



PRESIDENT'S DAY KICKS OFF WINTER BREAK FOR SCHOOLS
Presidents Day, a federal holiday celebrated on the third Monday in February, falls on Feb. 20 this year. It also kicks off a week-long winter break for schools throughout Rutland and Windsor counties.



KILLINGTON HOSTS COMMUNITY UPDATE
Head to the Grand Hotel Thursday at 5 p.m. and learn what's ahead for Killington.

Page 2



By Brent Goldman

CATCH CHAD STOKES OF DISPATCH THURS IN KILLINGTON

The Middlebury College alumni turned multi-band founder, will perform at the Pickle Barrel in Killington this Thursday, Feb. 16, 8 p.m.

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Local schools grapple with hoax shooting calls

By Katy Savage

Otter Valley Union High School in Brandon, Fair Haven High School and Christ the King in Rutland were among 21 Vermont schools that received hoax calls purporting to report shootings the morning of Wednesday, Feb. 8.

Slate Valley Union Supervisory Union Superintendent Brooke Olsen-Farrell said she was informed by a school resource officer around 9 a.m. that someone called the police and said a student in English class at Otter Valley Union High School had been shot.

The school resource officer cleared the students

"No one should have to go to school or work under those kinds of circumstances," Olsen-Farrell said.

and checked the classrooms. The school put the emergency operations plan in place and determined within 5-10 minutes the threat wasn't credible.

"Obviously, whenever you get something of that nature it does take a toll on the mental health of staff and students and parents," Olsen-Farrell said.

"No one should have to go to school or work under those kinds of circumstances."

"We didn't think it was viable. Typically if someone had a student or staff member injured in our classrooms there would have been multiple 911 calls. There was none of that happening."

Olsen-Farrell immediately called Rob Evans, Vermont's school safety liaison. "Shortly after I notified him, he informed me that there were multiple calls coming in across the state."

School threats → 2

City voters to consider option tax

By Katy Savage

Rutland city voters will consider a 1% sales option tax on Town Meeting Day, March 7.

The option tax has been discussed by the Board of Aldermen several times in the past but this will be the first time it's put before voters.

The option tax was last considered in 2017 when David Allaire faced Michael Coppinger in the mayoral race. Coppinger used the option tax as a campaign platform, while Allaire opposed the tax.

"I didn't feel the timing was right," said Allaire, who won the 2017 race. "I wanted to get into the office and look at the lay of the land and see how our finances were. When I got elected I thought we were in good shape financially."

Allaire said his position has changed.

"We have some looming issues in front of us," he said. "Unless we find an outside

revenue resource, we're not going to be able to tackle them."

The city is facing a lack of funds for capital improvement and a city pension deficit.

The option tax would generate an estimated \$1-\$1.2 million. Allaire said he'd propose that some of the money go to property tax relief.

Allaire is facing challenger Mike Doenges for mayor on Town Meeting Day.

Doenges, the chair of the Board of Aldermen, also supports the option tax.

"It's not a massive tax," Doenges said.

Doenges said shoppers are used to seeing the option tax as neighboring towns, including Rutland town and Brandon, have a local option tax in place.

Doenges said he's spoken to many business owners,

Option tax → 2

Second public hearing for Killington TIF bond draws new attendees, questions

By Polly Mikula

The second public hearing for Killington's TIF bond was about half as well attended as the first hearing on Jan. 30, but drew many new attendees. About eight residents attended in person at the Public Safety building with 27 others attending via Zoom.

The hearing again began with an overview of Killington

Forward, specifically focused on the first phase, which voters are being asked to approve via a bond at Town Meeting Day, March 7 — Article 5.

Town Manager Chet Hagenbarth read Article 5 to the audience Monday night, "Shall the Town Select Board TIF bond → 8



By Brooke Geery

Madison Scott prepares equipment for riding at Killington Resort.

Killington Resort celebrates its team with Beast Week, Feb. 11-17

Get to know a few of the people on the mountain

By Brooke Geery

With winter operations in full swing, it's an exciting time to work at Killington Resort and Pico Mountain. Every department is churning at full steam to provide an incredible experience for guests. From ticket sales to the rental shop to the Killington Grand Hotel, something is happening 24 hours a day. During this busiest time of the winter season, the resort celebrates Beast Week over Feb. 11-17, 2023, to say thank you to the hardworking people who make it all possible.

The seven-day long celebration is packed with special events such as a private K/P employee film showing at the Paramount Theatre, a glow in the dark party at the Wobbly Barn and a night for employees only at the Tubing Park presented by Bubly. The team is treated to gifts, free food and too many other perks to list.

It takes a lot of people to keep The Beast running. In fact, Killington Resort is one of the largest employers in the state of Vermont with over 1,500 employees during the winter season. The jobs are as varied as the people who hold them, and for ticket supervisor Josh

Reed, that's one of his favorite parts of working here.

"Everyone I work with has a backstory," he says. "In ticketing, one of our ticket agents is a retired Navy captain. Another one of our agents was an attorney his whole life. One was a stockbroker on Wall Street for 30 years. All these people have lived all over the world, they've done all these neat and interesting things and we all sit together. We're just selling tickets, but we have pretty good personalities because of the lives we've lived up until now. Long story short, I just enjoy the people I work with. They're funny, engaging, and we have great conversations. People are sharp here."

Reed's own background includes many years in software sales and marketing for companies in Phoenix, Arizona, Los Angeles, and Austin, Texas. He continued to work in that field after moving to Vermont about seven years ago and joined The Beast team in October 2021. After a stint in group sales, he moved into his current role.

Beast Week → 25

Hartland store celebrated grand opening

By Curt Peterson

After a couple of postponed openings, BG's welcomed the public at dawn on Monday, Feb. 13 with free coffee and freshly-made brownies.

The iconic institution and gathering place in Hartland Three Corners for more than 40 years, closed Jan. 1 when new ownership took possession. Six weeks of serious renovations began, under able supervision of new manager Ian Rose.

"I can honestly say," long-time owner Bill Gaucher told the Mountain Times, "this was the first time in 42 years the store was closed for a full day."

Gaucher will be working to support Rose

for at least a few weeks.

The store has the same area, but seems much larger. There are more products offered, but greatly improved lighting, new shelving and fixtures, and strategically changed layout make it easier to move around and shop.

There's enough of "old" BG's preserved to make long-time customers feel at home, and the presence of familiar faces — Barbara Dow, Keri Esty, Carol Whitney and Logan Rediker, to name a few — added comfort as one walks on all-new floors and marvels at the neatly-stocked shelves and new counter tops.

BJ's open → 23



By Curt Peterson

Nicole Bartner enjoys a free coffee as part of BJ's reopening celebration Monday, Feb. 13.

Option tax: Rutland City may add sales option tax from page 1

who will carry the burden of collecting the tax. They were mostly supportive.

"They don't seem to have any negative feedback," Dogenes said.

City voters will also consider a \$23,261,061 budget on Town Meeting Day. The budget is up 2.4% from the previous budget.

Allaire said he was able to fight inflation by not budgeting for positions the city has been unable to fill.

There are four vacan-

cies on the 32-officer police department. Allaire said he would find funding if those positions were filled.

Allaire also eliminated an assistant city attorney position after struggling to find the right candidate.

The city saved around \$420,000 in salary expenses.

Allaire said fuel, salaries and increases in cost of materials used by the public works department are driving the slight budget increase.

School threats: A slew of 21 hoax calls reported shootings at Vermont schools; all found not to be credible from page 1

Vermont State Police said the calls were received between 8:40 a.m. and 10:50 a.m. at the main line of a dispatch center, police department or town office. All of the threats were deemed not credible.

Fourteen of the threats were made against high schools, three were private religious schools, two were elementary schools, one was a middle school and one was an entire school district, according to police.

State police issued a press release on Feb. 8 explaining the initial investigation determined all the calls were placed via a voice over internet protocol (VoIP) software.

"The calls also appear to have been made by a person and are not believed at this time to have been automated," police said in a press release.

The calls appeared to be associated with nationwide hoax phone threats of school shootings, bomb threats, and other violent events, police said.

The governor's office, Agency of Education, Department of Public Safety, State Police, Vermont Intel-

ligence Center and local law-enforcement agencies were working together.

The threats were still under investigation as of Feb. 14.

A day after the hoax calls, Killington Elementary School Principal Mary Guggenberger informed parents that a KES staff member had identified a potential threat.

"A threat assessment was conducted and determined to be not credible," Guggenberger said in a note to parents around 6:30 p.m. on Feb. 9. "The relevant parties were provided adequate resources to navigate the situation."

Guggenberger explained via an email to the Mountain Times that the threat was not a hoax and was not associated with the threats received by the other schools.

Guggenberger's note to parents did

not describe the nature of the threat. She declined to say more when asked.

"I can only tell you what I told parents, that a potential threat was identified and deemed not credible by the school safety team," Guggenberger said.

Gov. Phil Scott held a press conference after the hoax calls, calling them "unnerving."

"These calls were a hoax — an act of terrorism designed to create chaos and stoke fear that can be exploited," Scott said in a statement. "These events are unnerving for everyone — students, teachers, parents and Vermonters. We can use this energy to come together because unity is the most powerful way to ensure terrorists do not achieve their goals."

Secretary of Education Dan French asked for community support.

"These incidents can have a significant and often traumatic impact on students, staff and families," French said in a statement. "Schools will be working hard in the coming days to support their communities as we navigate the aftermath of this incident."

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MOUNTAIN TOP RESORT

COMMUNITY UPDATE

KPAA ANNUAL MEETING
RESORT UPDATE – PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE
GREAT GULF – VILLAGE UPDATE
TOWN OF KILLINGTON – WORKFORCE HOUSING

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2023, AT 5:00 P.M.
KILLINGTON GRAND HOTEL

RECEPTION IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING

Hear from special guests
Mike Solimano, President & GM of Killington Resort & Pico Mountain and
Michael Sneyd, President of Resort Residential with Great Gulf

Please RSVP at killington.com/rsvp

FAQs: Killington Forward

In response to comments and questions heard around town, on the slopes and at the public hearing, Jan. 30, the Killington Select Board answers questions on what voters need to know to be informed about Killington Forward before voting March 7 on Article 5.

What is Killington Forward?

Killington Forward is a comprehensive, multi-phased plan to develop municipal water infrastructure, rebuild an improved Killington Road, allow for the development of Six Peaks Village, and lay the groundwork for workforce housing. It will be paid for by a combination of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) as well as some grants and forgivable loans. On the March 2023 ballot, the town is asking voters to authorize, with a vote on Article #5, a not-to-exceed debt limit of \$47 million (\$26 million low interest loan and \$21 million municipal bond) for Phase 1 of the project.

What is Tax Increment Financing (TIF)?

A TIF District is an area in which tax revenue generated from new development (in this case, the Six Peaks Village and Resort area) is utilized for public projects (in this case, water and road infrastructure) that support the private investment in the District.

Taxes from the original value of a property continue to go to the state Education Fund and Killington's annual budget. The "increment" is the difference between the original value of the property and the developed value of the property. A portion of the taxes on the "incremental value" during and after development of the project can be used to finance "TIF Debt" right away.

Will voting for Killington Forward affect my taxes?

No. The water and road project in Phase 1 is paid for by a combination of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) as well as a \$2.3 million ARPA grant and a \$3.6 million fully forgivable loan for emerging contaminants. The cost of the project will be paid for by property taxes incurred by the newly developed residential units and retail spaces of Six Peaks Village.

What financial protection does the Town have if moving forward with a developer?

The town spent much of 2022 negotiating a development agreement with Great Gulf (the Six Peaks developer) to secure the financing of this infrastructure investment. This agreement was vetted by the state (Vermont Economic Progress Council) and a third party economic consultant, who determined that this provides for municipal protection for a project this size.

The development agreement states that Great Gulf will allow the town to raise the land value to the needed assessment to raise enough taxes to pay the bond. The taxes needed to cover debt service are proportionately very small for the scale of the Great Gulf business entity.

The Development Agreement requires that the developer pays the taxes in order to pay for the bond, regardless of economic conditions. Conditions stay with the land regardless of the owner.

How will the town manage the long-term intricacies of TIF financial management?

Killington's Select Board created a new position specifically to manage the financial and accounting scope of this project. Mark DeCota was hired as the Finance Director in 2022. In the proposed FY24 budget, there is also an Assistant Accountant position recommended, pending the passing of Article #5.

Who will own the water infrastructure and will new users of the municipal water have to pay for it?

The town of Killington will be the owner of the water system. As with any municipal water system, each user (including Great Gulf) will be charged service fees to cover the operations and maintenance and will be responsible for their own individual connections to the transmission line. The capital cost of building the system will be covered by the TIF and grants and will not create any additional fee for users.

Will I be consulted if the road construction or pipe installation affects my property?

The town will make every attempt to stay within its right of way. However, if permission is needed for impact to private property, the town will be in touch on a case by case basis.

What are we doing about workforce housing?

Access to clean municipal water is critical for the development of any housing. In fact, affordable housing developers will not consider sites without municipal water and the cost of providing water makes the development of workforce housing unachievable.

The creation of this system will provide water down Killington Road to Ravine Road in Phase 1 and will open up eventual opportunities for parcels to be redeveloped or units to be added to existing properties. Meanwhile, the town also is taking further steps to ensure workforce housing will be secured on Killington Road. Details of these efforts will be announced in the coming weeks.

How will parking be affected by the construction of Phase 1 and the ultimate development of the Village?

According to Michael Sneyd of Great Gulf, every space at Killington Resort that is being displaced will be replaced. In addition, all new condo units will have underground parking. Four parking areas will feed lifts, and a system of shuttles will become even more readily available.

How does the creation of new residential units in the village, which will primarily be second homes, help our community?

There is a shortage of available housing at all price points around the entire state. In Killington, the problem has been magnified as second homeowners purchase the stock intended for year-round residents. This addition of housing supply at Six Peaks will ease the pressure both for residents and visitors.

