



POULTNEY MAPLEFEST IS SATURDAY

Enjoy Poultney's annual celebration of everything maple this Saturday, March 22.

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By James Kent

IBOTS TEAM AIMS FOR CHAMPIONSHIPS

Rutland robotics students are gearing up for competition that begins this weekend, but they aim for more than just glory. The skills learned open doors to higher education and career opportunities.

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MARCH 19 IS CERTIFIED NURSES DAY

On Wednesday, the nation honors nurses who have earned and maintain national board certification in their specialty, recognizing their commitment to excellence and patient care.

Pages 20-21



By Jerry LeBlond

Winners crowned at final ski bum race

Teams Clock Tower and Here We Go tied for the Killington Ski Bum Race Series season title with a perfect 900 points earned. Scores are based on the top three point-getters on each team, each week, with year-end standings taken from the top six finishes. First place in each category earns 50 points. The local teams of up to five skiers, snowboarders, and Telemark skiers race down Highline in pursuit of Ski Bum glory and bragging rights in 10 Wednesday races from Jan. 8 to March 12. After-parties were held after each race at various locations throughout town.

Killington announces David Atherton as its new town manager

By Polly Mikula

David Atherton will be Killington's new town manager, the Select Board announced at a special meeting Tuesday, March 18. The 4:30 p.m. meeting took only 14 minutes as the confirmation of Atherton new town manager and his contract signing was the only thing on the agenda.

Chair of the Select Board Jim Haff read the contract aloud in full before Ricky Bowen made the motion to approve the contract. All were in favor.

Atherton has most recently worked as town manager of Pittsford (February 2023 to February 2025) and prior to that he was the town manager for Brandon for nearly eight years. In Brandon he oversaw the Segment 6 project, a major overhaul of the road and waterlines through downtown.

Atherton said he enjoys working on large municipal infrastructure projects.

"I'm really project based," he said in an interview Tuesday. "I love to see projects through from start to finish and although I'm coming into the Killington project a bit after the start, I'm excited to see it through to completion."

Town manager → 8

\$32m investment planned for GE Aerospace Rutland

An investment of nearly \$32 million has been allocated to the GE Aerospace facility in Rutland, according to a company news release last Wednesday, March 12. The money will be spent on new machines, upgrades, precision equipment, and specialized tooling to support the production of components for aircraft engines, the release noted. Specifically "specialized tooling to support the production of components used in narrowbody and widebody aircraft engines, along with military helicopter and fighter jet engines," it noted.

GE Aerospace said it is planning to hire 5,000 workers nationally; it is unclear how many more Rutland may be seeking. Currently, there are over 1,000 people employed at Rutland site and 20 positions are open.

This investment is the second major influx in just over a year. About this time last year, GE announced a \$24.9 million investment which comprised of industrial ovens, inspection equipment, grinders, tumblers and tooling equipment.

500 acres of private land conserved in Wallingford

Nearly 500 acres of private land at the entrance to the popular Robert T. Stafford White Rocks National Recreation Area in Wallingford have been conserved in perpetuity as public land, according to the Trust for Public Land, which secured funding for the acquisition.

The property is home to the popular Ice Beds Trail network and features views of Otter Creek, the Taconic Range and the Green Mountains.

The area is known as a biodiversity hotspot, according to the Trust for Public Land, as it provides habitat for state

500 acres → 8

Mission Farm's Odeon in Killington receives Faith & Form International Award for Religious Architecture & Art

By Polly Mikula

Killington has received a new accolade, but you probably wouldn't have guessed it'd be an international award for religious architecture and art. Partners for Sacred Places announced the winners that represent the best in architecture, liturgical design, and art for religious spaces. The 2024 awards recognized excellence in the creation and restoration of religious spaces, the designing of religious landscapes, and the making of religious art.

The Odeon at Mission Farm in Killington won the Sacred Landscape Award.

"Dan Snow's phenomenal work, The Odeon in the Green Mountains was chosen by Partners for Sacred Places as an award winner in the category of sacred landscape. This work will be presented an award at the Interfaith Design's reception at the AIA Annual Conference in June," according to a recent news release.

"I'm so proud of the team that helped to make this happen," said Lisa M. Ransom, executive director at Mission Farm. "We couldn't have done it without the Vermont Art Council grants as well as very generous donors in our community... The goal was always to create a space for our community and to invite our community to be part of the space," she said.

Odeon award → 9



By Oliver Parini, courtesy Mission Farm

The Odeon at Mission Farm in Killington has been awarded the 2024 Sacred Landscape Award for its exceptional integration of art, architecture, and community spirit in a religious space.

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Sherburne UCC "Little White Church," Killington, VT



Courtesy Karen D. Lorentz

A view of the mountain Merrill wanted to develop for skiing: Skye Peak (left), Killington Peak (center), and Snowdon (right).

How Killington became the beast, Part 2: A story of vision and passion

By Karen D. Lorentz

Having observed the development of skiing in Sweden, Vermont State Forester Perry Merrill envisioned similar recreational and economic possibilities for skiing in Vermont.

During 37 years on the job, he oversaw the purchase of 170,000 acres of forestland in 27 state forests and 32 state parks. He negotiated many long-term leases with ski areas — Mount Mansfield, Burke Mountain, Jay Peak, Smuggler's Notch, Okemo, and Killington, to name the big areas while there were smaller rope tow areas like the one at Shrewsbury Peak, which operated on state lands leased to a Rutland group in 1935.

The late Vermont Senator George Aiken wrote of Merrill, "It was in no small way due to his aiding and abetting, cajoling and urging, that Vermont is now noted for its excellent ski areas."

One of Merrill's reasons for leasing state land to ski operators was to provide income for Vermont's state parks. It was the lease payments and revenues from food and retail sales in the lodges on state land that provided a substantial income for his state parks operating budget. That is why fees for day and overnight camping uses could be so nominal as to be affordable to virtually everyone.

Finding someone for Killington

In 1954, the father of Vermont's state parks and alpine ski areas finally met with success in attracting someone to develop Killington when Preston Leete Smith, 24, visited him to see about buying Ascutney Ski Area, which was for sale.

Although Merrill wasn't talking to a group of businessmen with the financial wherewithal or practical experience to develop a ski area, he had found someone who shared his appreciation for the sport of skiing.

He told Smith about Vermont's second-highest mountain, saying, "Come back and see me after you've seen Killington."

A tall, almost shy young man, Preston "Pres" Leete Smith had a far different background from most ski area entrepreneurs of the time. He had not grown up with family working in the ski industry, his parents weren't skiers, and he hadn't been part of the 10th Mountain Division, which spawned many a ski area founder.

Smith's route was roundabout and founded not on being in a position to develop a ski area but on a love for the sport. Hard work, determination, and a love of what he was doing were the elements that made his entrepreneurship possible. His upbringing fostered this possibility.

From cows to skiing

Preston Leete Smith was born to Bernice Leete Smith and Robert Avery Smith in New York on February 3, 1930.

"I happened to be born in New York City because my father aspired to be in show business in his early years," he said [in a 1988 interview] of the nine months of his life not



Submitted

Sue and Preston Smith in 1955 (above) working together on Killington sketches (below).

spent as a New Englander. The elder Smith was a baritone singer performing on Broadway, but since it was the Depression Era, it was a short stint, and the family returned to the Leete family homestead in Guilford, Connecticut.

Pres Smith's early boyhood was spent on Leete's Island, a section of Guilford named for his ancestor William Leete, the first governor of the New Haven Colony. (Later, when the New Haven and Hartford colonies merged into the State of Connecticut, William Leete served as governor of Con-

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THURSDAY, MAY 22 | 7:00 PM



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Bar Harbor Bank & Trust employees support Vermont libraries through charitable giving program

Three Vermont libraries have received donations from Bar Harbor Bank & Trust as part of the bank's Casual for a Cause program, an employee-driven charitable initiative. Through this effort, employees dress casually on Fridays in exchange for a bi-weekly payroll deduction, pooling funds that are then distributed to nonprofit organizations each quarter.

For the fourth quarter of 2024, Bar Harbor Bank & Trust employees contributed to Brandon Free Public Library, Norman Williams Public Library in Woodstock, and Royalton Memorial Library, recognizing their role in enriching local communities.

"Bar Harbor Bank and their generous employees are valued community partners, playing a vital role in strengthening Brandon Free Public Library's ability to expand its resources," said Molly Kennedy, director of Brandon Free Public Library.

"This generous support enables us to expand our resources and programs. The bank's commitment to our mission helps us build a stronger, more informed, and connected community," said Clare McFar-

land, director of Norman Williams Public Library.

"This generous gift goes beyond books and resources; it is an investment in our community," said Pam Levasseur, assistant director of Royalton Memorial Library.

Since its inception in 2018, Casual for a Cause has raised over \$372,000 to support

organizations across Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont. Jack Frost, VP Director of Community Giving at Bar Harbor Bank & Trust, highlighted the program's impact: "By pooling their individual donations

"This generous support enables us to expand our resources and programs," said McFarland.

together, employees are able to be part of more substantial contributions that have a very real impact on the community organizations and the people they serve."

In addition to the Vermont libraries, the latest round of donations benefited organizations in Maine and New Hampshire, including Upper Valley Habitat for Humanity, which serves Vermont and New Hampshire.

For more information about Bar Harbor Bank & Trust's community initiatives, visit: barharbor.bank.

Vermont Adaptive announces \$500,000 matching gift

Vermont Adaptive Ski and Sports, a nonprofit dedicated to providing outdoor recreation for individuals with disabilities, on Tuesday, March 18, announced a \$500,000 matching gift from an anonymous donor to support its Vermont Adaptive Forever endowment fund. The gift, combined with financial commitments from every member of the organization's board of directors, marks a significant step toward Vermont Adaptive's long-term sustainability.

The anonymous donor, a former participant, shared how Vermont Adaptive transformed their life following a severe spinal cord injury.

"Vermont Adaptive changed my life," they wrote. "After a severe skiing accident, a spinal cord injury threatened to rob me of my favorite activities...skiing, hiking, cycling, motorcycles, golf, and running. Two years to the day after my accident, I hesitantly signed up for Vermont Adaptive, got on my skis and returned to skiing. Vermont Adaptive also helped me get back to the golf course (but not my handicap!). I wouldn't be alive today without the confidence and hope that Vermont Adaptive instilled in my broken body. I can't think of a more worthy organization and leader to help bring more of that magic to the many others as or more deserving than me."

In addition to the matching gift, the Vermont Adaptive board has collectively contributed \$30,000 toward the endowment's \$3 million goal. Executive Director Erin Fernandez emphasized the importance of

these contributions. "These two milestones mark significant momentum in securing the long-term sustainability of our programs," she said. "We are incredibly grateful to this donor and our board for ensuring that Vermont Adaptive remains a strong and vibrant community in the future."

The Vermont Adaptive Forever endowment fund, established in 2016 and managed by the Vermont Community Foundation, is a permanent financial resource for the organization, particularly its scholarship fund. In 2024 alone, Vermont Adaptive awarded more than \$210,000 in program scholarships to ensure that financial barriers do not prevent individuals from participating in outdoor recreation.

"For nearly 40 years, we have never turned someone away based on their ability to pay," Fernandez said. "It's a central part of who we are and what we do at Vermont Adaptive. These values continue to be an anchor for us. We're proud of our origins and are committed to remaining true to those values for years to come."

With the \$500,000 matching challenge now in place, every donation made to the Vermont Adaptive Forever endowment will be doubled, up to the full match amount. Board member Harry Grey and longtime donor Cam McCormick encouraged community participation: "Every gift counts, and every donation helps ensure that people of all abilities have access to outdoor recreation."

For more information or to donate, visit: vermontadaptive.org/endowment.

Vermont Adaptive seeks nominations for Kellen Sams Memorial Leadership Award

Vermont Adaptive Ski and Sports is accepting nominations for the Kellen Sams Memorial Leadership Award, recognizing volunteers, staff, and interns who demonstrate outstanding organizational commitment and leadership. Kellen Sams dedicated his life to outdoor experiential education and inclusive recreation. Established in his memory, the award highlights individuals who embody his passion for professional development, leadership, and outdoor education for all abilities. Nominations are accepted throughout the year, with the 2025 recipient announced this fall at Vermont Adaptive's annual appreciation lunches.

Kellen Sams was an avid adventurer, outdoor educator, and advocate for adaptive sports. His experiences included working with Outward Bound, wildlife conservation efforts along the Appalachian Trail, and instructing at the adaptive ski program in Crested Butte, Colorado.

Despite his extensive training and safety measures, he tragically lost his life in an avalanche in Colorado's San Juan Mountains in 2010. This award continues his legacy by recognizing those who share his dedication to inclusive outdoor recreation.

To nominate a deserving individual, visit: vermontadaptive.org/awards/?blm_aid=255231.

Submitted

A plaque on the wall honors past recipients of the Kellen Sams Memorial Leadership Award given to those who dedicate their work to outdoor education and recreation.

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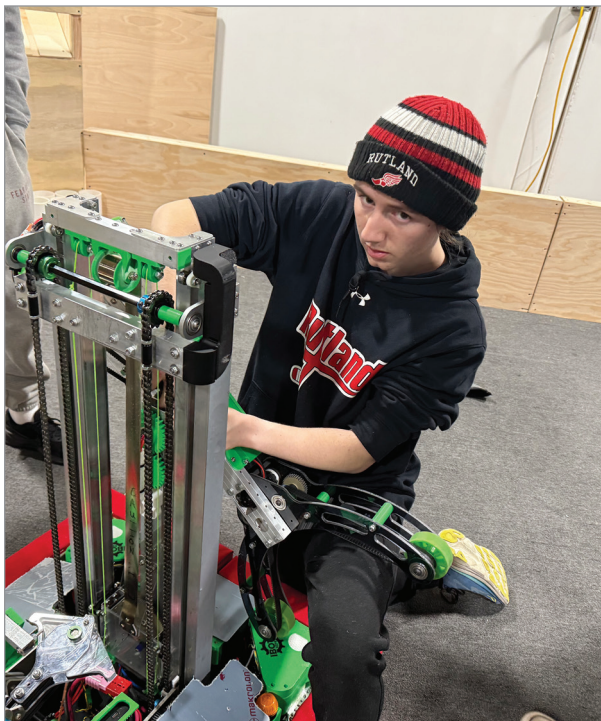
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By James Kent

The IBOTS built an entire mock-up of this year's FIRST Robotics Competition game arena in order to practice their robot. In this obstacle, the robot must place PVC tubes onto the metal rungs, and remove the balls in the way.



By James Kent

iBOTS' Finian Smathers, head of mechanical fabrication and pit crew lead, made some final adjustments to this year's competition robot.

Rutland's Team 2370 – The IBOTS gears up for a new season of robotics competition

By James Kent

In a region better known for its mountains than its machines, a team of high school students is proving that rural Vermont is embracing STEM in a major way. Team 2370, known as The IBOTS, is part of Rutland Area Robotics, and this weekend, they will head to Springfield, Massachusetts, for their first competition of the season in the FIRST Robotics Competition (FRC). But this story is more than just robots—it's about teamwork, problem-solving, and opening doors to higher education and career opportunities in science, technology, engineering, and math.

Each year, FIRST Robotics challenges teams worldwide to design, build, and program a robot that can complete a unique game. This year's competition, themed around an underwater ecosystem, requires robots to retrieve and hang PVC pipe onto pegs of varying heights to earn points. At the IBOTS testing site on location at the Rutland MINT, onsite mentor Dan Roswell, who has been with the team since 2008, explained the challenge.

"Every January, we get a new game. We have about eight weeks to design and build a robot that can play it. This year, teams must navigate 'algae' obstacles while placing the PVC pipes on scoring pegs."

Rutland's IBOTS is one of just nine Vermont teams among 210 competing in New England, making their achievements all the more impressive. Last

year, they reached the world finals in Houston, Texas, competing among the top 600 teams globally and finishing fourth in their division.

"It was pretty unbelievable," Roswell said. "There's no money or prizes—it's all about the glory. But the real prize is the college and career opportunities these kids gain."

"One of mine exploded spectacularly, but that's how it goes. You learn, rebuild, and keep improving," said Singesen.

From STEM to scholarships

Beyond competitions, FIRST Robotics teams have access to millions of dollars in STEM scholarships, and one in four students who apply receive funding. Colleges actively recruit students from FRC teams; competitions often double as college fairs. "They'll talk with the dean of engineering, tour campuses, and connect with industry leaders. It's an incredible way for them to get noticed," Roswell said.

For Jacob Jepson, the team's driver and programming lead, the experience has shaped his future ambitions. A Mount Saint Joseph Academy sophomore, Jepson has been involved in FIRST Robotics for over five years. "We compete at WPI every year, and I'd love to go there for software or robotics

engineering," he said.

For Jackson Singesen, a junior at Rutland High School, joining IBOTS was a dream come true. "I've loved making things since I was a kid," he said. "This team is everything I love—building, designing, and problem-solving." He has his sights set on MIT or Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University to pursue engineering. And while Singesen recognized that an institution such as MIT could seem far-reaching, his time with the IBOTS has already taught him that nothing is impossible if you work hard and put your mind to it.

Meanwhile, senior Finian Smathers, head of mechanical fabrication and pit crew lead, has built his college applications around his decade-plus of FIRST experience. "I won the Dean's List Award at our district event, which got me into a luncheon at Worlds where we met admissions reps from MIT, Purdue, WPI, and more," he said. He's still waiting on responses from several schools, but his top choice is the University of Toronto, which he hopes to receive word on later this spring.

