



Courtesy Townline Grill
The Mozzarella Smash Burger is as creative as it is popular.

NEW BURGER SMASHES IT

From food truck to restaurant, Townline Grill expands offerings with creative flairs. Beer will be available to accompany burgers beginning this week.

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LOCAL PARTNERS TO OPEN NEW EARLY ED CENTER IN PITTSFORD

The Pittsford Village Farm has entered a partnership with Rutland County Parent Child Center to open an Early Childhood Education center in the spring of 2026.

Page 4



BEWARE FROST QUAKES

Frost quakes happen when water in the soil freezes and expands quickly. The release of pressure can cause effects similar to earthquakes with explosive noises and shaking.

Page 32



Archived photo, courtesy Okemo Resort

One of the most popular features of Okemo Parks has been its halfpipe — a rare feature in the state. A petition to bring it back now has over 4,000 signatures.

Locals petition Okemo to bring back the halfpipe

By Katy Savage

Banners demanding “Save the Halfpipe” and “Build the Pipe” flutter across the balconies of Winterplace condominiums at Okemo Mountain Resort, as the community protests the closure of the popular halfpipe for a second consecutive year.

A change.org petition with nearly 4,000 signatures reflects the outcry,

spurred by Vail Resorts’ decision not to open the halfpipe.

“The Okemo halfpipe is more than just a feature on the mountain — it’s a vital part of our community and a beacon for snowboarders and skiers across the Northeast and beyond,” the petition reads. “Its absence this year not only diminishes the experi-

ence for local riders but also impacts youth programs, competitions, and the broader snowboarding culture.”

The halfpipe has long been a staple at Okemo, serving as the site for USASA events and fostering talent, including Olympic medalists Hannah Teter and Danny Kass. Ross Powers, another Olympic gold med-

alist and alumnus of Stratton Mountain School, has even led snowboard camps at Okemo in his retirement.

A coach from nearby Cavendish emphasized the halfpipe’s significance on the change.org petition.

“I’ve been an instructor and coach of a seasonal program for almost Okemo halfpipe → 14

Petition hopes to expand Killington Select Board to five

By Curt Peterson

On the Friday, Jan. 10 Merisa Sherman delivered a petition to town hall with the requisite signatures required to add an article to Killington’s Town Meeting Ballot on March 4. Bearing 73 signatures, the petition asks voters to expand the town Select Board from its present three-member configuration, to a five-member body.

The town clerk verified the signatures before the Select Board meeting Monday, Jan. 13. Sherman told the Mountain Times all the other commissions and agencies in town have five-member boards, and the Select Board would better serve the public if there were also five selectpersons.

“I believe in the democratic process,” Sherman said, adding she thinks the expanded board would give people a more democratic voice.

The three-member board and the interim town manager Tom Yennerell acknowledged receipt of the petition at their meeting, Jan. 13, and accepted the article with the slight legal edits suggested by James Barlow, the town’s attorney.

Board chair Jim Haff explained they can’t solicit candidates for the proposed new positions before the article either passes or fails. If voters turn down the proposal, there will be no new seats to fill. If it passes, the new legal wording sets up a schedule for candidates to file petitions to be on a May 28 special vote by Australian ballot. The new selectpersons would begin June 1.

“In the past eight years,” Haff said, “only one person has challenged an incumbent for a seat on the board.”

There were two people at the meeting in person, and three or four attending via Zoom (two of whom were reporting for the Mountain Times). Sherman herself said she doesn’t attend the Select Board meetings, but is herself a town lister and on the Development Review Board.

“Where are the people who are interested in serving on the board,” Haff asked.

A motion to formally accept the petition as amended by town council was passed unanimously.



Courtesy Kara Ryan

In the wake of Okemo Mountain Resort not opening the halfpipe this year, banners of protest can be seen on the balconies of Winterplace condominiums.

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Rutland seeks resignation of school board member, claiming she moved out of the city

By Kevin O'Connor/VTDigger

Rutland City officials are seeking the resignation of a local school board member who continues to serve after reportedly moving to a nearby town.

“The city has found that you do not reside within the city as is required to be eligible to vote within the city and to have a seat on the city’s school board,” municipal attorney Megan LaChance wrote to board member Heather Hauke in a Dec. 24 letter.

Hauke, owner of Rutland’s Intrinsic Property Services and mother of four school-age children, was elected to a three-year term on the 11-member board in 2023 and will be up for reelection in 2026.

Hauke, reached by phone Thursday, said she hadn’t received the letter and wouldn’t answer questions about where she was living or whether she would resign.



Submitted

Heather Hauke

completed due diligence and upon reasonable belief,” determined that Hauke and her family now live in

School Board,” LaChance wrote.

To avoid a “public spectacle,” the lawyer continued, “the city respectfully requests you to voluntarily correct your voter registration and to resign from the school board.”

“If you fail to take the requested action,” the letter closed, “the city will initiate proceedings to have you removed from the voter registry in the city and from the school board.”

Three weeks after mailing the letter, the city attorney said she had yet to receive a formal response from Hauke, who participated in the board’s most recent meeting Tuesday night, Jan. 14.

When Hauke ran for election two years ago, she noted her family’s connection to Rutland City schools.

“I’ve always been volunteering in classrooms, whenever there’s a field day or a field trip or an open house,” she told the VTDigger in 2023. “I feel like this is the next step in being involved.”

Asked about potential next steps, LaChance said, “Due to statutory constraints, we are not able to take formal action until after the Town Meeting election,” which this year is March 4.

“If you fail to take the requested action, the city will initiate proceedings,” its attorney wrote to Heather Hauke, who continues to serve in office.

“There clearly must be a misunderstanding,” she said, adding, “That’s all I’m going to say.”

But the city attorney, “having

Mendon, according to the letter.

“Despite not residing in the city, you are registered to vote in the city and currently sit on the Rutland City

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Donahue announces bid for Rutland City Alderman

Lifelong Rutland City resident Tom Donahue announced his candidacy for the Rutland City Board of Alderman on Jan. 8.

Donahue is a former Alderman and was president of the board before going to work for Mayor Jeff Wennberg as director of community development for the City. Subsequently, Donahue headed the Rutland Region Chamber of Commerce and currently is the head of BROCC Community Action.

Donahue has named Peg Flory and Cal Josselyn, Jr. as campaign co-chairs.

Donahue said if elected, his focus would be to increase public safety in Rutland and decrease property taxes.

“As a resident deeply invested in this community, I grow more and more concerned about the crime and violence,” Donahue said. “One deadly shooting in our city is one too many.”

Additionally, Donahue said he will focus on new business investments to ease the growing burden on residential property taxpayers.

“As a long-time homeowner, I understand the burden placed on our residents by ever-increasing city property taxes,” Donahue said. “Family and



Submitted

Tom Donahue

individuals’ budgets are so strained right now by the rising costs of goods and services that paying the rising property taxes has become daunting.”

If elected, Donahue intends to request an appointment to the aldermanic Public Safety Committee and the Community

and Economic Development Committee to have a voice at the table to further these critical initiatives.

While working for Mayor Wennberg, Donahue cited his role in attracting Vermont Country Store to the Airport Industrial Park (the City shared property tax 50/50 with the town of Clarendon) and in redeveloping the Rutland Shopping Plaza, including courting the owners of Price Chopper Supermarket.

“We will need to start now to fill the void created when Walmart leaves downtown. I also successfully led efforts to obtain millions of dollars invested here for rail, air, and road improvements that we continue to enjoy today,” Donahue said.

Tom Donahue has served on some 23 area boards and commissions over

his career. He is vice chair of the Christ the King School board and is a Vermont Justice of the

Peace. He is married to Gayle Donahue, and they have five children and 12 grandchildren.

“One deadly shooting in our city is one too many,” Donahue said.

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FRIDAY, MARCH 7 | 7:30 PM

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CHRIS JANSON

SATURDAY, APRIL 5 | 7:00 PM

GARRISON KEILLOR
"TONIGHT"

SATURDAY, APRIL 19 | 7:00 PM

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GUEST EDITORIAL



Submitted

George William Hodulik

George William Hodulik, 98

George William Hodulik was born on Feb. 22, 1926, on Walnut Street to parents Justin and Angela Hodulik of Dunellen, New Jersey. He was raised on Walnut Street with his two sisters, Helen and Josephine, and brother, Henry. George passed away on Sunday, Jan. 12. He is the last of his generation.

George attended St. John's School in Dunellen and St. Peter's Vocational School in New Brunswick before enlisting in the U.S. Navy at age 17, serving his country as a boiler tender during World War II from 1944 to 1946 and from 1950 to 1953 during the Korean War.

In the Navy, he attained the rank of Machinist Mate 2nd Class and Water Tender Petty Officer 2nd Class, serving on two destroyers: the USS Wren DD-568 and the USS Fiske DD-842. On the latter, he was a plank holder, having been a crew member when the ship was commissioned.

After returning home following World War II, he completed his high school education at Dunellen High School and is part of the Class of 1946. Although not a degreed engineer, he was the epitome of a self-taught engineer. After serving in the Korean War, George worked as a machinist for many local machine shops, finally settling at Lockheed Martin for over 35 years. He was a machinist, model maker, and forerunner to modern CNC machinists. George was proud of the many satellites he worked on that were in the sky. He was one of the last employees to be there, shutting down the place in the early 1990s.

George was an active voter and a faithful Catholic who received all his sacraments. He attended mass frequently, honoring Sunday and Holy Days, not to mention weekdays, after which he would gather to catch up with other parishioners, sometimes going for breakfast at the Junction Deli. He was baptized at St John's and a parishioner there until the opening of Our Lady of Fatima, where his parents and brother are original parishioners. The family is thankful to the at-home Eucharistic Minister Gary and his best friend Mike, who would bring him communion, sit with him, and recite daily Mass readings with a dialog to follow.

George and Dorothy's children received their sacraments of initiation at Our Lady of Fatima, which was one of the rocks of his foundation throughout life. He frequented St. Mary's in Middlesex, Christ the King and Immaculate Heart of Mary in Rutland, Our Lady of the Mountains, Killington, St. Mary's Barnegat/Manahawkin, and St Francis, LBI.

George and his brother Henry, a fellow World War II veteran, were active members of the Dunellen American Legion Post 119 and would later found the Dunellen Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 5479, which continues to support local heroes.

George lived in Dunellen for 98 years. He and his wife, Dorothy, raised their four children in the home he built adjacent to his childhood house on Walnut St.; his primary

Obit, Hodulik → 14

New early childhood education center to open in Pittsford

Rutland County Parent Child Center and Pittsford Village Farm enter partnership to serve community

With the New Year came great news for continued progress at Pittsford Village Farm (PVF).

At the last PVF board meeting of 2024, the board unanimously voted to accept the Rutland County Parent Child Center's (RCPC) application to operate an Early Childhood Education center at the PVF Farmhouse, once renovations are complete. After receiving the news, RCPC Co-Executive Director Stephanie Carvey and PVF Board Chair Lorrie Byrom signed the Memorandum of Understanding, according to a Jan. 15 news release.

Solidifying this partnership marks a huge milestone for Pittsford Village Farm, a local non-profit that has been working for years toward the renovation of the 8,000 square-foot farm house that sits on 150 acres of publicly-accessible land in the heart of Pittsford's village center.

If all goes according to plan, RCPC will open the early childhood education center at Pittsford Village Farm in the spring of 2026.

The Pittsford Village Farm's mission is to strengthen the vitality of the community by connecting social, cultural and educational opportunities that

help build a stronger community for all. While also managing our 150-acres in downtown Pittsford and coordinating outdoor performances and programs, the renovation of the Farm House has been a primary focus for the volunteer board. Once completed, the Farm House will be home to a community center on the ground floor, and an early childhood education center on the first floor and two affordable two-bedroom apartments on the second floor.

"We are thrilled to enter into a partnership with RCPC for a number of reasons," said Pittsford Village Farm Board Chair, Lorrie Byrom. "RCPC is so clearly an organization that is deeply rooted in the community, yet it is also connected to a broader network that provides the type of support that ensures a successful program. It is equally meaningful to us that RCPC has the experience and resources to offer a high-quality early childhood education program, while also working to support the whole family. This is a wonderful and unique piece that benefits the entire Pittsford and Rutland County community, which is central to our organization's mission."

Since 1985, RCPC has been dedicated to removing barriers and providing concrete support to caretakers, youth and families within the Rutland County region. The agency's reach and programming has expanded over the years to meet the varied needs of families in our area, including workforce development, children's integrated services and family support, parenting classes, and much more.

"Community partnerships are imperative to supporting and uplifting families," said Stephanie Carvey, co-executive director of RCPC. "We are especially excited to expand nature-based programming with young children utilizing the beautiful space provided by the Pittsford Village Farm. Given its central location in Rutland County, we hope to serve communities who have not yet had access to early childhood education, which is critical not only to the development of young children, but also a valuable resource to working families."

Pittsford Village Farm is located at 42 Elm St. in Florence.

For more information, visit: pittsfordvillagefarm.org.

When is a sign an election sign?

By James Kent

Last week, The Mountain Times ran a story about a Trump/Vance banner affixed to an abandoned poll sign on a vacant lot next to Godnick's Grand Furniture. Readers wanted to know if this sign, a replacement to a similar Trump/Vance sign that appeared prior to the Nov. 7 election and was added close to election day, was in violation of Rutland City's sign ordinance. The Mountain Times contacted City Building Inspector Mark Sadakierski, and connected with him Friday, Jan. 17.

Sadakierski indicated that the banner in question did not, in his view, violate the Rutland City sign ordinance because it did not feature the words "Elect" or "Nominate." Therefore, it wasn't what he considered an election sign. While it seems unlikely anyone could mistake the intention of the sign for anything other than an election sign, Sadakierski disagreed. However, he said he'd have to check with the city's lawyer to make a final judgment.

One area where the sign was in undisputed violation of the ordinance was that the property's owner, Leonard Knappmiller, did not file for a sign permit, something required by Rutland City. Sadakierski said he had reached out to Knappmiller to inform him that he must fill out a permit request. As of Friday, Knappmiller had not responded to Sadakierski's request. Sadakierski declined The Mountain Times inquiry for Knappmiller's contact information.

No stranger to controversy

In 2019, Leonard Knappmiller was fined \$6,000 and asked to fix an issue stemming from 2016, when he was



By James Kent

A view of the opposite side of the Trump/Vance sign, greeted travelers heading North on Route 7 in Rutland City on Monday, Jan. 20.

found to have filled in more than 10,000 square feet of wetland and wetland buffer on his property. Knappmiller, owner of Poultney Properties LLC, was accused of harassing a Poultney resident who was in opposition to the property owner's planned Dollar General development. Poultney's Development Review Board denied Knappmiller's permit in that case. While Poultney Properties LLC is a property

Sign → 14



Courtesy Killington Pico Area Association

As part of January Safety Observance month, Killington reminds uphill travelers to be safe while having fun on the mountain at all times of day and weather conditions.

Killington reminds guests of uphill travel safety

As winter enthusiasts continue to embrace uphill travel at Killington Resort and Pico Mountain, resort officials remind guests of the importance of following designated routes and safety protocols. Uphill travel—whether by skinning or snowshoeing—offers an invigorating way to experience the mountain, but adherence to the resort’s policies is essential for ensuring the safety of all guests and resort staff.

Uphill travel pass and guidelines

To access Killington and Pico’s uphill travel routes, all participants must obtain a 2024/25 Uphill Travel Pass and wear the corresponding armband at all times. The pass is free for season pass holders, while non-pass holders can purchase one for \$59. Registration includes watching an etiquette video and signing an express assumption of risk form.

Uphill travel is permitted on designated routes only, which are chosen to minimize conflicts with resort operations, including snowmaking and grooming. The uphill routes—marked by uphill travel icons—are updated regularly based on mountain conditions and operational needs.

Uphill travelers must ascend on designated routes during operating hours but may descend on any open trail. However, during non-operating hours, participants must ascend and descend on designated uphill travel routes for safety.

Critical safety concerns

Killington Resort has reported recent incidents where uphill travelers have strayed from designated routes, creating dangerous situations involving grooming equipment. Snow-

cats operate with winch cables that can be nearly invisible in low light or snowy conditions, posing serious risks to anyone off designated paths.

All uphill travelers must adhere to posted signage, respect closed trails, and stay within approved routes to avoid hazardous situations. Those venturing beyond resort boundaries assume full responsibility for their safety, as ski patrol services are unavailable outside resort operating hours.

Emergency preparedness and best practices

Resort officials urge all uphill travelers to be prepared for winter conditions, as cell phone service may be unreliable on the mountain. During resort hours, ski patrol can be reached at 802-422-1243 or via in-house phones at extension 4444. Outside of operating hours, emergencies should be reported by calling 911.

For a safe and enjoyable uphill travel experience, guests should:

- Wear their Uphill Travel Pass armband visibly at all times
- Check route availability on Killington’s website before heading out
- Avoid travel outside of designated routes to prevent conflicts with snowcats and mountain operations
- Ascend and descend only on designated routes during non-operating hours

Killington Resort continues to support uphill travel as a rewarding and scenic activity but emphasizes the need for compliance to keep the experience safe for everyone.

For more information, visit: killington.com.

Facebook group dedicated to Sherburne Pass road conditions proves popular

By James Kent

Brent Dickinson, a veterinary practice manager from Merchantville, New Jersey, is no stranger to Killington or the infamous Sherburne Pass. His family still owns a condo at Mountain Green, which they’ve had for over two decades. Dickinson graduated from Green Mountain College and was a Poultney volunteer firefighter before moving back to New Jersey. As a firefighter, he witnessed the results of many traffic accidents.

Safety is a constant for Dickinson, and after a recent visit to Killington over New Year’s, he got an idea. As an avid follower of the Killington Locals’ Facebook page, Dickinson noticed a significant amount of posts or responses would focus on conditions of the Sherburne Pass, that hilly stretch of road on Route 4 that brings travelers to and from Killington down to Rutland. If you’ve traveled the Pass this winter,

you’ll be all too familiar with its icy and snowy conditions and the joy and splendor of trucks grinding to a halt as they try to make their way up a hill on the Pass. Knowing what the conditions on the Pass are and if there are any issues along the stretch could help travelers with the timing of their driving decisions and potentially reduce accidents.

“I’d be on Killington Locals and notice a similar question, ‘How’s the Pass?’” Dickinson said. “It got to be something I started to pay attention to—a lot. Then I thought, maybe if this information was all in one place, it could be an updatable and valuable resource.”

Dickinson started the Facebook group “Sherburne Pass—Killington Rt 4 Info” on Thursday, Jan. 9. In one week, the group had amassed 1,000 followers. The posts suggest that

FB group → 13



Courtesy Brent Dickinson

A new Facebook group dedicated to road conditions along the Sherburne Pass in Killington reached 1,000 followers in its first week.



