESTATE Specializing in the Killington region for Sales and Listings for Homes, Condos, Land, Commercial as well as Winter seasonal rentals. Call, email or stop in. We are the red farmhouse located next to the Wobbly Barn. PO Box 236, 2281 Killington Rd, Killington. 802-422-3610, bret@killingtonvalleyrealestate.com

KW VERMONT LUXURY (KELLER WILLIAMS REALTY). Specializing in listing and selling Homes, Investment Properties, Condos, Land, and Commercial Properties in the Killington, Okemo and Woodstock Areas. Our Killington office is located at 1995 US Route 4, Killington. Contact us anytime for all of your real estate needs. Free Market Consultations. Marni@PeakPropertyRealEstate.com or 802-353-1604.

PRESTIGE REAL ESTATE OF KILLINGTON, 2922 Killington Rd., Killington. We're different. We only deal with Killington real estate, the town we love and call home. We concentrate on only one thing: property sales. And we do it well. Our focus allows us to spend more time understanding your needs — either as a buyer or as a seller of Killington VT real estate. Specializing in the listing & sales of Killington Condos, Homes, & Land. Call 802-422-3923. prestigekillington.com.

PUBLISHER'S NOTICE: All real estate advertised herein is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act, which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference, limitation, or discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status or national origin, or intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination." This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. All persons are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised are available on an equal opportunity basis.

SKI COUNTRY REAL ESTATE 335 Killington Rd., Killington. 802-775-5111. SkiCountryRealEstate.com — 9 agents servicing: Killington, Bridgewater, Mendon, Pittsfield, Plymouth, Stockbridge, Woodstock areas. Sales & Winter Seasonal Rentals. Open Monday-Saturday: 10 am — 4 pm. Sunday by appointment.

VERMONT REAL ESTATE COMPANY. Our goal is to cultivate a culture where agents are always prompt, honest, reliable, and professional. We value the relationships we build and view every home sale as a step towards a deeper relationship with our clients. We pride ourselves on our commitment to a higher standard, with a mission to raise the bar of the expected level of service. Tucker Adirondack Lange. 303-818-8069 or email tucker@vtreco.com.

WHITE CAP REALTY is an Equal Housing Opportunity real estate brokerage. We are wholly independent and practice across the State of Vermont. Please find us at www.realwhitecap.com

Services

BEAUREGARD PAINTING, 30 years experience. 802-436-1337.

ELECTRICIAN FOR HIRE. Contracting or service. Call Jim at Leighton's Light and Power 802-356-2407

MOUNTAIN BREEZE PROPERTY MANAGEMENT, LLC specializing in home caretaking, house-keeping and grocery service. 802-770-4129. mountain-breezepropertymanagement.com.

Wanted

BUDTENDERS WANTED at a new cannabis store in Central Vermont. (Killington, Bridgewater, Woodstock environs). Are you passionate about cannabis and excited to be part of an emerging industry? A new retail cannabis store is seeking enthusiastic and knowledgeable Budtenders to join our team! What we're looking for are friendly and customer-focused individuals with a passion for cannabis. Strong communications skills and a willingness to learn. Prior retail or cannabis experience is a plus, but not required. Ability to work flexible hours, including weekends. Applicants must be at least 21 years old and eligible to work in the U.S. What we offer are competitive wages. We value your skills and dedication. Room to grow with opportunities for advancement. A fun and supportive environment. Work in a space where community and curiosity thrive. To apply, send your resume and a brief cover letter telling us why you're excited to join the team. Send resume to tracy@woollymammothcannabis.com. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis.

For Rent

KILLINGTON OFFICE SPACE! 300 square feet of dedicated office space, plus bathroom, kitchen, and storage for rent. Office is on the second floor of the Mountain Times newspaper building located at 5465 U.S Route 4 on the flats (next to Dream Maker Bakery — an extra perk of having your office here). Quiet, professional working environment must be maintained. Willing to renovate to reflect the needs of your business. Some office furniture can be provided. Option for premium signage on Route 4 available to help promote your business. If interested, please email jason@mountaintimes.info or call the office at 422-2399.