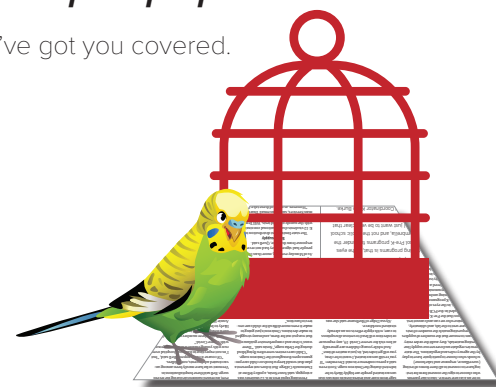
A high-stakes, high-intensity competition

Robotics competitions aren't just about building a machine—they require strategy, adaptation, and teamwork. Jepson, who has been the IBOTS' driver for two years, explained

IBOTS → 8

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MEETING DETAILS

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TIME: 6:30 PM

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PUBLIC FEEDBACK SOUGHT ON 3 DESIGNS

Please join us for a Public Meeting on the Killington Recreation Master Plan Project. Vermont Integrated Architecture (VIA) has worked in conjunction with Town Staff and members of the Recreation Commission to develop three proposed concepts for the redesign of Killington's Recreation Facilities focusing on the Johnson Recreation Center and repurposing the existing Town Hall for use by the Killington Recreation Department.

Vermont Integrated Architecture (VIA) will present the three concept designs, give an overview of the thought process behind the concepts, and seek public discussion /input.



Superintendent Sousa looks forward

By Curt Peterson

Mountain Views School District (MVSD) Superintendent Sherry Sousa is aware of recent friction but she's focusing on the future. In the five years she has been superintendent, Sousa has faced the "mean side" of school culture — bullying and racism — and invested significant time and effort trying to steer student energy and faculty training in a better direction. There are 449 students at the Woodstock middle and high school campus — 10% of them are considered from "marginal communities."

Unfortunately, the efforts are needed. In 2022, Jaya Holliman alleged that her son, who is Black, endured isolation, harassment, and racial slurs from fellow students, with what she considered a lack of adequate and appropriate response from MVSD administrators and faculty.

The Vermont Human Rights Commission investigated the allegations, and findings supported Holliman's claims. Superintendent Sousa didn't fight the HRC decision, which included

mandatory anti-discrimination training for MVSD staff.

"I stand behind my staff and administrators who worked tirelessly to meet this student's needs," Sousa responded.

As previously reported, the district settled with Holliman for \$175,000. Sousa disagreed with the HRC's determination of fault, but felt it prudent to avoid the "time and expense of litigation."

Some constituents have petitioned for the removal of Sousa as superintendent. However, the majority of the MVSD board and many staff, parents and students supported her decision, and Sousa continues the enormous responsibility of managing the school district.

All of that behind her now, Sousa welcomed the Mountain Times's interest in how the district approaches the challenges of racism in a state with so few residents of color.

Many of the actions were part of campus culture already, but she said there is always room for improvement.

"We have ... ask ourselves, 'Can we do better?'" said Sousa.

Sousa consulted with Dr. Luvelle Brown of Ithaca, New York, a published and well-known expert on school and organization cultural issues, to develop and fine-tune MVSD procedures and policies.

One innovation is "Late-Start Wednesdays," when faculty members meet to assess any current situations and how to address them, as well as to discuss possible improvements in tactics.

"A basic strategy is to make sure every student feels welcome," Sousa said. "And that teachers are working together and constantly aware of any hazing, harassment or bullying."

Every incident is reported directly to Sousa's office, with information about any harm that might have resulted.

"We're interested in correcting any harm done," she said. "To do that, we have to engage with the victim directly."

"Often the bad behavior isn't intended to harm the victim, but we all have to address any harm done," she said, "and we have to reflect on each event and ask ourselves, 'Can we do better?'"



Courtesy RPMC
Dr. Steven Runyan, DO



Courtesy RPMC
Sarah Barton, CNM



Courtesy RPMC
Dr. Douglas Dier, MD



Courtesy RPMC
Jordan Carr, PA-C

RRMC honors 2024 Physicians and Advanced Practice Providers of the Year

Rutland Regional Medical Center (RRMC) has announced the recipients of its 2024 Physicians and Advanced Practice Providers of the Year Awards, recognizing healthcare professionals who demonstrate excellence in clinical care, patient advocacy, and community leadership.

These awards honor individuals who exemplify dignity, respect, and professionalism each year while serving as role models within the healthcare system and the broader Rutland community. This year's awardees, selected from a pool of more than 30 nominees, include two physicians and two advanced practice providers representing both RRMC and Rutland area community providers. Awardees include:

Dr. Steven Runyan, DO – RRMC Physician of the Year

As Medical Director and Section Chief of Psychiatry at RRMC, Dr. Steven Runyan has been a pivotal figure in mental healthcare since joining in 2023. His compassionate approach, clinical expertise, and

dedication to fostering trust between patients and providers earned him this distinguished honor.

Dr. Runyan holds a doctor of osteopathic medicine from the University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine and completed his psychiatry residency at the University of Vermont. His colleagues praise his empathy, advocacy, and commitment to strengthening community partnerships, leading to improved patient outcomes.

Sarah Barton, CNM – RRMC Advanced Practice Provider of the Year

A certified nurse midwife at Rutland Women's Healthcare, Sarah Barton has made history as RRMC's first employed Certified Nurse Midwife. With degrees from College of Our Lady of the Elms and Frontier School of Midwifery & Family Nursing, she has dedicated her career to expanding access to maternal healthcare and mentoring the next generation of providers.

Barton is widely recognized for her clin-

ical expertise, leadership, and passion for education and training, ensuring that both colleagues and patients benefit from enhanced care and knowledge in midwifery.

Dr. Douglas Dier, MD – Community Physician of the Year

Since arriving in Rutland in 1990, Dr. Douglas Dier has been a cornerstone of the region's rheumatology care. A long-time member of the RRMC Credentials Committee, he has contributed significantly to medical leadership while maintaining an unwavering dedication to his patients.

Dr. Dier earned his medical degree from the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry and completed a rheumatology fellowship at the University of Vermont. He is board certified in internal medicine and rheumatology and is recognized for his collaborative approach, accessibility, and compassionate patient care.

Jordan Carr, PA-C – Community Advanced Practice Provider of the Year

A family practice physician assistant,

Jordan Carr, PA-C, is celebrated for his patient-centered approach and ability to build strong, trusting relationships within the Rutland community. A graduate of Springfield College, Carr is board-certified by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA).

His peers commend his clinical expertise, professionalism, and ability to clearly communicate medical conditions and procedures, ensuring patients and their families feel informed and supported.

Recognizing excellence in healthcare

RRMC Vice President of Medical Affairs Dr. Philip Lapp emphasized the importance of honoring these dedicated professionals: "These awards recognize individuals who go above and beyond in their commitment to patient care, staff collaboration, and community well-being. Their impact extends far beyond the walls of RRMC, shaping the future of healthcare in Rutland."

For more information, visit: rrmc.org.

← 500 acres: from page 1

and federally endangered bats, peregrine falcons and the state-threatened plant short-styled snakeroot. It's also home to a large wetland complex that provides flood resilience to communities downstream.

Connected blocks of forest this big are a rarity in Vermont and elsewhere, and scientists say they are critical for protecting biodiversity as the climate changes.

In 2023, Vermont committed to conserving 30% of the state's land by 2030 and 50% of the state's land by 2050.

The parcel sits adjacent to the state-owned Otter Creek Wildlife Management Area and federally managed Green Mountain National Forest, and it expands a swath of more than 270,000 acres of conserved forestland.

The newly conserved land will provide a bridge for wildlife and plants between the Otter Creek wetland and the top of the Green Mountain spine.

Prior to the transaction, the parcel was owned by a local family who managed the popular community hiking trails there for more than 90 years.

The family asked not to be identified but said in a statement, "These woods are our friends and we look forward to a continued relationship with them under the careful stewardship of the Green Mountain National Forest."

← Town manager: from page 1

"I can remember in my title searcher days, there was talk about things going on up there, and the lack of water was what was really holding a lot of them back. So it's pretty cool that it's finally happening. It's just gonna do so much for this whole area," he added.

Atherton will officially begin on March 25, 2025, for a contract term of five years. He will be paid a salary of \$140,000.

Atherton was one of three candidates the Killington town manager search committee had recommended to the board for consideration. Two former members of the board, Chris Karr and Robert Hecker, had been involved in a months-long process of interviews prior to Town Meeting Day, but when Rick Bowen and Patrick Cushing took those places on the board after the election, the top candidates were re-interviewed. The selection of Atherton was unanimous.

Atherton currently lives in Brandon, but is contemplating a move.

"We're looking at relocating closer. Actually, we've been thinking about that since I got done in Brandon," he explained. "Probably in the Rutland City area. We used to live down there years ago, and I think it's exciting what's going on there now... It's a good time to be there, I think"

Atherton does not ski or snowboard but "used to mountain bike a lot" until a back injury three years ago. "I'm hoping this is the year I can get back into it as well. It's



Submitted

Nearly 500 acres of private land in Wallingford, including the Ice Beds Trail network, have been permanently conserved, connecting vital ecosystems and protecting biodiversity in the region.

The effort was funded in part by the Land and Water Conservation Fund, a program created by Congress in the 1960s that invests earnings from offshore oil and gas leases to acquire new federal land. It's one of the largest sources of funding nationwide for conservation projects.



Submitted

David Atherton

been three years of not being able to do much, so it's time."

Interim town manager Tom Yennerell (who stepped in for the town Sept. 3 after town manager Michael Ramsey left Aug. 14) will complete his contract with the town upon Atherton's arrival.

Atherton said he feels confident about the job and will be able to hit the ground running. "I've done this gig before, so there's a lot of similarities. It's just the little nuances that I'll need to figure out," he said. "The first week or so is going to just be meeting everybody and see what's going on and then I'll really start to dive in the following week and go from there."

"I'm looking forward to getting things done," he told the board Tuesday.

West Ridge Center launches Open Access for addiction recovery program

On Monday, March 17, the West Ridge Center, a Rutland Regional Medical Center specialized clinic for recovery and addiction, kicked off an Open Access Model for admissions. The Open Access Model is designed to improve access and reduce wait times for individuals seeking support for their opioid use disorder (OUD).

"Previously, if an individual requested treatment they would be given an appointment and it could be anywhere from 24 hours to a week before we could admit them," said Faith Stone, RN, program director at the West Ridge Center. "Now, with the Open Access Model, we can begin the assessment and provide individuals with the appropriate medical assistance they need on the same day."

Currently, the West Ridge Center treats between 350-425 patients daily. With the recent addition of a nurse practitioner and the new Open Access Model, the West Ridge staff can provide treatment for patients when they are ready to receive help.

Under the new Open Access Model, patients will be seen Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. to 11 a.m. and can expect to spend approximately two hours for a full assessment by clinical staff. The West Ridge Center nursing staff will help patients navigate the daily dosing system for OUD and all patients will have access to therapy and case management. The patient may also be referred to other agencies for additional

assistance for needs such as housing, transportation, and medical care.

"We have a highly skilled and dedicated team of clinicians, nurses, and support staff at the West Ridge Center who are inspired by our patients every day," said Stone. "Our patients are our community members and neighbors. It is of utmost importance to all of us that we are able to help our community members when they are ready to receive treatment."

West Ridge Center was established by Rutland Regional Medical Center and opened in 2013 to help manage the growing need for addiction recovery in the area. The West Ridge specialists combine proven medication-assisted therapies, such as methadone and buprenorphine dosing, with psychological and social counseling to deliver the most effective treatment. Treatment includes strengthening a patient's connection to family and community and relapse prevention. All aspects of opioid use disorder are treated including social, psychological and medical issues. West Ridge also offers a range of educational classes on communicable diseases, nutrition and wellness, addiction and the brain, and relapse skill building.

The West Ridge Center is located at 1 Scale Ave., Building 10 at the Howe Center in Rutland.

For more information, visit: rrmc.org/services/addiction-recovery.

← IBOTS: from page 5

the fast-paced nature of competition: "Last year's game was about shooting projectiles, but this year we're doing pick-and-place tasks. We've been practicing non-stop, and I think we've got a real shot."

Behind the driver, a pit crew works like an F1 race team, repairing damage and making on-the-fly modifications between matches. Singsen described the problem-solving aspect: "We prototyped three different designs before settling on this one. One of mine exploded spectacularly, but that's how it goes. You learn, rebuild, and keep improving."

Smathers emphasized the unpredictable nature of competition. "What can go wrong will go wrong. We have to be prepared for everything—mechanical failures, software issues, unexpected rule changes. But that's the challenge, and that's what makes it fun."

The March 14-17 weekend event in Springfield is just the beginning. The IBOTS will compete in three regional events, including Vermont's first-ever FRC event at UVM on March 28-30. If the IBOTS perform well, they could once again qualify for the New England District Championship and, ultimately, a return trip to the World Championships in Houston.

STEM education that lasts a lifetime

Beyond competitions, Rutland Area Robotics fosters career connections. Many IBOTS alumni have interned or gone on to work at local Vermont tech companies, including GE Aerospace, Hubbardton Forge, and Casella Waste Systems, some of which sponsor the team. "It's like NASCAR," Roswell said. "You've got a pit crew, a driver, and a scouting team. It's more than just building robots—running a business, managing time, working as a team. And these are skills that last a lifetime."

With a new season ahead, Team 2370 – The IBOTS is ready to take on the challenge. As they head into their first competition, they carry the excitement, knowledge, and ambition that could propel them to the world stage once again.

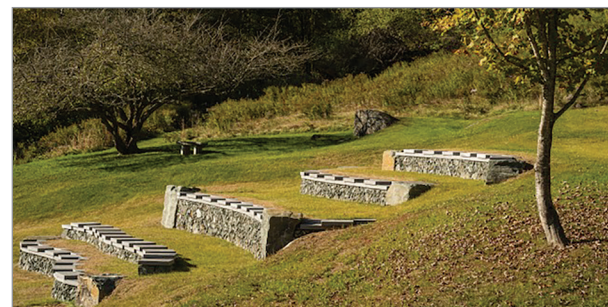
For more information or to support the team, visit: rutlandarearobotics.org.

"It's like NASCAR," Roswell said. "You've got a pit crew, a driver, and a scouting team."



By Oliver Parini, courtesy Mission Farm

Visitors gather on the stone steps of the Odeon at Mission Farm, where art, nature, and community come together.



← **Odeon award:**
from page 1

“For those who gathered at Mission Farm in the Green Mountains in recent years, the conversation centered on having more spaces to connect, share stories, and listen to music. By identifying common spaces and celebrating them, the group hoped to end isolation in their community and nurture a new relationship to the land that they steward.” Partners for Sacred Places continued on their website highlighting the award winners. “The community members wished to craft an assemblage of stones into a space that would concentrate the earth’s energy into a light-capturing atmosphere. Two belief systems would have to intersect and amplify one another to bring the project to successful completion.”

Ransom said Mission Farm has some concerts planned for spring/summer (weather permitting) and a few wedding planned as well as some educational programming in the near future. The award will be celebrated at its annual Meadows and Mountain Festival in August.

“Two weeks after the Odeon’s completion and three days after community volunteers rolled out fresh sod between the terraced seats, the 2023 Mountain and Meadows Festival took place. There was food and music, conversation, and reflection. People joined together to make the place come alive, and space and energy became one,” the Partners for Sacred Places stated.

The jury for the 2024 awards commented: “The larger stones act as an extension from the stone church. The level of detail in the placement of the stones makes it belong to the landscape, that it has always been here. Spirituality extends into the landscape.”

Dan Snow, the Odeon’s artist and stonemason, is Vermont born and raised. On his website, Snow is described as “an assemblage artist specializing in site-generated, or locally sourced, natural materials... From the practical to the fantastical, Snow’s works in stone fuse vanguard vision with old world techniques and traditions.”

For more info, visit: faithandformawards.com.

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Senate committee votes to repeal clean heat standard

A small addition to a bill on reorienting energy efficiency goals does the job

By Emma Cotton/VTDigger

A short new section to a 22-page bill focused on retargeting energy efficiency goals has given Senate Republicans what they have been seeking — with increasing insistence — for weeks: the end of any mention of a clean heat standard in Vermont law.

“30 V.S.A. chapter 94 is repealed” was the key phrase added to S.65 that helped it advance with a bipartisan 4-1 vote in the Senate Natural Resources Committee Friday.

Before the addition, the bill’s focus was to reorient the goals of Efficiency Vermont toward reducing climate pollution as opposed to its current mandate, lowering electricity demand.

Policy-wise, Sen. Anne Watson, D/P, chair of the committee, said repealing the clean heat standard is “not really a big deal.”

“We’re not moving forward with the clean heat standard at this time,” Watson said in an interview Friday.

The law currently on the books did not actually put a clean heat standard in motion. Rather, it required the state’s Public Utility Commission to flesh out its details and build a policy, like a car that lawmakers could decide to drive out of the parking lot this session.

The goal of the clean heat standard was to reduce carbon emissions that come from heating and cooling buildings in Vermont, which accounts for around 30% of the state’s total greenhouse gas emissions.

But voters had affordability on their minds last November, and they showed it by breaking the Democrat-Progressive supermajority, making any road for the clean heat standard impassable. The car was doomed to remain in the parking lot.

Actually, deconstructing the car — or repealing it — would grant Republicans a political win. Only one of its parts, a fuel dealer registry, remains in the bill.

But it also appears Watson has used the repeal language as leverage to advance S.65.

Sen. Scott Beck, R-Caledonia, the Senate minority leader, sits on the Senate Natural Resources Committee and voted yes Friday.

“I think it is a bit of a compromise,” he said. “And Republicans did very, very well in the November elections, but it doesn’t mean that Vermonters want one side or the other to have their way all the time.”

“This is maybe an example of a little more cooperation,” he said.



By Glenn Russell/VTDigger

Sen. Anne Watson, D/P-Washington, chaired the Senate Natural Resources and Energy Committee at the State House in Montpelier on Tuesday, Jan. 28, 2025.

Age Strong Vermont reports progress first year

The Vermont Dept. of Disabilities, Aging & Independent Living and the Dept. of Health released a report last month on progress made by Age Strong Vermont, the state’s dedicated effort to provide all people who live in Vermont the opportunity to thrive as they age.

Age Strong VT serves as a roadmap for building a state that works for Vermonters across their lifespan. The goal is to ensure all Vermonters can look forward to enjoying a secure retirement, good health, access to housing and transportation, connection to community, and more in later life.