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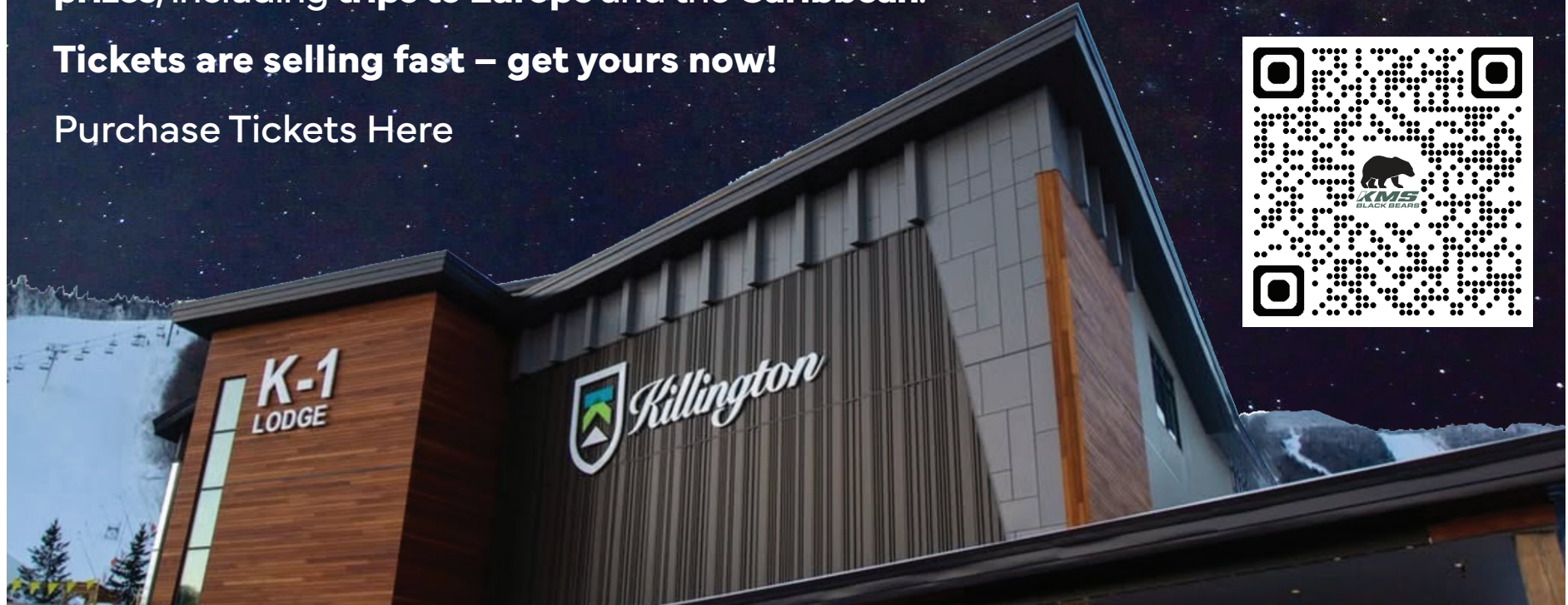


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Cobras slide into 2025 with confidence

Cobra Gymnastics, in Rutland, is off to a fantastic start for its 13th season as a competitive program. It was voted the 2024 Xcel Vermont Club of the Year under USA Gymnastics for the third year in a row and continues to promote a healthy and quality competitive program for athletes age 6-18 in the Rutland area. The 48-member team has traveled to Massachusetts, New York and Essex, Vermont for the start of their regular competitive season.

Jan. 10-11 proved successful at the Royal Regal Classic in Essex as both the Bronze and Silver teams captured first place team finishes over their friendly long-term rivals, Regal Gymnastics Academy.

Head coach and owner, Shelby Barsalou reported, "This team is full of talent and excitement for the sport. I look forward to the unfolding of the season to truly see how much they can accomplish."

Over 460 athletes competed in a variety of levels; Cobra participating in the Xcel Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum meets in addition to a lone Level 8 athlete.

Bronze team

The Bronze team, including four veterans and 12 first-year athletes, demonstrated their depth of talent by capturing a close victory over Regal Gymnastics 113.35 to 113.30 in the team competition. Individual gold medalist include: Julia McGuire: AA- 37.350, Vault- 9.500, Brooke Laramie: Floor: 9.625, Lydia Carpentier: Beam- 9.300, Olivia Sheehan: Beam- 9.300, Mya Bixby: Vault- 9.600, Ella Cortina: Floor- 9.525 and Ivy Graham: Bars- 9.375.

Silver team

The Silver team outshone 61 other posted team scores to capture the highest team total of the entire meet weekend with a 115.625. This talented 16-member team demonstrated their depth of artistry on floor with four athletes claiming top 100 scores in the nation for 2025- Bailey Wilbur, Catherine Welch, Lily Cassineri and Emelia Ribeiro. Individual Silver team gold medalists include: Wilbur: Floor- 9.875, Welch: AA- 37.925, Floor- 9.825, Domenica Gagliardi: AA- 37.650, Vault- 9.600, Beam- 9.250, Beatrix Hagge: Beam- 9.700, Ribeiro: Bars- 9.550, Floor- 9.750, Lorelei Shackett: Bars- 9.600.

Gold team

Cobra's veteran 10-member Gold team captured second place in a competitive field of eight teams. Bay Sparks entered the top 100 scores of the nation on balance beam. Individual gold medalists include: Bay Sparks: AA- 37.55, Bars- 9.450, Beam- 9.725 and Alexa Kojak: Vault- 9.00.

Platinum team

The five-member Platinum team, the highest level of the Xcel program this season at Cobra, showed talent and promise with a third place finish in the team awards. Individual Gold medalist included Amelia Gibbs on vault with a 9.275.

Mia Harrington, Cobra's senior athlete and lone level 8 competitor went home with two silver medals on bars and balance beam and one bronze medal for AA. Harrington is a senior at Burr and Burton Academy and participates in the high school gymnastics circuit in addition to being a nine year member of the Cobra team.

The team has six more travel meets in front of them including, Saratoga, New York, Charleston, South Carolina and Derry, New Hampshire and local Vermont meets.

Cobra hosts a drop-in open gym on Saturdays at 1 p.m. for ages 4 and up.

For more information, visit cobravt.com.



Courtesy Team Photo
Catherine Welch (left) and Bailey Wilbur (right), both on the Silver Team, posed after successful events in Essex earlier this month.



Submitted

Mike Fischer chainsaws a fallen tree in the snow that fell across part of the Hartland trails.

Hartland Winter Trails to celebrate 50 years

By Curt Peterson

Hartland Winter Trails (HWT) has two 50th birthday events coming up — a concert with refreshments featuring Andrew and Noah Van Norstrand starting at 7:30 this Friday, Jan. 24, at Damon Hall, and a new format tiki-torch night event across from the firehouse from 2-8 p.m. on Feb. 8.

In 1974 Henry Merritt created a short, 1-kilometer cross-country ski trail on his Quechee Road property for his daughter, who had cystic fibrosis, to use for rigorous exercise that helped her condition. Gary Trachier, one of the snowball-makers at HWT, was a member of his high school Nordic ski team then, and got interested in expanding Merritt's idea.

"This was before Nordic skiing exploded with popularity," Trachier told the Mountain Times. "But once the ball got rolling, the trail system grew larger every year."

Ski trails require maintenance, which volunteer friends and landowners provided. By 1985, Trachier guesses the system was 10 kilometers long, making use of landowners' enthusiastic permission to allow trails across their properties. His sister and brother-in-law, Andrea and Theo Ambros, their parents, Roger and Clydene Trachier, and enthusiasts George and Carol Little loosely managed the trail system, responding to events, weather, landowners' wishes, adjusting for wet spots, and opportunities for better trail routes.

Equipment has always been a challenge. Trachier remembers grooming the earliest trails with an old snowmobile and a homemade track-maker. Needs and equipment have evolved — HWT now has a John Deere Gator and a professional grooming machine, a total investment of about \$23,000.

"The trails grew steadily for the first 30 years," Trachier said. "There was no organization, no formality, just enough enthusiasm and good will to keep growing and serving more skiers."

HWT's list of skiers and supporters includes 500 names. There is no membership fee or charge for using the trails. Fundraising projects to buy equipment have successfully produced whatever money was needed.

Last year HWT was awarded two grants: \$45,000 state VOREC grant for trail improvement, and \$4,500 from the Killington Foundation (funded by proceeds from the Women's FIS World Cup races) to buy skis and snowshoes to lend to people who want to learn how to use them.

"Later this month we hope to use this equipment for an outdoor program with Hartland Elementary School students," Andrea Ambros said.

The last 20 years have involved fine-tuning the trails and the entity.

"Four or five years ago we formed Hartland Winter Trails, Inc. as a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation," Trachier said. "We have a board, officers and legal status."

Friday's concert and Tiki Torch in February will commemorate five decades of successful community recreation.

For more information, visit: hartlandwintertrails.org.



Submitted

Henry Merritt founded the HWT area in 1974.

Anticipation

This Wednesday, Jan. 22, members of the administration will share with all lawmakers their proposal to reform Vermont's education system and the way to fund it. One leading legislator, who was briefed on the proposal, indicated the reform plan may be the biggest overhaul the Legislature has seen in 50 years.

It's no secret that last year's increase in property taxes played a large role in changing the political makeup of the Legislature in November. While Democrats continue with a majority in the House and Senate, they also lost more Democratic seats than in any other state-house in the country.

Understanding the new dynamic and the message from voters, legislative leaders appear more open to hearing the governor's reform suggestions this session.

Changing the status quo is never easy. Whether it is a change to a "Foundation Formula" like most states, where each district receives a flat amount per student from the state, or a change to Vermont's lowest in the nation staff-to-student ratio, there will be critics. The NEA and some other groups, for example, have argued that Vermont does not have a spending problem, but rather needs more income from higher earners.

During his inaugural speech to lawmakers, Scott indicated Vermonters wanted change and that we needed to do it together, despite some adjustments being potentially unpopular.

The governor is also taking a lead on improving public safety. In his weekly press conference last Wednesday, Jan. 15, he outlined a plan to help us move towards safer



By Rep. Jim Harrison

communities. A few of the administration's proposals included:

- Repeal "Raise the Age" law for 19-year-old offenders and reform our youthful offender procedures to ensure accountability. If no action is taken by the Legislature this session, 19-year-old criminal offenders will be treated like children in the Family Court, making Vermont the only state to increase the age of juvenile jurisdiction to 19. Further increases to age 22 are anticipated in the current law.
- Revise bail laws to make it a tool courts and prosecutors can use to hold violators accountable. He indicated many view our status as a "catch and release" system which does not deter repeat offenders.
- Simplify extradition laws when they are waived.
- Build a system that can deliver a swift and sustained connection to addiction treatment and recovery by re-tooling and reinvigorating existing programs.
- Elevate the Dept. of Public Safety to the Agency of Public Safety, making its director a cabinet level position in line with its importance.

Other items of note:

The highly anticipated Clean Heat Standard report from the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) was released this past week to the Legislature. While the report estimated lower heating fuel increases than previously anticipated, the PUC concluded that the "Clean Heat Standard is not well suited to Vermont." The report went on to say "...achieving thermal sector greenhouse gas reductions consistent with the Global Warming Solutions Act would be best achieved by building upon existing

Harrison → 12

Top issues facing local towns this session

The issues most important for the voters in Windsor-5 remain:

1. Education financing
2. State aid for school construction
3. Accessible housing
4. Adapting to more severe and frequent weather events.

Close behind and contributing to the high costs of living and working in Vermont is:

5. High cost of healthcare and health insurance.

On education financing:

This week, on Jan. 22, the Governor Scott will deliver a major proposal for pre-K-12 public education that will likely dominate the legislative session. He is expected to propose seismic changes to education governance, facilities, funding, and college and career readiness. His administration has provided some initial glimpses to legislative leaders, who have said there is some real promise in his proposal.

Once the governor and his administration (Agency of Education, Department of Taxes) have delivered their proposal, it will be up to the Legislature to translate it into statute and decide what they (we) can support it. Drafting the legislation will be just the beginning — the implementation will take time and significant effort across the state. In looking at all possible scenarios, the earliest that some of the ideas could be effective is 2026.

The chair of the Commission on the Future of Public Education in Vermont, Megan Roy, told a joint hearing of the House and Senate that the commission decided not to make any specific proposals for cost containment in December because it was impossible to do so without affecting

governance and delivery (number of school districts, schools, and class sizes). Those policy discussions need significantly more discussion.

She cited the lack of consistent data among the school districts as making it difficult to make any hard and fast decisions.

Local voters were upset that the commission did not make any solid recommendations to help relieve pressure on the statewide education property tax. But her explanation did make sense, that any meaningful cost savings would have to involve the other two legs of the stool. With the Legislature now in full swing and the administration making a sweeping proposal, the role of the commission may have to adjust its focus to provide constructive input and feedback rather than drafting a proposal of its own. That is yet to be determined.

While the governor's proposal is expected to be significant, it isn't clear that there will be any cost savings in the near term. He has pledged to keep the statewide property tax level, which will require funds from other sources given the projected increase of 5.9% in school spending. To that end, he has proposed banking a significant amount (\$87 million) from the Budget Adjustment Act for FY 26, most likely for "buying down" property tax rates.

Stay tuned for more information on this important topic.

I was fortunate to be assigned to the Committee on Ways and Means, which deals with raising revenues to support the state government through taxes and fees. We will be devoting 80% of our time this session to the Education Fund and finding ways to craft a fair funding formula that supports quality education that Vermont can afford.

*Charlie Kimbell is the state representative for Windsor-5, which includes Woodstock, Reading and Plymouth.
Email: ckimbell@leg.state.vt.us*



By Rep. Charlie Kimbell



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Clean heat standard is less expensive than previously thought, though not 'well suited to Vermont,' commission says

The state has “a long history of implementing innovative and effective programs to reduce energy use,” commissioners wrote, and it would be more effective to build on existing programs rather than create a new policy

By Emma Cotton/VTDigger

The chair of the state’s Public Utility Commission told lawmakers on Thursday, while presenting a long-awaited report, that implementing the controversial clean heat standard could cost significantly less than others have previously suggested. However, chairman Ed McNamara concluded that the commission recommends that the state not move forward with it.

Debate about the proposed program—designed to reduce planet-warming greenhouse gas emissions from heating and cooling buildings in Vermont—has almost entirely focused on its potential cost to consumers.

In May 2023, state lawmakers overrode Gov. Phil Scott’s veto of a bill that established but did not implement a clean heat standard. Instead, lawmakers directed the state’s Public Utility Commission to complete a detailed framework that they could analyze and decide whether to pass in the 2025 session.

Political momentum to enact a clean heat standard has swiftly waned, given that Democratic supporters lost ground in November’s elections and lawmakers have increasingly said the program would be too expensive for Vermonters. However, supporters of the policy have long warned that skeptics should wait for the commission’s final report before jumping to conclusions about the program’s viability and cost.

That 247-page report went live at 11:37 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 15. McNamara attempted to sort through its major findings only hours later for lawmakers in a joint hearing between the Senate Natural Resources and Energy Committee and the House Energy and Digital Infrastructure Committee.

The report, which McNamara said contained gaps, estimated that a clean heat standard would likely increase the cost of a gallon of fuel oil by less than 10 cents in 2026 and could increase by another 45 cents by 2035. That’s far less than other per-gallon cost estimates, including a \$4 per-gallon estimate often cited by Scott.

Staff at the commission concluded in the report that while the clean heat standard prescribed in the 2023 Affordable Heat Act is “theoretically workable,” commissioners wrote, the body “does not believe that this program is well suited to Vermont.”

The state has “a long history of implementing innovative and effective programs to reduce energy use,” commissioners wrote, and it would be more effective to build on existing programs rather than stand up an entirely new policy.

After the presentation, Sen. Anne Watson, D-Washington, said in an interview her initial reaction was relief that the cost “was not as high as what some folks had projected that it might be.”

She referred to other options put forward by the commission, including increasing the existing fuel tax and funneling the additional money toward incentives for cleaner heating systems, and a potential thermal efficiency charge that could be used in a similar way.

“As we know, we have to find common ground amongst Republicans, Democrats, and Progressives this session,” she said. “And so I think having a menu of options is a good thing for us.”

The conversation is taking place while Vermont careens toward a 2030 deadline in the state’s landmark climate

law — the 2020 Global Warming Solutions Act — by which time Vermont must cut its emissions almost in half. Without a comprehensive program to reduce heating-related emissions, the state is sure to miss that deadline — which has prompted a different discussion about moving the 2030 deadline back.

Scott has long been opposed to the clean heat standard, and without a supermajority of Democrats and Progressives, any effort to move the program forward is unlikely to succeed.

Sen. Scott Beck, R-Caledonia/Essex, the Senate minority leader who also serves on the Senate Natural Resources and Energy Committee, told VTDigger that he won’t support “a program that imposes taxes, penalties or fees on Vermonters.”

“I am willing to support, and I have supported in the past, programs that are supported by general fund revenues and goals that are based on the affordable technologies that are available,” he said.

Another cost estimate

A clean heat standard would work by establishing a credit market. It would require fuel dealers that import heating-related fossil fuels into Vermont to offset the emissions associated with their products by earning credits. Fuel dealers could gain credits in several ways, by delivering cleaner-burning products like biofuels, for example, or by paying a fee.

Money raised from those fees would go toward switching Vermonters to efficiency measures and other heating systems that pollute less, but those who don’t make the switch could pay higher prices for heating fuels.

Many have tried to estimate how much prices would increase. The Public Utility Commission’s new report provides another clean heat standard cost estimate. However, along with past estimates that have been widely criticized, this estimate may be similarly murky.

The analysis is missing a major component, McNamara told lawmakers. It only calculates program costs — such as the cost for the government to provide incentives to buy a heat pump — not costs that individuals pay to make those

upgrades. Its analysis also cuts off at 2035, meaning that the long-term cost benefits of purchasing a heat pump in 2034, for example, are not included. As a result, lawmakers still don’t have a clear picture of the total costs and benefits.

Those missing pieces aside, the upshot, according to McNamara, is that people who can switch to less-polluting heating systems because of the clean

heat standard would likely save money. The commission’s rough estimate shows that a clean heat standard might cause people who don’t switch to different systems to pay between 8 cents and 9 cents more for a gallon of heating fuel in 2026. By 2035, that price is estimated to increase to between 56 cents and 65 cents per gallon.

In addition to cost, McNamara said the credit market established in the clean heat standard would be tricky for Vermont to pull off alone.

More testimony came Thursday from Mia Watson, special programs manager at the Vermont Housing Finance Agency, who chaired an equity advisory group that was tasked with telling lawmakers how the clean heat standard might affect low-income people and other marginalized communities.

Watson said the status quo — in which heating oil prices have fluctuated immensely throughout the past several years — is highly inequitable and that lower-income households use a greater percentage of their budget on heating costs. Lower-income households, which statistically produce fewer greenhouse gas emissions, are also more likely to “rely on expensive and price-volatile heating fuels,” she said.

Still, Watson said the clean heat standard would pose a web of challenges for the same group.

For example, there are no requirements or market forces that would ensure that weatherization would occur before heat pumps are installed in Vermonters’ homes. Experts recommend that weatherization happens first, “so you’re not blowing hot air into an unsealed space,” Watson said.

Low-income Vermonters are more likely to live in older homes, which are more likely to need repairs — and those

repairs could be costly.

“Even when homes don’t require repairs, full decarbonization of a home can easily cost over \$20,000 for weatherization and multi-zone heat pumps in a single-family home, and that’s kind of a good case scenario,”

Watson said, which is

more than a lot of people can afford, even with incentives. She said about 78,000 Vermont households are considered low-income in this context, meaning they earn at or below 60% of the median income.

Rick Weston, who worked with the commission as chair of the Clean Heat Standard Technical Advisory Group, told lawmakers that, while implementing a clean heat standard might be challenging, “that’s not a reason not to do it.”

“Reducing emissions and reducing costs are not alternative, mutually exclusive choices. In my view, they are the same choice,” he said, pointing to volatile fuel prices.