Mike Solimano and Michael Sneyd have also indicated that Six Peaks Village will add new community gathering spaces, special events, and year-round retail and hospitality interest.

VOTE TUESDAY MARCH 7 TOP PRIORITY ARTICLE 5

KILLINGTON FORWARD—THE PLAN TO DEVELOP:

MUNICIPAL WATER INFRASTRUCTURE
WORKFORCE HOUSING

NEWLY DESIGNED KILLINGTON ROAD
SIX PEAKS VILLAGE AT KILLINGTON RESORT

To learn more about Article 5 and plans to move Killington Forward join us:

FEBRUARY 16 • 5PM

Killington Grand Hotel
Resort's Community Update

MARCH 6 • 7PM

Public Safety Building/Zoom

TUESDAY MARCH 7
7AM-7PM

Town Meeting Day

Vote at the Town Offices



LEARN MORE

HOW TO REGISTER TO VOTE: VISIT MVP.VERMONT.GOV

AN ARTIST RENDITION OF THE SIX PEAKS
VILLAGE AT KILLINGTON RESORT.



COMMUNITY NEWS

THE HISTORY OF Pico

FRI MAR 24, 2023 4-6 PM

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and Distinguished Guest Panel

Karl Acker, Frank Heald, Justin Lindholm, David Wright



TOWN OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED FOR PRESIDENT'S DAY MONDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2023

TOWN OF KILLINGTON: 802-422-3241 Follow the prompts to reach the Dept of choice.



TOWN OF
KILLINGTON
VERMONT

**NECESSITY
RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS, the Killington Selectboard has determined that the public interest and necessity of the Town of Killington and its inhabitants require that real property be acquired and municipal offices be constructed on 2046 US Route 4 in Killington (the "Project"); and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that the cost of the Project will be approximately One Million Six Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$1,600,000); and
WHEREAS, this amount is too great to be paid out of the ordinary annual income and revenue of the Town of Killington, even after applying all grants in aid of the Project; and

WHEREAS, the Killington Selectboard has determined that, for the reasons set forth above, authority to finance the Project through debt instruments for a term of more than five years, is required;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Selectboard of the Town of Killington that the proposition of incurring debt through issuance of such debt instruments be submitted to the qualified votes of the Town of Killington in the following form:

ARTICLE 4. Shall general obligation bonds or notes of the Town of Killington in an amount not to exceed One Million Six Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$1,600,000), subject to reduction from available state and federal grants-in-aid and the application of available reserves, to be financed for a period not to exceed ten (10) years, be issued for the purpose of purchasing and renovating the property at 2046 US Route 4, which includes the Post Office, to become the new Town Hall.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a vote on said proposition shall be conducted by Australian Ballot at the annual Town Meeting to be held on Tuesday, March 7, 2023 at the Killington Town Office, 2706 River Road, Killington, Vermont at which meeting the polls will open at 7:00 A.M. and close at 7:00 P.M.; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Warning for the above-mentioned Town Meeting shall be published in the Mountain Times on February 16, 23, and March 2, 2023 and that the Warning for such meeting shall be posted in five public places in the Town of Killington, and the same shall be posted on the Town website.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Selectboard will hold a public informational hearing on the above-stated proposition on Monday, March 6, 2023, at 7:00 P.M. at the Killington Public Safety Building, 800 Killington Road, Killington, Vermont.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Warning for the 2023 annual Town Meeting is specifically approved for use in connection with the consideration on the above-stated proposition of making public improvements and financing the same for a term not to exceed ten (10) years.

Dated at Killington, Vermont this 30th day of January, 2023.

Stephen Finneron

Jim Haff

Christopher Karr

Received for record this 31st day of January, 2023.

Lucretia Wonsor
Killington Town Clerk

Taking shape

At this stage of the session, new members and new committee chairs are settled in and committees are busy taking testimony and amending their priority bills for the session. With deadlines to get bills out of their initial committee soon after the Town Meeting recess, the next few weeks will determine the shape of the 2023 session.



By Rep. Jim Harrison

By the end of last week, one of the priorities of House Judiciary Committee, H.89, or medical shield bill, passed the House by a wide margin. The measure is intended to provide protections to health care providers performing procedures that are legal in Vermont, such as abortion, that may not be legal in a state the patient is from.

Issues likely to be considered in the next few weeks:

- Senate Natural Resources continues to push ahead with S.5, the Clean Heat bill, following pushback from the Scott administration and fuel dealers on the expected jump in heating fuel costs and conversions to other heating systems.
- House Environment and Energy is taking up H.158, which expands the 1970s era bottle bill to wine and all

- non-dairy beverages.
 - Ranked choice voting is back under consideration with S.32, which allows voters to rank candidates in the presidential primary.
 - House Agriculture is considering H.165, the continuation of universal school meals, although it is not clear what taxes will be raised to pay for the initiative.
 - House and Senate committees are digging into major childcare legislation, including an expansion of pre-K to all public schools for 3- and 4-year-olds. The governor has proposed an increase in assistance to families, while many legislators are looking for a more expansive program that would require new taxes.
 - Sports betting, H.127, is under consideration in the House Government Operations Committee.
 - House and Senate committees are reviewing bills to build out more housing in Vermont, including statewide changes to zoning restrictions and the permitting process. A public hearing on housing will be held Feb. 16 at 5:00 pm. To testify, visit: [Legislature.Vermont.gov/links/public-hearing-on-housing](https://legislature.vermont.gov/links/public-hearing-on-housing). The hearing will also be available to watch live on YouTube at the following link: [Tinyurl.com/mkjmuahf](https://tinyurl.com/mkjmuahf).
- Harrison → 8

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TOWN OF
KILLINGTON
VERMONT

WARNING:
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL HEARING: March 6, 2023
&
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING: March 7, 2023

The legal voters of the Town of Killington, County of Rutland, State of Vermont are hereby warned and notified to meet at the Killington Town Office at 2706 River Road in Killington on Tuesday, March 7, 2023, from 7:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M. to vote by Australian ballot on the following Articles.

Legal voters are further warned that a public informational hearing will take place at the Killington Public Safety Building at 800 Killington Road in Killington and via electronic means on Monday, March 6, 2023, at 7:00 P.M. For information on how to participate in this public informational hearing, please see the Public Informational Hearing Notice and Agenda posted herewith.

Article 1. To elect the following town officers:

- a. A moderator for a term of one year;
- b. A selectboard member for a term of three years;
- c. A town clerk for a term of three years;
- d. A lister for a term of three years;
- e. A cemetery commissioner for a term of three years;
- f. A library trustee for a term of five years

Article 2. Shall property taxes be paid in three installments: the first due August 15, 2023, and overdue subject to interest after August 25, 2023; the second due November 15, 2023, and overdue subject to interest after November 25, 2023; and the third due February 15, 2024, with the total tax delinquent after February 25, 2024?

Article 3. Shall the voters approve total general fund expenditures of \$6,409,784, of which an estimated \$378,945 shall be applied from the 2022 general fund balance, \$4,367,100 shall be raised by property taxes, and \$1,735,700 in estimated non-property tax revenue for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2023?

Article 4. Shall general obligation bonds or notes of the Town of Killington in an amount not to exceed One Million Six Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$1,600,000), subject to reduction from available state and federal grants-in-aid and the application of available reserves, to be financed for a period not to exceed ten (10) years, be issued for the purpose of purchasing and renovating the property at 2046 US Route 4 to become the new Town Hall?

Article 5. Shall the Town Selectboard be authorized to pledge the full faith and credit of the Town to secure indebtedness or make direct payments for the purpose of funding one or more public improvements and related costs attributable to projects serving the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District, specifically:

- a) **Projects:** acquire and construct a municipal water system; construct new roads and upgrade existing roads and acquire those roads to ensure future maintenance.
- b) **Related Costs:** payment of or reimbursement for TIF eligible related costs incurred by the Town for the creation, implementation and administration of the TIF District, including costs paid to outside vendors, consultants, and various related fees and other expenses related to the TIF District, as well as direct municipal expenses such as departmental or personnel costs related to creating or administering the District to the extent they are paid from the municipal and not education incremental taxes and are otherwise reimbursed in accordance with law; in a total principal amount not to exceed \$47,000,000 (which will bring the total TIF District debt approved since the TIF District's creation to \$47,000,000) and to issue bonds, notes or make interfund loans for such purpose, in one or more series, and expend up to \$650,000 for related costs, which will bring the total related costs authorized by voters to \$650,000, with the understanding that tax increment from the properties within the TIF District shall be pledged and appropriated for the payment of such indebtedness or direct costs of the improvements?

Dated at Killington, Vermont this 30th day of January 2023.

Stephen Finneron

Christopher Karr

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MOUNTAIN TIMES

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

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GUEST COMMENTARY

Civility, respect in the public square

By Gov. Phil Scott
Editor's Note: At his weekly press conference Tuesday, Governor Phil Scott addressed concerning incidents seen at youth sporting events over the past several months, and the need for everyone to work to be better role models. A transcript of Scott's remarks follows.

Good afternoon. I want to start today by addressing some concerning incidents we've seen over the past few months at youth sporting events, from spectators in the stands using racial slurs at players of color, to the tragic violence in Alburgh recently.

Now, I understand the passion surrounding sports, but it's clear we have a problem, and we should not tolerate the hate. And it's not just at these events, or sporting events in general, or unique to Vermont. I believe it's a symptom of a much deeper problem, where there's far too much anger, and a lack of respect in our society. We're constantly being divided into camps, whether it's politics, religion, race, or social issues. Everything has turned into "us versus them."

Too many want to stoke fear — raise the temperature — which can sometimes lead to violence.

We see politicians convince their supporters that the other side is the "enemy," and some in the national media choose to ramp up conflicts to get more views... or increase their ratings. And when both politicians and (political commentators) are successful with those strategies, they end up pitting neighbors against neighbors.

Unfortunately, over the past several years, we're seeing more and more of that build up, and boil over. It leads to big problems, like storming the capitol, but also on a smaller scale, like what happened in Alburgh.

None of us should find this acceptable, and all of us have an obligation to tone down the rhetoric, recognize the humanity in everyone, including those we disagree with, and just be better role models for our kids.

The idea that a brawl would break out amongst adults, in front of their kids at a middle school basketball game, is just plain sad.

Our kids watch us every single day and many of them want to be just like us. What message are we sending, what are we teaching them about how to handle disagreements, when this is what they see?

I think we should all ask ourselves what we can do in our everyday lives to help bring down the temperature a bit and be a better human being.

Maybe it's deciding not to wade into that keyboard feud on social media with someone you've never met. Maybe instead of flipping off the driver who cut you off, you let it go, and reflect on the fact that you've probably made a mistake or two behind the wheel as well.

We also have a responsibility in this building too, from public servants, to lobbyists, and those who report on it. Not every disagreement has to be a "battle" or a "fight."

I think almost everyone here just wants to make Vermont a better place. So let's use that as the starting point.

Now, reasonable people can disagree on the issues. In fact, it's healthy to do so. But it doesn't mean we're not trying to do what we think is best, and it certainly doesn't mean we don't care about the wellbeing of others. We just have different thoughts and approaches on how to get there.

It all comes down to respect and civility, and doing our part to calm things down a bit when tensions are high, and things get heated. At the end of the day, whether you're a parent, co-worker, public servant, or leader in any capacity, the things we say and do carry much more weight than we might think.

So before acting, just remember—regardless of age—we're all role models for someone, and we all need to play our part. And it's never too late to be a better person.

It's never too late to be a better person.



Second Guessing Biden by Monte Wolverton, Battle Ground, WA

LETTERS

Vote yes for Killington Forward

Dear Editor,
I am writing to encourage all residents of Killington to vote 'yes' on March 7, for Killington forward, Article 5, on the town ballot.

Whether you are a senior citizen, as I am, or a new young family recently settled in our town, Killington Forward will have a profound effect on us and future residents for years to come.

Commit to making Killington relevant into the future.

Clean water, a newly designed Access Road, affordable housing and the new Six Peaks Village are all part of a comprehensive plan to propel us into the future.

With the Resort providing four season recreation, we already attract new business, residents and visitors. With TIF financing and grants to help pay for this new development, we will continue to be one of the top rated Vermont towns. We need to support the hard work and effort our town officials have put forth to make all of this possible.

Our new ice skating rink
Forward → 7

School board to hold another meeting on Feb. 27 in response to parents' express safety concerns

Dear Editor,
The WCUUSD School Board thanks everyone who joined our Feb. 6 meeting. We heard your concerns, stories, and desire for better communication and transparency regarding student safety.

Board members also continue to receive emails and to have conversations with parents and community members. It is truly encouraging to see so many people dedicated to the safety of our schools and the wellbeing of our students and school community.

After listening and considering next steps, the board will take the following actions:

To enable continued community involvement in this important issue and to promote transparency of School Board decision-making, a dedicated board meeting will be held Feb. 27 at 6:30 p.m. with public comment and open board discussion.

To further enable continued community involvement and information gathering, parents, faculty, and students will be invited to complete a survey about school culture. The School Board will discuss the results to further evaluate the strengths and needs of our

schools.

To evaluate the effectiveness of our current student behavior policies, school district staff will prepare a report and recommendations to the School Board on the positive behavior interventions & supports (PBIS) system currently in use in our schools to understand what's working and what needs to be improved.

To address student behavioral concerns at WES, school staff will work with the district finance team to provide a report and recommendations with associated costs for adding a new WES administrator position.

To improve communication and transparency to our communities, the School Board policy committee will work to draft and adopt new policies regarding emergency response, school safety, and communication.

To further improve communication and transparency to our communities, a new page will be added to the WCSU website dedicated to school safety. It will include the policies and procedures that guide decision making and what training is in place for

School safety → 7

Vermont House passes bill to protect women's rights in other states

Dear Editor,
The Vermont State House of Representatives closed the week by approving one of the most important bills I believe will come before us this year.