The Age Strong VT Year 1 Highlights Report outlines progress made since the launch of the plan in 2024, and calls attention to key goals related to affordability, healthcare, housing and beyond. Highlights include:

- The expansion of Medicare Savings Programs
- Funding for long-term care facility stabilization
- Increased access to Meals on Wheels
- Brain health promotion campaigns
- The development of intergenerational programs, micro-transit pilots, and new housing

“By 2030, one in three Vermonters will be over the age of 60,” said Health Commissioner Mark Levine, MD. “There is much more work we need to do, but the progress made in this first year lays a strong foundation for an age-friendly state that will benefit all who call Vermont home.”

“Our state’s future depends on the contribution of older Vermonters as the fastest growing demographic in the state,” said Dr. Jill Bowen, commissioner of the Dept. of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living. “The Age Strong VT multisector approach will help us achieve the collective impact we need to ensure we have the robust infrastructure and systems in place to support all Vermonters as we age.”

For more information, visit: HealthVermont.gov/Age-StrongVT.

Vermont House votes to ban toxic ‘forever chemicals’ from more household products

The Vermont House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly Thursday, March 13, to outlaw the use of toxic perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in dental floss, cleaning products, and fluorine-treated containers — a critical step in reducing Vermonters’ exposure to these harmful substances.

“In fact, it’s hard to imagine a more direct path of exposure than using a string coated with PFAS to clean your teeth every day,” said Anna Seuberling.

According to the Vermont Dept. of Health, PFAS exposure can lead to reproductive and developmental disorders, decreased antibody response to vaccines, pregnancy-induced hypertension and preeclampsia, certain types of cancer, and more.

The bill (H.238), given initial approval by the House in a voice vote, builds on earlier legislation adopted in Vermont that addressed PFAS in personal care products, menstrual products, textiles, cookware, rugs and carpets, artificial turf, ski wax, and more.

“This law will be another important step toward protecting Vermonters and our environment from exposure to toxic PFAS,” said Anna Seuberling, environmental health advocate with the Vermont Public Interest Research Group (VPIRG). “In fact, it’s hard to imagine a more direct path of exposure than using a string coated with PFAS to clean your teeth every day.”

In addition to adding more products to the list of those that must soon be free from intentionally added PFAS, the legislation strengthens the definition of what it means for the chemical to be “intentionally added.” The new definition will

cover a broader use of PFAS in the manufacturing process, meaning that the standard will be more protective, even for products already covered by existing law.

“This legislation demonstrates that it is still possible to find broad agreement when it comes to protecting public health and our environment from dangerous chemicals like PFAS in consumer products,” said Rep. Amy Sheldon (D-Middlebury), chair of the House Environment Committee. “Toxic PFAS does not belong in products that we use in our homes every day. These are dangerous chemicals, and they are not necessary in things like dental floss, cleaning products, and the many other items we’ve already addressed in previous legislation. This is a win for public health and our environment,” Sheldon added.



Half full or half empty?

Depending on one's perspective we might look at various issues as making progress or going in the wrong direction, just like the proverbial glass half full or half empty. For example, Governor Scott issued his first veto of the 2025 session on the annual mid-year Budget Adjustment Act over concerns about increased spending and extending the winter hotel voucher rules into early summer. Legislators who supported the BAA are disappointed, while opponents are hopeful about the veto.



By Rep. Jim Harrison

There will likely be a vote in the House this week to override the governor's veto, but it will likely fail, given the new political makeup of the Chamber. However, on a more positive note, Democratic leaders met with the Governor Friday afternoon after the veto, hoping to find an agreeable path forward. We are unsure if a compromise has been reached at this point, but I am optimistic it will happen. The glass is half full.

On another issue, there have been bills to repeal the state's Clean Heat Standard (Act 18) in both the House and Senate since early in the session. I am the lead sponsor of the House version (H.16), and Terry Williams of Rutland County is the sponsor in the Senate (S.68). While the Clean Heat law doesn't fully take effect unless the Legislature adopts the proposed rules, it is estimated to increase heating fuel prices eventually by as much as 58 cents per gallon. The repeal bills have been languishing in the respective House and Senate committees with no apparent movement. However, on Friday, the Senate Natural Resources Committee attached the Clean Heat repeal to a bill changing the scope of work of Efficiency Vermont on a 4-1 vote. While the repeal has a long way to go, it fits in another half-full glass from my perspective as it appears it will be addressed.

Other issues of interest:

- The House passed a two-year delay of the Raise the Age law, which raises the age at which adults are treated as juveniles. Without the delay passing in the next few weeks, 19-year-olds will be charged as minors for most criminal offenses. Vermont is only one of two states that currently treat 18-year-olds as minors. Increasing that to 19 and eventually 21 will make Vermont a further outlier. Scott had proposed repealing the law, so the delay is seen as a compromise.
- To address rising healthcare costs in Vermont, both the House and Senate Health Care Committees advanced bills to expand the authority of the Green Mountain Care Board over hospital costs. UVM Medical Center has been scrutinized for its high-

er-than-average administrative costs and subsequent pricing.

- The House General & Housing Committee advanced its omnibus housing bill with some changes to municipal zoning appeals, tax credits for first-generation homebuyers, and more funding for affordable housing and infrastructure projects.
- In the half-empty category, one of the governor's public safety initiatives for bail reform for repeat offenders did not advance by Friday's crossover deadline. However, one might say it is half full as the House Judiciary took testimony this past Friday on the bill, potentially leading to an amendment of the proposal to another bill later in the session.
- Some believe education reform efforts are going too slow and may extend the 2025 session into June, while others believe slow and deliberate makes for a better outcome. The reform legislation has been granted an extension from the legislative crossover deadline. Consolidation of school districts, minimum class sizes, school choice options, changes in financing, and more are all being discussed. It is unclear whether a ban on cell phones in schools will be considered this session.
- The House Appropriations Committee has its work cut out this week. There are an estimated \$300 million in spending requests over and above the governor's budget proposal from various advocacy organizations and independently elected state officers like treasurer, attorney general, and sec of state, as well as from other House committees. Appropriation members will need to remove a dollar of the governor's plan each time a dollar is added for one of the recommended adds it wants. In addition, this will be done against the backdrop of what spending changes in Washington might mean for the state, as over 36% of state revenue comes from the federal government. For example, the Agency of Agriculture learned that a \$1.7 million federal grant to support local foods in school cafeterias was eliminated last week.

Although there is no shortage of half-full or half-empty perspectives on the issues circulating at the State House, most agree that the annual March Madness college basketball competition under the dome is a full glass. The bracket games, done during the after-work hours, provide some fun and diversion to various policy differences during the day. As the self-appointed commissioner of the competition, which raises some money for charity, I am looking forward to the games beginning this Thursday.

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

Part 2:

from page 2

necticut.) The family lived in the 16-room home of his maternal grandfather, Calvin M. Leete. The house was located on the same plot of land that had been in the family since 1670. The adjacent acreage was owned by cousins who operated a full-time dairy farm with 30 head of cattle. "I grew up farming from the time I was old enough to herd cows," Smith related.

A career change by his father brought about a move, and his parents established a business in West Hartford Connecticut. After attending Plant Junior High, Smith went to Oakwood, a prep school in Poughkeepsie, New York. He returned summers to work on the farm. The experience was not without impact — his younger twin brothers Avery and Alcott became veterinarians, and Smith studied agriculture in college.

However, Smith recalled having had more aptitude for engineering in high school. "I really liked and excelled in math and science. But my folks were not oriented to that sort of thing. They were into art — my father's success was in early American antiques, American primitive art, and antique oriental rugs.

"He and my mother were not into the same interests that I was. They were not into sports, and I was always involved in sports — football, basketball, baseball, and track. Ice skating was my real love and an aspiration aside from aeronautical engineering. I loved planes...used to draw planes all the time. I remember being particularly fascinated by the Flying Tigers. My tests and grades in school would have indicated that I should pursue engineering, but no one encouraged me to do that."

With his parents having become Quakers and joining the Friends' Society in West Hartford, Smith attended Earlham College, a Quaker liberal arts school in Indiana. There, he majored in agricultural science, taking natural and physical science courses, including forestry, soil science, biology, chemistry, and physics. He graduated with a science degree in 1952.

After college, Smith had a variety of jobs. He tried to get a position in the insurance industry but was "turned down. I guess they didn't think I'd make a good salesman." As a conscientious objector, he worked for Goodwill Industries instead of military service. He also worked at a silk screen shop in Guilford and became shop manager.

It was during this time of first employment that Smith got into skiing seriously.

He had taken backyard runs as a youngster, thanks to his Uncle Preston Leete, who was interested in the sport. During his teenage years, a family friend took Smith to Mohawk Mountain, a small area in Cornwall, Connecticut. It was "the first bona fide ski area" he visited. But he couldn't afford skiing during his college vacations, so after college, he "really learned to ski," and the memorable trips to Vermont began.

Smith recalled "hooking up with the New Haven and Waterbury ski clubs, and when they didn't offer a trip, I drove myself." He

met Walter R. Schoenknecht, president of the New Haven club, but although Schoenknecht was promoting Mount Snow, Smith couldn't afford to buy stock. Schoenknecht, the legendary ski area visionary and entrepreneur, also ran Mohawk, a ski area he founded in 1947, and Smith became a ski patrolman there, which helped to make his skiing more affordable.

Passion

Commenting on his desire to ski, Smith had said: "I had a terrible time skiing every weekend because I didn't earn very much money. I used to drive twelve hours in a snowstorm in an old convertible, wearing a motheaten raccoon coat and eating peanut butter and crackers just to get to Stowe. I was always looking for deals on skis and forever putting edges on them; they were the metal screw-on sections in those days. You were forever damaging them, and it just made it that much harder to afford the sport."

On one trip to Pico, Smith remembers "barreling down B Slope in the rain and jumping as far as I could off the big boulder toward the bottom of the slope. I landed in soft snow, sunk in about two feet, and stopped dead because my skis refused to slide. I egg beatered down the hill, breaking them into splinters." The bad fall didn't bother him. The expense of replacing the skis was the greater problem!

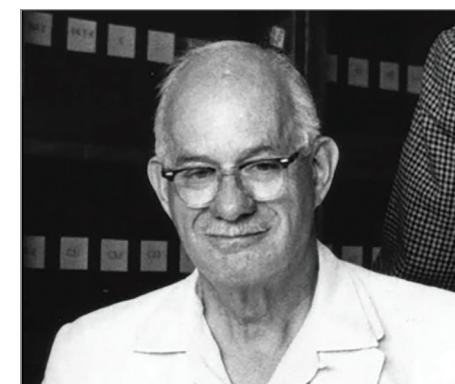
On occasion, he couldn't afford the dollar fifty to sleep at Scotty's Bunkhouse in Stowe, so he slept in his sleeping bag in the car in zero-degree weather.

In 1954 Smith met Susanne Hahn and, having become engaged, began to think seriously about his career.

Sue Smith recalled, "The appeal of skiing and the lure of the mountains caused us to consider Vermont." With Mount Snow recently launched, the couple thought of purchasing property and building a ski lodge there, but after several trips to the area, it soon became apparent to them that financing a lodge was out of the question.

"I had no money and few people would be interested in financing a ski lodge. But there were a lot of people interested in a ski area — I thought the financial support would be there," Smith recalled.

Next week, in Part 3, we'll meet the people who strengthened Smith's determination to operate a ski area.



Perry H. Merrill

Submitted

GUEST EDITORIAL

Sunshine Week: Access to government records and information is more important than ever

By Tanya Marshall

Editor's note: Tanya Marshall is the Vermont State archivist, chief records officer, and director of the Vermont state archives and records administration, a division of the Vermont secretary of state.

As the days get longer and snow melts, it is fitting that this is Sunshine Week—an annual celebration of government records and information that is the cornerstone of government accountability and transparency. As President Abraham Lincoln famously stated in his Gettysburg Address, a government “of the people, by the people, and for the people” means people must have access to authentic and reliable records and information. Without this, we’re in the dark. As we face an increasingly complex landscape of disinformation and misinformation, access to authentic, reliable, and trustworthy government records and information is more critical than ever.

Sunshine Week coincides with a poignant time in our history. It is alarming that our fundamental rights as Americans are currently under threat from an unprecedented dismantling of federal agencies and the unauthorized destruction of federal records and information. Both are critical for ensuring government accountability and transparency, fiduciary responsibility to taxpayers, and the public’s right to know. The effectiveness of all government programs and services relies on authentic and reliable information. Further, the public’s trust in these programs and services relies on transparency, accountability, and civic engagement.

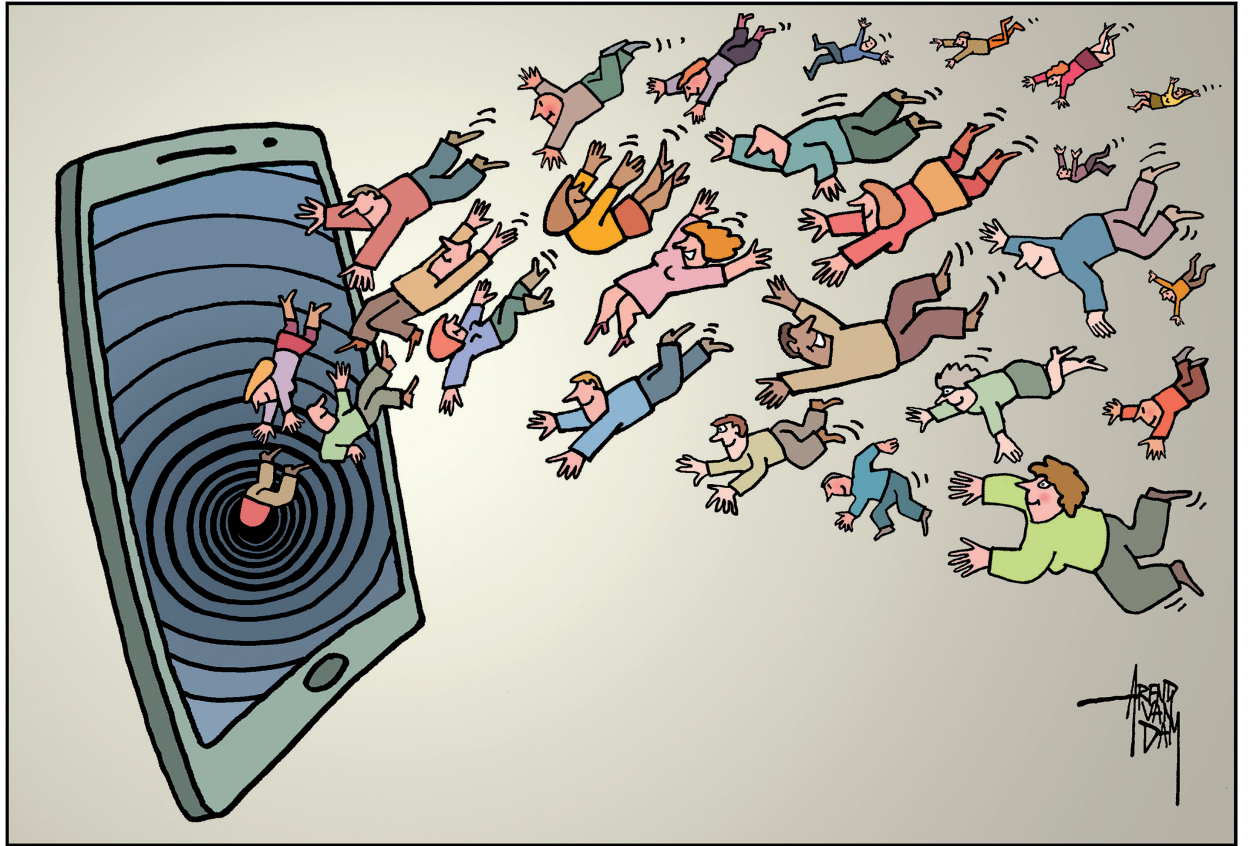
Yet, authentic and reliable records and information are being removed from federal websites, despite being an efficient and cost-effective way to provide publicly available information and actively engage Americans in the federal programs and services they rely on. Federal civil servants responsible for the management, technologies, and use of federal records and information are being fired or have “voluntarily” resigned or retired.

Those recently affected include National Archives and Records Administration employees, United States Digital Service, 18F (a digital services team within the General Services Administration), and key federal agencies dedicated to data collection and research. All told, the recent and ongoing loss of institutional and expert knowledge is staggering.

For Sunshine Week 2025, it is crucial to shed light on Vermont’s laws for a transparent and open government. The State of Vermont’s commitment to manage and safeguard its local and state government records and information, especially from unauthorized destruction, was established by state law in 1937. Following the Watergate scandal of 1972 and subsequent Congressional action to ensure government accountability and transparency further while balancing individual rights to

We, as a nation, stand to suffer profoundly if our nation’s “freedom of information,” “public records,” and “right to know” laws falter for any American.

Sunshine week → 13



Black hole by Arend van Dam, politicalcartoons.com

LETTERS

Our kids deserve phone-free schools

Dear Editor,

Education is heading for a major overhaul in Vermont. Whether it be the governor’s, the House, or the Senate proposal (or most likely some amalgam of the three), it is happening. Although the pressure

The science is clear: time is short and our kids deserve this relief now, not next year or the year after.

for action is intense now, we won’t actually see substantive changes play out until 2027 or beyond.

In the meantime, there is important pending legislation which will start showing positive results very quickly at minimal cost. I’m talking about cell-phone-free schools (see phonefreeschoolsvt.com for more information).

Vermont doesn’t risk being too far out in front
Phone-free → 14

Addressing the inconsistencies in AFP, VTGOP’s stance on energy policies

Dear Editor,

The recent actions of Americans for Prosperity (AFP) and the Vermont Republican Party (VTGOP) reveal a concerning inconsistency. AFP, founded by the Koch brothers and a mouthpiece for Big Oil, is campaigning to repeal Vermont’s Act 18 of 2024, the Clean Heat Standard, citing concerns that it will “increase the cost of living,” “make it more expensive to heat your home,” and “make Vermont less competitive with our neighbors.” However, these claims overlook a critical fact: Act 18 is not actually being implemented.