Given that the governor does not support the program and its prospects of political success are slim, Johana Miller, energy and climate program director with the nonprofit Vermont Natural Resources Council, said she hopes “the governor and his team do far more work to figure out, if not this, then what.”

“Business as usual is not serving anyone well,” she said. “We need solutions that actually help Vermonters reduce their energy bills, access cleaner, local heating resources, save money, and do our part to mitigate the climate crisis.”

At the conclusion of McNamara’s presentation, Sen. Ruth Hardy, D-Addison, thanked him and apologized that he had to present the information so soon after the commission’s comprehensive report was filed.

“It seems important to get out of this what we can, especially given all of the work you guys have done,” Hardy said. “I don’t want to waste your work.”

The state has “a long history of implementing innovative and effective programs to reduce energy use,” commissioners wrote, and it would be more effective to build on existing programs rather than create a new policy.

“Reducing emissions and reducing costs are not alternative, mutually exclusive choices,” said Weston.

GUEST EDITORIAL

Early signs of progress on housing, education reform

By Angelo Lynn

Editor's note: Angelo Lynn is the publisher of the Addison Independent, as sister paper of the Mountain Times.

Early statewide conversations on school funding and housing offer some hope that progress on these two crucial issues will finally occur.

In his inaugural speech, Gov. Phil Scott hinted his administration will actually put forward a plan to change the state's school funding formula as well as improve educational outcomes. For the past four terms he's complained about how much Vermont spends on education but hasn't provided any solutions or worked with the Legislature to make changes. Hopefully, he'll be bolder in his fifth term and take a leadership role on the issue.

But expect plenty of controversial proposals. He's long held that Vermont's pupil-teacher ratio is too high and that consolidation of classes or schools is the likely answer — particularly at the elementary level — while never actually proposing a change. (He's been hoping the Democratic Legislature would do the actual work and he'd avoid the political heat.) Other suggestions Scott made include "a simpler governance structure" and an incentive for school boards who contain their spending. He also said communities clinging to "local control" of their school budgets has been an obstacle in the past and that his proposals may include more state control of what school districts spend.

Such control could come with the adoption of a "foundation formula" whereby the state calculates how much districts spend on their schools and provide them grants to cover those costs. That could solve some problems in the current system, but a similar system was in place prior to Act 60 and was found to provide inequitable education to all students and ultimately ruled unconstitutional by Vermont's Supreme Court.

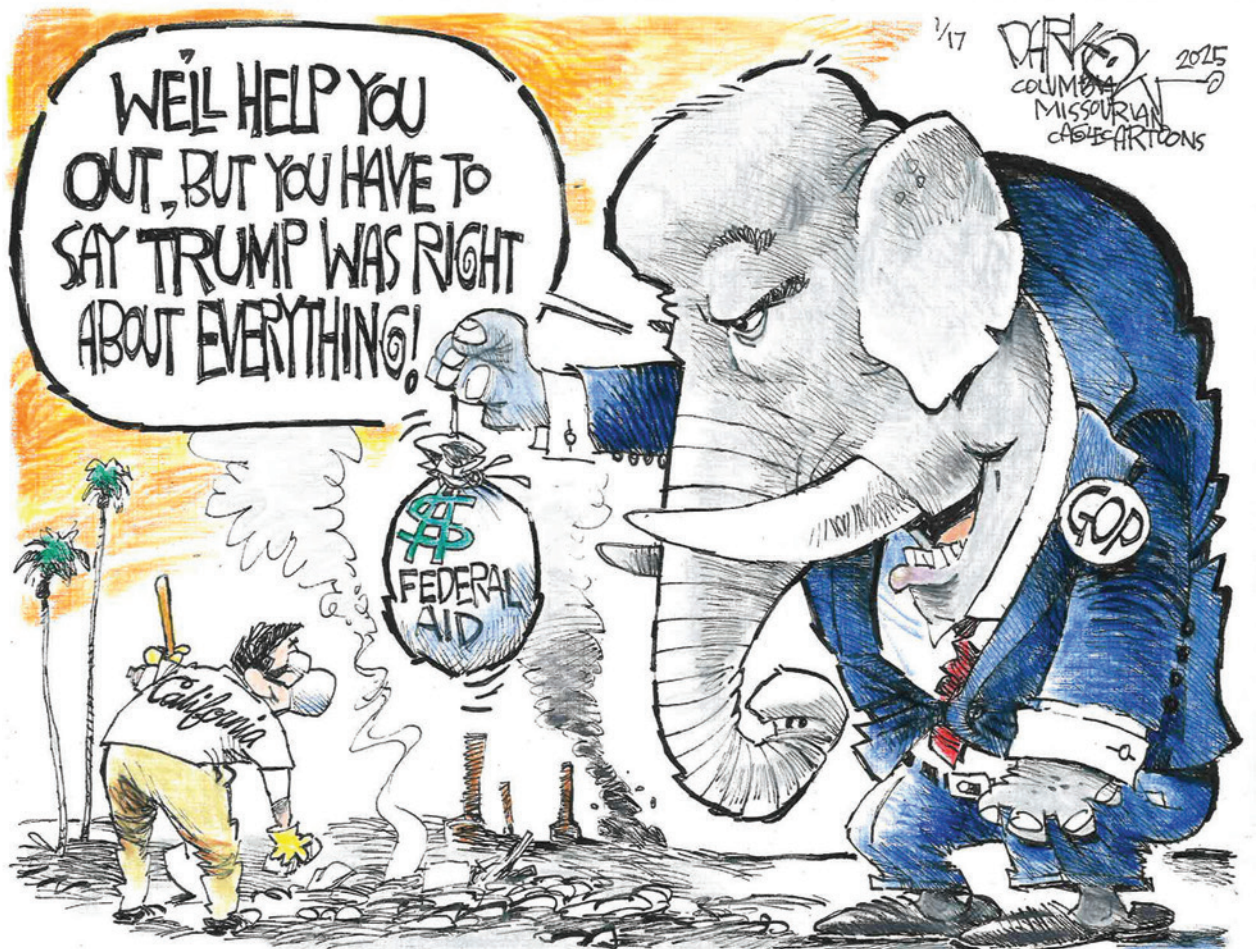
Following the governor's address, Speaker of the House Jill Krowinski, D-Burlington, said she was excited to hear the governor would propose a plan to make educational spending more cost-effective.

"We've all been talking about how we need to work together to ensure that our kids have the best education that Vermonters can afford and to hear the governor talk about specific ideas around classroom ratios and school consolidation... we have to put them on the table, and we can't do this alone. We need the governor with us in the room crafting solutions together," she said.

That, at least, is progress. With the governor saying he'll be a willing partner to find a solution, and actually take the lead on the issue, there's hope compromise can be found to pursue viable solutions.

Scott also suggested Vermont towns should use the state's tax incremental funding system, or TIF, to address housing shortages, particularly of larger, multi-unit developments.

On creating more affordable housing, the good news comes from a new, nonpartisan lobby called "Let's Build Homes." The group's messaging, according to a press release, Early progress → 12



String attached to Federal aid by John Darkow, Columbia Missourian

LETTERS

Vermont's population growth: why it matters

Dear Editor,

A thriving, prosperous state is a goal that all Vermonters can agree to. That goal is easier to achieve with a growing population.

More people means a larger selection of workers for businesses, government, and non-profits. It means more people earning incomes, supporting local businesses, and paying taxes to support government programs—many of which serve the neediest of our citizens. A growing economy means more opportunities for us and our children.

It is important, therefore, to know whether, and by how much, our population is growing. In the first two decades of the 21st Century, Vermont's population has been growing at less than half the national rate and we were in the bottom 10 states in terms of population growth. That's very different from Vermont's experience at the end of the 20th Century, when Vermont's growth was in step with the national experience.

What about now? The U.S. Census counts the nation's population every 10 years, and in the intervening years we have only population estimates, and those are problematic. A recent study by the Vermont Treasurer's office reports that 7,500 more people moved into Vermont than out in 2023. But that estimate, based on U.S. Census data, relies on a sample of only about 7,200 households out of 340,000 total households in the state.

A more recent Census estimate based on more comprehensive data, found that 511 more people moved out of Vermont than moved in during 2024. And that Census estimate found that since 2020 only 6,160 more people moved into Vermont than left the state—less than the total number the Treasurer's office reports moving here in just one year.

Given Vermont's total population is just under Population → 13

Finding common ground amid uncertainty

Dear Editor,

As a resident of St. Johnsbury, I regularly hike up Observatory Knob. A half mile from my home, I get to walk through woods and meadows to a summit with panoramic views. The 117-acre conserved land features forests, open fields, and benches to rest — just a short walk from where people live.

This fall, when I grew overwhelmed by the national news and when floods hit my hometown earlier this summer, this short hike always grounded me. The neighbors I encountered, the winding trails, and the open views to the north and east always stirred gratitude. It's a reminder of why I have dedicated my working life to land conservation.

As the president of the Vermont Land Trust, I am privileged to connect with landowners and supporters throughout Vermont. Our collective experience during the pandemic demonstrated the value of conserved lands in support-

ing people's wellbeing, with food from local farms and open space to get outdoors. Over the past four years, that sentiment has only grown.

More recently, we're witnessing the ability of conservation to strengthen our resilience to climate change. Last year, alongside dozens of partners and homeowners, my organization protected 38 miles along rivers and 245 acres of wetlands, which will help reduce flooding due to more frequent and intense storms.

We're also witnessing the power of conservation to connect people and provide opportunities for collective action. In a time when communities feel beleaguered by change or divisiveness, I've been inspired by moments of unity. Like St. Johnsbury came together to protect the Knob a few years ago, last year, community members from Island Pond to Berlin, Athens to Pownal Common ground → 13

CAPITAL QUOTES

The 47th President of the United States was inaugurated on Monday, Jan. 20, in a gala ceremony funded through corporations and billionaire donations estimated at \$250 million.

“I’m ready for the work ahead to defend our Constitution and will be working tirelessly to address the urgent needs of Vermonters and working people across America,”

said U.S. Rep. **Becca Balint** in an official statement on President Donald Trump’s Inauguration.

“My job is to do the best I can to help Vermonters, and I’ll continue to do that. We are witnessing today the peaceful transfer of power,”

said U.S. Senator **Peter Welch** in an official statement.

“It’s my hope the new administration and new Congress use the peaceful transfer of power as an opportunity to start fresh, work together, and collaborate to the benefit of all Americans. I also want to extend my appreciation to President Biden and Vice President Harris for their service to our nation,”

said Governor **Phil Scott** in a released statement on President Trump’s inauguration.

“All these journalists are like, ‘Congresswoman, are you going to the inauguration? Are you going to the inauguration?’ Let me make myself clear: I don’t celebrate rapists. So no, I’m not going to the inauguration,”

said Rep. **Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez** in an Instagram post on Sunday, Jan. 19.

“This was no ordinary victory. This was a fork in the road of human civilization... This one really mattered. Thank you for making it happen! Thank you. My heart goes out to you. It is thanks to you that the future of civilization is assured,”

said Tesla and SpaceX CEO **Elon Musk** during the inaugural parade. He followed his comments with a salute that fell out of fashion in the early 1940s.



COMMENTARY

The 3 Hs — housing, hunger and health care

By Bill Schubart

Editor’s note: Bill Schubart is a retired businessman and active fiction writer, and was a former chair of the Vermont Journalism Trust, the parent organization for VTDigger.

The latest statewide count for unsheltered Vermonters is 3,458, a nearly 5% increase over 2023, the second highest rate in the country, and this is deemed by experts to be a significant undercount.

Meanwhile, discussions of homelessness are overshadowed by our governor’s headline focus on “affordability,” which has led to steep cuts in the motel voucher program.

According to a VTDigger story last month, “Lawmakers budgeted about \$44 million for the motel program this fiscal year. Before new restrictions on the program went into effect earlier this fall, around 1,400 households had motel vouchers. With an \$80 rate cap on rooms in place, the program cost roughly \$112,000 per night.”

And we’re talking about building a new

\$70 million prison. How much permanent housing shelter would \$114 million fund?

If we take a broader look at the root of the problem, or better yet the hierarchy

of causation, we will see a more intelligent and cost-efficient strategy.

Homelessness is primarily caused by poverty, mental illness and substance use disorder.

Over the decades, we’ve made largely ineffectual efforts to thoroughly deal with these drivers. We’ve made marginal progress

but will continue to come up short until the homeless struggling with poverty, mental illness or substance use disorder are safely housed.

Our neighbor Canada is pioneering a way to provide housing with the necessary support systems to meet these complex health needs. The “highly supportive housing” project has been a resounding success, and plans are underway to expand it to other areas.

Housing is understood not as a reward for getting one’s life back on track but rather a precursor to doing so.

3 Hs → 13

The great housing development divide

The State of Vermont is one of the biggest housing developers in the state. Seven state departments qualify as housing developers, and the University of Vermont is a housing developer. Seven public housing authorities also qualify as housing developers. Add to the list the seven homeownership organizations that are housing developers, and then there are the housing trusts that are also housing developers.

Rounding out the list of government and government-affiliated housing developers is the massive roster of non-governmental organizations and nonprofits that qualify as housing developers, partnering with federal and state authorities to spend public funds to develop housing.

With this well-funded and well-connected housing development infrastructure, it’s hard to believe that the ribbon cuttings are so few and far between.

Against this backdrop of housing developers, a pro-housing advocacy group named Let’s Build Homes has entered the housing

arena, sounding the alarm and claiming that Vermont needs to double housing production to create the 30,000 housing units it needs by the end of the decade.

Let’s Build Homes is a broad-based coalition of well-heeled members banging an old beat on an old drum. The press conference last week was well covered, and the press release was echoed by any publication worth its ink, supported by editorials of how wonderful it is to have such a synchronized focus on the development of housing, complete with a plan to advocate for more significant support and the removal of unnecessary obstacles. It was almost as if a press release of the state of affairs was news, the coalition was newsworthy, and the remedies were innovative.

Let’s Build Homes is helmed by Miro Weinberger, the former mayor of Burlington and a housing developer in his own right.

Vermont Public quoted Miro Weinberger as saying, “The Vermont Housing Finance Agency is currently serving as the fiscal agent for the group as it forms; the intent is to ultimately create an independent, non-profit advocacy organization.”

“Let’s Build Homes has raised \$40,000 in pledges so far,” he added, from “some of the large employers in the state and philanthropists.” Weinberger made a point to note that

Housing divide → 14



The Accidental Activist

By Stephen Box

CARTOONS



Trump tower of promises by Dave Granlund, PoliticalCartoons



Clap for Trump by Pat Bagley, The Salt Lake Tribune, Utah



Trump- Season 2 by Dave Whamond, Canada, PoliticalCartoons

← Early progress: from page 10

"mirrors that of the nationwide YIMBY (Yes In My Backyard) movement.

"If we want nurses, and firefighters, and childcare workers, and mental health workers to be able to live in this great state — if we want vibrant village centers and full schools — adding new homes is essential," said Miro Weinberger, former mayor of Burlington and the executive chair of the new group's steering committee.

As we've reported in this space several times over the past few months, a housing needs assessment study estimates Vermont needs 24,000 and 36,000 new homes over the next five years to meet demand. The group says it will encourage the Legislature to consider a "housing infrastructure program," to help fund the water, sewer and road networks that need to be built in order for housing development to be possible and will focus on reforming the appeals process for new housing that currently allows a single individual to tank housing projects that have broad community support. Both initiatives could spur real progress in addressing Vermont's housing crisis.

Notably, in his Inaugural Address, Scott also suggested Vermont towns should use the state's tax incremental funding system, or TIF, to address housing shortages, particularly of larger, multi-unit developments.

That the issue is getting such intense scrutiny so early in the session is an optimistic sign that the state will address the housing shortage as one of the state's top priorities, if not the single-most important.

Not discussed in the governor's inaugural address (or just barely mentioned) was health care reform. That's a huge mistake. The high health care costs Vermonters face (reportedly, the highest in the country) puts an enormous strain on our educational funding and on the effort to make Vermont affordable. Creating more housing for health care workers was a high priority in the statewide analysis compiled by the Oliver Wyman group last fall, so check off one of those recommendations. But the Wyman team offered several other important suggestions. While many of the report's suggestions were tough medicine — unpopular with Vermont's hospitals and many communities — if the state doesn't heed at least the most essential recommendations, doing nothing will only make the state sicker.

Hopefully the governor will address that oversight in his budget address, and the Legislature will keep the issue front-and-center as well.

← Harrison: from page 8

programs rather than overlaying a new and complex regulatory structure such as the proposed Clean Heat Standard."

It is unclear at this point whether the appropriate committees will take up a repeal of the Clean Heat Standard law as I and others have proposed.

Rep. Noyes, D-Wolcott, and I will be leading a bipartisan effort to phase out the Vermont income tax on Social Security benefits. Vermont is currently one of only nine states that tax this important benefit to seniors. The proposal, which is expected to be released early this week, increases the income threshold each year to exempt more residents from the tax, eventually eliminating it altogether. Proposals to reduce the state's revenue almost always face an uphill climb; however, our bill has attracted 60 additional co-sponsors in the House, which may add some momentum to the measure.

The president of Blue Cross VT, in a letter to lawmakers, indicated that claims paid for Blue Cross VT members have been increasing by 17% per year since 2020. As a direct result of escalating prices for medical services and pharmaceuticals, Vermont's commercial healthcare premiums — already high and growing at an unsustainable rate — are not covering the cost of care.

While some of the rising costs may be the result of aging demographics, their data indicates prices charged by hospitals and the healthcare system are among the highest in the country.

A new pro-housing advocacy group (Let's Build Homes) made up of a wide range of people and organizations, says Vermont needs to

build, build and build again to address the state's housing crisis. The former mayor of Burlington, Miro Weinberger, is the executive chair of the new group's steering committee.

There will be a public hearing on the governor's recommended FY 25 mid-year state budget adjustment on Thursday, Jan. 23 at 1 p.m. More information is available on the Legislature's website: Legislature.vermont.gov. The work on next year's budget (FY 26) will begin following the governor's budget address on Jan. 28.

In closing, I look forward to hearing what the administration's highly anticipated package of education reforms might look like.

To add another idea to the discussion, I introduced a short form bill this past week to consolidate the number of school districts in Vermont (128) to align with the career and technical education service regions (15).

Jim Harrison is the state representative for Chittenden, Killington, Mendon, and Pittsfield. Email: JHarrison@leg.state.vt.us.

← **Common ground:**
from page 10

(and more!), protected places that matter to them.

After a divisive national election and uncertainty about what's to come, many of us seek refuge. This could be a physical or emotional refuge: a place where we feel at home, safe, and with others who share our love of place.

Conserved lands can provide this refuge. Protecting and caring for the home we share, in solidarity with one another, is one of the most nurturing things we can do right now. It gives us a sense of agency, of taking action with our neighbors and creating lasting change when much feels outside our control.

Vermont lawmakers will face difficult choices this upcoming legislative session about which services and programs to fund and which ones to scale back. They will make these choices in the context of several converging crises.

The impacts of climate change are undeniably here, whether it's excessive heat, frequent floods, or new pests.

Added to this are crises in affordable housing, education funding, and property taxes, alongside other economic pressures. It's clear that Vermont's land and lives are facing a new reality.

The Biodiversity and Climate Resilience Act of 2023 (Act 59), which aims to protect 30% of Vermont's land and waters by 2030 and 50% by 2050, comes at this inflection point. To reach the 2030 goal, which is just five years away, we will need to double our pace of protection while balancing competing needs on our land.