Vermonters overwhelmingly went to the polls in November and showed they want reproductive freedom and access to abortion protected in our state. Every single community in Vermont approved Article 22, which has now enshrined these rights in our state constitution.

Vermont has also consistently been a state where transgender rights are respected and the lifesaving importance of gender affirming care has been acknowledged. In the previous biennium the Legislature approved a resolution confirming this and condemning states that do not follow medically established best practices in regards to such medical care.

In other states, the rights of women are under attack with draconian anti-abortion laws. In other states best medical practices are consistently ignored and there have been a wave of anti-trans laws targeting

H.89 → 7

CAPITAL QUOTES

Gov. Nikki Haley, 51, of South Carolina announced her campaign for president in 2024 on Tuesday, Feb. 14. She's the only candidate to join Donald Trump so far, though a few others are expected to announce their campaign soon...

“Republicans have lost the popular vote in seven out of the last eight presidential elections. That has to change...You should know this about me: I don’t put up with bullies. And when you kick back, it hurts them more if you’re wearing heels,”

said **Nikki Haley**, announcing her candidacy, Tuesday.

“Nikki suffers from something that’s a very tough thing to suffer from: She’s overly ambitious,”

said **Donald Trump** in an interview with Hugh Hewitt earlier this month, according to Fox News.

“I think that, certainly, people here are willing to consider options other than Trump,”

said **Mick Mulvaney**, a former member of Congress from South Carolina who was Trump’s acting White House chief of staff.

“She started out as a Never Trumper before resigning to serve in the Trump admin. She then resigned early to go rake in money on corporate board. Now, she’s telling us she represents a ‘new generation.’ Sure just looks like more of the same, a career politician whose only fulfilled commitment is to herself,”

Taylor Budowich, a former Trump spokesperson and head of MAGA Inc., said in a statement.

COMMENTARY

Police accountability is a public safety issue

By James Lyall

Editor’s note: James Lyall is the executive director of ACLU of Vermont.

The Vermont affiliates of the NAACP and ACLU this month invited to Montpelier five family members whose loved ones were lost to police violence, and who are a part of the Love Not Blood Campaign. Their stories are a powerful reminder that our ongoing work to bring more oversight and accountability to policing is a matter of life and death, particularly in overpoliced communities of color.

They also remind us that Vermont is not an outlier or an exception. Our criminal legal system has some of the worst racial disparities in the country, and police data from across the state confirms what so many Black Vermonters continue to tell us: year after year: people of color are stopped, searched, ticketed, and prosecuted at much higher rates than their white counterparts.

Take Burlington, for example, where

Black people account for 6% of the population, but 21% of arrests. Burlington police last year were twice as likely to keep Black people in custody than white people, and half as likely to send Black people to diversion as an alternative to incarceration.

Studies of Vermont police data released in 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2020 all reached similar conclusions.

Unfortunately, as in years past, law enforcement officials continue to insist that police should be left to police themselves, while denying or downplay-

ing the extent of racial profiling in Vermont communities. Some go so far as to suggest that improving police oversight could deter police recruitment, as if we can’t expect new officers to be held accountable to the laws and values of the communities they serve.

It’s a cynical argument and a false choice, and Vermonters should reject it.

Accountability → 8

Vermont police data released in 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2020 all reached similar conclusions.

← **H.89:** Vermont House has passed a ‘shield bill’ to protect health care providers from page 6

transgender children and their supportive families. This is horrifying enough on its own, but some states have also adopted a series of laws that target health care providers in other states who provide abortion services or gender affirming care to residents of their state. This overreach is meant to intimidate and have a chilling effect beyond their own state borders. It is a means to attempt to erode freedoms and prevent important medical care in other states like ours.

To counter this, the Vermont House of Representatives passed H.89. This

is a “shield bill” that clearly establishes that Vermont will not assist such states in any investigations regarding actions in Vermont that they claim violate their anti-abortion or anti-transgender laws, nor will we honor any subpoenas or warrants that may emerge from such investigations in other states.

In passing H.89 your state representatives have made clear that we will protect our health care providers and be a safe haven for anyone who runs afoul of laws in other states that attack women’s ability to make their own choices

about their bodies or attempt to block best medical practices for transgender children. Vermonters can be proud of what this says about our state.

The bill passed by a large margin in the House: 130-13. Looking at it through a local lens, every Rutland County representative except one voted in favor of this bill. It moves on now to the Senate. I hope both the Senate and the governor act as quickly as possible to approve this bill and get these important protections in place.

Rep. William Notte,
Rutland city

← **Forward:** from page 6

was a small step in response to the continuing needs of our community. Now it’s time to take a giant step by supporting Article 5 and commit to making Killington relevant into the future. It will add to our tax base and promote opportunities for growth in many areas for a long time to come.

I urge you to vote yes for Killington forward, Article 5.
Gerrie Russell,
Killington

← **School safety:** District board invites comment from page 6

school staff.

The meeting Monday, Feb. 27, will take place at 6:30 p.m. in the WUHSMS Teagle Library, with the agenda published soon.

We invite all parents and community members to come, listen, share your thoughts and concerns, and to continue this important discussion as we work together to improve safety, behavior and education for all of our students.

Five new school board members are needed, one from Plymouth, one from Bridgewater, one from Killington and two from Woodstock.

We invite you to consider joining the School Board as we seek to elevate the importance of education in our communities.

Keri Bristow, WCUUSD
School Board Chair
Ben Ford, WCUUSD
School Board Vice-Chair

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Sherburne UCC "Little White Church," Killington, VT

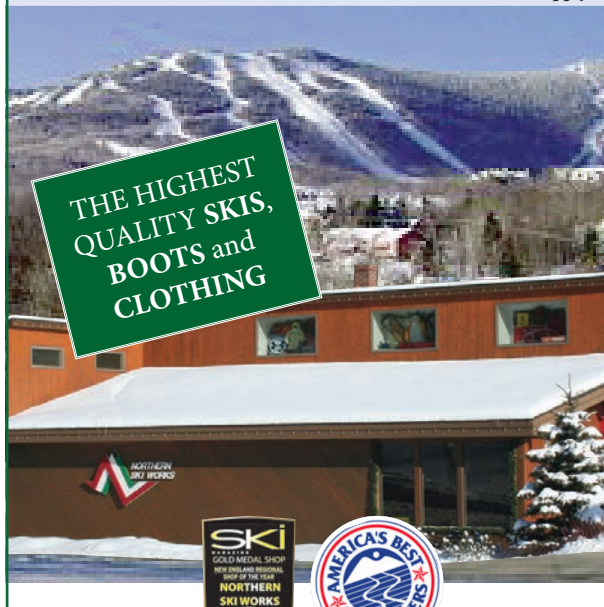


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TIF bond: Killington Select Board holds second public hearing on Article 5, explains TIF tool to finance debt
from page 1

be authorized to ... secure indebtedness ... not to exceed \$47,000,000 ... with the understanding that tax increment from the properties within the TIF District shall be pledged and appropriated for the payment of such indebtedness or direct costs of the improvements?"

Selectman Chris Karr said the plan meets both the town's needs and the developer's. Killington needs municipal water, improved roads, and more housing at all levels; the developer for Six Peaks Village needs basic water and road infrastructure to get the project off the ground, he explained.

"If voters approve Article 5, they will be approving needed municipal infrastructure at no cost to taxpayers," Select Board member Jim Haff added. "It's the added value of the land in the TIF district that will cover the cost of the town's bond payments over time — and that's guaranteed."

All of Phase 1 (water and road) will be paid for with Tax Increment Financing (TIF) — a tool for approved municipalities to finance public infrastructure serving a designated TIF district and spur private development that wouldn't happen "but for" that initial municipal investment. New private development incrementally increases the value of the grand list and that increment is used to pay the municipal bonds.

Thus, it does not raise municipal taxes.

By the numbers

Stephanie Clarke, vice president of White + Burke, real estate advisor to the Killington Forward project again explained how the TIF math for Phase 1 works specifically at the hearing Monday:

\$52 million in infrastructure investment (\$47 million of which to be voted on for debt in Phase 1) will produce an estimated \$295 million in increased property value. Taxes on that increased value will be used to pay off the bond debt.

Additionally, the town has secured \$2.3 million from an ARPA grant and \$3.6 million in drinking water in an "Emerging Contaminants" forgivable loan.

The plan

The long awaited Six Peaks Village has an Act 250 permit for over 32,000 square feet of commercial space, approximately 239 new units of housing consisting of condos, townhomes, and single-family homes. (The town's financing plan requires only a portion of the village to be developed to cover its Phase 1 investment costs — only 180 units.)

Great Gulf, the developer, has guaranteed the minimum bond payment in a development agreement with the town

signed Oct. 28, 2022. Great Gulf is the second largest private home builder in the United States, building about 5,000 units a year in the U.S.

"The developer has agreed for us to raise their property value to pay for the bond," Haff explained. "If the developer doesn't pay, it goes to a tax sale, and ... the developer is pledging 180 units will be sold, if they're not they still have to cover that cost."

The annual cost to pay off a debt of the \$47 million bond, starts at \$2.5 million and grows to \$4 million, Michael Sneyd, president of the North American Resort Residential division of Great Gulf further specified.

What's in it for residents?

In short: a municipal water system that ensures water quality and quantity along Killington Road and a new and improved Killington Road, including new sidewalks, bus pull-offs, pedestrian crosswalks, intersection improvements, lighting, new fire hydrants, and landscaping improvements (all of which were needed, but would have been an unreasonable burden to taxpayers without TIF).

Workforce housing

Another common concern among residents is the need for workforce housing.

"Municipal water and sewer are required before housing trusts will talk to us," said Haff. "We have sewer, but we need a plan for water before we can even begin the conversation about workforce rate development. All this is contingent on a positive vote on Article 5. We simply need that to get started."

At the Resort's community update this Thursday, Feb. 16, an announcement is expected to be made regarding plans and possibly the location for a planned workforce housing development.

Timing

If Article 5 passes on Town Meeting Day, March 7, projects will begin this coming spring and summer 2023. Those projects include the beginning of the municipal water system in "The Flats," the road from Route 4 to Anthony Way and the dry water line in that section for future use and the beginning of the Six Peaks Village. The new road in the village will be constructed in 2024. The first phase of the municipal water system is expected to be completed by the end of 2024 or early 2025.

For more information and past stories related to TIF and Killington Forward, visit: mountaintimes.info/tif.



Accountability: Policing practices examined
from page 7

The fact is, we can have both safer communities and more accountable police. As the Love Not Blood Campaign reminds us, true public safety—encompassing all community members, including those who are overpoliced and discriminated against—requires more police accountability, not less.

The good news is that Vermonters have ample opportunities this year to win overdue police reforms. Towns like Bennington and Burlington—both with long histories of biased policing—are considering whether to empower civilian oversight of their police departments.

Related citizen oversight legislation is up for consideration in the State House, along with several other police reform proposals.

One would limit police enforcement of minor vehicle infractions that are often used as pretexts for traffic stops, and could drastically reduce profiling and racial disparities in traffic enforcement. Another would prevent police from lying to children in interrogations, a practice that is still allowed in Vermont and has been known to contribute to false confessions and wrongful convictions.

As our state considers ways to enhance police accountability and reimagine law enforcement's role in our communities, it is imperative that we prioritize racial justice and center the voices of those who are impacted by unjust policing practices.

Vermont voters and their representatives have some golden opportunities to do that this year.



Harrison: Legislative priorities are shaping up
from page 4

- House General & Housing is taking up H.66, the paid family leave bill. The measure provides up to 12 weeks of paid leave for each employee and is funded by a new payroll tax on wages. Scott favors a voluntary plan that does not require new taxes. A lobbyist for one of the organizations supporting the bill, has suggested lawmakers ignore the governor's concerns and override his veto if it comes to that.
- Senate Appropriations is expected to complete its work on the annual Budget Adjustment Act, H.145, this week. It is unknown how they will consider Scott's objection to the extra \$90 million of spending the House added to its version of the bill, including another \$21 million to continue the hotel voucher program without restrictions.
- Sen. Ruth Hardy, D-Addison, along with 10 co-sponsors, introduced S.66, which aims to limit school choice to only public schools with a couple of exceptions, like Burr and Burton and St. Johnsbury Academy. Other independent or private schools would no longer be eligible to receive public tuition payments under the proposal.

The 2023 session is scheduled to wrap up by early to mid-May. The ultimate shape of what's to come may be in the eyes of the beholder. Stay tuned....

Jim Harrison is a state house representative for Chittenden, Killington, Mendon and Pittsfield. He can be reached at: JHarrison@leg.state.vt.us or harrisonforvermont.com.