In contrast, AFP has issued a strong statement in support of President Trump’s economic agenda, which includes imposing tariffs on key trading partners and our Canadian neighbors to the north. These tariffs are poised to raise energy costs for Vermonters, thereby increasing the cost of living, making home heating more expensive
Energy policy → 14

SOS for the USPS

Dear Editor,

Donald Trump wants to merge the U.S. Postal Service with the Dept. of Commerce. This action will get him one step closer to privatization of the postal service, which could lead to the erosion of universal service, increased costs, and potentially harm vulnerable populations who rely on the post office for essential deliveries like mail-in ballots and prescriptions.

The National Asso. of Letter Carriers is holding nationwide rallies on March 23. 204 Main St., Brattleboro, at 3 p.m. is Vermont’s location.

“Local rallies nationwide will bring together NALC members and the public to show their support for letter carriers, all postal employees, and the Postal Service,” NALC President Brian L. Renfroe said. “At a crucial time, this is an opportunity to educate our customers about everything at stake if the Postal Service is privatized or restructured... We need everyone’s help in our fight like hell against these attacks.

More information can be found at NALC.org.

Susan Henderson (retired letter carrier), Grand Isle

Thoughts on education reform

Dear Editor,

A considerable amount of attention and work this legislative session has been devoted to Vermont’s preK-12 public education system and its funding. This is important work as 30% of state spending is devoted to our most precious resource, 83,000 children.

Vermonters understand how meaningful these conversations are. Education is critical to our communities and a pillar of democracy. Schools serve as important community hubs essential for economic and workforce development, attracting families, and fostering individual and societal success.

Taxpayers are important, too; their voices in November were heard loud and clear.

In short, Vermonters want change. Here are a few thoughts on how change could be structured so that all Vermont children receive an excellent education that taxpayers can afford.

Vermont should transition to a foundation funding formula that is more transparent and understandable than
Ed reform → 14

CAPITOL QUOTES

Avalanche: Democrats on government funding fight

The Republican-controlled House of Representatives government funding bill contained massive cuts to essential programs while ensuring that the federal dismantling efforts of President Trump and Elon Musk would continue unchecked. A potential showdown and government shutdown in the senate was averted when Minority Leader Chuck Schumer and nine other Democrats voted in favor of the continuing resolution (CR). Reaction amongst lawmakers was notable.

“While the government will remain open, we are frustrated that this funding bill gives a blank check to Donald Trump and Elon Musk to continue attacking the federal workforce and dismantling the services Virginians rely on. This bill lacks the meaningful proposals we offered as amendments to rein in and defund DOGE and protect our veterans from being indiscriminately fired — because Republicans blocked them all,”

said Virginia Sens. **Tim Kaine** and **Mark Warner**.

“When Donald Trump wakes up in the morning and says, ‘You’re doing the right things, Senate Democrats’ — we don’t feel that is the right place to be,”

said No. 3 House Democrat Representative **Pete Aguilar**.

“In order to pass this bill the Republicans needed 60 votes — which meant they had to have seven votes from Democrats — and they got them. Actually they got 10. That is sad and a real failure on the part of Democratic leadership. NOBODY in the Senate should have voted for this dangerous bill,”

said Vermont Senator **Bernie Sanders**.

“There are members of Congress who have won Trump-held districts in some of the most difficult territory in the United States who walked the plank and took innumerable risks in order to defend the American people, in order to defend Social Security, Medicaid and Medicare. Just to see Senate Democrats even consider acquiescing Elon Musk — I think it is a huge slap in the face,”

said Democrat Representative **Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez**.

COMMENTARY

The Brazilian railroad and Vermont’s housing crisis

Chip and Dan Heath, in their book “Switch,” tell the story of a young MBA who ran a chunk of the Brazilian railroad after it was privatized and broken into pieces. The newly minted railroad CEO ended up with a share that included steam locomotives and infrastructure in dire need of repair and maintenance, with 20% of its bridges in danger of collapse.

Against all odds, Alexandre Behring took charge and began scripting the critical moves, not all the moves, just the critical moves. He implemented four rules with a focused commitment to the destination: financial solvency and operational efficiency.

The rules that he implemented were:

1. Money would be invested only in projects that would earn more revenue in the short term.
2. The best solution to any problem was the one that would cost the least money upfront—even if it ended up costing more in the long term, and even if it was a lower-quality solution.
3. Options that would fix a problem quickly were preferred to slower options that would provide superior long-term fixes.
4. Reusing or recycling existing mate-

rials was better than acquiring new materials.

The four rules were clear: Unblock revenue, minimize up-front cash, faster is better than best, use what you’ve got.

These rules, taken together, ensured that the focus would be on the critical moves that would result in rapid change and progress.

What would it look like if the State of Vermont scripted the critical moves in the current housing crisis and focused on a commitment to a destination, in this case, housing for all?

If the destination was every single Vermonter housed in a safe and healthy home, what would the rules look like?

Short-term focus:

Invest in solutions that house people today. Investing in hotels and shelters simply postpones the inevitable. Focus on housing people today—no more meetings to prepare for the intake meeting to evaluate sustainability at another meeting to look for housing at another meeting. Compile a registry of vacant units and fill them. Convert the abundant number of housing navigators to housing supporters and assign them to newly minted tenants to ensure a long-term successful tenancy. The State of Vermont has at least two departments

Housing crisis → 14



The Accidental Activist
By Stephen Box

← Sunshine week:

from page 12

personal privacy, state legislatures — including the Vermont General Assembly — shored up state laws to require the same. Today, government accountability and transparency are governed by the Vermont Public Records Act (1 V.S.A. §§ 315 - 320). Its importance cannot be overstated: access to authentic and reliable government records and information is a fundamental right.

Through the Vermont State Archives and Records Administration (VSARA), the Secretary of State’s office fulfills a relatively simple yet essential role in the Vermont Public Records Act. VSARA is charged with supporting the Vermont government in systematically managing its records and information “to provide ready access to vital information, to promote the efficient and economical operation of government, and to preserve their legal, administrative, and informational value.” (1 V.S.A. § 317a). The archives, records, and information professionals at VSARA rise to this challenge without fanfare.

The baseline VSARA sets for Vermont public agencies is compliance with all six parts of the Vermont Public Records Act — Policy, Access, Exemptions, Management, Procedure, and Enforcement — and with the specific laws and rules that govern each individual agency’s records and informa-

tion. This work is done in collaboration with managers, technologists, legal counsel, and other agency stakeholders. The outcomes are effective policies and procedures for managing and safeguarding Vermont records and information and publicly available documentation of what types of records and information are created or received by each public agency. Full transparency. Full accountability.

Why is this important? Full transparency and accountability of what records and information are created or received and the requirements relating to their management are critically important, especially for legal certainty of their authenticity, reliability, and trustworthiness. Government programs and services depend on them, and the public does. We, as a nation, stand to suffer profoundly if our nation’s “freedom of information,” “public records,” and “right to know” laws falter for any American.

The Secretary of State’s office is doing, and will continue to do, everything in its power to ensure that the public’s access to authentic, reliable, and trustworthy government records and information is neither disrupted nor prevented. This includes preserving Vermont’s rights to a transparent and open Federal government as well.

← Phone-free:

from page 12

on this issue: according to the National Conference of State Legislatures, at least 27 states have introduced bills to ban or limit cell phone use in schools. Eight states across the political spectrum including Florida, California, Louisiana and Minnesota have already enacted laws, underscoring the urgency of addressing this public health crisis.

In a guest editorial piece printed in this publication last week, March 12-18, social psychologist Jonathan Haidt made an eloquent case for action. Research clearly links cell phone use to the deterioration of students' mental health. Usage is linked to isolation, loneliness, depression, bullying, heightened sexualization, suicidal urges, and — not surprisingly — poor attention and performance in school. We know that developing brains should avoid substances that can harm them, like alcohol. Cell phone usage can actually change the way that young brains develop.

Many schools already have a “no phones in class” policy, but that doesn't solve the problem: students can get their phone “fix” every 45 minutes or so between classes (if indeed they are not cheating on the policy in class), and may spend much of class time anticipating that relief. Cell phone apps are designed to be addictive, to capture our attention for as long and

as intensely as possible — while collecting and monetizing that data as well.

At the handful of Vermont schools that have voluntarily adopted a “bell to bell” policy (the phone is handed in when you arrive and picked up when you leave), there was initial resistance and skepticism from students, staff and parents. That's understandable.

But just midway through their first year of going phone free, students at Thetford Academy made a video to log their reactions and thoughts. One after another, they describe with a sense of wonder how kids talk to each other now instead of having their faces buried in a phone.

The Legislature has identical bills, House Bill H.54 and Senate Bill S.21 which would provide all students with the benefits of phone-free schools. Either of these bills should pass easily, given the number of co-sponsors, the positive results where implemented, the minimal cost, the direct evidence and the science supporting the severity of the crisis at hand. The science is clear: time is short and our kids deserve this relief now, not next year or the year after.

Please, contact your legislators and ask them to help advance this crucial bill now.

Robin Chesnut-Tangerman, Middletown Springs

Editor's note: Chesnut-Tangerman is a former Vermont legislator.

← Energy policy:

from page 12

sive, and reducing Vermont's competitiveness — exactly the outcomes AFP warns against. This contradiction suggests that AFP's opposition to Act 18 may be less about protecting Vermonters and more about preventing regulatory oversight of the fossil fuel industry.

Governor Phil Scott has taken a measured approach by forming an interagency task force to assess the potential impacts of these federal tariffs. While this was a prudent first step a month ago, there has been limited

communication since then to Vermonters about how to prepare for the potential effects on their purchasing power and energy costs. Governor Scott could help inform Vermonters preparations by addressing the real impact President Trump's actions will have on groceries and energy costs. He has an effective model of crisis communication that he could redeploy and hold regular informational briefings on what is currently known.

Instead of focusing on procedural gim-

← Housing crisis:

from page 13

with a complete rental housing unit registry. VT Taxes and VT Public Health both maintain registries of rental housing, but they live in siloes and don't work with the departments that are focused on housing. If the crisis is housing, all departments are housing departments and should be housing people today.

Cost efficiency:

Invest in Tenants and Landlords: An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Housing supporters that support tenants and landlords with training, education, and guidance are the best strategies for ensuring that the tenant/landlord relationship is successful and long-term. Spend the money upfront to ensure successful tenancies and spend less at the back end on Legal Aid and eviction stalling/prevention.

Speed of implementation:

Invest in Process Design: It is imperative that the many departments and agencies within the State of Vermont get in sync with each other and work together to standardize and simplify the process of administering the many elements that make up the housing infrastructure. Today is the day to deliver. Anything that takes longer needs to be reviewed and evaluated in order to focus on a collective sense of urgency. Defending the status quo is defending mediocrity.

Resourcefulness:

Invest in Housing Solutions: Engage the “Housers” in Vermont and ask the simple questions. What would it take to get more housing units online, and what would it take to fill them with people who need housing? Housers aren't involved in the conversation as evidenced by the many commissions, advocacy groups, think tanks, and policy organizations that meet regularly to churn the data and gnash their teeth, trawling and asking “What are we gonna do?” How about engaging the Housers, collaborating, and getting creative about solutions?

Vermont is an amazing state filled with resourceful and resilient people, and we are positioned to either maintain the status quo or turn things around.

If we were to focus on the short-term, commit to cost-efficiency, act with a sense of urgency, and celebrate the bright spots of resourceful behavior, we could resolve the current housing crisis quickly, efficiently, and effectively.

For more information on strategies for resolving the current housing crisis, join Partners in Housing on the last Friday of every month at 1:30 p.m. This month's meeting will be held at the Rutland VFW.

Partners in Housing is a local housing committee that connects housers, wrappers, supporters, and the government in the process of getting more safe and healthy housing online, quickly and efficiently, with a commitment to financial responsibility and good stewardship.

micks and rallies to halt a state policy that is not advancing, the VTGOP could acknowledge the financial and emotional stress that the Trump tariffs, mass firings, and funding freezes are having on Vermonters, the likely impacts on the cost of groceries, heating and cooling their homes and driving their cars, and our Republican colleagues could speak up against those federal policies and against the agenda of Americans for Prosperity.

At the Town Meetings in

my district it was clear to me that Vermonters are worried about what is happening federally. It's time for all of our elected leaders to align our actions with the interests of Vermonters by acknowledging and confronting policies that are actually harming our state's economy and residents.

Rep. Laura Sibilila is an independent representing Dover, Jamaica, Somerset, Stratton and Wardsboro and the Ranking Member of the House Energy & Digital Infrastructure Committee

← Ed reform:

from page 12

our current Act 60 funding formula and closely connects a district's local spending decision to its local education property tax rate. Vermont's current income sensitivity program oddly benefits fewer than half of its 100,000 recipients, places an unnecessary administrative burden on the tax department, is impossible to explain to Vermonters, and disconnects the budget voting decision of some homeowners from their education tax rate. An income-dependent property value exemption targeted at 40,000 homeowners and paid for by non-property taxes would be a dramatic improvement and protect our most vulnerable taxpayers.

Funding reform is integral to how Vermont delivers education. Act 60 is a unique Vermont funding formula constructed 28 years ago when Vermont had 115,000 students and full schools; it is still unique; no other state has adopted a similar funding system. Funding is closely linked to how Vermont delivers public education. Act 60 gives districts equitable taxing capacity; it does not guarantee equitable education spending across Vermont.

Vermont will likely continue to move toward an education system composed of local elementary schools, central middle schools, regional high schools, and career & technical education centers. This shift has already begun in many areas of Vermont; in others, it is current practice, and in some, reform is necessary. Geography, bussing, school building infrastructure, and special education are factors that must be considered in this conversation, among others.

Further consolidation of school districts is being considered; much of Vermont has already moved beyond the governance model of one school district for every town. The Agency of Education's proposal is five school districts; the Senate is exploring nine. Presently, Vermont's largest school district is 4,000 students and smaller than what many experts believe

is necessary to efficiently deliver an education required by 21st-Century students.

Local control is important and will continue to be defined differently as school districts increasingly do not conform to municipal lines. We need to focus on children; they all deserve an excellent education no matter which town they live in.

Public tuition to public and independent schools continues to be a complicating factor when considering the consolidation of school districts. Districts with different operating/tuitioning structures cannot merge because of equal opportunity considerations. I believe that Vermont's use of public tuition for more than 150 years is indispensable in areas where it is used. It is possible that public tuition could be limited to schools considered critical to the delivery of public education. Sen. Bongartz's governance proposal addresses public tuition within governance reform.

Vermont needs to be more attractive to highly trained educators, especially in rural and less affluent areas. There is broad support for ensuring that educators in all areas of Vermont are fairly compensated. I am unconvinced that Vermont needs a statewide teacher contract, and instead support a salary floor. The employer share of school healthcare plans has become too expensive and unaffordable for school districts and taxpayers; costs are crowding out core education programs. Vermont needs to rethink how these plans are negotiated and paid for.

The Agency of Education under Secretary Saunders does not have the resources and staffing necessary to lead Vermont through a transformation process of this magnitude. Vermont's Legislature must make sure AoE is resourced so that Vermont gets this transformation right.

Please do not hesitate to reach out. I can be reached at sbeck@leg.state.vt.us.

Sen. Scott Beck, Caledonia District, Senate Minority Leader

WORDPLAY

REMOTE WORK WORD SEARCH

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally and backwards

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

ANNUALIZED
 ASYNCHRONOUS
 CLOUD
 COMMUNICATION

COWORKING
 DIGITAL
 FLEX TIME
 FREELANCE

FULLY
 GIG ECONOMY
 GLOBAL
 HOURS

HYBRID
 LOCATION
 MESSAGE
 OFFSHORING

REMOTE
 SOFTWARE
 SOLOPRENEUR
 TEAM

TELECOMMUTE
 VPN
 WORKLOAD
 WORKPLACE

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Solutions → 30

CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Take heed
- 5. One's superior
- 9. Prepped meat
- 11. Tighten anew
- 13. Type of textile fiber
- 15. Animalistic
- 16. When you hope to get somewhere
- 17. Offender
- 19. Former NYC mayor Ed
- 21. Type of cryptocurrency
- 22. Mauna ____, Hawaiian volcano
- 23. Herring-like fish
- 25. Popular PBS program
- 26. Congressman (abbr.)
- 27. Flightless Australian birds
- 29. Defrosted
- 31. Prior Yankee sensation Kevin
- 33. Nasal mucus
- 34. Some are southern
- 36. A place to construct
- 38. Popular beer brand
- 39. Shouts of farewell
- 41. Network of nerves
- 43. Make a

- mistake
- 44. Showed old movie
- 46. Body parts
- 48. A divisor
- 52. Congressional investigatory body
- 53. Papers
- 54. Most unnatural
- 56. Judge the worth of something
- 57. Makes sounds while sleeping
- 58. Which
- 59. Hungarian Violinist

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Pages
- 2. Head pain
- 3. A loud utterance
- 4. Large brown seaweed
- 5. Hulu's chef Carmine
- 6. Greek mountain
- 7. Made final
- 8. Bar
- 9. Tai subgroup
- 10. What you eat again
- 11. Teaches
- 12. Small constellation
- 14. Type of berry
- 15. Cows fat-

	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			

- tened for meat
- 18. A way to hoof it
- 20. Exaggerated a role
- 24. About two
- 26. Long upholstered seat
- 28. What employees earn
- 30. Fiber from a coconut husk
- 32. Digits
- 34. Polish by rubbing
- 35. Liquid body substances
- 37. Furniture with open shelves
- 38. Edible part of a chicken
- 40. Satisfy
- 42. Tool used to remove
- 43. Icelandic poems
- 45. Swiss village
- 47. Drunks
- 49. Evergreen plant genus
- 50. Light precipitation
- 51. Ribosomal ribonucleic acid
- 55. An informal debt instrument

**GET
PUBLISHED**

email us: editor@mountaintimes.info

GUESS WHO?