We've done big things in the past, and we can rise to the challenge again. One recent success is the culmination of our 27-year effort with the Nature Conservancy to protect 26,000 acres of forestland for nature and communities in the northern Green Mountains. When I joined the Vermont Land Trust in 1997, this effort to protect lands once owned by the Atlas timber company was just getting off the ground. The goal was to show that forests could be

managed simultaneously for ecological health and sustainable timber.

Atlas was a turning point for conservation in Vermont. It presented a bold opportunity to deepen our impact across a globally significant swath of forestland from northeast Vermont through Nova Scotia.

Fast-forward to today. Those protected forests support connected habitats for dozens of species and many headwater streams within high-priority watersheds. The lands are also popular destinations for hikers, anglers, and hunters.

Much as Atlas pushed us to innovate, so will Act 59. We must think differently, work in partnership, and generate new resources. It's an opportunity for us to come together, and it's the spark we need to do more to protect the homes we share in the face of climate change.

Tracy Zschau,
St. Johnsbury

Editor's note: Zschau is the president & CEO of the Vermont Land Trust.

← **FB group:**
from page 5

people are actively reporting on road conditions in and around the Sherburne Pass area.

While most of the posts on this new group page focus on Sherburne Pass road conditions, Dickinson reminded followers to keep things focused on road conditions. Still, he appreciates how a few dedicated followers do an excellent job keeping folks informed of conditions, accidents, and other challenges a trip over the Pass presents. And, while already up to 1,000 members in such a short amount of time might seem daunting to some Facebook group organizers, Dickinson said, "The more the merrier."

Perhaps, when the winter season is over, activity on the page will taper until next season, but Dickinson said even in good conditions, the Pass always has a surprise or two in store for travelers. Anyone who remembers a certain watermelon hanging out on a guardrail near Pico during the summer of 2019 will attest: The Sherburne Pass always keeps it interesting.

← **Population:**
from page 10

650,000, that's a drop in the bucket. And the larger picture is even more problematic. Over the past 10 years, Vermont has experienced more deaths than births each year. Since 2020 deaths have outnumbered births by 6,800, erasing any population gain from people moving here from other states.

As the Baby Boom generation ages, the number of deaths will continue to increase. At the same time, the number of women in their prime childbearing years will fall, which means

the number of births will also continue to decline. That will be a source of population decline.

A healthy economy means people want to live here and can afford to live here.

A healthy economy means people want to live here and can afford to live here. A growing population is both a reflection of that and a source of our prosperity.

One only has to look at towns and cities across the country to see the effects of a stagnant population,

and contrast that to the dynamism in areas that are growing.

We should not be complacent about our current lack of growth, and we should not base policies on a misinterpretation of what the actual population numbers are or what they are telling us.

Art Woolf, Burlington
Editor's note: Art Woolf is associate professor emeritus at UVM where he taught economics for 39 years. He served as the state economist for Governor Madeleine Kunin from 1988-1991.

← **3 Hs:**
from page 11

Across the pond, Finland has become the Euro leader, virtually eradicating homelessness within its borders with its "housing first" policy. The model is based on the belief that decent, safe housing is a basic human right — like universal health care — commitments we in the U.S. seem loath to consider. Instead, we choose to believe health care and housing should be lucrative businesses, even as their accelerating costs make them increasingly out of reach for our average citizens.

The Finnish theory is founded on the view that if a person does not have a stable home, it's virtually impossible to make significant improvements in other areas of life. This approach sets "housing first" apart from the "treatment first" models, which have been shown to have little long-term impact in reducing homelessness. Finland learned that the requirement that potential occupants be intoxicant-free and able to take control of their lives has proven to be an insuperable barrier for many homeless people with multiple problems, and that the pathway to help in fact comes with a secure place to live with wrap-around services — the "housing first" principle. Housing is understood not as a reward for getting one's life back on track but rather a precursor to doing so.

It should go without saying that housing is a matter of survival as well. The recent deaths of Lucas and Tammy Menard in Wolcott, although undetermined as to cause, highlights the lethal danger of "living rough" in the Vermont cold. Another unidentified person has been found dead as well in an encampment in Berlin.

We should start by committing to a "no homeless in Vermont" strategy now. Does this mean we will achieve that goal immediately? No, it means we will do whatever is necessary over the next two legislative sessions to achieve that goal.

We can start by surveying all available shelter space to get people inside over this winter. We have empty dorm space at several colleges. There are many of us older folks living in houses designed for our younger families who are now gone and on their own. Could some of us share living space with those who are otherwise healthy but cannot afford housing?

Might HomeShare Vermont be a resource to expand options for the healthy homeless? We have a young couple living with us in their school bus parked on our lawn.

One solution to the cost problem would be to create a voluntary income tax for high-income

Vermonters to fund construction of energy-efficient "wrap-around-support housing" in our larger communities.

Vermonters rebel at the idea of paying higher taxes when they're unclear as to what the money raised will pay for. When a clear, humane goal that directly benefits one's community is within their reach, the benefits of which they see immediately, the popular resistance to taxes, especially voluntary ones, subsides. Look at the success of "gofundme" in supporting specific families in need in our communities.

We Vermonters like to imagine ourselves as outgoing, caring and focused on the well-being of our friends and neighbors. Our "better angels" go to work during calamities such as severe weather events. But in the chronic, gradual erosion of community well-being exemplified by the "three

Hs," housing, hunger and health care, we're often mystified while looking to our government to provide solutions.

The plaint of "affordability" that our governor applies to any solutions brought forth to solve our larger problems doesn't relieve us of our obligation to our communities and neighbors to alleviate suffering here at home, especially in housing. Nor does it eliminate neighbor-to-neighbor solutions.

Do we really want to leave these problems to fester unsolved forever?

Worldwide, 73 countries comprising 69% of the world's population have declared health care a universal right. Others of our peer nations are working on finding ways to eliminate homelessness. Solutions are possible. But here at home, the \$4.5 trillion health care business is apparently too lucrative for the few elites who benefit from it to declare it a universal right.

Meanwhile, private equity is slurping up housing around the country and raising sales and rental rates in a market that is increasingly unaffordable to many. Is family housing now so lucrative that we're willing to tolerate homelessness to support its profits as well?

Meanwhile, access to housing, health care, and education are proven to be three drivers of economic growth.

Perhaps we could start to tackle our own housing crisis here in Vermont by learning from other societies that have done it successfully. A focused "voluntary community housing tax" funded by better-off Vermonters who care about their neighbors in need would enable us to begin building public housing with support services and achieve a shared goal of eliminating homelessness in Vermont.

Are we really okay with our neighbors freezing to death in winter?

← Okemo halfpipe:

from page 1

15 years,” the coach, who just went by the first name, Tony, on the petition said. “The halfpipe is an integral part of our terrain-based teaching and coaching. This very halfpipe is not only one of the last remaining on the East Coast but has produced numerous professional and Olympic athletes. The halfpipe is part of Okemo’s identity.”

The decision not to open the halfpipe is seen by some as a cost-cutting measure. Vail announced a two-year plan in the fall to save \$100 million after a drop in profits from last year’s lack of snow.

Vail Resorts declined to provide a comment by press time and it’s unclear if the halfpipe will open in future years. The USASA website shows that all halfpipe events at Okemo for the 2025 season have been canceled, including a Futures Tour event slated for Feb. 7. The cancellations mirror those at Vail-owned Mount Snow, where scheduled pipe competitions on Jan. 25 and 26 have also been axed.

Meanwhile, Killington Resort opened a 180-foot mini pipe on Timberline on Jan. 17 with about 15 feet of vertical. Killington is scheduled to host a USASA competition there on Feb. 23, which has been the plan since the summer.

“At this time, we do not have plans to host any other pipe events this season,” said Amy Laramie, Killington’s vice president of brand marketing and events.

Killington has offered a variety of modified pipes on Dream Maker and Timberline over the past five years.

“We do not have plans to build a pipe on Dream Maker this year but will utilize that space for other features to conclude the park run,” Laramie said. “We plan to keep the mini pipe on Timberline open for the remainder of this season.”

Okemo, meanwhile, is scheduled to hold rail jams on Feb. 8 and March 1, but the halfpipe events leave a noticeable gap.

“People are heartbroken,” said Kara Ryan, a Cavendish resident. “They’re gutted. It’s just a beloved thing that everyone is heartbroken over.”

It’s just a beloved thing that everyone is heartbroken over,” said Kara Ryan.

← Housing divide:

from page 11

“none of the money that this organization is going to raise is coming from developers.”

This is the Wilco Tango Foxtrot moment for me. Does Weinberger not know where housing comes from?

Or could it be that he subscribes to the caste system of developers? Are there legit government-supported altruistic developers and citizen developers, capitalistic creators of wealth by building housing for a profit?

The irony here is that mom-and-pop developers, the citizen developers, are responsible for 80% of the affordable housing stock in the state of Vermont and yet only receive 20% of the financial support.

Citizen developers are pulling permits at a rate of 4 to 1 over the well-heeled NGOs [non-governmental organizations] and nonprofits, producing housing at a quarter of the cost, and yet...no invitation to the party! One would think that if Let’s Build Homes were serious about building homes, they would look to those who are doing it and ask, “How can we help?”

Currently, there is a 9-unit housing development in St. Johnsbury that costs \$5 million. It was developed by a well-respected nonprofit and relies on public funds, demonstrating that it’s still possible to turn gold into straw.

How can the state of Vermont turn its collective eye on the lack of financial stewardship that is sucking the air out of the room and disrupting the market?

Last year, I developed 8 units of affordable housing for formerly homeless veterans, all at a tenth of the cost of the St. Johnsbury development.

Last month, I cut the ribbon on a four-unit project, developed at a total cost of \$222k, while the local 24-unit housing developed by a nonprofit will cost \$333k per unit.

An interesting but telling incident with the four-unit ribbon cutting was my invitation to one of our federal representatives. The response was that there would be no attendance because the elected official had no money in the project. From my per-

Mom-and-pop developers, the citizen developers, are responsible for 80% of the affordable housing stock in the state of Vermont and yet only receive 20% of the financial support.

spective, in the midst of a loudly proclaimed housing crisis, any ribbon cutting would be an occasion to celebrate, even if the elected official had no money in the game. In fact, there is even more reason to celebrate! But I digress.

Here are *my* recommendations for Let’s Build Homes:

- Embrace those who are getting it done, the citizen developers
- Stop banging the Act 250, TIF, and Tax Incentives drum and ask the citizen developers what they want and need and how you can help
- Open up the umbrella, make some room, and remove the great divide between those in control and those who are getting it done
- Look for the low-hanging fruit, the immediate gains that create the momentum

The Vermont Housing Finance Agency, the source of the data that fuels the Let’s Build Homes agenda, also released the Rutland Region Housing Needs Assessment report, commissioned by the Rutland Region Planning Commission and completed by the Vermont Housing Finance Agency. The

report indicates that there are 2,413 vacant homes in Rutland County. What would it take to get these properties back online? What would it take to get property owners back into the mix?

Granted, this is more challenging work than spending \$300k per unit to build new, but it’s fast and furious and has the

potential to yield immediate results.

As for Weinberger’s distaste for donations from developers, perhaps he will join the Partners in Housing at our upcoming meeting on the last Friday of January to see if we can find some common ground in our collective pursuit of safe and healthy housing for all Vermonters.

Stephen Box is a “Houser” in Rutland County, developing, renovating, and managing residential properties. Email: VermontHouser@gmail.com.

← Obit, Hodulik:

from page 4

residence was never more than 200 feet from where he was born.

In 1984, George and Dorothy purchased a fix-me-up second home on Ralph Lane in Manahawkin, New Jersey. They spent their golden years fixing that beach house and sharing memories with family, especially the grandchildren.

George could be found in Killington helping his son Michael’s family build their home and sharing in their children’s lives. He was a regular at Shark swim meets, MSJ, Woodstock,

Killington sporting and theater events or just getting parts at Goodro Lumber. When not traveling to visit family and maybe “helping” in construction projects, he could be found at home tinkering.

George joined the Dunellen Fire Department at age 35, was sworn in as Vice President in 1984, and continued to be a life member.

The Dunellen Firehouse reopened on Dec. 6, 2024, after an Oct. 12, 2021 fire. He also rededicated the George W. Hodulik Firehouse, which he humbly accepted as a tribute to many past and

present members. The Firehouse community was truly his second home. His last active fire with full SCBA was in 2007; he was 81.

George was grateful and felt blessed for not suffering from any chronic illness. However, beginning in 2011, he suffered from lower back and sciatic nerve issues and, as a result, had deteriorating mobility.

Around 2012 was the last time he played golf, went bowling, threw some horseshoes, or took a bike ride. Since then, there has been a long list of helpers to maintain his physical well-being. Among those the family is grateful for is Hospice with the recent transportation home and valued at-home support. ACCElerate Skilled Nursing and Rehabilitation: He got to walk one last time, learn to eat correctly again, and gain an additional 6 weeks of life. Finally, his caretakers, including Lado, Kim, and recently Dennis, as well as his home aid workers Janet and daughter,

His primary care physicians, most notably Dr. Bobella, joked when

retiring that George was one of his first patients. George’s last physician visit was to Dr. Shepard, a podiatrist, who said he was honored to treat, in his words, “the legend of Dunellen.”

In closing, the family is eternally grateful to Sheenan Funeral Home for preparing him for his final journey and to all the people who came to visit and be a part of his life. You should know this is what has kept him alive for so long.

George is survived by his four children: David Hodulik (Deborah), Michael Hodulik (Giuliana), Gerard Hodulik (Jacqueline), and Pamela Dozier (Hodulik) (James). He also has 11 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren. His predeceased include his brother Henry Hodulik, sisters Helen Schoenberger and Josephine Klapp, and Parents Justin and Angela.

A funeral mass was held for George on Jan. 17 in Piscataway, New Jersey. In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to Dunellen Fire House at 231 South Madison Ave, Dunellen, New Jersey.

← Sign:

from page 4

company listed in Poultney, the company has no online presence with any available contact information. It is unclear if the property in Rutland City with Trump/Vance sign is registered privately under Knappmiller, a Rutland City resident, or with Poultney Properties LLC.

The other side of the sign

The pole sign where the Trump/Vance sign is affixed on one side bears a second sign on the other side. This smaller, square sign reads “Trump/Vance 2024.”

Surrounding the sign, on the ground, are several official election signs for Rutland City Mayoral candidate Henry Heck. More than one month before Town Meeting Day, our mathematics placed these signs outside the three-week window of the election and likely in violation of the sign city ordinance as readers have suggested. The Mountain Times did not discuss this second sign or Henry Heck candidate signs with Sadakierski, although we did ask what would happen if Knappmiller did not respond to the request for a sign permit application.

Sadakierski said that Knappmiller could start accruing fines if he did not submit a sign permit request, but his small staff’s focus was on other pressing matters — indicators that this sign issue would not be addressed soon.

In the meantime, the large banner that Sadakierski insists is not an election sign continues to greet visitors entering Rutland, who might be wondering, what the Trump/Vance sign is promoting, if not election related or associated with any business.

WORDPLAY

NEAT AND TIDY WORD SEARCH

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally and backwards

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

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|---|--|
| ACTIVITY
CLOSETS
CLUTTER
COLLECTIBLES | COMMON AREA
CONTAINERS
DONATION
FILING | GARAGE
GROUPING
LABELS
MAINTENANCE | MANAGEMENT
ORGANIZING
PACKRAT
PERFECTIONIST | PROCRASTINATION
PURGING
REPURPOSE
SEQUENCING | VERTICAL SPACE
SORTING
SYSTEM
TIDYING |
|--|---|---|--|---|--|

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.

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

Level: Intermediate

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Solutions → 30

- CLUES ACROSS**
- "Loser" rocker
 - Partner to relaxation
 - Mixing
 - Winged nut
 - Expression of blame
 - Vast ocean
 - Comedienne Gasteyer
 - Multiply
 - Meat from a pig (French)
 - Related
 - Rocker Stewart
 - Surprise completely
 - Loon
 - Canister
 - Large, deep-bodied fish
 - Takes forcefully
 - Oil cartel
 - Palmer and Hepburn are two
 - More than one
 - Places down purposefully
 - Pitching statistic
 - Type of sword
 - Witnesses
 - Body part
 - Mixes slowly
- CLUES DOWN**
- ___ Aires, city
 - Coarse grass
 - Type of gene
 - Door handle
 - Competition
 - Muslim ruler title
 - Hunting expeditions
 - Large mollusk
 - Bind securely
 - Former U.S. presidential candidate
 - 2-point plays in football
 - Breezed through
 - Type setting
 - Felt for
 - Codified rules

		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		

- Small dome
- Chevrotain
- Male reproductive gland
- Controversial beliefs
- Z Z Z
- One who confines another
- Bishop
- Garlands
- Bird that flies by the coast
- Optical device
- Greek goddess of discord
- Some are "Rolling"
- Formerly (archaic)
- Thrust a knife into
- German river
- Atomic #26
- Make a grotesque face
- Primordial matter of the universe
- Chinese philosophical principle

GUESS WHO?

I am a singer/songwriter born in Tennessee on January 19, 1946. I grew up with 11 brothers and sisters in a small cabin. I learned to sing in church. I've released 26 No. 1 Billboard hits during my career, and I'm known as the "Queen of Country Music" as a result.

Answer: Dolly Parton

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WED
1/22

Virtual Screening: 'Inventing Tomorrow'

Available to stream through Jan. 24. Virtual event. Free. This documentary follows young scientists from around the world as they tackle pressing environmental challenges and present their research at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair. Hosted by Sustainable Woodstock and Pentangle Arts. Donations welcome to support the local arts community. pentanglearts.org

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. Wednesdays 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.

Diabetes Support Group

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

Public Skating

2-3:40 p.m. Union Arena, 80 Arnsden 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.

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.

Silent Book Club

5:30-8 p.m. Speakeasy Cafe, 31 Center St., Rutland. Free. Bring your own book, grab a drink, and enjoy two hours of uninterrupted reading. Phoenix Books will have a pop-up with books for sale. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. phoenixbooks.biz/events.

'The Improbable Run'

6:30 p.m. Castleton Free Library, 638 Main St., Castleton. Free. Dennis Jensen, a Castleton resident and former writer-editor at the Rutland Herald, shares his story of competing in the Seniors' Event at the World Series of Poker. Hear about his journey to the final table and his remarkable sixth-place finish, earning over \$120,000. castletonfreelibrary.org.

THURS
1/23

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.

SATURDAY 11 A.M.-3 P.M.

ICE FISHING DAY AND FESTIVAL



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.

Michelob ULTRA Race World

1-3 p.m. Thursdays through March 13. Pico Mountain, 73 Alpine Dr., Killington. Refer to website for details. Weekly race series featuring individual and team competitions, followed by after-parties at the Last Run Lounge with food, prizes, and Michelob ULTRA specials. picomountain.com.

American Red Cross Blood Drive

1:30-6:30 p.m. Killington Grand Hotel, 228 E. Mountain Road, Killington. Free. Donate blood and enter for a chance to win a trip for two to Super Bowl LIX in New Orleans. Eligible type O, B-, or A-donors can make a Power Red donation. Schedule an appointment at redcrossblood.org with code KILLINGTON. rcblood.org/SuperBowl.

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.