WORDPLAY

'LIBRARY' word search: Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally and backwards

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

ALPHABETICAL
BINDING
BOOKS
BORROW
CAMPUS

CARD
CATALOG
CHECKOUT
COMPUTERS
GENRE

LEARNING
LIBRARIAN
LIBRARY
MEETING
MEMBER

PERIODICALS
QUIET
REFERENCE
RESEARCH

RETURN
SCHOOL
STUDY

SUDOKU

Solutions → 31

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

Level: Intermediate

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Solutions → 31

CLUES ACROSS

1. River in Tuscany
5. A way to represent
8. Rocker's guitar
12. Civil Rights group
14. Brew
15. Scratch
16. W. Asian country
18. The Eye Network
19. Clarified butter
20. Part of the Cascade Range
21. Downwind
22. A way to steer
23. Loop
26. Not ingested
30. Swampy coniferous forest
31. Musician
32. Signing
33. Containing iron
34. Part of a theorem or proof
39. Veterans battle-ground (slang)
42. Of enormous proportions
44. Italian city
46. Come before
47. Balm
49. Undergarments
50. Male parent

51. Ropes
56. Ear part
57. Investment vehicle
58. Dictator
59. Cain and ____
60. A type of code
61. Border river along India and Nepal
62. It's what's for dinner
63. Consume
64. Christian ____, designer

CLUES DOWN

1. Cuckoos
2. Skin issue
3. City in central Japan
4. Sorrels
5. Twinned diamond
6. Canadian province
7. Monetary units
8. Head honcho
9. Goddess of wisdom
10. Part of a play
11. Get rid of
13. Applicant
17. Bowling alleys have many
24. Explosive
25. "The Say Hey Kid"
26. Ultrahigh frequency

1	2	3	4					5	6	7			8	9	10	11
12				13				14					15			
16					17			18					19			
20								21					22			
				23		24					25					
26	27	28	29					30								
31								32								
33											34	35	36	37	38	
				39	40	41		42	43							
		44	45					46								
	47						48									
49					50				51		52	53	54	55		
56					57				58							
59					60					61						
62					63						64					

27. No (Scottish)
28. Make a mistake
29. Credit card term
35. Keyboard key
36. Woman (French)
37. In the middle of

38. Score perfectly
40. Coat a metal with an oxide coat
41. Deadly disease
42. A place to dock a boat (abbr.)

43. Belch
44. Member of U.S. Navy
45. "In ____": separate from others
47. Examine extensively
48. Adjust

Guess Who?

I am a singer and actress born in California on February 15, 1986. I unsuccessfully auditioned for “American Idol” when I was 17. However, I rose to fame on a television series about a high school chorus.

Answer: Amber Riley

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WEDNESDAY FEB. 15

Early Literacy Playgroup

10 a.m.-noon Fox Room, Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St, Rutland. Free. A fun playgroup for your 2-5 year old. Miss Allie, A certified teacher hosts.

Storytime!

10:30-11 a.m. Kimball Library, 67 N Main St, Randolph. Free. Join Kimball Library for songs, books, and crafts during storytime. Recommended for ages 2-6 but all are welcome. The event will be held outside, weather permitting. For more info visit kimballlibrary.org.

Winter Story Time

10:30-11:30 a.m. Fletcher Memorial Library, 88 Main Street, Ludlow. Free. Story Time is the perfect opportunity for children and caregivers to make new friends, practice early literacy and language skills and have fun! Each week features stories, songs and hands on art or STEM activities. For more info visit: fmlnews.org.

Vermont Historical Society announces its Winter Speaker Series. African Americans in Vermont, 1790-1870 with Jane Williamson.

12-1 p.m. 09 State Street Pavilion Building (next to the State House), Montpelier. Jane Williamson has been researching and documenting the lives of Black Vermonters for more than a decade. Many of these Vermonters were highly successful and integrated into their communities as church members, parents of schoolchildren, farmers, and homeowners. Their stories have often been overlooked, and Williamson brings to bear a variety of research methods and questions to highlight their contributions to Vermont history. For more info visit:vermonthistory.org

Saving the American Chestnut

6-7:30 p.m. Fox Room, Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St, Rutland. Free. Tom Estill of the VT/NH Chapter of The American Chestnut Foundation speaks on the history of the American Chestnut tree and recent scientific discoveries revealing the exciting possibility of a new blight resistant American Chestnut tree to be released into the wild. For more info visit: rutlandfree.org.

Movers and Shakers

11 a.m. Godnick Center, 1 Deer Street in Rutland. Free. A program of low-impact exercise is designed for people with Parkinson's, or anyone else who wishes to maintain or improve flexibility, strength, and balance in a supportive and relaxing environment. Start your week off right and work out with us. Call 802-773-1853 to reserve your spot. For more information call 802-236-2543 or email: mroussel01@comcast.net.

Rutland Free Library Book Club Book Club

1:00-3:00 p.m. Fox Room, Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St., Rutland. Free. Your monthly book discussion group, all are welcome! For more info visit: rutlandfree.org or for questions, please contact facilitator Al Wilkinson at alwilkin@comcast.net.

Public skate

3-4:10 p.m. Union Arena, 80 Amsden Way in Woodstock. \$6 ages 13-up, \$5 ages 4-12, free ages 3-under. Rental Skates are available! \$6/pair. Rink is open for public skate! UnionArena.org

RNESU School Board Meeting

5-6 p.m. Otter Valley Union High School Library, 2997 Franklin Street in Brandon or online/dial In. Free. Join to discuss pertinent issues. All board information, including a link to participate are available at: mesu.org.

Figure Drawing with Live Model

5-7 p.m. Chaffee Art Center, 16 South Main Street in Rutland. Cost is \$20. 3rd Wednesday of each month from 5-7 p.m. Bring your own supplies. Sign up for 4 weeks at \$60 or \$20 per class. Must RSVP. For more info visit: chaffeeartcenter.org.

Keb Mo' at Paramount Theatre

7:30 p.m. 30 Center Street in Rutland. Tickets: \$40, \$50, \$60, \$70 + tax/fees. Please note: Complimentary vouchers are not redeemable for this performance. With five GRAMMYS, 14 Blues Foundation Awards, and a groundbreaking career spanning nearly 50 years under his belt, Keb' Mo' stands as one of the most accomplished and respected artists working in contemporary roots music today. For more info visit:paramount.org.

THURSDAY FEB. 16

Tomásio: Abstractions of a Metaphorical World.

8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Castleton University Bank Gallery, 104 Merchants Row in Rutland. Thomas Hacker or Tomásio's robust energetic acrylic paintings explode off the canvas is every imaginable hue. These multilayered works ask the viewer to look into themselves to find the organization and abstract forms shifting in the pigment. For more info visit: castleton.edu/arts/art-galleries.

Bone Builders Mendon Seniors

10 a.m. Roadside Chapel, 1680 Townline Road, Mendon. Free. Join Mendon Seniors for their bone building session every Tuesday and Thursday. For more info call Pat 802-422-3368.

Circle of Parents

10 a.m. Virtual. Free. Virtual. Circle of Parents is a professionally facilitated, peer led self-help support group for parents and other caregivers. Participants meet weekly for 60-90 minutes online in virtual meetings. For more info and to join a group contact Amber at amenard@pcavt.org or 802-498-0603.

Killington Bone Builders

10 a.m. Sherburne Memorial Library, 2998 River Road, Killington. Free. In the meeting room at Sherburne Memorial Library. Weights provided. For more info visit: sherburnelibrary.org.

Homeschool Club: Musical Instrument

Petting Zoo

11 a.m.-Noon Fox Room, Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St., Rutland. Free. Join us in the Fox Room for this Homeschool Club gathering. Ms. Helen from Green Mountain Music is providing us with a Musical Instrument Petting Zoo! She'll be here with a ton of her instruments for you to test out. For more info visit: rutlandfree.org.

Drive-up pick-up meals

12 p.m. Godnick Center, 1 Deer Street, Rutland. \$3.50 donation ages 65+, \$6 fee under age 65. Reservations required. Godnick Center, in partnership with Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging and Meals on Wheels, is providing drive-up pick-up meals on Mondays and Thursdays at noon at the Godnick Center. For more info. visit namivt.org/support/peer-support-groups.

Circle of Parents in Recovery

3 p.m. Virtual. Free. Support group meets weekly online on Thursdays from 3-4:30 p.m. For more info visit: pcavt.org.

NAMI Connection peer support group

3 p.m. Virtual. Free. Struggling with managing your mental health? NAMI Connection Peer Support Group can help. This is a free, 90-minute recovery support group for people living with a mental health condition. For more info visit: namivt.org.

Circle of Parents for Grandparents

4 p.m. Virtual. Free. Meets weekly online. Run by Prevent Child Abuse VT. For more info visit: pcavt.org.

Kids' Painting Class

4-5:30 p.m. Chaffee Art Center, 16 South Main Street in Rutland. \$25.00 Learn to paint an owl with acrylic paint on canvas. For more info visit: chaffeeartcenter.org.

Yoga with Kellie

4-5 p.m. Rutland Free Library 10 Court St, Rutland. Free. Join Kellie for yoga weekly in the Fox Room. For more info visit: rutlandfree.org.

VINS: A Forest of Lights

5-7 p.m. VINS, 149 Natures Way, Quechee. \$10/adults. \$5/youth (4-17). The VINS Forest Canopy Walk and surrounding woodland will take on a festive look and feel this winter. Covered in thousands of lights, the Forest Canopy Walk will glow with magic and enchantment. Visitors are invited to stroll through the immersive forest of lights and experience the peace and wonder of the Forest Canopy Walk at night. For more info or to purchase tickets visit vinsweb.org.

Sip N Dip at Chaffee Art Center

6-8 p.m. Chaffee Art Center, 16 South Main Street in Rutland. Cost is \$35. Perfect for a date night or just out with friends! Attendees follow along with an instructor and leave with a finished painting. Must pre-register for this event at info@chaffeeartcenter.org or at chaffeeartcenter.square.site.



Film Noir Series Wallingford Town Hall, a Classic Film "D.O.A."

7-9 p.m. 75 School Street in Wallingford. Free. These noir films are all about guys and gals that never get a break, but they don't give up! There's always a new caper to solve. Insightful commentary that will welcome audience participation. Please remember to bring a comfy cushion for our humble metal folding chairs. For more info email: jordan.jankus@gmail.com.

Open gym: basketball

7-9 p.m. Killington Elementary School Gymnasium, 686 School House Road, Killington. \$5 at the door or \$20 for a 10-visit punch card. Open gym will run until March. Thursdays will be basketball. The cost of entry is either \$5 at the door or you can purchase a 10-visit punch card for \$20. Cash payments or checks will be accepted, no credit cards. You may not purchase punch cards in advance. For more info visit: Killingtonvt.myrec.com.

FRIDAY FEB. 17

Tomásio: Abstractions of a Metaphorical World.

8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Castleton University Bank Gallery, 104 Merchants Row in Rutland. Thomas Hacker or Tomásio's robust energetic acrylic paintings explode off the canvas is every imaginable hue. These multilayered works ask the viewer to look into themselves to find the organization and abstract forms shifting in the pigment. For more info visit: castleton.edu/arts/art-galleries.

Rutland Winterfest: A Forest Tale

9 a.m. Pine Hill Trails, at Giorgetti Park, 2 Oak Street Extension in Rutland. Free. Walk the Lower Giorgetti trail at Pine Hill Park and discover a forest tale along the trail. Dress warm and for walking in the woods. A winter tale will be up all of February. Take photos of your adventure and tag @comealiveoutside on FB and Instagram to have your photos featured on our social media! Rutlandrec.com/winterfestevents.

Great Backyard Bird Count

Anytime Anywhere. Free. Join birdwatchers around the world for the Great Backyard Bird Count. You can count on any or all of the four days for little as 15 minutes, or as long as you want. This is a great activity for families (and shut-ins)! Count birds in your backyard or your favorite outdoor location. For more info on the event and how to participate: Birdcount.org or birding@rutlandcountyaudubon.org.

Magic of Maple @ Billings Farm & Museum

10 a.m.-4 p.m. Billings Farm & Museum, 69 Old River Road in Woodstock. Cost is \$5 for youth, \$10 adult. Learn all about maple syrup traditions in Vermont and enjoy the beautiful Billings Farm & Museum site in winter. Vermont's rich maple history will be on display through photographs from the Top Acres Farm and Billings Farm collection, and a showcase of tools used for tapping, sugaring, and processing. For more info visit: billingsfarm.org.



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All about the arts for ages 3-5

11 a.m.-12 p.m. Chaffee Art Center, 16 South Main Street, Rutland. Free. Students will have fun creating and doing activities with art, music, literature, and more with instructor Lori Sullivan. One free book per student will be given weekly (while supplies last) thanks to our partners at Rutland Free Library. Adult must accompany children under age 4 and must pre-register by Wednesday each week. The class requires a minimum of three students. For more info visit chaffeeartcenter.org.

Art Adventures for ages 2-5

9:30-10:30 a.m. Chaffee Art Center, 16 South Main Street, Rutland. \$20/class. Every Friday students will create an art project based on an adventure into the land of Book Nook Discovery. One free book will be given every class thanks to our partners at Rutland Free Library. For more info visit chaffeeartcenter.org.

Lego Play

2-5 p.m. Kimball Library, 67 N Main St, Randolph. Free. Come to the Kimball library on Friday afternoons for free play and creative building. For more info visit kimballlibrary.org.

Tube to the Tunes

3:30-5:30 p.m. Jackson Gore Village at Okemo Ski Resort in Ludlow. Free. Come snowtubing at Jackson Gore this season! Cruise down the course and enjoy tunes from DJ Dave under the lights. For more info visit: okemo.com.

La Leche League of Rutland County

3:30-4:30 p.m. Fox Room Rutland Free Library 10 Court St., Rutland. Free. LLL is a free breastfeeding peer support group, we offer peer support and helpful information related to parents and their breastfeeding journey. For more info visit: rutlandfree.org.

VINS: A Forest of Lights

5-7 p.m. VINS, 149 Natures Way, Quechee. \$10/adults. \$5/youth (4-17). Joining the festivities this year will be Boston Bruins national anthem singer Todd Angilly, a For more info or to purchase tickets visit vinsweb.org.

SATURDAY FEB. 18

Tomásio: Abstractions of a Metaphorical World

8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Castleton University Bank Gallery, 104 Merchants Row in Rutland. Thomas Hacker or Tomásio's robust energetic acrylic paintings explode off the canvas is every imaginable hue. These multilayered works ask the viewer to look into themselves to find the organization and abstract forms shifting in the pigment. For more info visit: castleton.edu/arts/art-galleries.