I am an actress born in Louisiana on March 22, 1976. I was a fashion model at age seven. I had a breakout role as a party girl who sets her sights on Harvard Law School. I won several awards for playing a country star with an equally famous husband.

Answer: Reese Witherspoon

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.

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

Level: Intermediate

WED
3/19

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.

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

Cribbage for Adults

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

Bone Builders at the Chaffee

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

BIPOC Home & Business Ownership Virtual Gathering

4:30-6:30 p.m. Online. Free. Join a virtual discussion on supporting BIPOC community members in securing housing, starting businesses, and building a sense of belonging in the Upper Valley. A new resource guide will be unveiled, and key topics from the October gathering will be addressed, including financial access, zoning, and community outreach. Open to all. Register at vitalcommunities.org/events/bhbo-virtual-gathering.

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.

BENEFIT CONCERT FOR KRISTIAN PEDERSEN

SAT. @ 4 P.M.



Figure Drawing with Live Model

5-7 p.m. Chaffee Art Center, 16 So. Main St., Rutland. \$20 per class or \$60 for four weeks. A guided figure drawing session with a live model; participants must bring their own supplies. Minimum of four students required. chaffeeartcenter.org.

Book Group: 'Inner Excellence'

5:30-6:30 p.m. Chaffee Art Center, 16 So. Main St., Rutland. Free. A discussion on "Inner Excellence" by Jim Murphy. Held on the third Wednesday of each month in partnership with Phoenix Books, where members receive 20% off the monthly book. RSVP required. chaffeeartcenter.org.

Silent Book Club

5:30-8 p.m. Speakeasy Café, 31 Center St., Rutland. Free. A book club with no assigned reading—bring a book, grab a drink, and enjoy two hours of uninterrupted reading. Phoenix Books will have a pop-up shop with books available for purchase. phoenixbooks.biz.

Oil Painting: Alla Prima Technique

6-8 p.m. Chaffee Art Center, 16 So. Main St., Rutland. \$35. Instructor Spencer Pelkey teaches the Alla Prima oil painting technique, applying wet paint to wet paint in one sitting. All supplies included. Minimum of five and maximum of 12 participants. chaffeeartcenter.org.

Watercolor Wednesdays

6-7:30 p.m. Kaleidoscope Art Supply, 37 Center St., Rutland. \$25. Join artist Caitlin for a relaxed watercolor workshop. Materials provided. Attend multiple sessions in March for a gift certificate bonus. kaleidoscopeartsupply.square.site.

Acoustic Jam Session

6-8 p.m. (Thursdays through May 21) Artistree, 2095 Pomfret Road, South Pomfret. Free. A group jam session where participants take turns choosing songs and keys, with all acoustic instruments welcome. Led by musician Kerry Rosenthal. Not an open mic—focused on group participation. artistreevt.org.

Beginner & Intermediate Line Dancing Lessons

6-8:30 p.m. Springfield Vermont Recreation Center, 139 Main St., Springfield. \$15 beginner, \$10 intermediate (\$5 if attending beginner). Learn line dancing with beginner lessons from 6-7:30 p.m., followed by improver/intermediate lessons from 7:30-8:30 p.m. Outside food and non-alcoholic beverages permitted. Wednesdays through May 21, except April 23. copperheadlinedancing.com.

Film Screening: 'I'm Still Here'

7:30 p.m. Playhouse Movie Theatre, 139 Main St., Randolph. \$7-\$10. This Oscar-winning international feature follows a mother's struggle to rebuild her life amid political turmoil in 1971 Brazil. Rated PG-13. playhousemovietheater.com.

THURS
3/20

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.

Communication Skills Class

10-11:30 a.m. (Thursdays through April 24), Bugbee Senior Center, 262 No. Main St., White River Jct. Learn how to improve communication, reduce stress, and build healthier relationships. This course is led by Jeanne Childs. Sign-up required before the first session. 802-295-9068 or email hello@bugbeecenter.org.

Chaffee: Artery

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

Ukelele Group

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

Play Bridge!

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

Green Drinks: Farm & Wilderness Conservation

5:30-6:30 p.m. Virtual event. Free. A discussion with Farm & Wilderness Conservation about their stewardship of over 5,000 acres, upcoming projects, and connections between summer camps and conservation. Opportunities for seasonal jobs, volunteering, and community involvement will also be shared. sustainablewoodstock.org.

Fly Tying for Charity

5:30-7 p.m. Woodstock Nordic Center, 76 South St., Woodstock. Free. Join the Greater Upper Valley Trout Unlimited and Orvis Endorsed fly-fishing guides for an evening of fly-tying and socializing. Materials and tools provided, but participants are welcome to bring their own. Flies tied during the event will be donated to local charities. Drinks available for purchase. tu.org.

MUD DANCE: At Home in the Stream

6 p.m. Artistree, 2095 Pomfret Road, South Pomfret. Free. Artist Judith Taylor shares stories, images, and music reflecting on her post-flood exploration along the Ottauquechee River, using found artifacts to create figures that witness the landscape's transformation. artistreevt.org.

Pour Painting Workshop

6-8 p.m. Chaffee Art Center, 16 So. Main St., Rutland. \$40. Instructor Lorrie Amerio Maniery teaches the pour painting technique, guiding participants to create a finished piece. All supplies included. Minimum of five and maximum of 12 participants. chaffeeartcenter.org.

International Film Festival Screening: 'Parasite'

7-9 a.m. Herrick Auditorium, Vermont State University, Castleton, 233 South St., Castleton. Free. A screening of Bong Joon Ho's Academy Award-winning film "Parasite," exploring themes of class struggle and societal divide. Hosted by the Communications and Soundings Departments. vsc.edu.

Film Screening: 'I'm Still Here'

7:30 p.m. Playhouse Movie Theatre, 139 Main St., Randolph. \$7-\$10. This Oscar-winning international feature follows a mother's struggle to rebuild her life amid political turmoil in 1971 Brazil. Rated PG-13. playhousemovietheater.com.

FRI
3/21

Senior Café

10-11 a.m. Hartland Public Library, 153 US-5, Hartland. Free. Monthly gathering on the first Friday for unprogrammed social time with refreshments. Technical support appointments available by request. Transportation assistance may be arranged through Volunteers in Action. admin@aginginhartland.org or via@mahhc.org.

Bone Builders

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

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.

Eugenics in America: Its History, Influence, and Modern Echoes

1:30-3 p.m. Godnick Center, 1 Deer St., Rutland. \$8. Dr. Jonathan Spiro, former Castleton University president and author of "Defending the Master Race," examines the impact of the American eugenics movement, its influence on policies and Nazi ideology, and its modern resurgence. Part of the Spring Rutland OLLI series. learn.uvm.edu/olli/rutland.

Winter Bingo Fundraiser

5:30 p.m. Withey Hall, 1 Brennan Circle, Poultney. \$15 for 12 games, \$30 per family (up to 3 players), \$10 per additional player. Green Mountain Community School hosts its annual bingo night featuring themed basket prizes, Bhakta spirits, a 50/50 raffle, and a cash bar. Proceeds benefit the GMCS Scholarship Fund. greenmountaincommunityschool.org.

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

West Coast Swing Dance Classes

5:30-6:30 p.m. West Rutland Town Hall (upstairs), 35 Marble St., West Rutland. \$15 per class, \$10 for students, \$12 for RRMC employees and family. Learn West Coast Swing with flexible registration options for individual nights or the full series. Pre-registration required. vtwestiebest@gmail.com.

The Sharon Academy Middle School Circus

6 p.m. carnival, 7 p.m. circus. The Sharon Academy High School, 6704 VT-14, Sharon. \$10 per family, \$3 per individual. A student-led circus showcasing juggling, stilt walking, clowning, and more after two weeks of training with performer Troy Wunderle. Parking available at the Middle School with a shuttle to the High School. sharonacademy.org/2025/03/12/ms-carnival-circus-2025.

Film Screening: 'Snow White' (PG)

7-9 p.m. Woodstock Town Hall Theater, 31 The Green #2, Woodstock. \$8-\$12. Disney's live-action remake of the 1937 classic comes to the big screen. pentanglearts.org.

Film Screening: 'Mickey 17'

7:30 p.m. Playhouse Movie Theatre, 139 Main St., Randolph. \$7-\$10. A sci-fi thriller about a disposable employee sent to colonize an ice world, only to be regenerated after each death with most memories intact. Rated R. playhousemovietheater.com.

SAT
3/22

Poultney MapleFest

8 a.m.-6:30 p.m. Various locations, Poultney. Free. A full day of maple-themed events, including a pancake breakfast, tree tapping, horse-drawn wagon rides, kids' activities, and a community ham dinner. Explore local sugarhouses, enjoy historical tours, and take part in the Happy Hour Syrup Slam. poultneydowntown.com/maplefest.

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.

Smokey House Center Maple Open House

10 a.m.-2 p.m. Smokey House Center, 426 Danby Mountain Road, Danby. Free. Explore Vermont's sugaring season with sugarhouse tours, maple syrup tastings, hands-on demonstrations, and a maple-themed scavenger hunt. Learn about the Climate Adaptive Maple Program and enjoy maple-sweetened coffee and kettle corn. smokeyhouse.org.

Maple Open House at Baird Farm

10 a.m.-4 p.m. Baird Farm, 65 West Road, North Chittenden. Free. Enjoy sugarhouse and sugarbush tours, maple tastings, and free rosemary waffles. Tree tapping demonstrations at 1 p.m. Saturday features maple beer from Red Clover Ale Co. and maple sugar s'mores by Come Alive Outside. Boiling dependent on weather. bairdfarm.com.

Sisters Weekend Marketplace: March Madness

10 a.m.-4 p.m. Sisters Weekend Marketplace, 82 Main St., Windsor. Free. A seasonal shopping event featuring fresh linens, bright tableware, unique furniture, candles, and whimsical décor to welcome spring. sistersweekendmarketplace@gmail.com.

Sink or Skim Pond Skim

11 a.m. Mount Snow, 39 Mount Snow Road, West Dover. Free. Test your skills skimming across a 100-foot pond for a chance to win top prizes. Registration opens at 9 a.m. at the Cape House and is limited to the first 75 competitors on a first-come, first-served basis. mountsnow.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/.

Pour Painting Workshop

11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Chaffee Art Center, 16 So. Main St., Rutland. \$30. Instructor Lorrie Amerio Manieri guides participants in the pour painting technique, with all supplies included. Minimum of five and maximum of 12 participants. chaffeeartcenter.org.

Path to the Peak - Uphill Program

Noon. Pico Mountain, Killington. Free. A guided uphill travel workshop for intermediate and advanced explorers led by Mammut and Base Camp Ski Shop experts. Participants will learn essential gear selection, skinning techniques, layering strategies, and endurance nutrition. The session includes avalanche safety insights from AMGA guide Paul Rachele and concludes with a tour to Pico Peak's summit. A valid Killington/Pico Uphill Travel Pass is required. Registration limited to 20 participants. killington.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.

The Sharon Academy Middle School Circus

3 p.m. carnival, 4 p.m. circus. The Sharon Academy High School, 6704 VT-14, Sharon. \$10 per family, \$3 per individual. A student-led circus showcasing juggling, stilt walking, clowning, and more after two weeks of training with performer Troy Wunderle. Parking available at the Middle School with a shuttle to the High School. sharonacademy.org/2025/03/12/ms-carnival-circus-2025.

Amphibian Adventure

3-4 p.m. Vermont Institute of Natural Science (VINS), 149 Natures Way, Quechee. Free. Discover the wonders of amphibians with a VINS educator through interactive games and activities. Learn how to assist migrating salamanders safely across roads and join the on-call Salamander Bucket Brigade on the first rainy evening at 7 p.m. to support their spring migration. vinsweb.org.

Benefit Concert for Kristian Pedersen

4 p.m. Southern Vermont Arts Center, 860 Southern Vermont Arts Center Dr., Manchester. Donations encouraged. A community concert featuring Luminous Crush, Mike Farkas, The Buzzards, Andris Berry with Clarke Comollo, Ken Mades and the Stevie Ray Project, River Mountain Valley Boys, Breanna Elaine, and Kristian Montgomery and the Winterkill Band to support musician Kristian Pedersen and his family after a devastating fire. facebook.com/share/1FMZs1KRrG.

Okemo Snowshoe Walk with Joe Karl

6-7:30 p.m. Ice House, Jackson Gore Road, Ludlow. Free. Join Joe Karl for a guided snowshoe walk exploring Vermont history and nature. Bring your snowshoes and headlamp. Open to the first 30 participants, with a possible second trip based on availability. Hot cocoa provided by William Raveis Vermont Properties. okemo.com.

Film Screening: 'Snow White' (PG)

7-9 p.m. Woodstock Town Hall Theater, 31 The Green #2, Woodstock. \$8-\$12. Disney's live-action remake of the 1937 classic comes to the big screen. pentanglearts.org.

Film Screening: 'Mickey 17'

7:30 p.m. Playhouse Movie Theatre, 139 Main St., Randolph. \$7-\$10. A sci-fi thriller about a disposable employee sent to colonize an ice world, only to be regenerated after each death with most memories intact. Rated R. playhousemovietheater.com.

SUN
3/23

Duct Tape Derby

10 a.m. Mount Snow, 39 Mount Snow Rd., West Dover. Free. Build a sled using only cardboard, duct tape, zip ties, and paint, then race down the tubing hill for bragging rights. mountsnow.com.

Sisters Weekend Marketplace: March Madness

10 a.m.-2 p.m. Sisters Weekend Marketplace, 82 Main St., Windsor. Free. A seasonal shopping event featuring fresh linens, bright tableware, unique furniture, candles, and whimsical décor to welcome spring. sistersweekendmarketplace@gmail.com.

Winter Fairy Hunts at VINS

10 a.m.-2 p.m. Vermont Institute of Natural Sciences (VINS), 149 Natures Way, Quechee. Included with general admission. Join the fairy court for a magical scavenger hunt in the forest, searching for hidden fairy friends while learning about nature. After the hunt, build your own fairy house in fairy town using natural materials. Wings encouraged! Recommended for ages 4 and up. vinsweb.org.

Maple Open House at Baird Farm

10 a.m.-4 p.m. Baird Farm, 65 West Road, North Chittenden. Free. Enjoy sugarhouse and sugarbush tours, maple tastings, and free rosemary waffles. Tree tapping demonstrations at 1 p.m. Boiling dependent on weather. bairdfarm.com.

Behind Our Masks Workshop

1-3 p.m. Kaleidoscope Art Supply, 37 Center St., Upstairs, Rutland. \$35. A guided workshop exploring grief and self-acceptance through creative expression. Participants will reflect on the contrast between their outward selves and inner emotions. All supplies included. Ages 18+. kaleidoscopeartsupply.com.



WINTER FAIRY HUNTS AT VINS

SUN. | 10 A.M. - 2P.M.

Film Screening: 'Mickey 17'

2 p.m. Playhouse Movie Theatre, 139 Main St., Randolph. \$7-\$10. A sci-fi thriller about a disposable employee sent to colonize an ice world, only to be regenerated after each death with most memories intact. Rated R. playhousemovietheater.com.

Film Screening: 'Snow White' (PG)

3-5 p.m. Woodstock Town Hall Theater, 31 The Green #2, Woodstock. \$8-\$12. Disney's live-action remake of the 1937 classic comes to the big screen. This screening will host a costume raffle. pentanglearts.org.

Auditions: 'The Sound of Music'

4-7 p.m. First Universalist Church & Society of Barnard, 6211 VT-12, Barnard. BarnArts is holding auditions for "The Sound of Music," with over 20 named roles and an ensemble. All ages, genders, and experience levels welcome. Rehearsals begin in late April. Production runs June 20-29 outdoors in Barnard/Woodstock. Audition by appointment if needed. Fill out the audition form at forms.gle/jba2HEoaHaYGYJXm6. barnarts.org/sound-of-music/.

MON
3/24

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. This week's film is the Academy Award nominated movie, "A Real Pain." sherburnelibrary.org/movie-monday or 802-422-9765.

Biz Buzz Soiree with VT Womenpreneurs

5:30 p.m. The MINT, 112 Quality Ln., Rutland. \$15. A networking event bringing together entrepreneurs and professionals in a unique makerspace setting. Limited tickets available. vtwomenpreneurs.com/convене/biz-buzz-rutland-soiree.

Auditions: 'The Sound of Music'

7-9 p.m. First Universalist Church & Society of Barnard, 6211 VT-12, Barnard. BarnArts is holding auditions for "The Sound of Music," with over 20 named roles and an ensemble. All ages, genders, and experience levels welcome. Rehearsals begin in late April. Production runs June 20-29 outdoors in Barnard/Woodstock. Audition by appointment if needed. Fill out the audition form at forms.gle/jba2HEoaHaYGYJXm6. barnarts.org/sound-of-music/.

← Calendar:
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MET OPERA: 'FIDELIO'

TUES. @ 1 P.M.



TUES
3/25

Met Opera: 'Fidelio'

1 p.m. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St., Rutland. \$20. Beethoven's "Fidelio," featuring Norwegian soprano Lise Davidsen as Leonore, screens as part of the Met Opera Encore Series. Susanna Malkki conducts this powerful tale of love and heroism. paramountvt.org.

Handcraft Gathering

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

Alzheimer's Support Group

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

Line Dance Classes

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

West Coast Swing Dance Classes

5:30-6:30 p.m. West Rutland Town Hall (upstairs), 35 Marble St., West Rutland. \$15 per class, \$10 for students, \$12 for RRMC employees and family. Learn West Coast Swing with flexible registration options for individual nights or the full series. Pre-registration required. vtwestiebest@gmail.com.

Rutland Area Toastmasters

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

A Journey with Jessica Johnson

6:30 p.m. Phoenix Books, 2 Center St., Rutland. Free. Vermont author Jessica Johnson discusses her new book, "A Thousand Miles to Rome: Joy, Sorrow, Triumph and Everything In Between on The Via Francigena." The memoir follows her solo pilgrimage from England to Italy, later joined by her Labrador Retriever, Drogon, as she navigates setbacks and personal triumphs. A book signing will follow the discussion. phoenixbooks.biz.