Let's Paint Van Gogh's 'Starry Night'

6-8 p.m. Spa at the Woods, 53 Woods Lane, Killington. \$45. Local artist Lauren Teton will guide participants in painting their rendition of "The Starry Night." No experience is necessary. Materials are included. Snacks and wine are available for purchase at Killington Cafe and Wine Bar across the hall. Reserve by calling 802-422-3105.

Sip N Dip: Paint a Snowman

6-8 p.m. Chaffee Art Center, 16 So. Main St., Rutland. \$35. Join instructor Sally Hogan for a guided acrylic painting session featuring a snowman. Perfect for a date night or an evening with friends, participants follow step-by-step instruction and leave with a finished painting. BYO wine. All supplies included. Pre-registration required. chaffeeartcenter.org.

Opening Night Performance: 'The Effect'

7 p.m. Briggs Opera House, 5 S. Main St., White River Junction. Pay what you will for opening night. Shaker Bridge Theatre presents "The Effect" by Lucy Prebble, running through Feb. 9. This provocative play explores love, ethics, and the complexities of a clinical trial for a new antidepressant. shakerbridgetheatre.org.

Stick & Puck

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.



AMERICAN RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

THURSDAY 1:30-6:30 P.M.

← **Calendar:** Email events@mountaintimes.info.....
from page 16

FRI
1/24

Intro to Improv Dance

10-11:30 a.m. (Fridays through Feb. 28) Artistree, 2095 Pomfret Road, South Pomfret. \$150 for the entire class. Participants of all experience levels to explore creative self-expression through dance. The class incorporates various movement prompts, group and solo compositions, and music from diverse genres. Opportunities for reflection and somatic introspection are included. Registration required: hisawyer.com/artistree/schedules/activity-set/1111816?source=semesters.

Bone Builders

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

Connections & Interconnections of Life Weekly Group

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

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.

Opening Reception: 'FACES in Harmony'

5-7 p.m. Chaffee Art Center, 16 So. Main St., Rutland. Free. Explore six galleries and unique spaces at the Chaffee Art Center during this free event featuring the new exhibit "FACES in Harmony." Highlights include "artwork of faces," "The Peace Train," an annual photo contest, and a community wall. Enjoy wine, nibbles, and handmade items in the Gallery Shoppe. Awards will be announced, and public voting runs through Feb. 28. chaffeeartcenter.org.

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.

Andrew & Noah VanNorstrand Concert

7 p.m. Damon Hall, 1 Quechee Road, Hartland. \$5-\$15. Hartland Winter Trails kicks off the season with an evening of live music by Andrew and Noah VanNorstrand, blending folk, bluegrass, and Americana. Admission includes refreshments during intermission. hartlandwintertails.org/product/hwt-presents-andrew-noah-vannorstrand.

SAT
1/25

Craft Supply Swap

9 a.m.-1 p.m. Poultney Public Library, 205 Main St., Poultney. Free. Drop off clean and usable craft supplies until Jan. 24 during library hours, then return on Jan. 25 to shop for free materials and inspiration. All supplies are free while available, and no swap is necessary to shop. 802-287-5556.

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.

Winter Group Hike – Poultney River Loop

10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Slate Valley Trails, 212 Main St., Poultney. Free. Join SVT volunteers for a guided winter hike along the Poultney River Loop as part of the 2025 Winter Hiking Series. slatevalleytrails.org.

Ice Fishing Day and Festival

11 a.m.-3 p.m. Silver Lake State Park, 20 State Park Beach Rd., Barnard. Free. Vermont Fish and Wildlife hosts its annual Ice Fishing Festival, offering a day of fishing, skill-building, and winter activities. Instructors from the Let's Go Fishing program will provide hands-on lessons in knot tying, baiting, and using tip-ups, along with guidance on ice safety and fish identification. Visitors can enjoy a fish fry featuring locally caught Vermont fish, plus hot cocoa and family-friendly activities like sledding and ice skating. Equipment is available to borrow, and ice cleats are recommended. Advance registration encouraged. vtfishandwildlife.com.

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/.

Beginner Cardigan Knitting Class

11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Green Mountain Fibers, 34 Merchants Row, Rutland. \$165 for five sessions. Learn to knit your first cardigan with Amanda using Jennifer Hagan's Fundamental Top-Down Women's Cardigan pattern. This course is ideal for beginner sweater knitters who are comfortable with basic techniques. Class meets Saturdays: Jan. 18, 25; Feb. 1, 15; and March 1. Students must preregister and provide their materials. Registered participants receive a 10% discount on class yarn. greenmountainfibers.com.

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.

Begin the Lindal Tørkle with Wöldten

1-2:30 p.m. Green Mountain Fibers, 217 Woodstock Ave., Suite E, Rutland. \$50. Vermont designer Wöldten will guide participants in starting the Lindal Tørkle, a scarf from the Lindal Collection featuring mirrored short-row shapes for a symmetrical design. Attendees will place markers, practice wrap and turn techniques, and slip stitches to build confidence in completing the project at home. greenmountainfibers.com.

Learn to Knit Cables

3-5 p.m. Green Mountain Yarn & Fiber, 16 So. Main St., Rutland. \$35. Join Ellen to learn how to knit cables with twists and turns in various directions. Participants will create a swatch and receive the Main Street pattern from Tin Can Knits to practice at home. A materials list will be provided after registration. greenmountainfibers.com.

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.myrec.com.

Sensory-Friendly Screening: 'Inside Out 2'

4:30 p.m. Grange Theatre, 65 Stage Road, South Pomfret. \$10 adults, \$8 children/seniors. Artistree hosts a sensory-friendly screening of Disney and Pixar's "Inside Out 2." This movie experience is designed for families with special needs, featuring dimmed lighting, reduced sound levels, and the freedom to move or express as needed. Guests are welcome to bring sensory items or snacks for comfort. artistreevt.org.

Famous Hartland Roast Beef Supper

4:30, 5:30, and 6:15 p.m. Hartland United Church of Christ, 10 Station Road, Hartland. \$10-\$25. Enjoy an all-you-can-eat roast beef supper with three seatings available. Payment is cash or check only, made in person the night of the supper. To reserve, call 802-281-3124 and leave a message. hartlanducc.org.

Night Hike

5-6 p.m. Vermont Institute of Natural Science, 149 Natures Way, Quechee. \$10. Experience the night through sensory activities, test night vision, learn about different types of light after dark, and meet an education owl. VINS members and children under 3 free. vinsweb.org/event/night-hike-2025.

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.



SATURDAY 7-10 P.M.

FIRE & ICE FUNDRAISER FOR LUDLOW FIRE DEPARTMENT

Yonder Mountain String Band

7-9 p.m. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St., Rutland. \$39-\$59. Grammy-nominated Yonder Mountain String Band continues to lead the progressive bluegrass scene, blending traditional and modern jamgrass influences. paramountvt.org/event/yonder-mountain-string-band/

Fire & Ice Fundraiser for Ludlow Fire Department

7-10 p.m. Roundhouse at Jackson Gore, 111 Jackson Gore Road, Ludlow. Support the Ludlow Fire Department at this fundraising event featuring live music by Myra Flynn, a silent auction, food, and a cash bar. zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/bbad98cf-f2cf-44c4-b6c0-fabde78f3564.

SUN
1/26

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.

Upper Valley Baroque plays Bach's complete 'Brandenburg Concertos'

2 p.m. Grace Congregational Church, 8 Court St., Rutland. \$35. Upper Valley Baroque's chamber musicians perform J.S. Bach's "Brandenburg Concertos." Tickets available at the door. uppervalleybaroque.org/concerts.

Calendar:

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Public Skate

3:15-4:30 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.myrec.com.

Two-Step Dance Night at Artistree

5-8 p.m. Grange Theatre, 65 Stage Road, South Pomfret. \$20. Learn the Texas Two-Step and a fun line dance before dancing to a mix of styles, including swing, waltz, tango, salsa, and cha-cha. An intro Texas Two-Step lesson runs from 5-5:30 p.m., followed by a line dance lesson from 5:30-6 p.m. Open dancing continues until 8 p.m. No partner is needed, and anyone can lead or follow. Bring shoes that slide. Light refreshments available. artistreevt.org.

'Wintersong': A Celebration of Female Songwriters

6 p.m. Rivershed, 747 Killington Road, Killington. \$50-\$65. VIP tickets get a meet & greet with the songwriters, signed poster, and early entry. An all-female performer lineup including Kara Tondorf, Kristen Merlin, Cheley Tackett, Zoe Cummings, April Cushman, Kylie Sackley, Olivia Rudeen and Tiffany Goss. therivershed.com.

MON
1/27

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.

Public Skate

1:00-3:00 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.myrec.com.

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
1/28

Introduction to Curling

10 a.m.-noon. (Tuesdays through Feb. 6) Wendell A. Barwood Arena, 451 Highland Ave., White River Junction. \$50 course fee, \$40 arena fee, \$80 membership fee. Learn the fundamentals of curling led by experienced instructors. Sessions include lectures, demonstrations, and on-ice practice. Equipment provided; participants should wear warm clothing and non-skid shoes. reg130.imperisoft.com/Dartmouth/ProgramDetail/313137363134/Registration.aspx.

Intro to Cabochon Stone Setting

1-4 p.m. Tuesdays through Feb. 4. CraftStudies Studio & School, 87 Maple St., Hartford, VT 05001. \$250 (for all four sessions). 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.

Met Opera: 'Aida' (Verdi)

1-4:30 p.m. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St., Rutland. \$20. American soprano Angel Blue stars as the Ethiopian princess in Verdi's "Aida," a production featuring intricate projections and dazzling animations that transport audiences to ancient Egypt. paramountvt.org/event/met-opera-aida-verdi/.

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. abbotmemoriallibrary.org.

Alzheimer's Support Group

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

Line Dance Classes

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

Rutland Area Toastmasters

6-7:30 p.m. (Monthly) Courcelle Bldg, 16 North St. Ext., Rutland. Develop public speaking, listening, and leadership skills. Guests welcome. 802-775-6929. toastmasters.org.

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

'The Art of Life': Exhibition

Chaffee Art Center, 16 So. Main St., Rutland. Free. "The Art of Life" exhibit, featuring photographs and collages by Robert Black. Works by Chaffee artist members will be on display and for sale. Donations appreciated. Exhibit runs through March 1. chaffeeartcenter.org.

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.

'The Effect'

Jan. 23 through Feb. 9. Various Times. Briggs Opera House, 5 S. Main St., White River Junction. \$20-\$45. Shaker Bridge Theatre presents "The Effect" by Lucy Prebble. This provocative play explores love, ethics, and the complexities of a clinical trial for a new antidepressant. shakerbridgetheatre.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 through March 5, 5:30-6:30 p.m., and Wednesdays, through 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.

Women's Nordic Ski Skate Clinics

Wednesdays, 8:30-10 a.m., Fridays, 9:30-11 a.m. Woodstock Nordic Center, 14 The Green, Woodstock. \$30 per session or \$150 for six sessions. Intermediate to advanced skiers can join Olympian Tessa Westbrook to improve skate skiing technique. Sessions run through the end of the season, weather permitting. Registration at the Nordic Center lodge. woodstockinn.com.

UPCOMING

'King James'

Jan. 29-Feb. 16. Barrette Center for the Arts, 74 Gates St., White River Junction. \$34-\$74, \$24 youth and student tickets. Rajiv Joseph's play follows superfans Matt and Shawn as they bond over LeBron James' tenure with the Cleveland Cavaliers, navigating their friendship through shared love of basketball. northernstage.org.

Ladies & Lasers Night - Necklace Making

Workshop

Jan. 30 at 6 p.m. - Sherburne Memorial Library, 2998 River Road, Killington. \$25. Participants will create laser-cut necklaces in a fun and engaging environment. Due to high demand, an additional session has been added on Feb. 6. Please register to guarantee a spot. Sherburnelibrary.org

Rockin' with ROC and Grateful Dub



Rockin' the Region
By Dave Hoffenberg

This Thursday, Jan 23. at 8 p.m., the Pickle Barrel hosts one of my top shows from last year, New Hampshire's own Roots of Creation (original reggae), which will be opening up for themselves, so to speak. Their other band, Grateful Dub, is the headliner of the evening, and if you can't guess, they do a reggae-infused tribute to the Grateful Dead. You get two bands for the price of one, but really three because, as a bonus, Paul Wolsencroft (keyboardist of Slightly Stoopid) is opening the show. Roots of Creation is going on 26 years, and 20 of those years were touring nationally. Grateful Dub is relatively new, starting in 2018, but has only been touring for the past three years. Last year, Roots of Creation had the Pickle reggae rockin', and Grateful Dub had the place jammin'.

The lineup for the Pickle show is Brett Wilson (lead guitar/vocals), Christopher "Tal" Pearson (keyboards), Andrew "Dubking" Riordan (saxophone/vocals), Matthew "Dickey" James (bass), Brendan "Bdilla" Dillion (drums) and Kyle "Bobby" Bell (guitar/vocals). Pearson started the band with Wilson, and they've been jamming for over 20 years. Riordan has been with them for 12 years; the rest are relatively new.

"They're all super young and hungry. They have an amazing youthful energy. They've been with us for the past three to four years. It's a cool combination of three people who've been focused and dedicated and three people who are bringing a new kind of fire and getting us excited for things," Wilson said.

Last year, they did about 90 shows. Most recently, they performed two big shows for New Year's and then took all of January off to focus on releasing new music. They've been recording all their live shows, mixing and releasing them on nugs.net. They're working on releasing a Grateful Dub Studio Album Volume 2, with all new songs that weren't on Volume 1, and an original studio album.

"We got a lot of music going on, family, holidays, all that good stuff. We're excited to get back out on the road; all the guys are itching. It just so happens the first show of the year is at the Pickle Barrel. It should be a lot of fun. Lots of our friends like to come up from New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut to go skiing and snowboarding and see us. It's a historic venue, and we're excited to play there," Wilson said.

They never intended to be a tribute band. They had been playing shows with a mix of ROC and Grateful Dub, but the original fans wanted more originals, and the Dead fans wanted more Dead.

"We made the first Grateful Dub album in 2018 and just had a lot of fun with it. We broke the two projects into two separate things but then realized we can't be in two places at once so we decided to open up for ourselves and play a set of each and have some fun with it. It's kind of cool to have this new thing that's catching fire. Our really amazing ROC family is growing," Wilson said.

Lifetime, they have five studio albums, four live albums, and one live EP. You can find these on their website, rootsofcreation.com, and all the social platforms.

Brett added, "My philosophy is to get as many people to listen to it as possible. If they really want to support us, they can buy a ticket to a show, and if they want to go above and beyond, they can buy our music on vinyl and CD, where it

Rockin' → 26

[MUSIC Scene]

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

WED 1/22

KILLINGTON

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge- Rhys Chalmers

6 p.m. Rivershed – Red Daisy Revival

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

SOUTH POMFRET

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

THURS 1/23

BARNARD

6 p.m. Feast & Field, Rumney Sessions – Quincy Saul Research & Development Band

BRANDON

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

BRIDGEWATER

CORNERS

5 p.m. Long Trail Brewery – Kevin Herchen

KILLINGTON

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Chris Pallutto

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

KILLINGTON cont.

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

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

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

6 p.m. Rivershed – Nick Bredece and Jeremiah Strauss

6 p.m. The Foundry – Liz Reedy

7 p.m. Pickle Barrel – Grateful Dub with special guests Roots of Creation and opener Paul Wolsencroft of Slightly Stoopid

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

LONDONDERRY

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

LUDLOW

6 p.m. Off the Rails – Daniel Brown

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

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

WOODSTOCK

6 p.m. Ottauquechee Yacht Club – Theta Waves Trio

FRI 1/24

BOMOSEEN

6 p.m. Bomoseen Lodge & Taproom – George Nostrand

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 and Nick Bredece

KILLINGTON cont.

2 p.m. Pico's Last Run Lounge – Pete Meijer

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

4 p.m. The Foundry – Just Jamie

6 p.m. North Star Lodge Star Lounge – Jake Palatine

6 p.m. Rivershed – Kevin Herchen

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 – Garden State Radio

9 p.m. Jax Food & Games – Just Jamie

9 p.m. Wobbly Barn – Sean Patrick and the Alibis

LUDLOW

8 p.m. Off the Rails – Rustie Bus.

POULTNEY

6 p.m. Poultney Pub – Eugene Tyler Band

QUECHEE

5 p.m. Harry's Cocktail Lounge – Peter Concilio Jazz Trio
5:30 p.m. Public House Pub – John Lackard

RUTLAND

6 p.m. Stonehedge Indoor Golf – Duane Carleton

8 p.m. Moose Lodge – Karaoke with Sunset Entertainment

9 p.m. Center Street Alley – DJ EG

SAT 1/25

BRIDGEWATER

8 p.m. Woolen Mill Comedy Club – Comedy Show with headliners Levi Silverstein

KILLINGTON

1 p.m. Bear Mountain Base Lodge – Liz Reedy and Jake Palatine

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

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Duane Carleton

2 p.m. Snowshed's Long Trail Pub – Daniel Brown

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

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

6 p.m. North Star Lodge Star Lounge – Jake Palatine

KILLINGTON cont.

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

6 p.m. Preston's – Rhys Chalmers

6 p.m. Rivershed – Kevin Herchen

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

6:30 p.m. Wobbly Barn – Krishna Guthrie Band

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 – Garden State Radio

9 p.m. Wobbly Barn – Sean Patrick and the Alibis

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

LUDLOW

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

2 p.m. Okemo's Jackson Gore Courtyard – Apres Afternoon with the Adam McMahon Trio

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

QUECHEE

5 p.m. Harry's Cocktail Lounge – Sleeveless Tease

5:30 p.m. Public House Pub – Live Music

RANDOLPH

7:30 p.m. Chandler Center for the Arts – Cobalt & Titien with Ed McGee

RUTLAND

8 p.m. Angler's Pub – Karaoke with Sunset Entertainment

STOCKBRIDGE

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

WOODSTOCK

6:30 p.m. Ottauquechee Yacht Club – The Freeze Brothers

SUN 1/26

BRIDGEWATER

CORNERS

3 p.m. Long Trail Brewery – Nick Bredece

KILLINGTON

Noon. Rivershed – Brunch with Kevin Herchen

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

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Chris Pallutto

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

KILLINGTON cont.

6 p.m. Liquid Art – Tboneicus Jones

6 p.m. Preston's – Rhys Chalmers Lounge – Jake Palatine

6 p.m. Rivershed – Wintersong: A Celebration of Female Songwriters

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

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

7 p.m. Pickle Barrel – Lamp

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 1/27

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

LUDLOW

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



MONDAY @ 5 P.M.

RUTLAND

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

STOCKBRIDGE

5 p.m. Wild Fern – Bow and River

WOODSTOCK

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

TUES 1/28

KILLINGTON

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Nick Bredece

2 p.m. Snowshed's Long Trail Pub – Liz Reedy

6 p.m. Rivershed – Nick Bredece

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

POULTNEY

6 p.m. Poultney Pub – Bluegrass Jam

RUTLAND

5:30 p.m. Moose Lodge – Ryan Fuller

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



SUNDAY @ 6 P.M.

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

@back_country_cafe

Vermont's free ice fishing derby returns to Silver Lake for a day of fun and learning

Saturday, Jan. 25 at 11 a.m. — Barnard — The Vermont Fish & Wildlife Dept. invites anglers of all ages to participate in its free ice fishing day, a statewide event when fishing licenses are not required to fish on any waterbody open to ice fishing. To mark the occasion, an ice fishing festival will take place in Silver Lake State Park, at 20 State Park Beach Road, offering a day of fishing, skill-building, and winter fun.