Audubon West Rutland Marsh Monitoring Walk

8 a.m. Meet at the marsh boardwalk kiosk on Marble Street. Free. Join our friendly and knowledgeable birders on our monthly marsh walk in this Audubon Important Bird Area. No experience necessary. Go the entire 3.7 mile loop or go halfway. All are welcome! More info: birding@rutlandcountyaudubon.org

Great Backyard Bird Count

Anytime Anywhere. Free. Join birdwatchers around the world for the Great Backyard Bird Count. You can count on any or all of the four days for little as 15 minutes, or as long as you want. This is a great activity for families (and shut-ins)! Count birds in your backyard or your favorite outdoor location. For more info on the event and how to participate: www.birdcount.org or birding@rutlandcountyaudubon.org.

Intensive One Day Stone Carving Workshop

9 a.m.-4 p.m. The Carving Studio and Sculpture Center, 636 Marble Street, P.O. Box 495 in West Rutland. REGISTER: \$175 he Carving Studio and Sculpture Center announces a hands-on workshop exploring the creative potential of alabaster Saturday, February 18. Instructor Nora Valdez will discuss the carving process from concept to finishing. For more info visit Carvingstudio.org/event.

Magic of Maple @ Billings Farm & Museum

10 a.m.-4 p.m. Billings Farm & Museum, 69 Old River Road in Woodstock. \$5y-\$10ad. Learn all about maple syrup traditions in Vermont and enjoy the beautiful Billings Farm & Museum site in winter. Vermont's rich maple history will be on display through photographs from the Top Acres Farm and Billings Farm collection, and a showcase of tools used for tapping, sugaring, and processing. For more info visit: billingsfarm.org.

Winter Farmers Market

10 a.m.-2 p.m. Franklin Conference Center, 1 Scale Avenue, Suite 92, Rutland. Free. Shop fresh food and crafts from local farmers and artisans. For more info visit: vtfarmersmarket.org.

Virtual Sculpture Workshop for Young Artists (Ages 12-16)

10:15-11:30 a.m. The Carving center and Sculpture Studio. 636 Marble St. West Rutland. Cost is \$50. In this 4 week workshop, we will meet for 1 hour and 15 minutes at a time, every Saturday through February, and explore how to create a successful and meaningful sculpture. We will do so using super sculpey clay. For more info visit: info@carvingstudio.org.

Integrated Digital Organization of Your Genealogy Research

10:30 a.m.-Noon. Virtual/Rutland. Cost is \$10. Keeping track of your genealogy research effectively can be a challenge. Take your genealogy research to the next level by creating an integrated digital system. In this talk Suzanne Blanchard will take you through a step-by-step review of the research process and the benefits and challenges of integrating digital systems to keep track of your progress and secure your work. This class for the Vermont Genealogy Library will be a Zoom webinar from 10:30 to noon. Please visit our website, vtgenlib.org for additional details and for registration. Please visit our website, vtgenlib.org for additional details and for registration.

Puppet Making for Kids Ages 5-9

10:30 a.m.-Noon. Chaffee Art Center, 16 South Main Street in Rutland. \$25 per class or 3 classes at \$60. Learn to make different types of handcrafted puppets. Pre-registration required. For more info visit chaffeeartcenter.org.

Rutland Railroad Museum & model club

11 a.m.-3 p.m. 79 Depot Lane (off Route 4) Center Rutland. Free. Held in the Hawkfly or Neale Pavilion. For more info visit: rutlandrailway.org.

Next Steps In Handmade Books

1-3 p.m. Gallery at the Vault. 68 Main St. Springfield. Cost is \$7-30. Learn to create sewn and adhesive bindings. For more info visit: galleryvault.org.

Killington Hosts: Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream Social.

3-4 p.m. Snowshed or Ramshead Base Lodge at Killington Resort. Free. It's been a Minter Wonderland here in Killington so far and needless to say, it has been Oat of This Swirled! Join us for a Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream Social we're sure you Pecan't Resist. For more info visit: killington.com.

Music, Film & Food Soiree

3-7:30 p.m. Billings farm & Museum, 53 Elm Street in Woodstock. \$75/ person, \$85 at the door. Members are \$65 each. Join us Saturday for a fabulous film, live jazz, specialty cocktails from the bayou, and delicious New Orleans-inspired cooking. "Jazz Fest: A New Orleans Story" a film screening in the Billings Farm Visitor Center Theater. For more info visit: billingsfarm.org.

Presidents' Week Torchlight Parade & Party

4-8 p.m. Sakedena Six Ski Resort, 247 Stage Road, Pomfret Come celebrate winter with us at Saskadena Six! Sign up to ski down The Face and create the magical parade of lights, or bring the family and enjoy the view. Torchlight Parade will begin shortly after sunset followed by family festivities, Top Hat Entertainment cranking out tunes, and a cash bar (until 9pm). For more info visit: woodstockvt.com/events.

VINS: A Forest of Lights

5-7 p.m. VINS, 149 Natures Way, Quechee. Cost is \$10/adults and \$5/ youth (4-17). The VINS Forest Canopy Walk and surrounding woodland will take on a festive look and feel this winter. Covered in thousands of lights, the Forest Canopy Walk will glow with magic and enchantment. Visitors are invited to stroll through the immersive forest of lights and experience the peace and wonder of the Forest Canopy Walk at night. To purchase tickets visit vinsweb.org. For more info or to purchase tickets visit vinsweb.org.

Community Ice Skating

5-7 p.m. Giorgetti Arena, 2 Oak Street Extension in Rutland. Join Mission City Church for night of free ice skating for the community at Giorgetti Arena! Any age is welcome -and encouraged- to attend. Hot chocolate will be served and participants may want to wear warmer garments, and even gloves. Free skate rentals are available depending on availability, and folks are of course welcome to bring their own. Rutlandrec.com/winterfestevents.

SUNDAY FEB. 19

Magic of Maple

10 a.m.-4 p.m. Billings Farm & Museum, 69 Old River Road in Woodstock. Cost is \$5 for youth, \$10 adult. Learn all about maple syrup traditions in Vermont and enjoy the beautiful Billings Farm & Museum site in winter. Vermont's rich maple history will be on display through photographs from the Top Acres Farm and Billings Farm collection, and a showcase of tools used for tapping, sugaring, and processing. For more info visit: billingsfarm.org.

Complimentary Photos at the Peak

10a.m.-2 p.m. Killington Peak, Killington Ski Resort. Free. Have the perfect picture snapped at the second highest point in Vermont: Killington Peak! Our expansive 360° views make a breathtaking backdrop helping you remember your visit for years to come. Brian Farnum, a local professional photographer, will be on site at the top of the K-1 Gondola providing complimentary photos. killington.com/things-to-do/events/events-calendar.

Public skate

10:10-11:20 a.m. Union Arena, 80 Amsden Way in Woodstock. \$6 ages 13-up, \$5 ages 4-12, free ages 3-under. Rental Skates are available! \$6/pair. Rink is open for public skate! UnionArena.org

Tapestry Weaving with Mallory Zondag

12-4:30 p.m. Green Mountain Yarn & Fiber, 217 Woodstock Ave, Suite E, Rutland. Cost is \$125. Learn the hands on art of tapestry weaving and create a textured colorful tapestry for your home! Using a frame loom and a variety of materials such as silk, wool roving and yarn, you will learn how to warp a frame loom, how to weave and how to create patterns and textures using multiple techniques. For more info visit: greenmountainfibers.com.

Ethan Allen Homestead Museum - February

Enrichment Lecture

2 p.m. Ethan Allen Homestead Museum in Ethan Allen Homestead Park off VT Rt. 127 and via Zoom. "Why We Should Blame New England's Fish for Capitalism", by Zachary Bennett Norwich University professor Zachary Bennett will explore the important role nature played in the 18th century, (rather than decisions of the people), for society's transition to capitalism. For more info visit: ethanallenhomestead.org.

Open gym: intermediate/advanced pickleball

2-4 p.m. Killington Elementary School Gymnasium, 686 School House Road, Killington. \$5 at the door or \$20 for a 10-visit punch card. Open gym will run until March. Sundays will be pickleball (for intermediate/ advanced level players). The cost of entry is either \$5 at the door or you can purchase a 10-visit punch card for \$20. Cash payments or checks will be accepted, no credit cards. You may not purchase punch cards in advance. For more info visit: Killingtonvt.myrec.com.

Great Backyard Bird Count

Anytime Anywhere. Free. Join birdwatchers around the world for the Great Backyard Bird Count. You can count on any or all of the four days for little as 15 minutes, or as long as you want. This is a great activity for families (and shut-ins)! Count birds in your backyard or your favorite outdoor location. For more info on the event and how to participate: www.birdcount.org or birding@rutlandcountyaudubon.org.

Woodstock VT Film Series: Jazz Fest: A New Orleans Story

3-5 p.m. Billings Farm and Museum, 69 Old River Rd. in Woodstock. \$12-15. A deep-dive into the eponymous iconic hymn, Hallelujah: Leonard Cohen, A Journey, A Song chronicles the life of legendary musician Leonard Cohen, whose poetry evolved into a successful career as a singer-songwriter. Inspired by the book The Holy or the Broken: Leonard Cohen, Jeff Buckley & the Unlikely Ascent of Hallelujah by Alan Light, Leonard's story is told here by those who knew and loved him, including record executive Clive Davis and collaborator Judy Collins, who chart Leonard's life, from his beginnings as a child from a wealthy family in Montreal through his multi-year stint in a Zen monastery—as a man and an artist. For more info visit: billingsfarm.org.

Ethan Allen Homestead Museum's Book Club

3 p.m. Via Zoom Cost: Adults \$15, students (ages 5-17) \$7. Under 5 are free. Seven Years of Grace: The Inspired Mission of Ascha W. Sprague by Sara Rath published by the Vermont Historical Society. Seven Years of Grace is an historical novel, based on a true story and steeped in primary source research, about Achsa W. Sprague (1827–1862) of Plymouth, Vermont, one of America's best-known Spiritualists of the 19th century. In addition to Spiritualism, Sprague was active in the abolition of slavery, women's rights, and prison reform. Her muse? Another woman's husband. For more info visit: ethanallenhomestead.org.

Kids Corner Holiday Activities

4-5:30 p.m. All activities take place on the 3rd floor of the Snowshed Lodge at Killington Ski Resort. Free. After an amazing afternoon on the hill with the family, make sure to join us this Presidents' Weekend in the Snowshed Base Lodge for kid-friendly activities for the whole family to enjoy. Activities will include coloring, cookie decorating, pom-pom launchers, & more! Each day's crafts will leave your child with a souvenir to bring home (or eat, if your decorated cookie looks too good to wait for). For the big kids at heart, we'll have live music on the same floor of the Snowshed lodge throughout the weekend. killington.com/things-to-do/events/events-calendar/kids-corner-activities.

Okemo Torchlight Parade

5-8 p.m. Clock Tower Base Area and The Bull Restaurant & Bar. Free. Hangout at The Bull Restaurant & Bar and experience an amazing torchlight parade of skiers and riders traversing Okemo. For more info visit: okemo.com.

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MONDAY FEB. 20

Winter Wonders Camp

9 a.m.-4 p.m. Billings Farm & Museum, 69 Old River Road in Woodstock. Cost is \$200 for Billings Farm members, \$250 for non-members, \$50 discount for a sibling "Fun"tastic activities will include outdoor adventures, cooking over a campfire, snow and wildlife explorations, sledding, and winter crafts. A camper's day might include: making hot cocoa and popcorn over an open fire, scavenger hunt in the Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park, experimenting with oobleck, meeting our farm animals and learning what animals do in the winter and more. For more info visit: billingsfarm.org.

Public skate

1:40 p.m.-3 p.m. Union Arena, 80 Amsden Way in Woodstock. \$6 ages 13-up, \$5 ages 4-12, free ages 3-under. Rental Skates are available! \$6/pair. Rink is open for public skate! UnionArena.org

Magic of Maple

10 a.m.-4 p.m. Billings Farm & Museum, 69 Old River Road in Woodstock. \$5y-\$10ad. Learn all about maple syrup traditions in Vermont and enjoy the beautiful Billings Farm & Museum site in winter. Vermont's rich maple history will be on display through photographs from the Top Acres Farm and Billings Farm collection, and a showcase of tools used for tapping, sugaring, and processing. For more info visit: billingsfarm.org.

Open gym: intermediate/advanced pickleball

2-4 p.m. Killington Elementary School Gymnasium, 686 School House Road, Killington. \$5 at the door or \$20 for a 10-visit punch card. Open gym will run until March. Sundays will be pickleball (for intermediate/advanced level players). The cost of entry is either \$5 at the door or you can purchase a 10-visit punch card for \$20. Cash payments or checks will be accepted, no credit cards. You may not purchase punch cards in advance. For more info visit: Killingtonvt.myrec.com.

Great Backyard Bird Count

Anytime Anywhere. Free. Join birdwatchers around the world for the Great Backyard Bird Count. You can count on any or all of the four days for little as 15 minutes, or as long as you want. This is a great activity for families (and shut-ins)! Count birds in your backyard or your favorite outdoor location. For more info on the event and how to participate: www.birdcount.org or birding@rutlandcountyaudubon.org.

Babies and Toddler Rock

10-10:30 a.m. Fox Room, Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St, Rutland. Free. A music and pre-literacy program for children 0-24 months with Linda McFarlane. Free and open to all. For more info visit: rutlandfree.org.

A Community of Parents

10 a.m. Wonderfeet Kids' Museum, 11 Center Street, Rutland. Free. The community meets from 10-11:30 a.m. at Wonderfeet Kids' Museum. Snacks provided, siblings welcome. Find connection, education, and a community to share with. They're here to support you during the transition of adding a new baby or child to your family - or whenever you need a community of parents to listen! All parents including expecting parents and caregivers welcome. For more info visit bit.ly/frontlineworkerssupport.

Killington Bone Builders

10 a.m. Sherburne Memorial Library, 2998 River Road, Killington. Free. In the meeting room at Sherburne Memorial Library. Weights provided. For more info visit kimballlibrary.org.