ONGOING

Reggaeifest

March 22-23. Mount Snow, 39 Mount Snow Road, West Dover. Free (Snow Barn shows ticketed, 21+). A weekend of live reggae music, plus the Sink or Skim pond skim on Saturday and the Duct Tape Derby on Sunday. Performers include SunDub, Duppy Conquerors, Roots of Creation, Grateful Dub, and Hannah's Field ft. Sky Alan. mountsnow.com.

2025 Annual Student

Exhibit: An Artful Adventure

Through April 4. Chaffee Art Center, 16 S. Main St., Rutland. Free. Opening day event on March 8. Celebrate young artists from Vermont schools and homeschoolers as their work is displayed in a professional gallery setting. Featuring a variety of artistic disciplines, including visual arts, theater, culinary, poetry, and music. chaffeeartcenter.org.

Call for Art: 2025 Artist Member

Show

Submission deadline: April 1. Stone Valley Arts invites artists to submit up to five works in any genre, including painting, photography, sculpture, mixed media, and jewelry. Accepted artists will be notified by April 6. Artwork drop-off: April 12-13, 12-4 p.m., or by appointment. The exhibition runs April 26-June 8. At least one piece must be for sale. Submit at tinyurl.com/SVA25. Membership required; renew at tinyurl.com/SVA26. stonevalleyartscenter@gmail.com

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.

Fierce Females Pop-Up Exhibit

Through April 5. Artistree Community Arts Center, 2095 Pomfret Road, South Pomfret. Free. Celebrate Women's History Month with Fierce Females by Finnie Trimpf, a collection of 61 portraits honoring inspiring stories and collective strength. artistreevt.org.

Lifeguard Certification Course

March 21-23. Upper Valley Aquatic Center, 100 Arboretum Ln., White River Junction. \$370. A blended learning course with online and in-person training. Participants must complete a 9-hour online course before attending all in-person sessions: Friday 4-7:30 p.m., Saturday 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m., and Sunday 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Must be 15 or older and meet swimming prerequisites. Registration required at uvac.captyn.com. uvacswim.org.

MUD (Season) Exhibit

Through April 19. Artistree Community Arts Center, 2095 Pomfret Road, South Pomfret. Free. Celebrate the arrival of spring with Artistree's annual MUD (Season) Exhibit, showcasing 2-D and 3-D works from 60+ local artists inspired by Vermont's seasonal transition. artistreevt.org.

'Waitress'

Through April 13. Barrette Center for the Arts, 74 Gates St., White River Junction. \$27-\$97. This Broadway hit, featuring music by Sara Bareilles, follows Jenna, a pie-making waitress who finds the courage to change her life after an unexpected pregnancy. Directed by Carol Dunne. northernstage.org.

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

Folk and Roots Concert

March 26 at 6:30 p.m. Chaffee Art Center, 16 So. Main St., Rutland. \$10 adults, \$5 seniors/students. A benefit concert for the West Rutland School Music Department featuring Westside Roots Band with Phil Henry and Mitch Barron. chaffeeartcenter.org.

Noam Pikelnny and Friends

March 28 at 7:30 p.m. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St., Rutland. \$35.75-\$51.80. Renowned banjoist Noam Pikelnny, a founding member of Punch Brothers and Grammy-winning musician, brings his masterful bluegrass sound to the stage. paramountvt.org.

38th Annual Vermont State Scholastic Chess Championships

March 29 from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Lamoille Union High School, 736 VT-15, Hyde Park. Vermont's official selection tournament for national chess invitationals, open to K-12 students who are Vermont residents or enrolled in Vermont schools. Chessboards, pieces, and clocks provided. Pre-registration required by March 23; no walk-ins allowed. vermontchess.org.

Cedar Mountain Farm Summer Camp

June 23-27, 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Cedar Mountain Farm, 225 Pavillion Road, Hartland. \$350. A hands-on farm experience for ages 8-12, featuring livestock care, gardening, and activities like tie-dyeing, flower pressing, and making butter and ice cream. Registration closes March 28. cedarmountainfarm.org.

NOAM PIKELNY AND FRIENDS

MARCH 28 @ 7:30 P.M.



[MUSIC Scene]

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

WED 3/19

KILLINGTON

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Rhys Chalmers

6 p.m. Killington Cafe & Wine Bar – Open Mic hosted by Liz Reedy

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

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 hosted by Kerry Rosenthal

THUR 3/20

BOMOSEEN

6:30 p.m. Lake Bomoseen Lodge & Taproom - Trivia Night

BRANDON

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

BRIDGEWATER

CORNERS

8 p.m. Woolen Mill Comedy Club – Comedy Show with Texas' Best Comics

KILLINGTON

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Chris Pallutto

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

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

6 p.m. North Star Lodge Star Lounge – Nick Bredice

6 p.m. Rivershed – Jeremiah Strauss
6 p.m. The Foundry – Liz Reedy

7 p.m. Killington Cafe & Wine Bar – Trivia with Sunset Entertainment

7 p.m. Pickle Barrel – Yam Yam

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

LONDONDERRY

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

LUDLOW

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

7 p.m. Off the Rails – Sammy B

POMFRET

6 p.m. Rumney Barn – Duo Lakou

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. Center Street Alley – Karaoke 101 hosted by Tenacious T

WOODSTOCK

6:30 p.m. Ottauquechee Yacht Club – Jim Yeager

FRI 3/21

BOMOSEEN

5:30 p.m. Lake Bomoseen Lodge & Taproom – Breanna Elaine

CASTLETON

6 p.m. Blue Cat Bistro – Rebecca Padula

KILLINGTON

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

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Daniel Brown and Nick Bredice

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

4 p.m. The Foundry – Just Jamie

6 p.m. Killington Cafe & Wine Bar – Rick Webb

6 p.m. Rivershed – Nolan Driscoll & Steve Capachione

7 p.m. Casey's Caboose - Tboneicus Jones

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

7:30 p.m. The Foundry – Carl Anton

8 p.m. Pickle Barrel – Gridley Paige

9 p.m. Jax Food & Games – Just Jamie

LUDLOW

8:30 p.m. Off the Rails – Aaron Audet Band

QUECHEE

5 p.m. Harry's Cocktail Lounge - Live Music with The Preacher and The Teacher

5:30 p.m. Public House Pub – Bow Thayer & Krishna Guthrie

POULTNEY

6 p.m. Poultney Pub – George Nostrand

RANDOLPH

7:30 p.m. The Underground Listening Room - Carton with Featured Friends and The Way North

RUTLAND

5 p.m. Moose Lodge – Liz Reedy

6 p.m. Stonehedge Indoor Golf – Duane Carleton

SAT 3/22

BOMOSEEN

5:30 p.m. Lake Bomoseen Lodge & Taproom – Bob Recupero

BRIDGEWATER

3 p.m. Long Trail Brewery – Singo

8 p.m. Woolen Mill Comedy Club – Comedy Show with Headliner Gus Tate

KILLINGTON

1 p.m. Bear Mountain Base Lodge – Chris Pallutto

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Duane Carleton

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

2 p.m. Skyeship Base Lodge – Rick Webb

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

3 p.m. Still on the Mountain (Outdoor Patio) – Apres Ski with DJ David Chief

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

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

6 p.m. Preston's at the Grand Hotel – Liz Reedy

6 p.m. Rivershed – Nolan Driscoll & Steve Capachione

6:30 p.m. Still on the Mountain – Adam & Allie

7 p.m. Vermont Craft – Nick Bredice

7 p.m. North Star Lodge Star Lounge – All Request Dance Party with DJ Dave

7 p.m. The Foundry – Jenny Porter

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

9 p.m. Pickle Barrel – Gridley Paige

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 Sammy B

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

PITTSFORD

8 p.m. Hilltop Tavern – 90's Country Party with Sunset Entertainment

POULTNEY

4 p.m. Poultney Pub – Syrup Story Slam

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

QUECHEE

5:30 p.m. Public House Pub – Bobby Sheehan

6 p.m. Harry's Cocktail Lounge - Live Music with Ali T

RUTLAND

5:30 p.m. Moose Lodge – Ryan Fuller

STOCKBRIDGE

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

WOODSTOCK

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

SUN 3/23

BRIDGEWATER

CORNERS

3 p.m. Long Trail Brewery – Meet the Artist Night featuring Natasha Bogar with music by Nick Bredice

KILLINGTON

Noon. Rivershed – Brunch with Nolan Driscoll & Steve Capachione

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

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Chris Pallutto

6 p.m. Liquid Art – Tboneicus Jones

6 p.m. Rivershed – Trivia

6 p.m. Still on the Mountain – Open Mic Night hosted by Liz Reedy

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

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

LUDLOW

11 a.m. Okemo's Solitude 43 North Restaurant – Sunday's with Sammy B

QUECHEE

2 p.m. Harry's Cocktail Lounge - Live Music with Jim Yeager

STOCKBRIDGE

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

MON 3/24

KILLINGTON

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Duane Carleton

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

5 p.m. Sushi Yoshi – Tboneicus Jones

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

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 – Sammy B

TUES 3/25

KILLINGTON

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Liz Reedy and Nick Bredice

6 p.m. Rivershed – Sammy B

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

POULTNEY

6 p.m. Poultney Pub – Bluegrass Jam

RUTLAND

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



March 19, 2025 - Celebrating National Certified Nurses Day

**Educated,
Skilled,
and Certified.**



Rutland Regional Medical Center recognizes and honors the unique contributions of our Board Certified nurses on Certified Nurses Day. Certified Nurses Day is an annual worldwide event dedicated to celebrating certification as a means to ensure high standards of patient care and promote continuing excellence in the nursing profession. In alignment with the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) Magnet Recognition Program®, Rutland Regional nurses continue to demonstrate their professionalism, leadership, and commitment to excellent patient care.

CHIEF NURSING OFFICER

Kelly Watson, DNP, MHA, FACHE

AMBULATORY CARE UNIT

Coral Hawley, BSN, RN, CAPA, CPAN
Kristen Jackson, BSN, RN, CAPA, CPAN
Katie Mason, BSN, RN, CNOR
Penelope Strauss, PhD, RN, CPAN
Alyssa Williams, BSN, RN, PCCN

ANESTHESIA

David Blair, MSN, APRN, CRNA
Shawn Bowdoin, MSN, APRN, CRNA
Johnna Grabusky, MSN, APRN, CRNA
Sarah Hewitt, MSN, APRN, CRNA
Donald Johnson, MSN, APRN, CRNA
Mary-Agnes Knoles, MSN, APRN, CRNA
Claudette Maloney, MSN, APRN, CRNA
Kathleen Sloop, MSN, APRN, CRNA
Cathy Sommer, MSN, APRN, CRNA
Kelly St. Cyr, MSN, APRN, CRNA

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Cindy Baumann, BSN, RN, CCM
Kathleen Boyd, MSN, RN, NE-BC, CCM, RN-BC
Frederick Garrow, MSN, RN, NE-BC, RN-BC
Samantha Helinski, MSN, RN, CWOCN, CCCTM
Patricia Shaw, MSA, BSN, RN, RN-BC
Mary Frances Skaza, BSN, RN, CCM
Jill Smith, BSN, RN, CCM
Yulia Smith, MSN, RN, RN-BC
Sara Trepanier, BSN, RN, CCM
Jennifer Wasilauskas, DNP, RN, CNOR, ONC
Suzanne Woodbury, BSN, RN, CCM, ONC

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Suzanne Sabatato, MSN, RN, RN-BC

CODING

Tracie Harris, MSN, RN, CCM

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Flavia Porch, BSN, RN, CEN

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Concepcion Flanders, RN, RN-BC
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Heather McRae, MSN-Ed, RN, PCCN, MedSurg-BC, NP-BC
Helen Papeika, DNP, RN, CMGT-BC

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Donald Bloodworth, MSN, APRN, FNP-BC
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Hayley Santopolo, BSN, RN, PCCN

ENT & AUDIOLOGY

Katie Parker, MSN, APRN, FNP-BC

FOLEY CANCER CENTER

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Maya Dow, BSN, RN, OCN
Holly Fox, RN, OCN
JoEllen Goulet, BSN, RN, OCN
Kendra Hollister, BSN, RN, OCN
Jessica Jackson, RN, OCN
Elizabeth Murray, BSN, RN, OCN
Susan Nordmeyer, RN, OCN

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By David McClister
Banjo player Noam Pikelnny takes the stage at the Paramount Theatre in Rutland on Friday, March 28 at 7:30 p.m.

Noam Pikelnny fashions a homecoming at the Paramount Theatre, and he's bringing some friends along

By James Kent

March 28 at 7:30 p.m.—RUTLAND—Grammy-Award-winning banjo virtuoso Noam Pikelnny hits the stage at the Paramount Theatre for a bluegrass extravaganza on Friday, March 28. This time around, Pikelnny is bringing along some friends. Playing with Pikelnny is a crack group of amazing players, with Jake Eddy playing guitar, Teo Quale playing mandolin, Julian Pinelli playing fiddle, and Dan Klingsberg playing bass. Included in this gathering of music makers is 5th-generation Vermonter Caitlin Canty. Canty, a Proctor native, is also Pikelnny's wife.

This special performance serves as a homecoming concert for Pikelnny, which might sound strange for a musician born in the North Chicago area, who had most recently called Nashville his home. Like so many things that changed over the past five years, the pandemic also caused a shift in Pikelnny's life.

"When the pandemic hit, our son was born, and the industry shut down," said Pikelnny. Soon, trips to visit Canty's family in Vermont became more frequent, and Pikelnny saw the Green Mountain State as a place of opportunity. "We fell in love with the idea of living in Danby." Danby provides Pikelnny with everything he enjoys about rural living: plenty of area music festivals for him to take his kids to, and it's close enough for him to travel to NYC, where he tapes a live show for Audible with his group, The Punch Brothers.

Anyone who's heard Pikelnny play the banjo knows he's one of the best, but he remained modest when discussing his beginnings.

"I heard a Bluegrass band in school when I was eight. My brother took weekly lessons playing the mandolin. My mother suggested the banjo for me," said Pikelnny. "Pretty quickly, I fell in love with the actual sound of the banjo, but I am by no means a prodigy." Living in the Northside of Chicago gave Pikelnny an entry to an exciting world of musical opportunities. He'd attend jam sessions and song circles, and there was a never-ending supply of music festivals for him to attend.

"One of the things that's cool with bluegrass is that beyond the beauty of the music, it's almost a lifestyle," said Pikelnny, explaining why he loves performing bluegrass music.

Noam Pikelnny may take his music and playing seriously, but anyone who's caught his act or seen any of his online videos knows that he possesses a sharp wit and dry sense of humor that brings a sense of fun to the proceedings.

The atmosphere will be memorable when Pikelnny & Friends takes the stage at the Paramount Theatre on March 28. He's played the Paramount Theatre before, but this time around, it will feel like coming home to family.

For more information and tickets, visit: paramountvt.org.

'One of Them Days' struggles to make the rent

"One of Them Days" is the first theatrical R-rated female-driven Black comedy since 2017's "Girls Trip," and is a shocking statistic. Released in theaters in mid-January of this year, "One of Them Days" was a modest hit, making \$49 million off a budget of \$14 million. The movie's high-concept premise, two friends/

roommates have just one day to come up with \$1,500 rent money otherwise get evicted, doesn't pretend to break new ground, and doesn't try hard either. You know what you are going to get the second you watch the film's trailer. The best you can hope for in a movie like this will be that it provides a few laughs. Unfortunately, 'One of Them Days' forget that part.

I knew, going in, this movie wasn't likely to deliver a rib-tickling experience, but sometimes a crap shoot comes up sevens, so I took a chance. Plus, my entire family was suffering from whatever brutal virus was going around, so with a fever-induced brain space, I sat down on a Saturday night to watch this 97-minute shenanigan-filled buddy film unfold.

To the best of my knowledge, the film's stars, Keke Palmer and SZA, are not comedians, and it shows. There is nothing wrong with either's performance, but they don't exactly know how to deliver comedically. Both are appealing performers, but something is missing that prevents a few comic areas from breaking through. Would trained comics have made the film any funnier? I don't know. Comedian Katt Williams shows up in a minor role and isn't given anything funny to do either, so maybe the issues lie with the writer and director.

The plot, as thin as it is, hinges on Palmer's diner waitress, Dreux Jones, and

her artist roommate, Alyssa, moving into crisis mode when Alyssa unwisely lets her untrusting boyfriend Keshawn pay the rent—which he, of course, does not. Cue the shenanigans; trust me when I say this film is a boatload of shenanigans. In this case, the madcap antics are plenty but devoid of laughs.

There is some amusing social commentary baked within the story of "One of Them Days," like the movie's sardonic take on predatory payday loan companies, but aside from a few chuckles here and there, I was mostly going through the motions as this movie ticked off its comedy trope boxes.

Every time it looks as if Dreux and Alyssa are going to get out of their financial jam, a new obstacle gets in the way. Naturally, the plot hinges on an important interview for Dreux, which, if she aces, will get her that dream manager's job at Norm's Diner. Yeah, I know. Dream big. But don't worry, kiddos, this is a situation comedy, so you know it's going to all come out right as rain in the end. Alyssa's art is discovered through more shenanigans, and they make the rent. Bad guys are foiled, and love interests are kindled. If I'm a bit fuzzy on the details, by the time this film hit its third act, my RSV-induced fever had spiked to over 100 degrees, and I was nearly hallucinating that I had dreamt of watching this movie. My family assured me it was all too real, and no one else thought the movie was particularly funny. But, when you are sick, and you've seen pretty much everything else available, maybe "One of Them Days" is the perfect thing.

James Kent is the arts editor for The Mountain Times.



Screens and Streams
By James Kent



Courtesy Sony Pictures

"One of Them Days," starring Keke Palmer and SZA is now available to rent on demand.