The festival, free and open to all, provides an opportunity for beginners to try ice fishing without needing to purchase equipment or a fishing license. Vermont Fish & Wildlife staff and instructors from the Let's Go Fishing program will be on hand to teach essential skills such as knot tying, baiting, and using specialized ice fishing gear like tip-ups. Safety on the ice will also be a key focus, along with discussions on fishing regulations and fish identification.

"The ice fishing festival typically draws 500 to 700 participants for a day of fishing, skill-building, and community," said Education Specialist Corey Hart. "The annual event moves to different locations each winter, and we are excited to return to Silver Lake for 2025."

Beyond fishing, the event offers additional winter activities, including ice skating, sledding, and snow fort building. A fish fry station will

serve samples of locally caught fish, and Fish & Wildlife staff will be available to cook up participants' catches. Hot cocoa will be provided to keep visitors warm throughout the day.

"Ice fishing is one of the most accessible forms of fishing and can be a great way to introduce people to how much fun fishing can be," said Fish & Wildlife Interim Commissioner Andrea Shortsleeve. "This festival will demonstrate that ice fishing isn't just about catching fish. It's also a great way to spend time outdoors with friends and family."

Fishing equipment will be available to borrow, though participants are welcome to bring their own. Dressing appropriately for the weather is recommended, and ice cleats are strongly encouraged.

Participants can register in advance at the Ice Fishing Festival 2025 event page or upon arrival. Those who register ahead of time will be able to get on the ice faster.

For more information, visit: vtfishandwildlife.com.



Create Your Own 'Starry Night' at Spa at the Woods

Thursday, Jan. 23, at 6 p.m. — KILLINGTON—The fee is \$45, payable by credit card. Participants limited to 5. Participants can paint their rendition of Vincent van Gogh's "The Starry Night" at Spa at the Woods under the guidance of local artist Lauren Teton. No prior experience is needed, and all materials are provided. The session offers a relaxed and creative atmosphere, with wine and snacks available for purchase from the Killington Cafe and Wine Bar across the hall.

Teton, who first picked up a brush at a Paint and Sip event, now teaches recreational painting classes throughout the Northeast, including at restaurants, senior centers, libraries, and private events. She also offers corporate team-building workshops designed to encourage creativity and collaboration.

To reserve a spot, call: 802-422-3105.



Three Killington locals showed off their masterpieces at last winter's "Starry Night Paint Party" at The Star Lounge.



By Lauren Teton

Shaker Bridge Theatre brings 'The Effect' by Lucy Prebble to the stage

Jan. 23 through Feb. 9 — WHITE RIVER JUNCTION—\$20-\$45. Shaker Bridge Theatre presents "The Effect" by Lucy Prebble at Briggs Opera House. This thought-provoking drama follows two clinical trial participants whose intense chemistry raises questions about love, science, and human connection. As their relationship deepens, the supervising doctors find themselves at odds over the ethical implications of the study, challenging the audience to reconsider the impact of pharmaceuticals on emotion and desire.

The production is the third in Shaker Bridge Theatre's 17th season and is part of its commitment to featuring works by women playwrights. Directed by SBT founder Bill Coons, the play explores the intersection of science and personal experience. Coons describes it as "two kids falling in love" while questioning whether their feelings are real or merely a product of the trial's experimental antidepressant.

The cast includes a mix of returning and new actors. Susan Haefner, a Broadway veteran known for "State Fair," "Thoroughly Modern Millie," and "42nd Street," plays Dr. Lorna James. Haefner has previously appeared in several SBT productions, including "It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play." Tim Rush, another familiar SBT performer, plays Dr. Toby Sealey. His regional credits include "Our Town" and "All My Sons" at Weston Theater Company, as well as "The Member of the Wedding" and "The Little Foxes" at Triad Stage.

Haulston Mann portrays Tristan, one of the trial participants, and brings experience from productions of "Romeo and Juliet" and "The Rocky Horror Picture Show." He has also appeared on television in "Law & Order: SVU." Making her Shaker Bridge Theatre debut, Sophia Grasso plays Connie, the other subject in the study. She recently starred in a New York University master of fine arts proof of concept film and a Cape Cod-based horror film.

Playwright Lucy Prebble has gained international acclaim for her television, film, and theater work. She was an executive producer and writer for HBO's "Succession," earning multiple awards, and co-created "I Hate Suzie," a BAFTA-nominated drama. Her theatrical work includes "A Very Expensive Poison," "Enron," and "The Sugar Syndrome."

The production team for "The Effect" includes Clif Rogers as production stage manager and lighting designer, Craig Mowery as set designer, and Martie Betts as costume designer.

For more information, visit: shakerbridgetheatre.org.



Courtesy Shaker Bridge Theatre (L-R) Susan Haefner, Sophia Grasso, Haulston Mann, and Tim Rush star in "The Effect," presented by the Shaker Bridge Theatre with performances at the Briggs Opera House beginning Jan. 23.



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LOCAL

David Lynch (1946-2025) The Red Curtain draws on one of cinema's true masters.



Screens and Streams
By James Kent

There are filmmakers who redefine the movie-going experience and those who reshape it. David Lynch did both. He remains one of the most important filmmakers and certainly one of the most unique, risk-taking, and singular visionaries to ever pick up a movie camera. When

critics discuss films that push the boundaries of the medium, Lynch's name is inescapable.

Are David Lynch films and shows everyone's cup of tea? Hardly. If you've ever watched a Lynch film and thought, I don't get it, you'd be excused. But that was the secret of his work—he didn't care if you got it. Sometimes, even he didn't get it. These were ideas in his head, and rather than force them into conventional storytelling, he let his instincts guide him.

Discovering Lynch

My formative years were the 1980s, and as a film buff, I had heard of "Eraserhead" but had no idea what it was about. I recall "The Elephant Man" arriving in 1980, but my parents thought I'd be bored by a black-and-white film. They had so much to learn about me.

I first became aware of David Lynch with "Dune" (1984), a box-office disaster but a fascinating film. I loved the book and eagerly awaited the adaptation. Despite poor reviews, my father and I saw it opening weekend. It wasn't great, but it wasn't terrible either—just strange and occasionally good. There were moments of undeniable Lynchian oddness, and though it would never be the high point of his career, it remains a cult classic.

The moment I indeed became a Lynch fan was in 1985 at the Somerville Theater in Massachusetts. My mother and I attended a double feature: "The Man Who Fell to Earth" and "Eraserhead." If "The Man Who Fell to Earth" was odd, "Eraserhead" was a whole new level of strange. It was

dark, surreal, and deeply unsettling, like nothing I had ever seen. My mother and I laughed uncontrollably at the baby's introduction—if you've seen it, you understand. We thought that would be the pinnacle of weirdness, but the film just kept getting stranger.

I'd be lying if I said I loved "Eraserhead" on first viewing. But understanding and liking a Lynch film isn't the point—staying power is. And "Eraserhead" had staying power. Soon, I was buying an "Eraserhead" t-shirt at Newbury Comics and hunting down "The Elephant Man" on video. Lynch's films weren't just different; they were singular. And from then on, I wouldn't miss a single one.

'Blue Velvet' and 'Twin Peaks'

In 1986, Lynch rebounded from "Dune" with "Blue Velvet," a dark, subversive look at small-town America's seedy underbelly. It previewed ideas he would later cultivate in "Twin Peaks," the show that redefined network television. "Blue Velvet" had a strong narrative structure, but you never forgot you were in Lynch territory. It was with this film that the term "Lynchian" was likely born.

Watching "Blue Velvet" in Harvard Square, I felt more unnerved than enamored. I knew I had seen something great, but its disturbing nature left me uneasy. It took repeat viewings to truly appreciate its dark humor and brilliance. Kyle MacLachlan, who debuted in "Dune," became "cool" in my eyes after "Blue Velvet," setting the stage for his iconic role as Agent Cooper in "Twin Peaks."

When "Twin Peaks" debuted in 1990, it was a sensation. Everyone at college was talking about it. The mystery of who killed Laura Palmer became an obsession, and Lynch became our hero. Though he directed only a few episodes, his influence permeated the entire series. It's hard to imagine shows like "Severance" without "Twin Peaks" paving the way.

Between "Twin Peaks" seasons, Lynch directed "Wild at Heart" (1990), an uneven but essential film for his

fans. Then came "Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me" (1992), initially panned but now regarded as one of his masterworks. "Lost Highway" (1997) followed, improving with age, and then "The Straight Story" (1999), his most conventional film yet still distinctly Lynchian.

'Mulholland Drive': The masterpiece

As the new millennium approached, Lynch announced a new TV series, "Mulholland Drive." ABC greenlit a pilot, hated it, and canceled the project. But Lynch, ever resourceful, reworked it into a feature film. The result? His masterpiece.

Some films take a few viewings to digest. I knew "Mulholland Drive" was a masterpiece the moment it ended. People in the theater lingered, talking to strangers, trying to piece together what they had just seen. It was one of those rare film experiences that sticks with you. Starring Naomi Watts and Justin Theroux, in star-making performances, the film remains an engaging puzzle box, still being deciphered more than two decades later. It is my top film of the millennium.

After "Mulholland Drive," Lynch's "Inland Empire" (2006) pushed his dream-logic storytelling to its extreme. If you thought "Eraserhead" was the strangest film you'd ever seen, "Inland Empire" is the "royal flush" of unusual. It is more a collection of ideas than a structured story, but it still contains moments of pure Lynchian brilliance. Fans hoped he would keep making movies, but Lynch remained largely quiet for a decade.

'Twin Peaks: The Return'

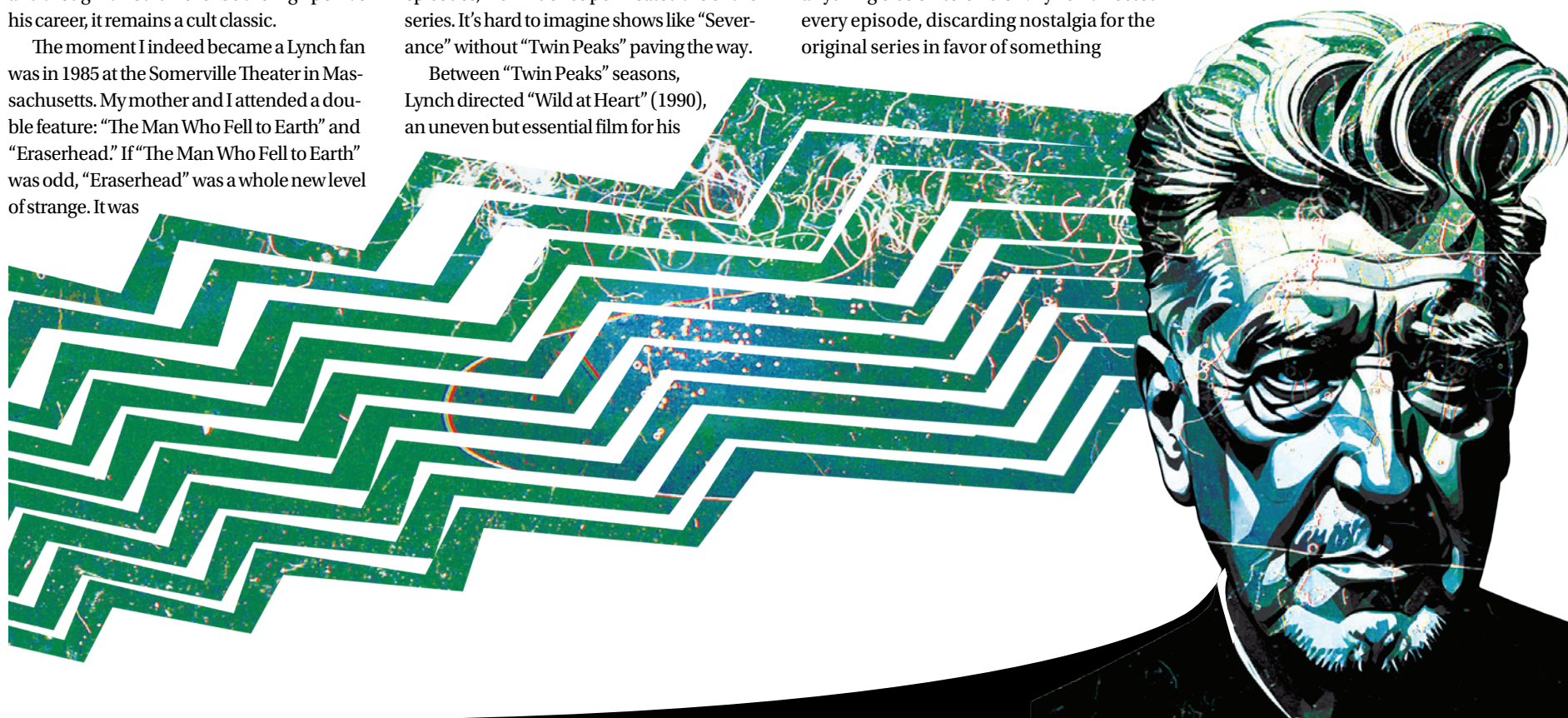
Then, in 2017, Lynch gave us "Twin Peaks: The Return." When he announced the revival, I was ecstatic—this 18-episode epic, his magnum opus, towered above almost anything else on television. Lynch directed every episode, discarding nostalgia for the original series in favor of something

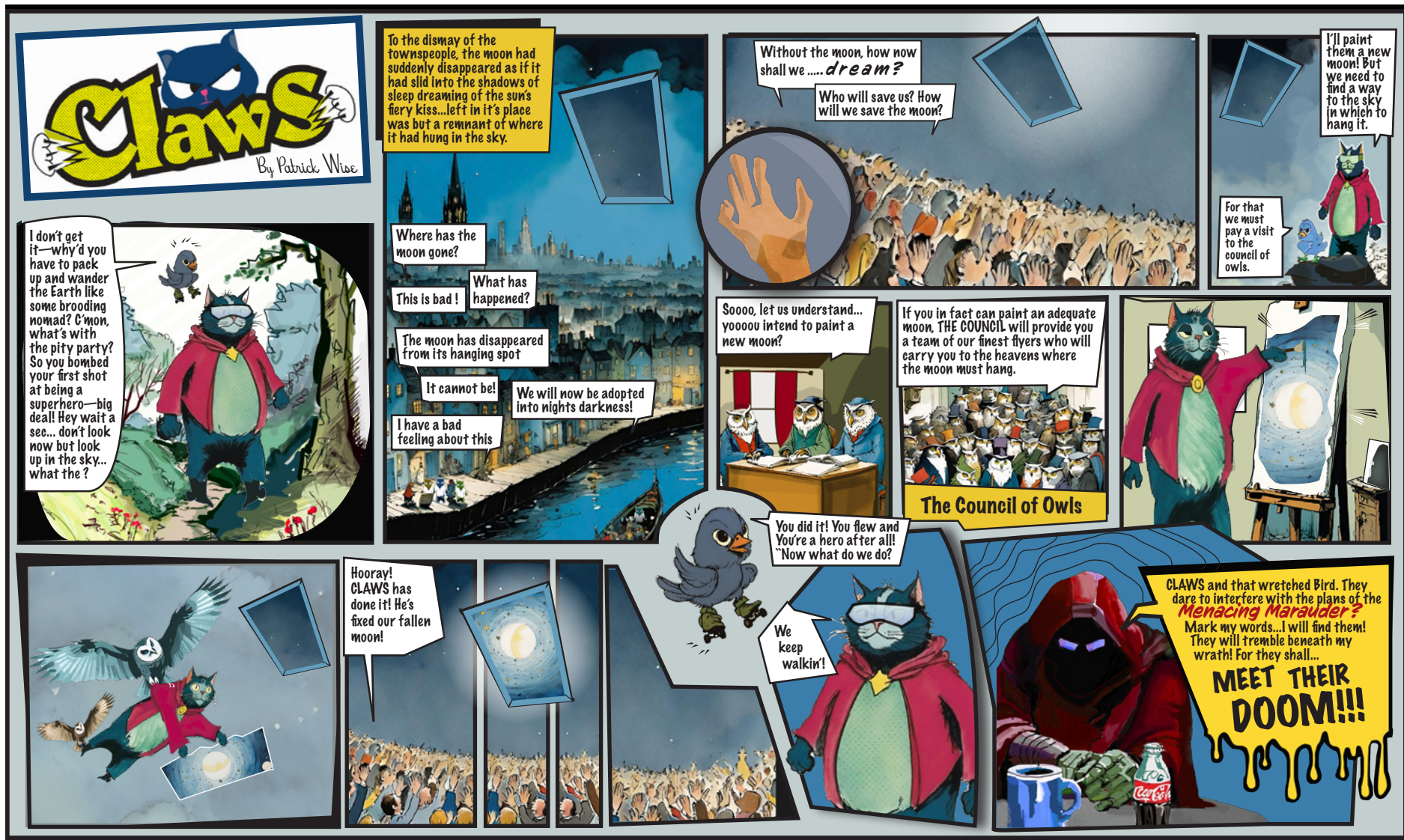
darker, stranger, and more foreboding. Episode 8 remains the most remarkable single episode of television I may ever see. The series' final moment leaves viewers with a chilling impression, one fans have debated since.

The world of film and television has lost an irreplaceable force. There will never be another David Lynch movie—no surprise new season of "Twin Peaks." The originality Lynch brought to cinema and TV over nearly 79 years is all we will ever have. He's gone to that magical waiting room with the black-and-white zigzag floor and red curtains in the sky. Perhaps his spirit will join the forest owls lurking behind the alley of a Winkie's diner or tucked away inside a mysterious blue box. And when you hear the clunk and whistle of the heat coming through the vents, listen closely—maybe you'll detect the faint noise of the woman in the radiator singing "In Heaven," and Lynch will be singing alongside her.

As Monica Bellucci recites in "Twin Peaks: The Return": "We are like the dreamer who dreams and then lives in the dream." And in our dreams, we will find Lynch again and again.

May Lynch's work continue to inspire generations of filmmakers and viewers. His impact isn't limited to cinema and television—his surrealist art, music, and even his philosophy on creativity and transcendental meditation have left an indelible mark too. While we mourn his passing, his spirit lives on in the art he left behind. The Lynchian world remains as alive and mysterious as ever, waiting for new audiences to enter and explore its depths.





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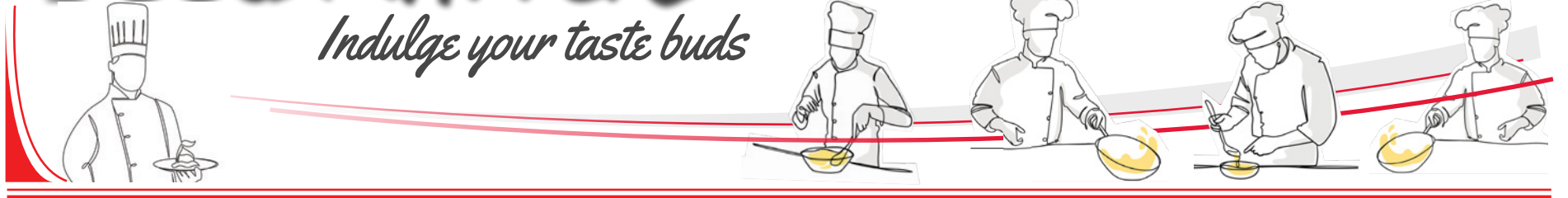
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Townline Grill and Bakery smashes it in Rutland

A successful smash burgers and tots food truck goes indoors for new possibilities
By James Kent

A new dining spot has taken root off Route 4 in Rutland. Townline Grill and Bakery, known to locals as a popular food truck, now occupies the space in the former Restoration BBQ location. Owner and primary cook Tracy Rose launched her food truck in 2021, gradually building a loyal following. In November of last year, she transitioned to a brick-and-mortar location at 131 Woodstock Avenue (east Route 4), creating the opportunity to expand the menu and serve more customers.