Puppet Making

10:30 a.m.-noon. Chaffee Art Center, 16 South Main Street, Rutland. Cost is \$25. Pre reg. required. Puppet-making for ages 5-9. Learn to make various types of puppets from paper bag puppets to paper plate and sock puppets. For more info visit chaffeeartcenter.org.

Drive-up pick-up meals

12 p.m. Godnick Center, 1 Deer Street in Rutland. \$3.50 donation ages 65+, \$6 fee under age 65. Reservations required. Godnick Center, in partnership with Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging and Meals on Wheels, is providing drive-up pick-up meals on Mondays and Thursdays at noon at the Godnick Center. Call (802)773-1853 for information or to make a reservation for pick-up.

Bingo

1:15 p.m. Godnick Center, 1 Deer Street in Rutland. Cost varies. Come play bingo at the Gonic Center in Rutland on Mondays at 1:15 p.m. This is a drop-in activity.

Kids Corner Holiday Activities.

4-5:30 p.m. 3rd floor of the Snowshed Lodge at Killington Ski Resort. Free. Make sure to join us this Presidents' Weekend in the Snowshed Base Lodge for kid-friendly activities for the whole family to enjoy. Activities will include coloring, cookie decorating, pom-pom launchers, & more! Each day's crafts will leave your child with a souvenir to bring home (or eat, if your decorated cookie looks too good to wait for). For the big kids at heart, we'll have live music on the same floor of the Snowshed lodge throughout the weekend. killington.com/things-to-do/events/events-calendar/kids-corner-activities.

Knit Night

6 p.m. Kimball Library, 67 N Main St, Randolph. Free. Bring your knitting - or other handicraft - and enjoy an evening of crafting and socializing. For all ages and experience levels. For more info visit kimballlibrary.org.

Open gym: indoor soccer

7-9 p.m. Killington Elementary School Gymnasium, 686 School House Road, Killington. \$5 at the door or \$20 for a 10-visit punch card. Open gym will run Mondays until March for indoor soccer. The cost of entry is either \$5 at the door or you can purchase a 10-visit punch card for \$20. Cash payments or checks will be accepted, no credit cards. You may not purchase punch cards in advance. For more info visit: Killingtonvt.myrec.com.

NAMI Connection peer support group

7 p.m. Virtual. Free. Struggling with managing your mental health? NAMI Connection Peer Support Group can help. This is a free, 90-minute recovery support group for people living with a mental health condition. For more info visit: namivt.org.

The Rutland Extension Master Gardener Group presents Martha Molnar

7 p.m. The Godnick Center, 1 Deer St. in Rutland. Martha Leb Molnar has a certificate in Botany from the NY Botanical Gardens. she is a freelance writer and commentator, and will talk about her new book, *Playing God in the Garden: How I Learned to Admire My Weeds*. In the book she talks about how she and her husband, having found their dream acreage in Vermont, try to stave off non-native invasives. This is not just for gardeners For more info visit: rutlandrec.com.

Bored Teachers

7:30 p.m. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center Street in Rutland. Tickets: \$25, \$35, \$45 + tax/fees. The biggest entertainment platform for teachers in the world, Bored Teachers, presents the funniest teacher-comedians in the world all on one stage. Their hilarious skits have amassed hundreds of millions of views on the internet, and they're all joining comic forces on the stage for a night of laughter you do not want to miss. For more info visit: Paramount.org.

TUESDAY FEB. 21

Winter Wonders Camp

9 a.m.-4 p.m. Billings Farm & Museum, 69 Old River Road in Woodstock. \$200 for Billings Farm members, \$250 for non-members, \$50 discount for a sibling "Fun"tastic activities will include outdoor adventures, cooking over a campfire, snow and wildlife explorations, sledding, and winter crafts. A camper's day might include making hot cocoa and popcorn over an open fire, scavenger hunt in the Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park, experimenting with oobleck, meeting our farm animals and learning what animals do in the winter and more. For more info visit: billingsfarm.org.

Magic of Maple

10 a.m.-4 p.m. Billings Farm & Museum, 69 Old River Road in Woodstock. Cost is \$5 for youth, \$10 adults. Learn all about maple syrup traditions in Vermont and enjoy the beautiful Billings Farm & Museum site in winter. Vermont's rich maple history will be on display through photographs from the Top Acres Farm and Billings Farm collection, and a showcase of tools used for tapping, sugaring, and processing. For more info visit: billingsfarm.org.

Bone Builders Mendon Seniors

10 a.m. Roadside Chapel, 1680 Townline Rd in Mendon. Free. Join Mendon Seniors for their bone building session every Tuesday and Thursday.

Public skate

3-4:10 p.m. Union Arena, 80 Amsden Way in Woodstock. \$6 ages 13-up, \$5 ages 4-12, free ages 3-under. Rental Skates are available! \$6/pair. Rink is open for public skate! UnionArena.org

Rutland Winterfest: Wild Encounters

11 a.m.-Noon Paramount Theatre, 30 Center Street in Rutland. Cost is \$1 Please limit your order to no more than 8-tickets. If you need more than 8, please e-mail boxoffice@paramountvt.org. Join us for an "imaginary safari around the world!" Meet animals from a variety of places on Earth, while discovering their amazing adaptations, learning their eco-contributions and learning their personal stories.



Rutland WinterFest: Human Foosball

3:30-5 p.m. kids can play for free. Paid tournament for adult teams runs from 5:30-8:30 p.m. Center Street Marketplace in Downtown Rutland. \$50 for each team of 6 players. Play a giant Human Foosball game in Center Street Marketplace Park! For more information contact Come Alive Outside at (707) 867-5969.

Chess Club

4-6 p.m. Godnick Center, 1 Deer Street, Rutland. Free. Like Chess? Come challenge an opponent to a friendly game and hone your skills. To register call 802-855-4533.

Circle of Fathers

4 p.m. Virtual. Free. Fathers Support Group. Run by Prevent Child Abuse VT. For more info visit: pcavt.org.

Circle of Parents in Recovery

5:30 p.m. Virtual. Free. Virtual support group. Run by Prevent Child Abuse VT. For more info visit: pcavt.org.

Grief support

6 p.m. VNA & Hospice of the Southwest Region's Rutland office at 7 Albert Cree Drive, Rutland and virtually. Free. The VNA & Hospice of the Southwest Region, (VNAHSR) will provide grief support services both in-person and virtually every Tuesday from 6-7 p.m. at the VNA & Hospice of the Southwest Region's Rutland office on 7 Albert Cree Drive. Led by Spiritual and Bereavement Coordinator, Collin Terenzini. Space is limited. For more info visit: vermontvisitingnurses.org.

Rutland Winterfest: Center Street Night Sliding

6-8 p.m. Center Street in Downtown Rutland. Free. Sled down Center Street at Rutland Winterfest! Video footage generously provided by Casella Construction Inc. Rutlandrec.com/winter-fest-events.

Swing Dancing Class

6:30-8:00 p.m. Fox Room, Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St., Rutland. Free. East Coast Swing Dancing is back! Come move to music with Richard and Sue every Tuesday, 6:30-8 in our Fox Room February 14- March 21. Good for beginners and intermediate swing dancers. Richard starts each class with instruction on steps; the rest is the dancing! For more info visit: rutlandfree.org.

Open gym: beginner pickleball

7-9 p.m. Killington Elementary School Gymnasium, 686 School House Road, Killington. \$5 at the door or \$20 for a 10-visit punch card. Open gym will run until March. Tuesdays will be pickleball for beginner level players. The cost of entry is either \$5 at the door or you can purchase a 10-visit punch card for \$20. Cash payments or checks will be accepted, no credit cards. You may not purchase punch cards in advance. For more info visit: Killingtonvt.myrec.com.

Paramount Theatre: Wildlife Encounters

11 a.m. Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St. in Rutland. Only \$1. Please limit your order to no more than 8-tickets. If you need more than 8, please e-mail boxoffice@paramountvt.org. Join us for an "imaginary safari around the world!" Meet animals from a variety of places on Earth, while discovering their amazing adaptations, learning their eco-contributions and learning their personal stories.

[MUSIC Scene]

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

WED.
2/15

KILLINGTON

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Silas McPrior

6 p.m. Rivershed – April Cushman

6 p.m. Still on the Mountain – Minute to Win it with DJ Dave

6 p.m. The Foundry – Jenny Porter

8 p.m. Jax Food & Games – King Arthur Jr

LUDLOW

7 p.m. Off The Rails – Micah Iverson

QUECHEE

6 p.m. The Public House – Lily Welch

POULTNEY

7 p.m. The Poultney Pub – Open Mic hosted by JD Tostoi

RANDOLPH

7 p.m. Kuyas at One Main – Open Mic with Indigenous Entertainment

RUTLAND

5:30 p.m. Moose Lodge – Ryan Fuller

5:30 p.m. Strangefellows – Duane Carleton

9:30 p.m. Center Street Alley – Open Mic hosted by Rick Urbani

WOODSTOCK

6 p.m. Third Place Pizza – Josh Jakab

THURS.
2/16

CHESTER

6 p.m. Pizza Stone VT – Andrew & Noah: Brothers at large

KILLINGTON

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Chris Pallutto

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

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

5 p.m. Moguls Sports Pub – Duane Carleton

5 p.m. The Foundry – Ryan Fuller

6 p.m. Liquid Art – Open Mic hosted by Tee Boneicus Jones

6 p.m. Still on the Mountain – Red Daisy Revival

7 p.m. Rivershed – Chris Pallutto

8 p.m. Pickle Barrel – Chadwick Stokes with special guest opener Brooke Annibale

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

LUDLOW

8 p.m. Off The Rails – Bob Kennedy Duo

PITTSFIELD

8 p.m. Clear River Tavern – Breanna Elaine

QUECHEE

7 p.m. Wee Bird Bagel Café – Open Mic Poetry: Valentine's Edition

RUTLAND

6 p.m. Strangefellows Pub – Trivia Night

6:30 p.m. Angler Pub – Open Mic hosted by John Lafave

SOUTH ROYALTON

6 p.m. 802 Pizza – Open Mic hosted by George Nostrand

FRI.
2/17

KILLINGTON

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

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Chris Pallutto

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

2 p.m. Snowshed's Long Trail Pub – Gully Boys

4 p.m. The Foundry – Just Jamie

6 p.m. Rivershed – Houston Bernard

6 p.m. Still on the Mountain – King Arthur Jr

6 p.m. The Summit Lodge – Duane Carleton

7 p.m. The Foundry – Aaron Audet

7:30 p.m. McGrath's Irish Pub – Curragh's Fancy

8 p.m. Pickle Barrel – Felix Brown

8 p.m. Wobbly Barn – Turning The Tide

9 p.m. Jax Food & Games – Just Jamie

9 p.m. Moguls Sports Pub – Acoustik Ruckus

LUDLOW

3 p.m. Okemo's Sitting Bull Lounge – Ryan Fuller

3:30 p.m. Okemo's Tubing Park at Jackson Gore – Tube to the Tunes with DJ Dave

8:30 p.m. Off The Rails – Sammy B

POULTNEY

7 p.m. The Poultney Pub – Plumb Bobs

QUECHEE

5:30 p.m. The Public House – Kind Bud

SAT.
2/18

BOMOSEEN

5:30 p.m. Bomoseen Lodge & Taproom – George Nostrand

BRIDGEWATER

8 p.m. Woolen Mill Comedy Club – Boris Khaykin (Comedy Central)

KILLINGTON

1 p.m. Bear Mountain Base Lodge – Chris P Duo

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – King Margo

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

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

4 p.m. Pickle Barrel – Happy Hour with Jamie's Junk Show and special guest opener Jenny & Liz

4 p.m. The Foundry – Micah Iverson

5 p.m. Mary Lou's – All Request Apres Ski with DJ Dave

6 p.m. O'Dwyers Pub – County Down

6 p.m. Pico Ski Club – Fundraiser with Aaron Audet

6 p.m. Rivershed – Houston Bernard

6 p.m. Still on the Mountain – Sammy B

6 p.m. Wobbly Barn – Krishna Guthrie Band

7 p.m. The Foundry – Jenny Porter

7:30 p.m. McGrath's Irish Pub – Curragh's Fancy

LUDLOW

8 a.m. Okemo's Sunburst Six Bubble Lift – Music by DJ Dave

2 p.m. Jackson Gore Courtyard – Apres Afternoon with Dustin Marshall, Free Smores, Games and Fire Pits

8:30 p.m. Off The Rails – Last Chair Band/DJ Dave

QUECHEE

5:30 p.m. The Public House – Blue Fox Blues Duo

RANDOLPH

8 p.m. The Underground Listening Room – Reggaeton Dance Party w/ DJ Chele

SUN.
2/19

BOMOSEEN

5:30 p.m. Bomoseen Lodge & Taproom – Ryan Fuller

KILLINGTON

1 p.m. Bear Mountain Base Lodge – Chris P Duo

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

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Live Music

2 p.m. Snowshed's Long Trail Pub – Primo and Prior

4 p.m. Pickle Barrel – Happy Hour with Jamie's Junk Show

5 p.m. The Foundry – Summit Pond Jazz

6 p.m. Liquid Art – Tee Boneicus Jones

6 p.m. Rivershed – Trivia

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

8 p.m. Pickle Barrel – Jimmy Kenny and the Pirate Beach Band

LUDLOW

8 a.m. Okemo's Sunburst Six Bubble Lift – Music by DJ Dave

2 p.m. Okemo's Clock Tower Base Area and The Sitting Bull Restaurant & Bar – Torchlight Parade and Patio Party with White Steer