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From jazz roots to funky grooves, Yam Yam hits the Pickle Barrel

By William O'Donnell

March 20, at 7 p.m.—KILLINGTON— The jam scene, notorious for featuring 20-minute guitar solos dripping with psychedelia, sees 10-year touring veteran Yam Yam taking a much different approach. Hailing from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, this primarily instrumental quintet's signature sound is upbeat, playful funk music bursting at the seams with youthful exuberance. Yam Yam is Michael Dempsey (piano/organ), Xander Moppin (bass), Jason Mescia (saxophone), and brothers Tom Fuller (guitar) and Tyler Fuller (drums). With high-energy poppy hooks plentiful, the Yam Yam show at the Pickle Barrel in Killington on Thursday, March 20 will heat up the early spring.

With the Killington show kicking off a string of dates taking the band as far as the Carolinas, veteran saxophonist Jason Mescia discussed how the band got their start, the eclectic background of influences that go into the band's unique sound, and crossing boundaries to make a first impression on new fans.

"I've been playing in the Harrisburg scene and in Philly for a very long time," Mescia said. "I would just take gigs with all kinds of different bands. When I first joined Yam Yam; I was probably playing in about 30 different bands. I was just trying to gig as much as possible."

With influences ranging from Lotus, Soulive, and Spafford to jazz legends like John Coltrane, Yam Yam made a significant impact right out of the gate.

"When we all got together, it just sounded like something special. It really just took off really quickly," Mescia said when discussing the band's self-titled debut, which rose to #17 on the Billboard Jazz Albums chart.

The band's rehearsal space/underground music venue, The Lingerie Room, where the band recorded their fan-favorite live album, "The Yam Yam Telethon (The Lingerie Room Sessions)", saw an opportunity for Yam Yam to play with one of their musical heroes, Lettuce, when the funk legends made a stop in Harrisburg. The venue, known for its rare and impromptu after parties, saw the two bands playing for an intimate crowd until the wee hours of the morning.

"It was nuts," Mescia said about the life-changing experience of meeting one of his musical idols.

Yam Yam is known for their catchy melodies and for pushing the boundaries of fans' expectations by bringing a rare approach toward funk music that is as experimental as it is approachable.

When asked how he takes his jazz background and applies it to the band's vigorous live performances, Mescia offered some words of wisdom.

"I feel like that's the jazz spirit, honestly. The kind of thing that makes you want to stay up until 7 in the morning. When I'm playing music, I want to be breaking a sweat. For me, it's like a sport. When a show starts for me, you've gotta be in the mentality of sports, like the ball is in play. Where you're really engaged to a level where it makes you break a sweat. That's what I like in (our) music."

Yam Yam brings their genre-bending styles to the Pickle Barrel Nightclub on Thursday, March 20.

For more information, visit: yamymband.com or picklebarrelnightclub.com.



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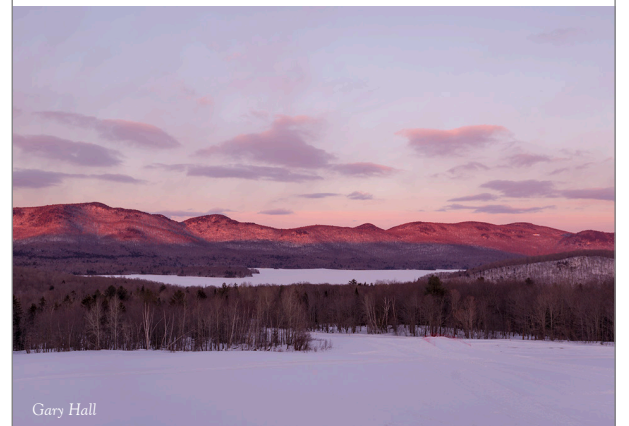


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Saturday, March 22, from 8 a.m.-6:30 p.m.—POULTNEY—Poultney MapleFest returns with a full day of maple-themed activities, community events, and family fun. The festival kicks off with a free pancake breakfast from 8-10 a.m. at the Poultney United Methodist Church, 108 Main St., followed by the Fifth Season Ride & Race at 9 a.m. from Analog Cycles, 188 Main St. Families can enjoy the Kid-Zone from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. at St. Raphael's Parish Hall, 21 East Main St., featuring bounce houses, arts and crafts, and indoor yard games. At 10 a.m., the festival's opening ceremony and tree tapping will take place at the Poultney Historical Society, 1499 East Main St. Visitors can also stop by Bryn Cariad Farm, 41 On the Green, from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. to meet newborn lambs and sample maple-inspired baked goods. For those looking to explore the outdoors, Slate Valley Trails will lead a guided hike at 10:30 a.m. from the Poultney Historical Society building.

Beyond the downtown festivities, guests can visit more than a dozen local sugarhouses throughout the region to see the sugaring process firsthand. Horse-drawn wagon rides and historical tours offer a glimpse into Poultney's past, while the Happy Hour Syrup Slam at 4 p.m. at Poultney Pub,

158 Main St., invites locals to share their favorite sugaring stories. The day concludes with a community ham dinner from 4:30-6:30 p.m. at Young at Heart Senior Center, 206 Furnace St. With food, entertainment, and a celebration of Vermont's iconic maple industry, Poultney MapleFest promises a day filled with tradition and community spirit.

For more information, visit: poultneydowntown.com/maplefest.



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Nothing tops a day at MapleFest like a traditional community ham dinner held at Young At Heart Senior Center from 4:30-6:30 on March 22.



Hartlanders cheer homegrown music

By Curt Peterson

Sunday afternoon, March 16, mild temperatures, and a loyal fanbase from every generation found Damon Hall filled with folks cheering local young woman Jenna Rice, singing pieces from her latest five-song album, "Salt and Strawberries." Her earlier albums are "Bottle Collection" (2019) and "Chapters Turn and Bridges Burn" (2021).

Rice, 27, radiating poise and personality, stood front and center on the historic stage, strumming a beautiful acoustic guitar she decorated by hand. She wore a modestly short red dress that she made herself. She wrote all the songs on her three albums, including her latest, introduced on Sunday.

Backup was deftly delivered by bass guitarist Chris McCampbell, Jim Yeager on drums, and dour-faced electric guitarist Randy Roos, who provided some worthy riffs.

Her original opening musicians called in sick at the last minute, but local favorite Peter Meijer and Jenna's husband Greg Goede-waagen stepped into the breach and did a brilliant job, including solos by each.



Admission was by donation only, a cash box at the door, and punters could purchase CDs, stickers or Tee Shirts, also designed by Rice.

Asked how well her albums have sold, she told the Mountain Times, "I really have not kept track."

Jenna Rice is obviously a "Renaissance woman" — besides music, she and Geode-waagen have a small farm in Weathersfield where they raise cows, chickens, pigs and vegetables.

"We mostly grow food for ourselves, friends and family, and we don't sell much," she said.

She is an accomplished photographer, marketing guru, and website designer, all through her one-woman company, Jenna Rice Creative. She and her sister Nora are also publishing a farm-to-table cookbook in July.

Her love of making music evolved when she was a high school student, and she started playing publicly at the Skunk Hollow Tavern in Hartland, where there are two music nights every week, including an open mic event. Gradually her geographical reach grew, as she played various gigs in the general area. Older local musicians took her under wing and supported her development.

"Going forward from this album release I am really hoping to start playing more, because I want these songs to be heard," she said.

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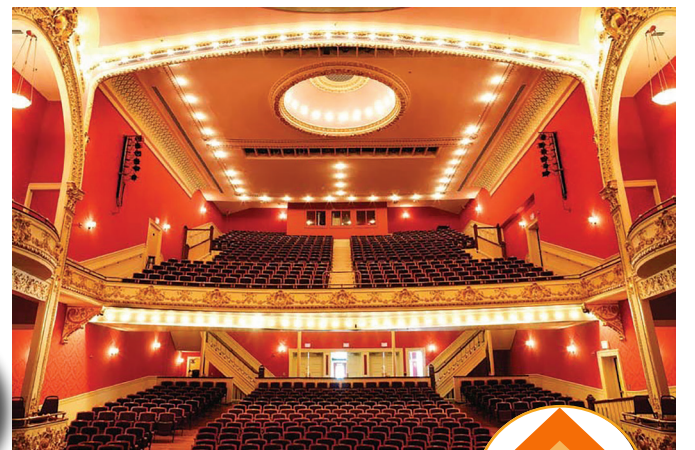
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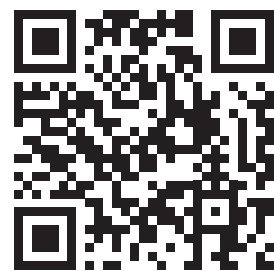
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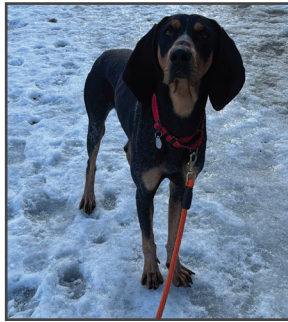
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Solutions From page 15

Crossword

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Rutland County Humane Society



Blue—1 ½-year-old. Male. Coonhound.



Emma—1-year-old. Female. Terrier mix.



Mila—2.5-year-old. Female. Pitbull mix.



Tucker—1-year-old. Male. Pit bull terrier.

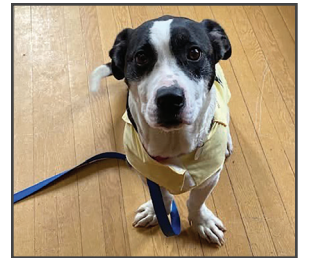


Chuck—Adult. Male. Hamster.

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



Nellie—9-month-old. Female. Terrier mix.



Jamba—5-year-old. Female. Basset hound/pit bull terrier mix.



Roxy—2-year-old. Female. Pit bull terrier.

Sudoku

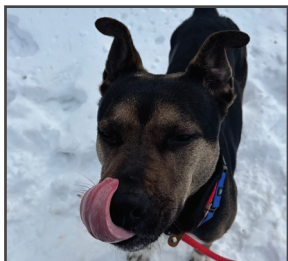
5	9	1	2	4	3	7	8	6
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9	5	4	6	2	8	3	1	7
6	1	2	5	3	7	9	4	8
7	4	6	3	8	1	2	9	5
3	2	9	4	6	5	8	7	1
1	8	5	7	9	2	6	3	4



Mischief—1-year-old. Female. Pitbull terrier.



Lady—11-month-old. Female. Coonhound.



Rocky—3-year-old. Male. Pit bull terrier/husky mix.



Fluffy—4 ½-year-old. Female. Domestic longhair.

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*By appointment only at this time. lucymac.org



Ginger—5-year-old. Female. Redticked hound.

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



Some of a litter of 12 puppies looking for loving homes!

Cosmic Catalogue



Aries

March 21 - April 20

You may not see yourself as a particularly intuitive person. That said, your dreams are rather intense right now. It would serve you well to pay them some attention. While awake, life may feel uncertain as so many changes are headed your way. Though while asleep, the answers are presenting themselves. Your main mission now is to trust and let go. Let go of controlling outcomes; you'll be amazed by where the path takes you.



Leo

July 21 - August 20

You are coming to the end of a long cycle of addressing your deepest fears and phobias. It's always darkest before dawn, but you know the light is near. This week, hold tight and choose to see the light. New and exciting pathways are opening up for you, but you will have to commit to them. If you've lacked inspiration, take action, and the inspiration will come. The unseen will soon be seen.



Sagittarius

November 21 - December 20

Your home life has been confusing for years at this point. Some moments were magical, while others felt like a nightmare. This has all brought you to the point you are at now. You get an opportunity to follow your heart and your dreams now. You don't have to have all the answers to make a decision. Go forth in the direction that brings you joy. Happiness is the key to everything now, so do your best to embrace it.



Taurus

April 21 - May 20

Just when you think there is no way out, there is. The stress and worry you've been experiencing aren't going to last forever. When you're stuck in something, though, it doesn't feel that way. This, too, shall pass. It may seem unhelpful now, but it's true. Do your best to think beyond the other side of where you are right now. The sky and your situation are bracing themselves to change dramatically. Think positive, and it will be.



Virgo

August 21 - September 20

To lose something feels like a loss. You never really lose; you either win or learn. Changing your mindset about a recent event can help you grow. If you stay in the loss mindset, you'll have to repeat the lesson until it's learned. A particular relationship is mirroring what you need to see in yourself. Let loose the need to know. Surrender the details. Trust in the outcome. Everything is working in your favor.



Capricorn

December 21 - January 20

Sometimes you need to delve into things that don't appear especially practical or productive. When you do this, magic happens! The more you lean into following your curiosity, the more likely you will achieve your dreams! Not everyone has to understand what you're doing – even yourself, for it to have meaning. Life holds the meaning that you give it, not others. You may not understand it right now, but there is a method to the madness.



Gemini

May 21 - June 20

You may need to reach deeper than you're used to reaching for to feel lucky right now. Your ruler, Mercury, plus Venus, are both retrograde in your Luck Zone. In order to have everything you've ever wanted you need to be grateful for all that you already have. Massive changes in direction are headed your way. This time in between eclipses is testing your resolve. You are stronger than you think you are.



Libra

September 21 - October 20

Nothing feels like it's working in the way you want it to when it comes to all kinds of relationships. Trials, tribulations, errors, and confusion – you name it, it's happening. You could throw your hands in the air and complain or heed the lessons. Striking the balance between rigidity and forgiveness is going to be your next cosmic test, and you are prepared for it now. A reassessment of what you actually want will help.



Aquarius

January 21 - February 20

You might experience something akin to a breakthrough regarding money this week. It may come to you more like a revelation or insight. It may not seem practical or even doable at face value. However, if you follow the inclinations and pathways that open up, you'll be amazed by what you can achieve or attain. A big part of this is about you trusting in you! The first step is to believe in yourself and that you are worthy of what you want.



Cancer

June 21 - July 20

The path of the unknown always feels scary before you take the first step. Very soon, a whole new pathway is going to open up for you. You may not know exactly where you are going right now. Try to control the outcome, and the path will only be bumpy. Surrender to the path being magical and more than you could ever hope for, and it will present opportunities for you that you couldn't even have imagined. Choose your destiny.



Scorpio

October 21 - November 20

Your romantic life has been on a rocky path in recent years. Just when you think you've got something solid, you don't. Just when you thought something was fun and light, it wasn't. Confusing just doesn't cut it. Some situations just aren't logical; they are magical. Who defines what is right or wrong anyway? Shakespeare once said, sometimes it is better to have loved and lost than to have never loved at all. Follow your heart and where the light takes you.



Pisces

February 21 - March 20

When life feels uncertain and confusing, it's important to pull your energy back in and focus on yourself. You could try to analyze everyone and everything, but you'll just chase your tail doing that. All you can focus on is you, your choices, and your mindset. You can't control other people. Trust that working hard to be the person you want to be will yield the results that are worth having.

A golden road awaits



Cosmic Catalogue
By Cassandra Tyndall

Just when you think all is lost, some way, somehow a yellow brick road appears. Teeming with golden yellow light, the vision almost blinds you. Confusing. Discombobulating. Almost scary.

What would it mean for you to take a step forward in the direction of the light? What would you have to sacrifice? What would you have to change? Whom would you have to forgive? You could point your finger at external situations and say this, that, or something else. Pointing the finger is easy.

What would you have to sacrifice within yourself? What within yourself would you have to change? What parts of yourself do you need to forgive?

The golden light is endless. So much so that, more often than not, we choose not to see it and blame it for not shining in the direction we want.

We point the fingers, play the blame game, and double down on our ego. We throw our hands in the air and console ourselves that we are not at fault for not getting what we want.

What if there was another way? What if we clicked our heels three times, followed the yellow brick road, and found our way home?

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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.

Surprising sugarmakers in the late winter woods

As steam rises from sugarhouse cupolas and early morning coffee pots, sugarmakers are working overtime to turn maple sap into golden syrup. But as it turns out, they aren't alone: other living things are sugaring too, and their stories affect the syrup that is poured on your pancakes (or into your morning coffee).

Many sugarmakers' most familiar – and troublesome – non-human coworkers are red squirrels, which chew holes in the soft plastic lines of sugarbush tubing networks to get at the sap inside. In a 1992 study, biologist and author Bernd Heinrich found that red squirrels are not just sap thieves: they also “tap” their own sugar maples, biting through the trees' outer bark and returning to lick up partly-dried streaks of candied sugar and syrup. Heinrich noticed that his local red squirrels had much in common with human sugarmakers: they selected sugar maples almost exclusively, got up early to check their taps, and sugared only on warm days in late winter and early spring.

Some winter birds, including the evening grosbeak, Bohemian waxwing, and cedar waxwing, also enjoy maple sap, which they sip from the broken ends of sugar maple twigs – but only as part of a balanced winter diet. Grosbeaks eat a healthy mix of tree seeds, buds, and overwintering insects, while waxwings have a serious sweet tooth (or beak?) for the fruits of trees, such as crabapple, hawthorn, and cedar.

Yellow-bellied sapsuckers, our most creatively-named woodpeckers, excavate rows of shallow “wells” in the bark of a few favored tree species; their taste in trees changes throughout the year, and maples are on the menu in late spring. During frequent visits, they renew their wells, lap up sap, and gobble insects trapped within them.

As sapsuckers seem to understand, insects are probably the biggest group of sap-eaters in our northern forests. One Canadian study documented 28 species of winter-active beetles, caddisflies, fireflies, and moths at sap pails, including multiple owl moths in the family Noctuidae. Although the noctuids, which some sugarmakers call “sap moths,” are dressed in unassuming browns and grays, they have a remarkable trick up their sleeves: flying and feeding in near-freezing temperatures, even though they are cold-blooded. In another study, Heinrich found that noctuid moths were shivering themselves up to

temperatures as hot as 95° and then using their dense, fuzzy coats and clever circulatory systems to hold onto the warmth. If you're a moth, this is a pretty good trick, as most of your avian predators are still on vacation in late winter and early spring.