LONG TERM RENTAL AVAILABLE February 1, 2025 in Fox Hollow Village. 3 bedrooms, 3 full bathrooms. Entirely remodeled. Brand new kitchen, appliances and bathrooms. Beautifully renovated unit. No pets. No smoking. Call 954-483-9618 for more information.

STORAGE UNIT RENTALS AVAILABLE! 5'X10' and 10'X20' \$75.00- \$150.00 per month. Garage Bay For Rent \$2,500.00 per month plus heat. 125 Valley View Drive, Mendon 802-855-8113 paquettepropertymanagement.com.

LISA'S WEDDING VACATION CHILDCARE LLC

Genuine Care for Your Child, Guaranteed Event & Vacation Childcare, Qualified Helpers for Large Events
Serving all of Vermont 10 years experience

Lisa Hard 802-558-3278
lisaseventcare.com | leese1124@gmail.com



WATER WELLS PUMPS COMPLETE WATER SYSTEMS HYDRO FRACKING GEOTHERMAL

East Poultney, VT 05741
802-287-4016
parkerwaterwells.com

United States Bankruptcy Court
for the District of Vermont
In re Roman Catholic Diocese of Burlington, Vermont,
Case No. 24-10205-HZC

Claims Notice for Survivors of Sexual Abuse and Others With Claims Against the Roman Catholic Diocese of Burlington, Vermont

If you were sexually abused by any person connected with the Diocese, a Catholic parish, or Catholic school within the geographic area of the Diocese, or have any claim against the Diocese, you must file a claim by **April 4, 2025**.

For more diocesan information: visit
vermontcatholic.org

For the bankruptcy docket: visit
https://case.stretto.com/diocesefurburlington

For U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the District of Vermont information: visit vtb.uscourts.gov

For advice about your rights: contact an attorney



(802) 775-2552

www.EMPORIUMVT.com
RUTLAND, VT

PREMIUM CIGARS • LOOSE TOBACCO • ROLLING SUPPLIES • HOOKAH • SHISHA • E-LIQUIDS • NIC SALTS • VAPES • COILS • POD MODS • BOX MODS • TANKS • PAPERS • CONES • WRAPS • SEEDS • GRINDERS • TRAYS • BAGS • STORAGE • HAND PIPES • WATER PIPES • BONGS • GLASS & SMOKING ACCESSORIES • LIGHTERS • TORCHES • 510 BATTERIES • DAB RIGS • E-NAILS • VAPORIZERS • INCENSE • CANDLES • TAPESTRIES • APPAREL • GIFTS • AND SO MUCH MORE



GET PUBLISHED

Email us: editor@mountaintimes.info

KW VERMONT
Luxury

PEAK
PROPERTY GROUP

IDEAL PROPERTIES CLOSE TO KILLINGTON, OKEMO OR WOODSTOCK!

HOMES | CONDOS | LAND
COMMERCIAL | INVESTMENT



802.353.1604
VTPROPERTIES.NET



Turnkey in Woodstock. Totally renovated in 2019. Gorgeous 3 bedroom/ 1.5 baths open concept cape contemporary. Move right in. You should see this gem abuts Woodstock Middle & High School. The backyard is wonderful. Sweet seasonal views! The lower level has a cool playroom. Must see to appreciate this gem! Zoned Residential & Commercial. **\$629K**



Harry's Café New Low Price 329K Turnkey Restaurant on 1 Acre. Plus 4.5 acre lot attached. The restaurant features 70 seats total with 8 seats at the bar. All equipment works including new coolers & ice machine. Renovated in 2018-Heat, Plumbing & Electrical. Successfully operated for 35 years. Plenty of parking. Possibilities abound! Motivated Sellers.



Marni Rieger
Broker
802.353.1604



William Spanos
802.345.0693



Lindsay Cimadon
860.681.9302

Marni@PeakPropertyRealEstate.com
1995 Route 4, Killington VT
59 Central Street, Woodstock VT



Gorgeous Views! Beautiful Lake Amherst property with 200 feet of lake frontage and a great new dock. Prime spot minutes to Killington, Okemo, and Woodstock. Enjoy panoramic lake & mountain views from the entire main level of this open concept 2 bed, 2 1/2 bath contemporary gem. A must see! **\$849K**



Direct to VAST Trails
4 bed/ 2 bath open concept home close to Killington or Okemo. Strong rental potential. **\$475K**

Celebrating 35 years!