8:30 p.m. Off the Rails – DJ Dave's Dance Party

MON.
2/20

KILLINGTON

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Duane Carleton

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

5 p.m. Mary Lou's – BAK'n

6 p.m. Rivershed – Rob Pagnano

6 p.m. The Foundry – Blues Night with the Chris P Trio

8 p.m. Jax Food and Games – Josh Jakab

LUDLOW

3 p.m. Okemo's Sitting Bull Lounge – Acoustik Ruckus

7 p.m. Off The Rails – Sammy B

8 p.m. The Killarney – Open Mic with Indigenous Entertainment

WOODSTOCK

5 p.m. The Village Inn – Jim Yeager and Jeff Stedman

TUES.
2/21

KILLINGTON

2 p.m. K1 Base Lodge – Acoustik Ruckus

2 p.m. Snowshed's Long Trail Pub – Sammy B

5 p.m. Mary Lou's – Mountain Music with Bow Thayer & Jack Snyder

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

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

6 p.m. The Foundry – Aaron Audet

LUDLOW

3 p.m. Okemo's Sitting Bull Lounge – Ryan Fuller

8 p.m. Off The Rails – SINGO

POULTNEY

7 p.m. The Poultney Pub – Open Bluegrass Jam

QUECHEE

5 p.m. The Public House – Jim Yeager



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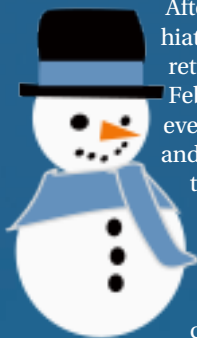
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Rutland welcomes the return of Winterfest, Feb. 17-25



After a two-year hiatus, Winterfest returns in full February 17-25 with events for all ages and abilities. Winterfest has been a Rutland staple for 20 years, but what began as a 4-hour event one day in February has blossomed into a 7-day festival during winter break. This year, Winterfest is bringing back crowd favorites like sledding down Center Street, Human Foosball, and the Real Rutland Feud while adding some future favorites to the roster. "Winterfest has been a long-standing tradition in Rutland and after a year off, we are excited to bring it back! Over the years the events have evolved and so many great memories have been created," said Winterfest event co-chair April Cioffi. "Spark some joy

and come play at Winter Fest!" Coming together as a community in this challenging time of year is incredibly important for mental and physical health and is the reason for throwing a big winter festival. Most events are free, and some paid events are open to spectators for free. "Hopefully, people are as excited and engaged as they were in the past," said Winterfest event co-chair Russ Marsan. "With new people and new sponsors, Winterfest is undergoing a renaissance of sorts. There's something for everyone to do: stuff for kids, adults and families. This year, there are 24 different groups including businesses, nonprofits, Rutland City, and the Town of Brandon: a good group of people."

- Things kick off Friday, Feb. 17 with a snowy story walk at Pine Hill Park
- On Saturday, Giorgetti Arena opens its doors for free ice skating from 5-7 p.m.

- On Tuesday, Feb. 21, folks can sled down Center Street and play or participate in a game of Human Foosball. Teams of six compete for the glory. Registration is \$50 per team and funds go to support Come Alive Outside. Spectators are welcome to watch the action for free.
- Wednesday morning at 10 a.m., kids and adults can wear their P.J.s at the Paramount to watch a flick, then join in the Great Bigfoot Chase at the Rutland Free Library at 1 p.m.
- Thursday evening at 6 p.m., cornholers of all abilities will compete in a mini tournament at the Rutland Recreation Center.
- Friday night at 6:30 p.m., bring the kids or a date to Skate with Bigfoot.
- The Loved Ones and Little Ones Dance wraps up Winter-

fest on Saturday, Feb. 25 along with the ever-popular Real Rutland Feud at 7 p.m. at the Paramount Theatre. Tickets to the Loved Ones and Little Ones Dance are \$15 per couple while tickets to the Real Rutland Feud are \$30 per person. For more information, visit RutlandRec.com/winterfestevents or call 802-773-1853 or email aprilc@rutlandrec.com.



Feb.
17-25



Rockin' the Region with Chadwick Stokes

This Thursday, Feb. 16, you don't want to miss Chadwick Stokes of Dispatch at the Pickle Barrel Nightclub. He's bringing his friend Brooke Annibale to open the show. He said she's a great singer-songwriter. I had a great chat with Stokes recently about what he's up to now.

I first saw Dispatch at The Muse in Nan-tucket in 1998 when they were known as One Fell Swoop. I was the deejay there. They instantly became a favorite of mine. In 2002, I was working with Atomic Pro Audio and got to see Jack Johnson open for them in Central Park West. Stokes exclaimed how crazy it was that he opened for them.

In 2005, I brought Stokes's other band, State Radio, to Snowshed for a college concert. I saw Dispatch a few times over the years in-between and then in 2021, I opened for him and his younger brother, Willie, at Hermitage Ski Club at Haystack Mountain. This past summer I got hooked up with Row 7 seats at Saratoga Performing Arts Center (SPAC) to see Dispatch, O.A.R. and G. Love. That was amazing. Stokes was surprised to know I've been following them for as long as I have. "Wow" was his reaction, I think.

Stokes now has a new project with his band, The Pintos, and they're starting a tour in March. They just played at the House of Blues in Boston for the Calling All Crows benefit weekend. That's the charity he started with his wife 15 years ago that connects music fans with feminist movements for justice and equality.

Stokes is also working on a rock opera. It's been a lifelong project of his that is finally coming to fruition. He said, "I'm using these tours to kind of kick me in the ass to get the songs and the band dialed in for hopefully a much bigger concept."

He's had the idea for about 25 years, he said, adding: "Some of my favorite records as a kid were 'Jesus Christ Superstar' and 'Hair.' It's one thing to have a song that tells a story but another to have 15 songs tell one story with just a thread that combines them all... I've always kind of toyed with the idea and made half-hearted attempts to combine songs and see the story they're telling but never started

with the story and brought songs into it. I'm just trying to do it intentionally for the first time after thinking about it forever."

The tour with The Pintos will feature seven or eight new tunes that he hopes to gear towards the opera, try them out to see where they'll fit. He said, "I've kind of done it backwards lately and Dispatch did, too. We used to play our songs live before we recorded them and then as bands mature, they stop doing that. They'll record the songs first and then go play them live. It's almost like they don't release the songs until the record. I'm kind of swinging back to that other *modus operandi* and just want to play the songs live a bunch. The band gets a lot of feedback from how it feels from the energy in the room. I'd like to go back to that model to make sure these tunes are as good as they can be. It's super helpful."

He also talked about this past summer's tour with O.A.R. which he loved. He said, "We haven't hung out with those guys in about 20 years. It was really cool to catch up. Everyone's so different now and older and fathers. It was fun but also strange to have all that time pass. It was fun to get to know them again and see where their musical journey took them and where it had taken us. It was fun to play all those great venues."

his own songs."

Stokes grew up in Sherborn, Massachusetts, which is out in the sticks and now lives in Milton, just outside the city. He grew up with music in the family. His father was a musician who played the piano. His mother, aunt and uncle were the music listeners with a big record collection. Chad said, "My appreciation for rock and roll came from them. My dad was always playing the piano in the house, and we were just drawn to it. My siblings (two brothers and a sister) and I played horns growing up through high school, as well as guitar. It's something we leaned into and were attracted to, the music, and we ate up all the public school had to offer us."

At Christmas they would all play Christmas carols together at home. When Chad's grandfather died, they were the Dixieland band that played at his service. Stokes said, "We get together on special occasions, and everyone chimes in with whatever instrument they play."

Stokes's first band was with the Willis brothers who in 2010 founded Bully Boy Distillers, Boston's first craft distillery. They grew up in Sherborn, too, and in junior high, they started a band together. They were called Electric Mayhem, which they stole from "The Muppets." Stokes met his Dispatch bandmates (Pete Francis

and Brad Corrigan) when they were freshmen at Middlebury College in 1995, just an hour north in Vermont. Francis and Stokes were roommates the following year. When they left school, they toured fulltime.

Stokes does a lot of humanitarian work. He just played a virtual show to raise money for the earthquake victims in Turkey. If you want to donate on Thursday or find out more, he'll steer you in the right direction. His charity, Calling All Crows, (callingallcrows.org) teamed up with Oxfam America (oxfamamerica.org) for that and other stuff, too. To find out more follow him on social media or visit: chadwick-stokes.com.

Stokes loves this part of his work, and said, "I like being on a team. I like the

work that goes into it. It's kind of like a game day when the show comes. Let's get our parts. With music, and sometimes sports too, you're always shooting for that other dimension. Not every show gets there but it's always fun to try for it. It's that other kind of world where the magic is. It's good to have little doses of magic in life to help you get by."



Rockin' the Region
By DJ Dave Hoffenberg



Chad Stokes

By Brent Goldman

In Killington, he plans on trying out some new songs like an instrumental he's been playing the last year that should be a part of the opera. His show on Thursday will consist of those, some State Radio and Dispatch songs plus some of his own.

He described his show as: "Massachusetts farm boy who grew up listening to Creedence sings some of



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Annual Great Backyard Bird Count is Feb. 17-20

The 26th annual Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) is taking place Feb. 17-20 in backyards, parks, nature centers, on hiking trails, school grounds, balconies, and beaches — anywhere you can find birds!

The Great Backyard Bird Count is a great way for people of all ages and backgrounds to connect with nature. Participation is free and easy. Bird watchers count the birds they see for at least 15 minutes on one or more days of the count, then enter their checklists at birdcount.org. All the data contributes to a snapshot of bird distribution and help scientists monitor change over the past 25 years. In 2022, Great Backyard Bird Count participants in more than 190 countries counted more than 7,099 species of birds on more than 350,000 checklists!

The Great Backyard Bird Count is a joint project of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society with partner Bird Studies Canada and is made possible in part by sponsor Wild Birds Unlimited.

For more information about what patterns scientists have discovered and how to take part, visit: birdcount.org or email: birding@rutlandcountyaudubon.org.



By Susan Elliott
A Northern Cardinal was spotted in Rutland Town during a past Great Backyard Bird Count.



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Billings Farm presents 'Jazz Fest: A New Orleans Story'

A music, film and food soiree benefits the Woodstock Vermont Film Series

Saturday, Feb. 18 from 3-7:30 p.m. — RUTLAND—Get ready for Mardi Gras with a New Orleans style celebration. At 3 p.m. there will be a screening of “Jazz Fest: A New Orleans Story” and at 5 p.m. enjoy a reception with live jazz performed by local virtuosos Michael Zsoldos and Ben Kogan.

“Jazz Fest: A New Orleans Story” weaves together live performances and interviews from the 50th anniversary of the iconic festival, featuring some of the biggest names in the music industry, along with a wealth of archival documentary footage from the past half century. This film not only captures the festival in all its glory, but also delves deep into the rich culture of new Orleans, the “Big Easy.”

“The kind of electric, spirit-lifting music documentary that will make you want to reinvent your life so that you can live your entire existence in the heart of Louisiana,” wrote the Globe and Mail.

The event will feature specialty cocktails and a menu of gumbo with chicken and sausage, including andouille sausage and crawfish for the daring sourced straight from New Orleans; muffuletta, a New Orleans classic; and sweet bites of monkey bread with a choice of bananas foster or a drizzle of bourbon chocolate sauce.

The film will be shown in the Billings Farm & Museum Visitor Center Theater and the reception takes place in the historic, restored barn.

Advance tickets are \$75 per person or \$85 at the door. Tickets for Billings Farm members are \$65. Must be 21 and older. Tickets include the film, live music, food, beer, and wine, as well as samples and one specialty cocktail, compliments of event sponsor Vermont Spirits Distilling Co. Additional cocktails are available for purchase.

Proceeds support the Woodstock Vermont Film Series and our vision to share place-based stories of people near and far, to engage our audiences, and to inspire conversations that increase connections with each other and our world.

Blues artist Keb' Mo' sings songs of positivity, gratitude

By Dave Gil de Rubio, Last Word Features

Wednesday, Feb. 15 at 7:30 p.m.—RUTLAND—With inflation ratcheting up and Ukrainians fighting for their homes and freedom in a war halfway around the world, it's hard to look on the bright side of the road. But that's where someone like guitar-playing singer-songwriter Keb' Mo' comes in.

On "Good To Be," his 16th studio album, the 70-year-old blues artist is all in on the warm and fuzzies in a way that avoids being Pollyanna-ish and more about basking in gratitude. And while it would be easy to think that the man born Kevin Moore went into this project with a preconceived notion of positivity, he insists it was a group of songs that came about organically and as more of a work in progress with the oldest material dating back to the late '70s, when he was an inexperienced musician making his way to recording his 1980 debut, "Rainmaker."

"I get asked that question a lot in terms of what the inspiration for a record is," he said. "The inspiration comes out of the time in which the work is created. I live my life and throughout that, writing sessions come up and whatever is going on at that time tends to seep into the music. Then when I look back at the year or year and a half of writing songs, there's a natural kind of basicness to it because it's all in the same time period. I'm not really looking for a theme, but this seems to have a theme of

fiddle and harmonica Old Crow Medicine Show infuses into "The Medicine Man" or weaving a message of vulnerability into the horn-kissed shuffle "So Easy." Elsewhere, Moore touches on the ideas of intimacy (the delicate ballad "Quiet Moments") and social justice (the string-embraced "Marvelous to Me"). And while Mo' has called the state of Tennessee home for the past 11 years, "Good To Be" brought back plenty of memories of growing up in Compton, a place that had a far different look long before Kevin Moore became Keb' Mo'.

"We had a music store in Compton called the Compton Music Center, which is where, along with the pawn shops, we got our instruments—guitars, saxophones and trumpets," he recalled. "There was a family called the Dedmans—Leonardo, Dathan and Dexter Dedman. They were all genius musicians in a musical family and were jazz aficionados. At the time, Compton was middle class people trying to get their kids through college. A lot of the men had good jobs at the Douglas Aircraft Company and Lockheed. They were machinists and had health plans. My mom was a hairdresser with a shop. There were a lot of businesses because people had jobs in that area. Kids were doing all right."