“I started as a home bakery, then moved into the food truck business,” Rose explained. “I was in Brandon for two years before moving the truck to Cold River Road in Rutland. Now, I have a permanent location where I can do even more.”

One of the most exciting changes since opening the restaurant is the addition of beer. Beginning this week, Townline Grill offers tap beer, bottles, and cans. By summer, Rose plans to have a full bar available.

Smash burgers and tots take center stage

While Townline Grill serves a variety of items, including chicken wraps and quesadillas, the focus remains on smash burgers and tots. These aren’t just any burgers—Rose has carefully crafted a lineup of specialty options that have quickly become fan favorites. The Mountain Times put two of our toughest critics on the case (teenage boys), and they were instant fans of Townline Grill’s double-patty smash burgers and crispy tots with a side of Townline Grill’s homemade house sauce.

“The Mozzarella Smash Burger and the Maple Bacon Smash Burger are super popular,” Rose said. “People also

love the Cowboy, which comes with pepper jack cheese, bacon, and onion rings.”

One unique menu item is the Smash Tots—a combination of crispy tots topped with a smashed burger patty, house sauce, onion rings, and more. “People love that they can customize their order. If someone wants Taco Tots, we’ll make it. We do chopped cheese, deep-fried tortillas—there’s a lot of creativity in the kitchen,” Rose said.

Other hot-selling items are Townline Grill’s bakery items, like the cake pops, which sell out quickly.

Fast, fresh, and friendly

Townline Grill and Bakery offers both takeout and dine-in service, with 25 seats, including bar seating. Though it’s a casual spot, Rose and her team prioritize efficiency. “We want to keep things moving,” she said. “People know us from the food truck, so they expect fast service. We work to get orders out quickly.”

Rose still cooks out of her food truck, which is parked adjacent to the restaurant. An internal kitchen is planned for the future, and as the business continues to grow, so does Rose’s vision for the restaurant.

“You’ve got to keep building,” she said. “We’ve added beer, and eventually, we’ll have ice cream. There’s always something new coming.”

Townline Grill and Bakery is open Monday and Tuesday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Wednesday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. The food truck will return for catering and events starting in April.

For more information, visit: townlinegrill.com.



Courtesy Townline Grill
Top left: The Mozzarella Smash Burger is a customer favorite at Townline Grill. Top right: Townline began serving beer on Jan. 20. Bottom left: Cake pops are a high demand item from the Townline Grill’s bakery section. Bottom Right: Crispy tots with Townline’s homemade dipping sauce make a great pairing with any Smash Burger.

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Rockin'

from page 18

sounds a little bit better. I got into this because I love music so the more people that listen, the happier I am," Wilson added.

Wilson appreciates fans coming out to their shows. "This day and age you're competing with Netflix, and all these ways people have to relax at home. To get them out of their homes, and out of their seats and into their cars, and to get lodging and go out to dinner it's not easy to make all those things happen. So you have to put together a pretty compelling evening of fun, and if every show is different, we're constantly being challenged but having a good time doing it. We're giving them an original experience every time."

Last year, GD played at the Sugar Shack in Florida, where legendary acts play, in a really cool spot. You can check some of their videos on YouTube. There are plans to release that show on vinyl. GD Vol 2, which I mentioned earlier, will have a lot of special guests like G Love and Paul Wosencroft. They also released an original song, "Ride or Die Chick," produced by Left Coast Sound and features Dave Foral from the Dirty Heads on bass, producing half of it with Jungle Josh and some friends from the band Kash'd Out. Josh and Dave have worked with Sublime, Wiz Khalifa, and others. Wilson said they have three more singles to drop, and then they'll have a full album.

"There's a lot of music on the horizon for us," Wilson said.

What Wilson loves best about playing the Pickle is getting people from all over in there.

"We're not just getting people from Vermont, but from all over the Northeast and even the country. It's nice to have a reunion of people you know and meet some people you don't know from all those different areas. It's a Vermont venue but also a national venue because so many people come from so many different places. We're just trying to create a one-of-a-kind transcendent musical experience. I don't really party or do drugs anymore, so for me, music is the drug. It's like a musical or spiritual orgasm is what we're trying to bring to the crowd," Wilson said.



By Brian Schwartz

RoC, aka Grateful Dub, will play at The Pickle Barrel in Killington on Jan. 23 at 8 p.m.



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Courtesy Grateful Dub

Grateful Dub

Lindsey Vonn is making a comeback; her memoir hints why

By Karen D. Lorentz

Lindsey Vonn was the top female ski racer with 82 World Cup wins when she retired from racing in 2019. She was closing in on Ingemar Stenmark's 86 wins when her injuries caught up with her. Now at age 40, she has rejoined the U.S. Ski Team after an almost six-year hiatus.

In January 2023 Mikaela Shiffrin eclipsed Vonn's World Cup wins and now has 99 wins but is currently recovering from abdominal surgery to fix a wound suffered in the Giant Slalom at the Killington Cup. However, Vonn continues to hold the record among men and women World Cup wins in Downhill (43) and Super-G (28).

To some her return might seem crazy, especially given the multitude of serious injuries she suffered and which finally made her decide to give up the love and focus of her life — ski racing and going fast.

But if you read her book "Rise, My Story," which was published in 2022, you'll not only find yourself binge reading but beginning to understand both the title and why she has returned to racing. Sure, she had a partial knee replacement (titanium) which is making this possible, but as her story makes clear, she became a worldclass professional ski champion through a passion for going fast, hard work, and perseverance. She skied through pain and rose to the occasion of every race. That drive dates back to age 7 when she began to race and age 9 when she told her dad that she wanted to ski in the Olympics.

Her father, who had ski raced and was a part time ski coach and attorney, supported her ambition and set out for her what it would take to make the U.S. Ski Team. However, it wasn't until he saw her hiking up the hill and running laps at tiny Buck Hill (286-foot vertical) when no one else was outside — the lift had closed due to a lightning storm — that he really became convinced she had the spirit and drive. The plan they set out matched her relentless and aggressive spirit that took her to the top.

But as she makes clear in her story,

it wasn't easy. There were challenges with anxiety, nerves, depression, and pressure to overcome and many sacrifices that extended to her entire family being uprooted from their beloved Minnesota home to live in Vail so she could receive the top training available there.

So you're not a racer, neither am I. But once I began reading this book, it was hard to put it down. While I am a nice recreational old lady skier, I enjoyed learning about the makings of a champion and what the World Cup entails and how it works. This especially resonated with me since Kill-

ington hosts a World Cup.

There were many other things in her life that resonated, particularly her being taught by her father who carried her in a backpack for her first outings and then teaching her to ski at age 2 1/2 and then continuing to believe in her and support her dream. Her closeness with her family which extended to supportive grandparents made it clear that skiing was a tie that binds, and that was another experience, albeit recreational skiing, not racing, I had with my own father and siblings.

One of my favorite stories Vonn tells us of her relationship with Picabo Street, and Picabo giving her an autograph when she was just starting to race. Her description of a kind and helpful champion brought back memories of skiing with Picabo at Killington! (I had joined a press event and Donna Weinbrecht was giving a group of us a preparatory clinic for mogul skiing, i.e. making fast very short turns. We were at the top of a black diamond and it was my first time out so I hung back. When Picabo heard me say I wanted to go last, she asked if I was nervous. When I said yes, she said "I'll ski with you!")

Vonn relates how learning about friendships and competitive rela-

tionships among teammates was an important lesson, and she does a great job of filling us in on the real life of a serious athlete and the sacrifices that must be made to focus on one thing — going fast.

The descriptions of injuries — her first at age 12 was serious — and what it felt like to have surgeons drill into her back to remove stem cells to inject into her knee made clear just how much pain she suffered. She dealt with her injuries by rising to the occasion and racing even with hairline fractures and other conditions, like no cartilage to cushion the bones in her knee. When the knee no longer worked, she continued to race and then faced the hardest decision of her life — to race one last time. Her description of that race and her ensuing life transition is fascinating and will probably resonate with anyone who has faced a major loss that changed their life and identity.

What makes this book riveting is her descriptions of how she learned about mental strength, hard work, perseverance, and training. But what really led me to understand her return to racing this winter was a passage where she is new on the U.S. Ski Team and overhears the coaches discussing who to focus on leading up to the 2002 Olympics.

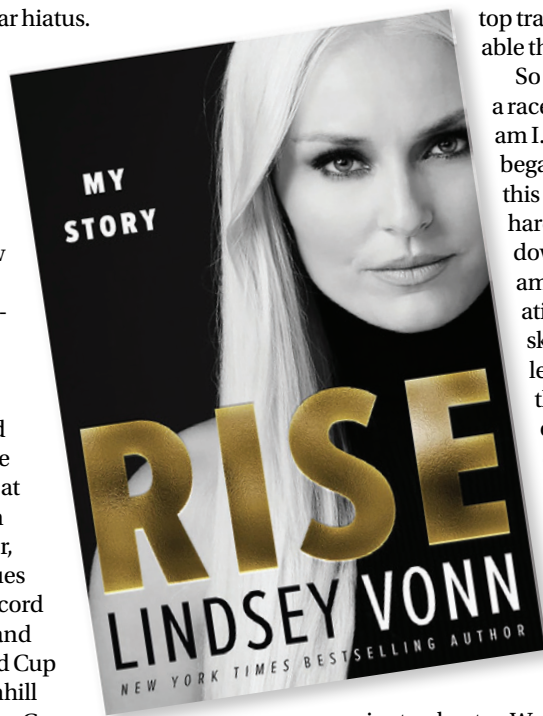
"I pressed my ear against the hotel room door and heard my coaches discussing the girls who were in the running to make the Olympic team. My chest tightened as I heard them say a string of horrible things about me, culminating in, 'Lindsey's not going to make it.'"

"It was brutal. That would have been bad enough, until they got to the second part of the conversation: 'Let's focus on Julia'" [Mancuso who had been on the team a year longer than Vonn], she related.

Vonn notes that she knew she had the talent and drive and was confident in her plan. "I would get better—better than I had been and better than Julia and good enough to win," she remembers thinking.

Acknowledging that the coaches saw natural talent in Mancuso, she writes, "But they failed to account for the largest question of how much success is a product of work ethic and how much is a product of talent. The fact is, they underestimated me on all

Vonn → 38



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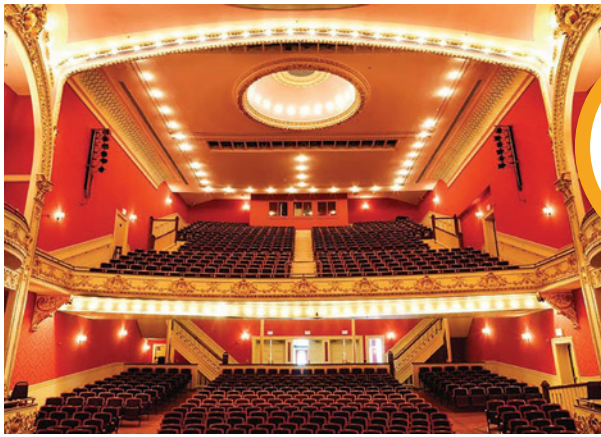
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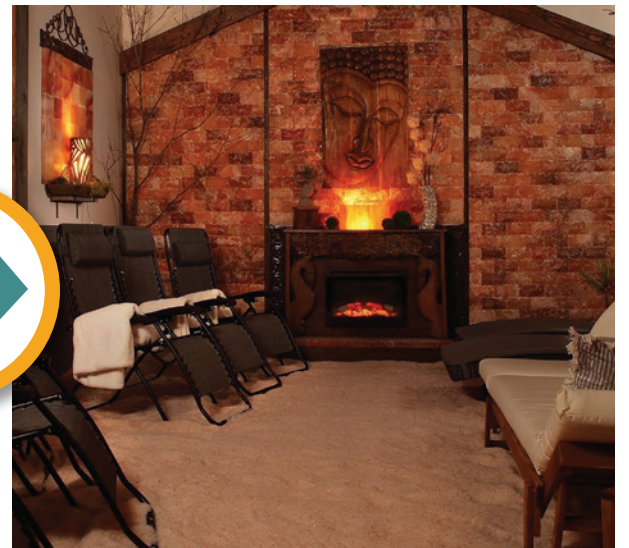


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The Mad Rose

The Mad Rose is a craft cocktail lounge that curates an imaginative selection of beverages made with its own syrups, bitters, and juices. It serves classic cocktails and prepares many of them as non-alcoholic versions.

Seasonal offerings include the "Northern Lights" cocktail, which is made with dry gin, rosemary, alpine liqueur, fresh lime juice, and house-made orange-spice bitters.

In June 2023, Brooke Lipman, who owns the Center Street Alley bar in Rutland, opened The Mad Rose. Brooke developed the cocktail menu with the help of Nicholas Capanna's Rutland-based Little House of Cocktails. The food menu features snacks, shareable plates, and delicious desserts. Be sure to follow The Mad Rose on social media for news and upcoming events, including popular cocktail classes led by Capanna.



By Shandi Marie

Michelle Cordeiro and Don Abrahamsen, co-owners.



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Solutions From page 15

Crossword

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

Sudoku

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

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Kane—5-year-old. Male. Pit bull.

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TYRONE

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MAGGIE

Maggie—2.5-year-old. Spayed female. Pit bull.



Piggy—2-year-old. Female. Pit bull.



Graham—1-year-old. Neutered male. Great Dane/pitbull mix.



Bluey—Female.



Theo—1-year-old. Male. Retriever mix.



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Cosmic Catalogue

The weight of hidden truths



Cosmic Catalogue
By Cassandra Tyndall

There are three things that can never be hidden – the Sun, the Moon, and the truth. Some truths can be buried for a long time, seemingly forever banished. A hidden truth is akin to a lie. It torments. It infects. It taints. It grows until it becomes a beast that consumes you.

Every lie and hidden truth eventually comes to light. It may take moments or a hundred years. The scariest part is that you never know when ghosts from the past will come back to haunt you.

When the bright light of the Sun reveals all, there will still be people who'll turn a blind eye to it. Deny it. Justify it. Play the game of whataboutisms to deflect the light. When the Ego chooses to double down on its position, no transformation can occur.

This week and over the next few weeks, many lies will have the light of the truth cast upon them. Those who can face their cognitive dissonance and stretch their mind into a new reality that challenges all they were taught or told will be those who are truly ready for this new era.



Aries

March 21 - April 20

Is a group or community that you are involved in all that they seem? Maybe. Maybe not. If you have a doubt in your mind about someone's true intentions, it may be best just to let the cards fall where they may. If you're the one who's questioning your own authenticity, then you do need to be true to yourself. You're here to be an individual, not a victim of a group mentality.



Leo

July 21 - August 20

We all carry truths about relationships. Most of this stems from our past experiences, from society, and the ideas we picked up along the way about how partnerships should be. What if it could all be different? What if you could create your own ethos by wiping the slate clean and starting all over again? If you're willing to be forever changed in all the right ways, start unlearning and relearning everything you know about love.



Sagittarius

November 21 - December 20

Some tough choices may need to be had this week as a result of an honest conversation. Relationships have been a big learning curve for you in recent months. Chances are, you've also stretched your boundaries a bit too. That said, if there is something you do or don't want, this is the week to face the truth of that reality. Come to terms with that and figure out how to address it.



Taurus

April 21 - May 20

You're going to have to be brutally honest about your career or your overall life direction now. Are you doing what you're doing because that's what you're doing? Or are you following a pathway that is authentic and totally you? You've been in a lengthy period of personal growth, and if the direction you're heading in no longer fits, start making the appropriate adjustments. It will take time to sort out, but you need to be honest with yourself.



Virgo

August 21 - September 20

Love and relationships play out according to our beliefs about them. If you're looking for faults in your partner or your date, you will find them. Over time, you'll become resentful and bitter. However, if you can look for the positive attributes in others and amplify them, your relationship will become nothing short of magical, and you'll both be happy. This week, start looking for the features in someone that you can be grateful for.



Capricorn

December 21 - January 20

Real change comes from the power of making a decision. Sometimes, this is a logical and thought-out choice. More often than not, it's the result of deciding that you want more for yourself and out of life. It can be the choice to not stand in the shadows of the past. To attract the abundance, prosperity, and confidence you desire, you have to make the choice that you're worth it and behave accordingly.



Gemini

May 21 - June 20

If there is one area of life that has been continually calling you for some time, then you need to follow it. It may not make much sense now, but you have to believe that your clarity will override your logic. What do I mean by clarity? That is your certainty that no matter what happens, you'll find your truly authentic and magical calling in life. Be honest with yourself about what is really giving you meaning and purpose.



Libra

September 21 - October 20

Regardless of your relationship status, it's time to turn the tables. Whether it's a romantic situation or a longer-term pairing, you need to get honest about what you want in love. More spice? More fun? Maybe you realize the situation you're in isn't going to last the distance. Whatever it is, you need to get to the truth of what brings you true joy and happiness. It may not be what you think!



Aquarius

January 21 - February 20

Some events happen in our lives that are a defining point, like a line drawn in the sand. A bit like your own personal before-common era/after-common-era. Chances are that this week, you may reach a point of no return. This may sound harsh or dramatic, but it's actually quite empowering. When you can tap into the truest depths of who you are then you can be seen in your best light. Authenticity is everything.



Cancer

June 21 - July 20

True intimacy is knowing yourself and being willing to share and express that with someone else. This includes the unpleasant parts of you, your fears, and the secrets you hide. You spend a lot of time hiding behind your protective outer shell. If someone is attempting to crack that right open, maybe it's high time you let them in. Real transformation lies in the fear you refuse to face.



Scorpio

October 21 - November 20

Every family has secrets and lies. Every family has things they deny and sweep under the carpet. This week, you may have it revealed to you the extent of your family secrets. Some may not be surprising; some may be shocking. While confronting, at least now you can face and transform what needs to be faced. Embrace this process as it is your superpower. You can be the agent that breaks family patterns.



Pisces

February 21 - March 20

What are the secrets you tend to bury, even from yourself? Sometimes, these secrets become so deeply buried it can be easy to forget they are even there. Rest assured, though, that one way or another, they will come back to the surface. If you're not sleeping, you're stressed, or you feel an unwelcomed burden, it may be time to lift the lid on the one thing you've been avoiding. Claim back the peace of mind you deserve.

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

Frost quakes: Groans of Old Man Winter



The Outside
Story
By Colby
Galliher

As the winter sun set on Feb. 3, 2023, the Caribou, Maine branch of the National Weather Service (NWS) was flooded with reports of seismic activity. James Sinko, the office's hydrology program manager, recounted Mainers calling in from across the state's Hancock, Penobscot, Piscataquis, and Washington counties to describe homes and buildings trembling and deep rumbles emanating from beneath their feet. The previous two months had been warm and rainy, and a fast-moving cold front that day led to temperatures "15-30 degrees below zero, falling at rates of 2-3 degrees every 30 minutes in some locations," Sinko recalled.