Ski Country REAL ESTATE



www.skicountryrealestate.com | Email: info@skicountryrealestate.com | Office: 800-877-5111

Highride 1BR, 1BA

Come see this cozy, meticulously maintained 1BR, 1BA condo in the Highridge complex. Conveniently located next to the Highridge Sports Center. Abundant natural light to relax in front of your wood burning fireplace after a day of winter activities!

Call to schedule your showing today!



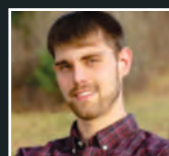
Lenore Bianchi
802-345-2785



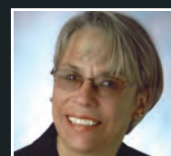
Chris Bianchi
802-353-6109



Megan Charlebois
802-558-3846



Patrick Bowen
802-558-6929



Pat Linnemayr
802-236-0854



Michelle Lord
802-417-7897



Katie McFadden
802-356-6100





Carolyn Bianchi
617 504 4439

Navigate the Killington area real estate market with local knowledge!

Tucker Adirondack Lange


(303)-818-8068
tucker@vtreco.com

VERMONT REAL ESTATE COMPANY


4740 Main Street, Waitsfield, VT 05673 | vermontrealestatecompany.com

Final Phase The Vistas



The Vistas at Sunrise
Premier, luxury, new construction, 4 bedrooms with garage, office, rec room and 4.5 baths. Offering spectacular mountain views, these homes are located in Sunrise Village, Killington's coveted and only ski on ski off community. Unique opportunity to customize your interior finishes. Construction has started on the final phase. 6 sites in total, 3 already sold. Enjoy the new era of Killington in your new home. For sale now!

Francesca Collins
(802)-272-3533




KILLINGTON PICO REALTY

Killington Ski-In/Ski-Out Home Between Great Eastern and Homestretch Ski Trails

www.644TrailviewDrive.com

Nestled between two of Killington's most iconic ski trails, this 5BR/5BA offers the ultimate blend of luxury and ski-in/ski-out convenience. Striking contemporary design featuring steep rooflines, cathedral ceilings and walls of windows framing the surrounding beauty. Updated kitchen with granite countertops, stylish appliances and butler's pantry.

Offered at \$2,400,000



2814 Killington Rd.
802-422-3600
www.KillingtonPicoRealty.com



 Kyle Kershner Broker/Owner	 Jessica Posch REALTOR®	 Daniel Pol Associate Broker	 Jane Johnson, ALHS, ASP(r) REALTOR®	 Edward Herson Lic. Assoc. R.E. Broker	 Krista Mosher REALTOR®	 John Humphreys REALTOR®
---	---	--	---	---	---	--

RIVER ROAD GEM

KILLINGTON HOME - UNMATCHED CHARM & LOCATION






3755 River Road, Killington VT **\$1,300,000**

3 bedrooms | 4 bath | 4,206 sq ft | attached 2 car garage

Tucked away at the end of a quiet drive, this timber-framed home boasts big, high-ceiling living areas with impressively large windows for natural light. Tongue and groove pine ceilings and paneling, glass-walled hot tub room. Multiple rooms to use as you choose, from office spaces to workout/game rooms and storage. Listing Broker: **Judy Storch.**



Killington Valley Real Estate

802.422.3610 killingtonvalleyrealestate.com

Offices on The Killington Road and at The Killington Grand Hotel

 Bret Williamson BROKER, OWNER	 Judy Storch BROKER	 Gary Thompson BROKER	 Cathy Quaglia BROKER	 Laura Derderian REALTOR®	 Walter Findeisen BROKER	 Doug Quatchak REALTOR®
--	---	---	---	---	--	---



Four Seasons

Sotheby's
INTERNATIONAL REALTY

Mountains Make the Best Neighbors



334 Stage Road | Killington, VT



Merisa J Sherman, Managing Broker
Killington, Vermont Office
802.345.0487 | Merisa.Sherman@SothebysRealty.com
MerisaJSherman.FourSeasonsSIR.com

Each Office is Independently Owned and Operated.