All this maple drama is visible to the naked eye, but if you put a drop of maple sap beneath a microscope, you'll find a whole world of very small organisms enjoying their own maple feast. Studies find that bacteria and yeasts with names like *Pseudomonas tolaasii* and *Mrakia gelida* live on maple bark and inside the tubing of sap collection networks. As the days warm, these microorganisms proliferate, eventually turning sap brown and mucky and spoiling late-season syrup.

But the maple microbiome isn't all bad! Many of those wonderful, elusive flavors – the ones that evoke notes of vanilla, pine, butter, and even flowers – get their start when microorganisms break the sucrose in maple sap into other forms of sugar like glucose and fructose, as well as aromatic compounds like

vanillin and syringaldehyde. While these names may sound strange, they taste delicious; and they're important enough that they explain much of the change in syrup flavor and color, from “golden-delicate” to “dark-robust,” as spring progresses.

Maples also derive surprising benefits from the microorganisms in their sap. Research shows that some strains of bacteria and yeast in maple sap act like a biological band-aid, proliferating at the site of injuries and stanching the “bleeding” of broken sap vessels until the

tree can heal. This response can be frustrating if you're a sugarmaker and the injury is a freshly drilled taphole, but as far as the tree's concerned, it's just what the doctor ordered!

As the sugaring season continues, remember you're not the only one enjoying the bounty of maple trees, and take a moment to think of the yeasts, birds, squirrels, and moths. While some might be stealing a taste of maple sap, others have helped give your syrup that unique, nuanced flavor.

Sam Blair is a graduate student at the Yale School of the Environment, pursuing a master's in environmental science. Illustration by Adelaide Murphy Tyrol. The Outside Story is assigned and edited by Northern Woodlands magazine and sponsored by the Wellborn Ecology Fund of New Hampshire Charitable Foundation: nhcf.org.



The Outside Story
By Sam Blair

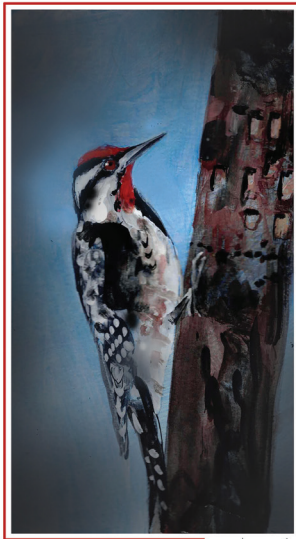


Illustration by Adelaide Murphy Tyrol

Stupid is as stupid does

If there's one thing I've been lucky with in my life, it's sleep. Other than my spat with cancer several years ago, I've navigated my night times with relative ease. I hear countless stories from people who suffer from insomnia or nocturnal restlessness, and I always feel thankful that I've avoided that life pitfall.

I've often bragged that I can fall asleep anytime, anywhere, in less than two minutes. Just the other day, I dropped my wife off at the grocery store so she could grab some provisions. As soon as she got out of my truck and shut the door, I kicked my seat back and tipped my cap down over my eyes. I'm confident I was asleep before she dropped the first item into her cart.

On the rare occasion that I do wake up in the middle of the night and find that I can't fall back asleep, I'll usually head to the kitchen for a snack. And while I have a certified sweet tooth, at that hour, I almost always crave salty content. It was during one

of these uncommon nighttime feasts that I had an epic revelation, a revelation so profound that I've never forgotten it.

I awoke one night in my late teens and headed to the fridge to find a snack. I searched for a moment before pulling out a jar of dill pickles. As I stood there chomping on the pickle, I turned the container over and read the label.

My eyes jumped around for a moment before landing on the section containing the ingredients. My chewing slowed when I read the first word: cucumbers.

My eyes widened and then jumped back and forth from the half-eaten pickle in my hand to the word “cucumber.”

I was awestruck. It had never occurred to me that pickles were simply small cucumbers soaked in vinegar and salt. I'm not sure what I thought pickles were or where they came from, but cucumbers weren't part of my previous understanding.

The Movie Diary → 39



The Movie Diary
By Dom Cioffi

Getting beastly in the Canyon

Spring looks a little different this year. Never mind that the rain stole all the snow off my lawn way before I was ready to put my Nordic skis away for the season. Or that all the local snowmobile trails shut down because the water bars are now exposed, and no one wants to ride through mud. Never mind that Ravine Road is a complete mess, and that FE-MA-demanded culvert makes everything worse.

These things happen in spring, so I'm mentally prepared for them.

It's those bare spots of Superstar that have my brain all messed up. For the past decade, we've been able to drive up to K-Base with a little smirk on our faces. All the other ski areas might be thinking this warm weather is ending their season, but not us. You can traditionally see the snow depth on Superstar from miles away. The mound at the top is higher than the chairlift and that beautiful ridgeline created by the tower guns stands out all the way from Pittsfield.

But not this year. This year, as you drive up, you can see the S starting to form, and it's only the middle of March. My brain is thinking that ski season is ending just from that visual. And it's tweaking out a bit. Also, who would have thought all that wonderful snow we got, that 55-day streak of greatness, would be taken from us in a matter of days? I mean, I have skied at Killington my whole life and lived here

for almost a quarter of a century, so I get it. But sometimes, it's just so hard to wrap your head around.

Too much spring, way too soon. I mean, don't get me wrong. I love doing mat Pilates on my deck in the warm sunshine, surrounded by snow, after skiing a few laps on the mountain. I love a good tailgate picnic in the parking lot while the mud creeps into my flip-flops. And I love skiing through muddy snow while laughing and giggling with my little athletes on a trail that won't be open the next day.

Not that we should be worried. Not at Killington, anyway. Even with the replacement of the Superstar Quad this summer, the resort is here to make the claim that we don't have to spring ski on Superstar. That

Superstar is not the only place where we can dump feet of snow and ski until June. We ski Superstar until June because we choose to. Technically, we can dump that much snow wherever we want to and still push for June.

Hello, the Canyon. The trails in there are beautiful—and nasty. From Ovation all the way around to ChopChop, the Canyon is one of the most stunning collections of inbound terrain anywhere in the country. Spend a day working your way around the horseshoe, one trail after the other, enjoying their uniqueness and the different angles. I'm more of a Toilet

Living the Dream → 39



Living the Dream
By Merisa Sherman

PAPER

The disappearance of paper

Paper is rapidly disappearing from our day-to-day world.

Many readers prefer to view newspapers, magazines, and books in digital format. However, I heard recently that young people, particularly Gen Z, are trending toward paper versions. This is an unexpected discovery as that generation is a “tech-savvy” group. If you are anything like me, you don’t know what ages are considered Gen Z. I looked it up and found out that Gen Z covers those born between 1997 and 2012.

My husband, Peter, spent over 30 years working for Moore Business Forms in Rutland. The company made continuous paper forms. In case you don’t know what those are, a continuous form has holes spaced evenly down each side of a sheet of perforated paper. The holes go into sprocket wheels that move the paper through the printer. Part of my job at City Hall was printing tax and water bills using continuous forms. We kept the top tissue-like copy for our records, and the bottom form was designed for mailing. Various paper reports kept in ledgers were also printed on continuous forms. The larger businesses needed this type of form in order to operate back in the ‘80s. By the late ‘90s, the trend toward inkjet printers using a single sheet of paper was preferred.

On a personal level, back in the ‘50s, I received a box of notepaper every year as a Christmas gift. It got immediate use as I wrote “thank you notes” for the presents I had received. Handwritten notes were also exchanged throughout the year with relatives from out of state and friends who had moved. It didn’t take long to use up a box of stationery. It was always fun to shop for more. There were so many pretty designs.

Pen pals from another country came into elementary school students’ lives. We needed note paper to exchange letters as we got to know one another.

A heavier kind of paper needed in yesteryear was the type used for recipe cards. When someone made an enjoyable

dish or dessert, we would ask for the recipe. It wasn’t emailed or texted to you. It was handwritten on a recipe card that usually had the words, “From the kitchen of...” You are reminded of that person every time you use their recipe. I still have a recipe box made by my handy husband, Peter, that holds recipe cards in my mother’s handwriting and that of my friends. Their memories live on through their recipe cards.

I received notice recently that one of my favorite magazines will be available only in digital format. I received the first one by email recently, and it’s just not the same as turning pages by clicking on an arrow instead of doing it with my fingers. The flower and bird pictures aren’t as enjoyable on a computer screen as when the printed page is in front of me. I guess I had better get used to such changes as I doubt that paper copies will even be available in the future.

One of my biggest surprises regarding the disappearance of paper in our lives was when I was told by my local bank that the main branch no longer cashes checks. I was told they are becoming a “paperless bank” and that I would need to go to their drive-thru to get a check cashed.

A part of history will disappear when no original paper evidence is available to the public that tells what life was like. Having information on individual phones and other devices does not allow the public to put their hands on the original documents, such as those currently in historical societies. When I do research for articles, the best information is often found in letters and various written records. A scanned document is the next best thing, but I am not looking at the actual paper that the person actually wrote on, and I miss that personal connection.

Let’s hope paper will always remain in some form for those who prefer the written word. If it disappears, we may have to go back to writing on stone. Now, wouldn’t that be handy?



Looking Back
By Mary Ellen Shaw

Using plant stands for indoor gardening

By Deborah J. Benoit

Gardeners bid farewell to their outdoor growing spaces each winter and turn their attention to other ways to occupy their days. Magazines and seed catalogs provide inspiration, but there’s nothing like gardening indoors to satisfy your inner gardener.

Plant stands with grow lights are a convenient way to bring your garden inside. They provide a place to gather plants together when you lack space, available windows, or sufficient light. With your plants in one place, it’s easy to monitor their health and be sure they’re receiving sufficient humidity (a common problem with the dry air inside during winter).

Plant stands can be plain or fancy. Some are made of wood and can be embellished to create a piece of furniture that would look good in any room. A homemade plant stand can be assembled from purchased components such as a wire shelving unit, and some grow lights.

Wire shelves may appear more utilitarian, but they add a clean look to your indoor garden and aid in air circulation, which is necessary for plant health. Purchased plant stands make setup quick and eliminate the need to select separate grow lights.

If you’ll be using multiple grow lights, be sure the power strip they’re plugged into is away from dripping or splashing water. Consider adding a timer to turn lights on and off for consistent hours of light.

For best results, lights should be positioned close to the top of plants but not touch foliage. A short chain between the light fixture and a hook attaching it to the plant stand makes adjustments easy. If the light is in a fixed position, you can always add a book or similar object below plants to move them closer to the light.

To learn more about choosing and using grow lights, visit: go.uvm.edu/grow-lights.

Some indoor gardeners display flowering houseplants such as African violets (*Saint-paulia*) or Cape primrose (*Streptocarpus*) on plant stands. Others may need a place for tender perennials saved from last year’s

garden. Plant stands can also serve as a propagation or seed-starting station.

If you’re overwintering outdoor plants, particularly those needing “full sun,” a plant stand can make sure they receive sufficient light to survive the cold season in good health.

These stands also provide a great place to root cuttings from plants such as coleus (*Plectranthus scutellarioides*) or herbs like basil (*Ocimum basilicum*) and rosemary (*Rosemarinus officinalis*). Information on rooting cuttings can be found at go.uvm.edu/perennials.

Many herbs grow well in pots, and a plant stand can provide the light they’ll need to provide you with fresh herbs through the winter and into the warm weather months. When choosing which herbs to grow, consider their mature size and whether your plant stand will comfortably accommodate them.

One of the best uses for a plant stand this time of year is for starting seeds for the upcoming gardening season. Providing sufficient light will help prevent spindly, leggy seedlings. You can monitor their progress easily from germination to potting up those baby plants. For information on seed starting, visit: go.uvm.edu/seed-starting.

When it’s time to move your indoor garden outdoors, remember that the sun is much brighter than a grow light and can damage plants grown indoors. Be sure to introduce plants to outdoor conditions by slowly increasing their exposure each day over the course of a week or two.

It doesn’t matter if you buy a plant stand complete with state-of-the-art grow lights or build one yourself. A plant stand can keep your inner gardener content through the long winter months and help provide a head start on the upcoming gardening season.

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



One of the best uses for a plant stand is for starting seeds for the upcoming gardening season.

By Deborah J. Benoit

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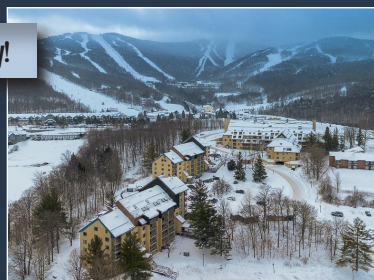
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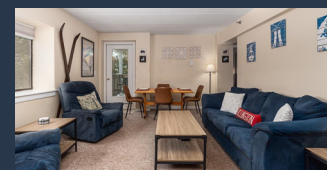


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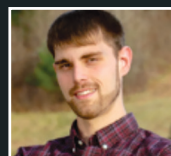
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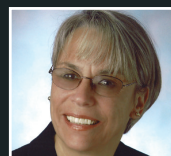
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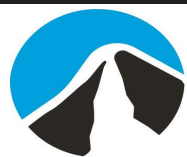
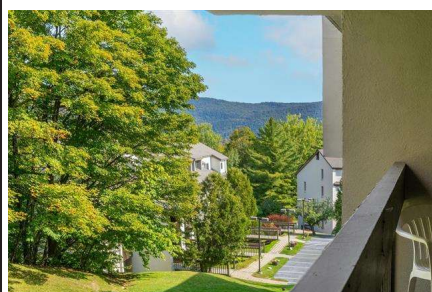
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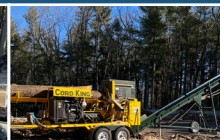


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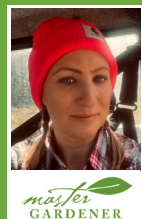
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Gardening Tip of the Week



Do you have a hillside where it's too steep to maintain grass, yet you are looking for something to plant to help cover and utilize for soil erosion? Consider strawberry plants. Strawberries are a low maintenance, low growing, fast spreading ground cover that offer many benefits to growing on a hillside. They are a hardy perennial that over time will spread without limitations and create a root system to eliminate most hillside erosion and weed growth issues. They also provide a bountiful harvest of berries in early summer and can also produce a late summer supply. Strawberries thrive in full sun exposure, yet can still be happy with some slight shade.



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← Movie Diary:
from page 32

I have never forgotten that night or my profound pickle revelation. Since then, no matter how smart I think I am, I have reminded myself that there is likely something else in this world that I've gotten wrong.

Well, I can honestly say it's been quite a while since I've had one of these revelations, but this past weekend, I had another, proving again that you're never too old to learn something new.

I grabbed my son on Saturday morning and told him I had to run an errand requiring his help. The truth was, I didn't need any help; I simply wanted to spend some dedicated time with him. We hopped in my truck and took off with him inquiring about what errand was so important that he had to get out of bed on a Saturday morning.

When we got to our destination, he saw the banner for the local farmers' market. He then understood what the trip was about and graciously settled into taking a short walk with his dad, knowing that a healthy treat was likely in his future.

While he was ordering a breakfast sandwich, I wandered about the area, looking at the available produce, before finally stopping at a booth dedicated to sprouts. Interestingly, I had just inquired about buying sprouts a few months earlier but was told that most major chains had now shied away from carrying them since they have a short shelf life and are prone to food safety risks like *E. coli*.

As I was gazing at the farmer's display, which featured items like "Alfalfa Sprouts," "Mung Bean Sprouts" and "Broccoli Sprouts," it suddenly occurred to me that sprouts were not a separate vegetable (as I had previously thought) but



rather the early growth stage of plants harvested just after germination begins. My mind was blown. A sprout wasn't a distinct food category; it was a step in plant growth – like when a plant sprouts from its seed.

Idiot!

I walked away, chuckling, reminiscing about my prior pickle experience, and intent on reminding myself that I'm not nearly as smart as I think I am.

This week's feature, "You're Cordially Invited," starring Will Ferrell and Reese Witherspoon, did little to increase my intelligence. This movie most certainly made me dumber.

"You're Cordially Invited" is a 2025 American comedy film written and directed by Nicholas Stoller. The plot centers on two weddings that are accidentally double-booked at the same venue on a small, remote island, leading to a chaotic clash between the two wedding parties.

This should have been a great comedy, especially considering its two main stars. But the days of taking chances in Hollywood are over (hopefully not), which left this film listless and overblown with half-hearted bits.

Check this one out only if you've expired every other film on your list. It will certainly burn an hour and a half of your time, but you won't get much enjoyment out of it.

A regretful "C-" for "You're Cordially Invited," now available to stream on Amazon Prime.

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

← Living the Dream:
from page 32

Bowl girl than an Anarchy one, but Royal Flush has been amazing, and I've never skied Waterfall Woods as many times in one season. With all this snow, Downdraft seems like her younger self. And seriously, nothing beats Double Dipper when she's not shining in the sunshine.

When she's shining, well, that would scare the crap out of even the best skiers in the world. But when she's open, groomed or not, Double Dipper stands proudly as the heart of the Canyon. I fell down her once, back when I was probably around 8. Before there were snow guns & the Canyon Quad, when you could actually see the two dips. I slid from the first dip all the way to the second dip. It's a good core skiing memory. DD still makes me stop and think before descending it. But you can find such a beautiful rhythm on that trail that your mind can just float away, and all of a sudden, you're at the double fall line and wondering how you got there.

And now we're going to get her for the springtime. That beautiful trail is filled with snow, moguls, and the most hardcore skiers on the East Coast. If you thought Superstar was nasty, let's see you run lap after lap on DD with no middle section to take a break. It's gonna be you and 28 degrees of greatness (Outer Limits is 27). It's going to be glorious.

I'm so excited that my blood is literally pumping harder while writing this. We've canceled our April West Coast trip to watch Killington throw down in the Canyon. Because we are Killington and we can make snow wherever we want, we have just chosen Superstar over the past few years. But May in the Canyon, well, that is going to be downright Beastly. See you out there!

Merisa Sherman is a global real estate advisor, town official and Coach PomPom. She can be found in the mountains or at merisa.Sherman@SothebysRealty.com.



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