These conditions set the stage for a series of frost quakes, a rare phenomenon some meteorologists and hydrologists call "cryoseisms." Unlike earthquakes, which are caused by shifting tectonic plates, frost quakes arise when specific meteorological and hydrological factors coincide.

These unusual seismic events occur when a rapid drop in air temperatures dramatically decreases the temperature of waterlogged soil, typically after rain or a thaw. "Water in the soil freezes and expands more rapidly than the soil particles can adjust. This causes a sudden rupture of the ice in the soil, generally in the coldest part of the night," said Henry Berry, senior geologist at the Maine Geological Society. "The release of pressure can cause effects similar to those of true earthquakes, especially explosive noises and high-frequency shaking."

Frost quakes tend to affect small areas and are more common in certain landscapes than others. They are "generally very localized events," explained Berry. "In one study where [detection] instruments were set up near each other, cryoseisms were felt and heard in several houses, but not in nearby houses only a few hundred feet away." Frost quakes are more likely in open areas rather than wooded ones, as nighttime temperatures in fields and meadows, which lack the vegetative cover that can trap heat, tend to dip lower than in forests.

While powerful earthquakes can generate catastrophe, frost quakes generally leave behind little evidence of their occurrence. Louise Fode, warning coordination meteorologist at NWS Caribou, said that although her office receives reports of frost quakes once or twice a winter, the reports have never included accounts of frost quake-related damage. Berry noted that most frost quakes are so subtle that they fail to register on conventional detection instruments. However, he said that when frost quakes are more powerful, "long cracks in the ground or in the pavement have been found, where the frozen ground snapped." Sinko added that frost quakes "can sometimes alter underground drainage passages."

Still, even when conditions seem ripe for frost quakes, they remain rare. "Cryoseisms require a particular set of conditions, which don't happen every year," Berry said. But, he added, "when the conditions are right, they can come in a bunch"—as Sinko witnessed in northern Maine in February 2023.

Climate change is making New England winters milder, but rising temperatures may not mean fewer frost quakes. Snowpack insulates the soil, keeping it warmer than the air. With "little to no snow on the ground," as

happens more often in a warmer world, soil temperatures crash,

said Sinko. Without a snow barrier, water in the soil is more likely to freeze quickly when air temperatures drop.

Inconsistent snowpack over the winter months could thus lead to more frost quakes. And even amid a pattern of higher temperatures, winter in the Northeast will still feature spells of frigid weather. "Frost quakes occur during sudden cold events, which can still happen in a warming climate,"

Sinko said. Fode concurred: "Even with warming winters, it will be quite a while before we have winters with no rapid freezing events, so I would anticipate we'll continue to get reports of frost quakes."

If a spate of warm and wet days gives way to a harsh cold spell this season, pay close attention to the ground beneath your feet — you may bear witness to a rare seismic phenomenon.

Colby Galliher is a writer who calls the woods, meadows, and rivers of New England home. To learn more about his work, visit colbygalliher.com. 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.



Courtesy Killington Resort

Ski memories from yesteryear

When snow arrives and I see cars with skis passing through Rutland, I can't help but think about my ski days, which began on some small slopes.

The areas where I skied in the '50s and '60s no longer exist. But the memories remain!

Like many kids who grew up in the Rutland area the first place we skied was at the Rutland Country Club. There was a 525-foot hill that had a rope tow that got you to the top. The tow was installed by the Rutland Recreation Department in the winter of 1951-1952. The motor for the tow came from a Volkswagen donated by Louie Salebra. The chief operator was Recreation Department employee Bill Reardon, who was assisted by part time employee Pat Canty.

Kids could ski for free and adults paid 50 cents for the day. There was no warming hut so you kept on skiing if you didn't want to get cold.

If you didn't know how to ski you could take lessons on Saturday mornings. Your instructor back in 1952 or 1953 might have been Stevia Chaffee, mother of Olympic participants, Suzy and Rick Chaffee. The Rutland Country Club is located on Grove Street just down the road from where the Chaffee family lived at the time. How convenient was that?

It was a fun place to meet your friends and parents were happy to not have to drive up the mountain to Pico.

In 1974 the rope tow was removed so if you wanted to ski you climbed to the top of the hill.

When you were old enough to drive and

preferred to ski at a small area you might have selected High Pond in Hubbardton. It opened to the public in the winter of 1951. Originally it was a personal ski area for W. Douglas Burden, a wealthy entrepreneur. Over the years the five original slopes increased to eight. The area had a base lodge where you could warm up and take a break from skiing. There were rope tows and a T-bar to get you to the top. High Pond operated until the mid-'80s. One of my more entertaining memories from there occurred in the parking lot where there were donkeys that wandered up to you. My cousin, Betty, petted one and encouraged me to do the same. I did and when I turned around it bit me in the derriere. Not what I expected to happen at a ski area!

You could also enjoy another small ski area, Birdseye, on the Castleton-Ira town line. Planning for it began in 1958 and it opened in 1962. There was a 750-foot Stabil lift and a rope tow. A T-bar was installed in 1965. One fun feature of Birdseye was night skiing. I took advantage of that feature quite a few times. The area closed in 1968.

By the '70s my friends and I did most of our skiing at either Pico or Killington. Trying the gondola was a fun experience. On my first ride I didn't remove my skis in time and they headed back down the mountain. I don't remember exactly how I got them back but I did and skied down the mountain.

By 1974 I had met my husband, Peter, who belonged to the Pico Ski Club. He taught in the Junior Program and also

Looking back → 38

Buc-ee's: On the road again

I recently had to go on a business trip and decided, since my son was available, that I would drag him along for company. The trip involved my own vehicle, so we packed up the night prior and got on the road at 6 a.m. the following morning.

If I'm going on a long road trip, I make it a point to have several podcasts available for listening. It's amazing how disconnected you can get from the drudgery of driving with a good podcast. I chose some topics I thought my son would find intriguing, but he was dead asleep five minutes after we got on the road.

Prior to his passing out, I mentioned that I had a surprise for him in the form of a special lunch destination about six hours into our trip. Given my son's love of food, he had a spirited response, but it did little to dissuade his need for sleep.

Normally, on a road trip, I'll look to Cracker Barrel as my go-to destination. It's clean, has a pleasant ambiance, and the food is much better than your average fast-food franchise. I'd always prefer a local establishment, but I realized those choices could drag you too far out of the way years ago.

The lunch destination I had in mind was a place I had been meaning to visit for years after hearing about it from other travelers. Unfortunately, their locations (it's a chain, after all) were never nearby where I was visiting.

When I mapped out my route for this trip, I altered it slightly just to include this stop. It was probably a half-hour out of our way, but that didn't account for much, given our overall time on the road.

As we got closer, I roused my son from his slumber and excitedly announced that our lunch destination was just ahead. His eyes opened, and he began scanning the horizon for a clue. Slowly, the hallowed location arose from the shining sun as if it were being unveiled by the gods above. When he realized where we were, he started to laugh and then slumped back into his seat, seemingly intent on going back to sleep.

Initially, we couldn't see the main building because it was blocked by 120 gas pumps. But once we got closer, the signage was clear. We had arrived at the haven of interstate travelers: Buc-ee's! For the uninitiated, Buc-ee's is a Texas-based chain of travel centers known for its massive stores, spotless restrooms, unique snacks, and iconic beaver mascot. Over the years, it has grown from a single gas station

into a favorite roadside destination and a legitimate cultural phenomenon.

You can't appreciate Buc-ee's until you actually visit one (currently, there are 51 locations throughout the United States—mostly in Texas). First of all, seeing that many gas pumps in one location is almost unnerving. The logistics of filling the reserves and maintaining the endless sea of pumps seem unimaginable. But I can attest that it sure made the navigation and pumping of my gas much easier. Oddly, Buc-ee's does not allow 18-wheelers on its premises, preferring instead to cater to car travelers.

If you visit Buc-ee's website, you'll quickly notice that its main claim to fame is having the "cleanest restrooms in America." I can also attest to this fact. The bathrooms at the Buc-ee's location I visited were expansive and spotless. I felt like I was in the restroom at a five-star hotel.

Of course, the main draw at Buc-ee's is the food, which is varied and plentiful. There are dozens of choices for the hungry traveler, many of them with a Texas edge, like brisket and freshly cut beef jerky in an abundance of flavors.

Buc-ee's also holds two world records. The Luling store in Texas is the largest convenience store in the world at 75,593 square feet, while the car wash at its Kathy, Texas, location boasts the world's longest conveyor, clocking in at 255 feet.

My advice to anyone traveling: Check your Maps app to see if a Buc-ee's is nearby, and then do everything in your power to make it part of your travels.

This week's feature, "Nosferatu," also involves some traveling, but in this case, the journey leads to death and destruction at the hands of a hideous creature.

Based on the 1922 film of the same name, "Nosferatu" was difficult for me to watch for several reasons. Nearly every scene appears dark and cold, setting a chillingly appropriate tone. There's also an air of repulsiveness in this film that, while fitting, given the distinctive characterization of the vampire, I did not enjoy. These attributes create a unique, oddly appealing vibe, but the disjointed storyline made the film almost unwatchable for me.

Check this one out if you love vampire films.

A hideous "D+" for "Nosferatu," now playing in theaters everywhere.

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



The Movie Diary
By Dom Cioffi



The magic forest

I pull my hood over my pompom and duck my head down as low as I can. My body is in the lowest squat I can manage with my ski boots on, and I can feel my tips rising off the snow as my weight drops back. Extending my pole grips out in front of me, I try to use my arms to counterbalance the weight of the squat, but I also need my hands out to block my face.

The branches are thick and covered with a solid layer of rime ice, and they are low—really low. They are the perfect height for the almost dozen 5- and 6-year-olds squealing with delight behind me, but they are definitely not meant for a grownup. I cannot tell what they love more—watching the coaches have to shrink real little and getting constantly dumped on by overhanging snow or having a world be just the right height for them.

We are in their world now. A world where grownups don't quite fit in and everything is

kid-sized. A world where chairlifts to intermediate terrain might actually be designed for small children to get on without getting nailed in their upper back and just pushed forward. Most of my little ones cannot even jump onto most of the chairlifts, needing to be lifted by a grownup. It severely limits our terrain options: we cannot ride the North Ridge, Canyon, Bear Mountain, or Northbrook Quads. We can only ride the Bubble or the South Ridge Quad with grownup support, even though we can ski everything off those lifts. And I refuse to take them on the Superstar or Skyepeak Quads because they rise so quickly after loading that any little mistake by my littles could become a big one—fast.

Because people don't expect littles to be ripping down Helter Skelter or taking the drops in Patsy's, they don't expect to see us coming down Big Dipper or East Fall. But
Living the Dream → 38



Living the Dream
By Merisa Sherman



5-year-old Heath Hayes of Team PomPom makes his way through the crazy, weird forest.

By Merisa J. Sherman



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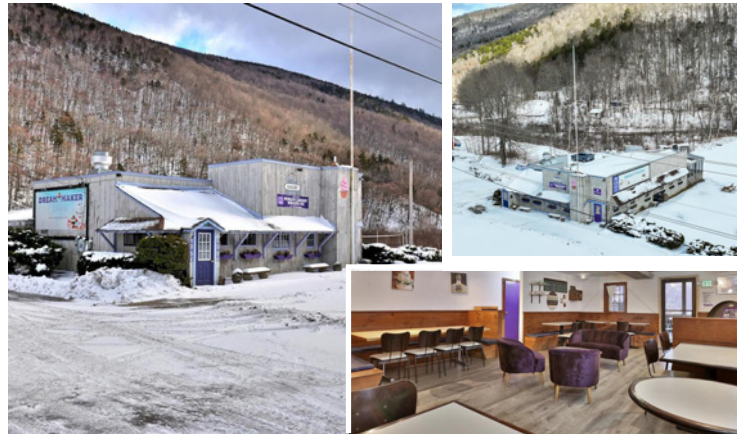
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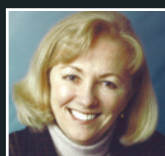
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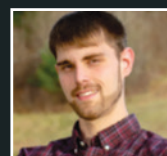
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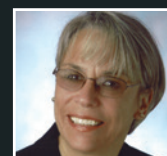
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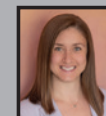
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← Livin' the Dream:

from page 33

for little kids who ski every weekend, these trails are a reality. Or at least they will be by the end of the season. Our young athletes work hard on their skiing; you should see their little brows crunch up as they put all their focus into making their pinky toes do the hard work of parallel turns. Where they should expect to see us is Rime or West Glade or anywhere on Bear Mountain—we just cannot get there.

But it's just perfectly lovely in here. The loveliest trees that we ever did see, all spiky and covered in snow. We love breaking through the branches, like big monsters making our way through the world. Their little 90-110cm skis fit right through, while even my 161s make it so I can barely wiggle. If we can find them, there are a few magical chutes that we can fly through. Chutes that were paths 30 years ago and have since grown in so strongly that I often wonder if I am the only one that ever goes in here.

Every once in a while, I see tracks coming through, and I always want to know who it is because I think we should be friends. Or maybe we are already friends, but we don't talk about this secret tree area. A secret that we can share without knowing each other. That's a pretty cool secret—kind of like the Wizard or Cooper's, although social media has completely destroyed both of those secrets.

So we fight hard to keep this one, never

going in the obvious entrance but always taking a different, crazy, weird one where you really hope your jacket and pants are up for the challenge. Because these branches are sharp, pointy, and stiff, they do not want to break, which might be the magic of this wooded area. If the branches don't break, the entrances cannot be made, and the paths cannot be found. It's our own secret garden that isn't a garden at all.

It's a forest—a magical one where the branches seem to grow overnight, and you never make the same turn twice. Some days, it feels like the trees have moved from where they were last week, and all hope of getting out seems futile. Our screams echo through the trees but never seem to leave the forest. We aren't in Killington anymore, but in some crazy, weird vortex where children rule the world and the trees move about.

But eventually, we do come out onto the public trails, where grownups are whizzing by us at phenomenal speeds that will turn us into pancakes or waffles with syrup. And nobody wants that. So please, during January Safety Month and at all other times, be on the lookout for littles on every type of trail. We don't want to become snow angels.

Merisa is a longtime Killington resident, global real estate advisor, and Coach Pom-Pom. Please share your stories at Merisa.Sherman@SothebysRealty.com.

← Vonn:

from page 27

levels, both when it came to my talent and skill, but also — and especially — how much I wanted it, and how hard I was willing to work in order to get there."

She goes on to expound on her innate feistiness, writing, "Over the course of my career, I've found I do much better when people doubt me — the press, my coaches, my competitors, my teammates. When anyone questioned my ability, that became part of my drive."

That night was the first of many times that she turned a lack of belief in her to "extra motivation," and became "determined to prove them wrong."

This book is a must read for parents who have kids who want to race and for any serious teen or adult racer. And for anyone

who enjoys skiing and simply wants to know what racers go through — like what Mikaela Shiffrin is going through — and what Vonn's return is really like.

Already, the 2010 Olympic downhill gold medalist has surprised skeptics by placing 14th at her first return to racing at St. Moritz, Switzerland, in the Super G after a disadvantageous 31st starting position. Vonn then took sixth- and fourth-place finishes in the Downhill and Super-G in her second World Cup return at St. Anton, Austria, Jan. 11-12. This past Sunday, Jan. 19, Vonn fell while on pace for a top-five finish in a Super-G in Italy.

"Rise" is available in hard and paperback and at the Apple bookstore as an E-book.

← Looking back:

from page 32

gave lessons to some of the women in the club. I have to admit I was his worse pupil as I schussed from one side of the hill to the other so I wouldn't pick up speed. I also had problems with the B-slope T-bar. There is a very steep section near the top of B slope that can cause your feet to come off the ground or at least mine did. When that happened your "T-bar partner" could lose his or her balance and fall off. One time my cousin, Betty, told Roger Pike, who was in line behind us, to take her place and get on the T-bar with me. She happily rode up with a total stranger. By the way, Roger did not fall off!

On that note I will end my downhill ski memories for this time around. Have fun making your own.

Marj Ellen Shaw is proud to be a "senior citizen" who has lived in Rutland her whole life. She has written columns for several newspapers over the years and is the author of Kittenhood 101. She invites you to take a look back at life in yesteryear.

Using seed and plant catalogs

By Deborah J. Benoit, Extension Master Gardener, University of Vermont

It begins in December. By January, seed and plant catalogs will arrive at your mailbox (or email) almost daily. Browsing through their pages provides a welcome escape from the garden-deprived days of winter.

These catalogs contain a wealth of information to help grow a successful garden. The trick is having some basic knowledge about your location to help you choose the best plants.

First, determine your United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Plant Hardiness Zone. You'll want to choose perennial plants that are labeled for your zone. You can find your USDA Hardiness Zone here: planthardiness.ars.usda.gov.

You'll also want to know your anticipated last frost date in the spring (when the danger of frost has likely passed) and your first anticipated frost date in the fall. The autumn date is useful to estimate how long your garden likely will last before a killing frost puts an end to its productivity. You can find the average last and first frost dates for your location here: garden.org/apps/frost-dates.

The number of days between the last frost date (spring) and the first frost date (fall) is the length of your growing season. Keep that in mind when selecting vegetable crops. If the "days to maturity" is longer than your growing season, cold weather could put an end to your garden before it's ready to harvest.

A catalog listing will tell you the plant's name and the variety being offered (e.g., Cornflower "Emperor William"), the plant's size at maturity (important when planning the number of plants you'll need), light requirements, what you'll receive (i.e., seeds or a plant) and the price. If ordering seeds, the listing will often state the approximate number of seeds in a packet.

The description should also provide the plant's botanical name. A plant may be known by different common names (e.g., cornflower is also known as bachelor's button), or the same common name may refer to entirely different plants. The botanical name identifies a specific plant.

It also lets you go beyond the catalog description and research plant care, potential pests and diseases, and other specifics before adding it to your garden.

In addition, listings may include whether a plant is an heirloom variety or a native and if it's drought tolerant, scented, or suitable for cut flowers. You may also learn whether it will attract pollinators such as bees, hummingbirds, and butterflies or if it's deer-resistant.

Catalogs often use symbols to indicate useful information, such as appropriate growing conditions (full sun, part shade, full shade). Look for a key to what those symbols mean in the general information section of the catalog or as a footnote at the bottom of the page.

You may find additional information regarding the hardiness of annuals and perennials helpful when deciding which plants to select for your garden. A "hardy annual" would likely resist a light frost without damage, lasting until a hard freeze. A "half-hardy annual" would likely sustain damage from a frost, and a "tender annual" would succumb to temperatures approaching freezing. Plants labeled "tender perennial" aren't frost tolerant and are often treated as annuals in colder climates. They'd need to be overwintered indoors and moved back outside after the danger of frost has passed in the spring.

Whether you're planning to start seeds this spring or are patiently awaiting the delivery of plants once spring arrives, catalogs can be a great way to get a head start on the gardening season.



By Claudette Gallant/Public Domain Pictures

For more than a century, seed and plant catalogs have provided gardeners with information on plant varieties, growing requirements, and other useful details, allowing them to purchase the vegetables, fruits, and flowers that will do the best for their plant hardiness zone and growing conditions.



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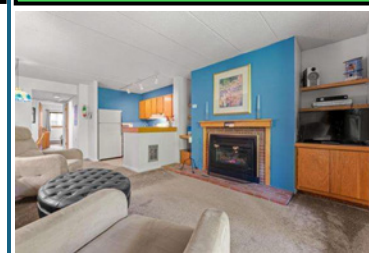
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