ACS DESIGN
BUILD

8 0 2 . 4 5 7 . 3 9 9 5

ACSDesignBuild.com

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN
BUILDING CONSTRUCTION
GENERAL CONTRACTING

Incorporated 1982

ASSOCIATE MEMBER
AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

← Dream in Color: from page 33

ognize as it requires great vulnerability and self-reflection. Some of us fear not fitting in and perform social gymnastics to be seen in the way we'd like. Some have a fear of failure, being different, being alone, being unhappy, being broke, or even the fear of something new. The list is endless of the things we don't want to experience or do not understand. But fear can be a roadblock or it can be a motivator. Succumbing to fear, and allowing it to be your enemy, can significantly halt progress and can lead to some uncomfortable reactivity or avoidance. Whereas, if we can walk a bit closer to the fear, acknowledge its presence without reacting, and try to understand what the foundation of the fear is, then we can respond to it at its roots. The heart is the bridge between the physical and the spiritual. In other words, it filters everything we see and helps us decide how to perceive it, just like our eyes. If we can approach our fear with love, and not as the enemy, then we can begin to learn the deeper lessons that this personal vulnerability is able to teach us.

How you can turn fear into agency

A helpful and insightful method for approaching fear, that over time can transform the mind, is to take a counterphobic approach. When encountering a situation that makes you uncomfortable, consider this process: Do not allow fear to dictate your posture, or how you behave. Do not allow the fear to convince you of what to say. Allow yourself

to be present with the fear without reacting. Tell yourself: "I am here. I am. I decide what this fear means. I control how this feeling affects me. I control whether this fear exists."

Avoid making assumptions or being closed-minded. Proceed mindfully and with intention.

Accepting fear as it is, instead of as a setback, will allow us over time to become closer to the feeling of fear. And we can instead use it as a chance to discover more about ourselves and the thing we are afraid of. The closer we study, and the more openly and honestly we meet tough feelings within us, the less they can dim our light. Approaching fear in this way and spending time with it, increases confidence and genuine motivation (agency), and helps transform the brain to view fear as something to be curious about, instead of something to naturally avoid. Instead of weakening us by convincing us to be reactive, it strengthens us by increasing our wisdom and resolve.

As we take steps to grow and make this a better year, let's try to lean on the strength of our commitments, our word, and our agency, to see our goals through to completion. And if we encounter feelings of fear, discomfort, or confusion, let's try to approach them with love and genuine curiosity, welcoming and encouraging the *growth of our best selves.*



HELP WANTED

Budtenders at a new cannabis store in Central VT

(Killington, Bridgewater, Woodstock)

Are you passionate about cannabis and excited to be part of an emerging industry?

A new retail cannabis store, is seeking enthusiastic and knowledgeable Budtenders to join our team!

WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR:

- Friendly and customer-focused individuals with a passion for cannabis.
- Strong communication skills and a willingness to learn.
- Prior retail or cannabis experience is a plus, but not required.
- Ability to work flexible hours, including weekends.
- Applicants must be at least 21 years old and eligible to work in the U.S.

WHAT WE OFFER:

- Competitive Wages: We value your skills and dedication.
- Room to Grow: Be part of a growing team with opportunities for advancement.
- A Fun & Supportive Environment: Work in a space where community and curiosity thrive.

HOW TO APPLY:

Send your resume and a brief cover letter telling us why you're excited to join the team to:

Tracy@woollymammothcannabis.com

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis



← **The Outside Story:**
from page 32

for avoiding injury, such as sunscald and frost cracks, and this adaptation is so effective that arborists sometimes wrap light-colored material around planted trees with dark bark to protect them.

Quaking aspen (*Populus tremuloides*) and balsam poplar (*Populus balsamifera*) also have light-colored bark and can thrive at this northern edge. Some species with light bark have the added advantage of bark that can photosynthesize in winter; aspen and paper birch are notable for this ability. Multiple adaptations ensure that trees are well-prepared to survive the northern winters.

American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*) can also photosynthesize through its bark, although it doesn't grow as far north as these other species. Its range extends from Florida to Quebec and into the Midwest. When healthy, it has smooth, unbroken gray bark and can live to 400 years old. Beechnuts provide important mast for a variety of wildlife species and were once the primary food source for the now-extinct passenger pigeon. The thin bark on American beech can photosynthesize, even in temperatures below freezing, giving the beech a bump in energy to help sustain it through this season. Although this adaptation helps the tree throughout winter, photosynthesis through bark becomes most active in the "vernal window," the shoulder season between winter and spring, after snowmelt and before leaf-out, when trees need energy for new growth.

While thicker bark on many tree species

prevents sunlight from reaching the photosynthesizing cork skin, this bark offers a different benefit by protecting and insulating the tree from temperature changes. Michael Wojtech, author of "Bark," refers to the thick plate-like bark of the eastern hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) as "radiator fins." These blocky bark sections increase the surface area for air to move around, distributing heat and maintaining even temperatures. Because hemlocks retain their needles all winter, little sunlight reaches the bark anyway, so this adaptation serves this tree well. Eastern white pine (*Pinus strobus*) has similarly thick and furrowed bark.

With the distraction of other growing things gone for the season, winter is an ideal time to turn our attention to tree bark, admire the great variety of subtle colors and textures, and ponder how these qualities facilitate different strategies for surviving the winter. On your next walk through the winter woods, you may notice the shreddy bark of hophornbeam (*Ostrya virginiana*), the great diamond ridges of white ash (*Fraxinus americana*), and the burnt potato chip bark of black cherry (*Prunus serotina*). How do each of these types of bark help the trees?

Catherine Wessel is the assistant editor at Northern Woodlands. 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.

← **Living the Dream:**
from page 33

forward, and be ready. You'll need that later in the woods, on the race course, and in the moguls.

And my athletes are learning to be prepared for anything the mountain might throw at them. If you come over a roller like F.I.S., you better be ready for what's on the other side. If it was perfectly groomed, you could come over blind and fast, focused on nothing. But on a fun trail? There could be a bald spot on the transition that you have to be ready for with quick feet, a jump, and some quick Tigger turns. Yes, bouncy turns like Tigger from Winnie the Pooh. They are 5 & 6 years old, remember?

We're not just teaching these kids to be good skiers; we're always thinking about improving their turns. We are giving them skills for life. Because life isn't perfectly groomed, where you can travel at an average of 29 mph. It's a fun trail full of challenges and variety. And it will take you out if you're not paying attention. Trying all the crazy, weird things is what makes you better, more adaptable, and receptive to change. If all you're trained to do is make one perfect turn, can you imagine the trauma when you cannot make that turn perfect?

I've been there, stuck in that one perfect turn. It's a trap, and it's really hard to get out of, both mentally and physically. Instead, you have to dance with the mountain, and it always leads, so stop trying to dominate it and tell it what to do. Learn the lessons that the mountain wants to teach you, and

you will become a more beautiful, receptive skier—and person.

This past weekend, we got stuck in a river bed and had to stop everything while we scraped everyone's skis off. A big bump in the road of life, but we learned to get out our season passes, sit down and scrape our skis off. Nothing to do about it but acknowledge the challenge and address it. Because what are we really learning? That we, no matter what age we are, are responsible for ourselves, our bodies and our gear. So we better ski the Fun Signs.

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



By Merisa J. Sherman

A Caution & Thin Cover warning also translates to: A double fun sign.



Prestige Real Estate of Killington

Exclusively Killington!



Base Camp at Bear Mountain

- 3000+ square feet
- 4-bedroom 4-bath
- Ski in/ski out townhomes
- Bear Mt ski trail views
- 2-car heated garage
- Starting at \$2,900,000





Artist renderings subject to change

Pinnacle B11



- 1BR/1BA
- Located near resort base
- Gas fireplace
- Pool/hot tub
- Mtn views

\$315,000

Topridge 37A



- **SKI IN/SKI OUT!**
- 4BR/4BA
- Beautiful views
- Gas fireplace
- New furnace
- New windows

\$1,700,000

2922 Killington Road 802-422-3923 www.prestigekillington.com

Killington



BE THE BEAST



LOCAL LOVE.

Calling all Vermont and New Hampshire residents. Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and new this season, Sundays, are your days to get the biggest savings on access to The Beast with discounted lift tickets!