Mo's early musical path led from his playing steel drums in a calypso band to playing with a number of back-up bands including Zulu, which caught the ear of Jefferson Airplane collaborator Papa John Creach as he was walking through Compton on the way to buying some soul food. The band was hired and the young guitarist's imagination was fired up.

"When we went on tour with him, I got exposed to all kinds of different musical situations—Captain Beefheart, Maria Muldaur, James Cotton, John McLaughlin and the Mahavishnu Orchestra," Mo' explained.

And while landing a staff writing job with A&M Records led to the aforementioned 1980 debut outing, its failure to connect prompted a career pivot.

"I had to reinvent myself and that meant starting from scratch because all my gigs had dried up and the 'Rainmaker' record had flopped," he said. "The phone wasn't ringing. I got a call to be a sub with a group called the Whodunit Band. That was the beginning of my rethinking of who I was. Then I started getting into the blues. I started playing the blues and was all about it. All that stuff on 'Rainmaker' had more of an R&B vibe to it. I figured nobody wanted to hear that, so I just embraced the blues. I was with a bunch of guys who were really into it. I got in there and the phone started ringing again and I started getting gigs around town playing in the clubs. At some point, I heard the Delta blues—country blues, and something snapped in me."

Fast forward to 2023 and Keb' Mo' is heading back out on tour. And if he's learned anything from the pandemic, it's a new approach to making music that technology has made possible for him.

"My goal going forward is three albums a year," he said with a laugh. "Because I don't have to work on them all at the same time. There are 365 days in the year. A record is about 10 or 11 songs on average, so that's 30 songs. I figure if I've got even three months of work days left over from touring and with the tools I have now, I can do these three records simultaneously. And everyone I work with has some ability to record remotely, if not in their own house, but their own neighborhood. We've been using this technology all along, but Covid-19 forced us to embrace it. I still like the old way too, but these tools opened up more opportunities for me."

Catch 'Mo at the Paramount Theatre located at 30 Center Street in Rutland this Wednesday night at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$40-\$70 + tax/fees.

For more information visit ParamountVt.org.



Keb' Mo'

Courtesy of Jeremy Cowart

goodness. There are three songs with the word good in it so that's why I called it "Good To Be." It just made sense to feature it. So that's the theme—gratitude."

As someone who has spent the past three decades working with a myriad of artists ranging from Zac Brown, Bonnie Raitt and The Chicks to B.B. King, Taj Mahal and Willie Nelson, Mo's latest outing is no exception. For this go-round, producers ranged from good friend Vince Gill to Tom Hambridge (Buddy Guy), while the roll call of musical guests include Darius Rucker, Kristen Chenoweth and Old Crow Medicine Show. And while trying to wrangle all these logistics is a challenge during the best of times, Covid-19 threw a few more wrinkles into the mix and forced Mo' to learn a few new tricks.

"The pandemic proved to be a blessing in disguise because with things getting canceled, it was nice to stay home [in Nashville] and spend time with my family," he said. "But as it dragged on, people started doing performances on their phones, which was very lo-fi and I was totally frightened of doing things like that. I sensed if this thing were to go long, production values were going to have to get better. We had to get all kinds of lighting and different plug-ins. I had to learn how to make things sound like they were done in the same room even if they weren't. It was crazy, but you start figuring stuff out, and now a lot of us, myself included, have a new skill set."

Most of the album was recorded while Mo' renovated his recently re-purchased Compton childhood home, where his mother Lauvella Cole lived until her death at the age of 91 in September 2018. There's plenty of love, nostalgia and memories baked into these songs, whether it's the nod to his mother amid the gospel vocals, pedal steel and Rucker's vocals in "Good Strong Woman," the languid convergence of banjo,



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Monday, Feb. 20 at 7:30 p.m.—RUTLAND—The biggest entertainment platform for teachers in the world, Bored Teachers, presents the funniest teacher-comedians in the

world all on one stage. Their hilarious skits have amassed hundreds of millions of views on the internet, and they're all joining comic forces on the stage for a night of laughter you do

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some of that stress this school year has been dumping on you!

Tickets are: \$25, \$35, \$45 + tax/fees.

For more information visit: ParamountVt.org.



Submitted

Comedy by teachers for teachers (and the general public too) will light up the Paramount stage, Monday at 7:30 p.m.

Three record-setting fish caught in Vermont in 2022

Three fish caught in 2022 were certified as new state records.

In February, Swanton angler Matt Gingras landed a new Vermont record burbot while fishing on northern Lake Champlain in the West Swanton area. The burbot, caught on a live golden shiner set under a tip-up, weighed 10.9 pounds and measured 32 1/2 inches long with a 17-inch girth. It beat the previous state record burbot caught in 2012 by 2.1 pounds.

Unfortunately for Gingras, his reign as the state record

"Bradley's record carp last year was no slouch at nearly 45 pounds," said Good. "But then Jacob's fish beating it by nearly 20 pounds is really just mind blowing."

burbot holder lasted just two months. In early April while open water bass fishing on Lake Champlain around South Hero, Stephen Estes of Auburn, New Hampshire, caught an 11.0 pound burbot casting a Ned Rig. The fish measured 34 inches in length and had a 17 1/2-inch girth.

In May of 2022, North Hero angler Jacob Kinney was out bowfishing at night for carp on Lake Champlain and took a fish that weighed an incredible 63.4 pounds. This monster carp smashed the previous record set just last year by Bradley DiSorda – a fish that weighed 44 pounds 11 ounces, also taken on Lake Champlain by bow. Kinney's new record measured 39 1/4 inches in length while its girth was an immense 37 1/4-inches.

Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department fisheries biologist Shawn Good, who administers the state's Record Fish Program, says Kinney's carp is the heaviest fish ever entered in the program.

"The department started tracking state record fish in 1969, and this 63 pound carp is far and away the largest fish ever entered," said Good. "As a matter of fact, looking through the

more than 1,200 entries received over the last 53 years, seven of the ten biggest fish on the list are carp. The other three fish in the Top 10 are a muskellunge, a lake trout and a channel catfish."

Good says with the increased interest in carp fishing in North American waters in the last 10-20 years, Kinney's giant really shines a light on the potential Lake Champlain has as

Fish → 21



Courtesy VTF&W

Right: Jacob Kinney took this 63.35 pound carp while bow-fishing last May in the Alburgh area of Lake Champlain. It beat the existing carp record set in 2021 by nearly 20 pounds.

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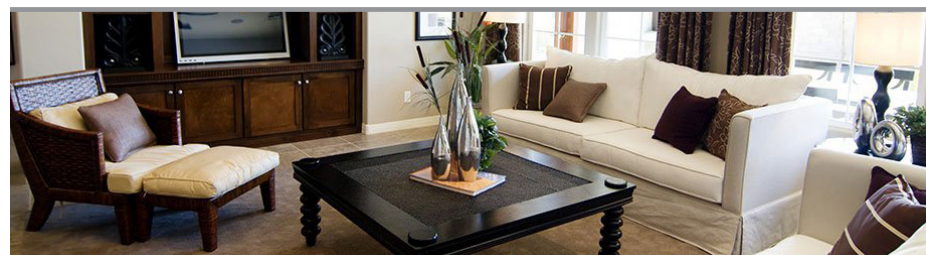
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MOUNTAIN TIMES

← Fish: Fish out there that can provide amazing action with real trophy potential all year long on lakes and rivers from page 18

a world class carp fishing destination.

“Bradley’s record carp last year was no slouch at nearly 45 pounds,” said Good. “But then Jacob’s fish beating it by nearly 20 pounds is really just mind blowing.”

Good says that at 265,000 acres and 120-miles long, Lake Champlain offers a nearly untapped carp population that receives very little attention.

“I think that die-hard carpers, whether they fish European style, or go after them with fly gear, would be floored at what Champlain has to offer. The lake not only produces trophy sized fish but it also provides consistent action for carp in the 15 to 20 pound range. It truly is a carp angler’s dream paradise.”

Good says that for anglers looking for new challenges and adventures, Vermont provides many overlooked fishing opportunities.

“Vermont has an abundance of waters with a wide diversity of fish species that

can be targeted and caught by hook-and-line, which speaks to both the variety and quality of sport fishing opportunities supported by healthy waters and good aquatic habitat,” said Good.

A great example of that, according to Good, is seeing the burbot record broken three times in the last 10 years, and twice last year in just a two-month span.

“While fishing remains excellent for more traditional species such as bass, trout, salmon, and pike, there are so many other fish out there that can provide amazing action with real trophy potential. Fish like burbot, bowfin, drum, gar, fallfish, suckers — the opportunities are endless,” said Good.

“The three records set in 2022 just reinforce the notion that Vermont anglers are expanding their fishing pursuits and having a great time while doing it.”

For more information visit: Vtfishandwildlife.com/ fish.



Courtesy VTF&W

Vermont’s burbot state record was broken twice in a 2-month period in early 2022. Matt Gingras (above) landed his record 10.9 pound fish while icefishing in February, only to be beaten by 2 ounces in April when Stephen Estes landed an 11 pound burbot while bass fishing.

← BJ's opens: Hartland's greatly missed corner store reopened Monday, Feb. 13 to locals delight from page 2

Rose, who set up and opened the Skinny Pancake in Quechee, said BG’s was already one of the most successful and well-run small stores he’s seen.

“We’re only changing a few things to improve the customers’ experience and help them find what they want,” Rose said. “We don’t need to reinvent the wheel.”

Rose has lived in Hartland for seven years and has two children at Hartland Elementary School. He was very familiar with “the BG’s experience” and loves the community.

“The store is so bright, and seems so much larger and easier to maneuver in,” Helen Stocker, who came from Windsor to see the new layout, told the

Mountain Times. “I like it,” She bought two New York Strip steaks to cook on the grill.

Nicole Bartner, owner of the Hartland Diner and one of the first customers, admired the new coffee station. Grab-and-Go breakfast sandwiches beckon coffee customers from a warming display.

“This is great!” Bartner said, looking around the “new” store.

Tom White, former selectman, was very impressed. “This is really something!” he said.

Greg Bjorkman stopped on his way to work and promised to come back later to “look around more.”

Hartland Fire Chief John Sanders

and his wife Nikki Buck remarked how impressed they were with the appearance of the store.

Although the renovations were extensive, the biggest delay was licensing, permitting, lottery setup, fire inspection and other bureaucratic processes.

Ms. Esty will be behind the new “Butcher” counter. Premade sandwiches and store-prepared foods such as soup-of-the-day, Shepherd’s Pie and Macaroni and Cheese will continue, as well as popular McNamara’s dairy products.

Most people said they never realized how much they depended on BG’s until it was closed.

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Meet Prince—4-year-old. Neutered male. Pit mix. Chocolate. If you are looking for a stoic, smart, and sweet pup, please consider Prince!



Meet Grace—2-year-old. Spayed female. Pitbull mix. Black. Grace is a sweet girl, who needs someone to give her patience and time to settle in. She has definitely come out of her shell, and is very exuberant, loves her toys and treats. She loves to prance.



Meet Miley—4-year-old. Spayed female. Domestic mediumhair. Buff. Miley is a quiet, but sweet girl. She is still adjusting here but she is very lovely once she starts to open up. She came to us as a stray on Feb. 2, so we are still getting to know her.



Meet Margaret—3-year-old. Spayed female. Domestic shorthair. Black and white. A sweet girl who's easy going and content describes her best.



Meet Boo Boo—4 year-old. Spayed female. Domestic shorthair. Brown/black tiger. She likes to be petted and loved up.



Meet Deebo—3-year-old. Spayed female. Domestic shorthair. Brown tiger. She is one of the first to run over to greet you when you go into the cat rooms.



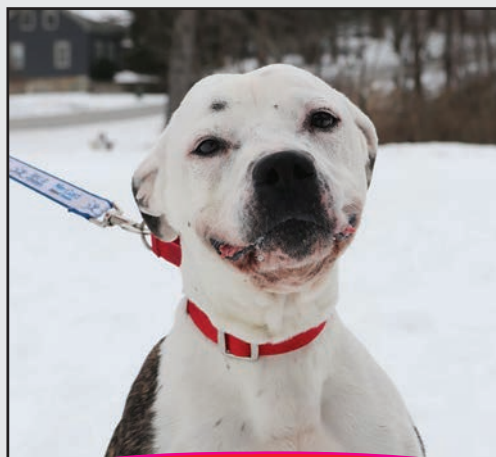
Meet Pearl (bonded pair)—2 year-old. Spayed female. Domestic shorthair. Orange and white. Pearl and Cream are littermates and need to go together.



Cream (bonded Pair)—2 year-old. Spayed female. Domestic shorthair. Orange and white. Cream is best friends with her sister Pearl. They are littermates and need to go to their new home together.



Spooky—2-year-old. Neutered male. Domestic shorthair. Brown tiger. This handsome little fella is a kitty who is sure to make a great friend.



TRIX

Meet Trix—6-year-old. Neutered male. Pit bull mix. Brindle with white. How about that smile? Trix was actually adopted from RCHS in 2016 when he was a puppy but was recently brought back to us. He is a bit shy at first, but quickly warms up and really wants to be around people. He was brought in with another dog, so he has lived with other dogs before. He loves his walks and playtime, and can't say no to belly rubs.

All of these pets are available for adoption at
Rutland County Humane Society
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Cosmic Catalogue

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Aries

March 21 - April 20

Groups, communities and friends may come into focus this week. The energy is heavy, but it's also strangely clarifying. You might like to call this week your "annual friendship review." Time alone in contemplation might be preferable to a heightened social schedule. Be strategic. This is the time to figure out the reason / season / lifetime scenario. Decide who goes into each category moving forward. Anyone who is weighing you down will only slow you down.



Leo

July 21 - August 20

It's been a long and arduous road for you in recent years, relationship wise. I'm happy to say, that for the most part, the road is all but travelled. This week you may reach a milestone that is well worth celebrating. Put the past in the past and come together in the spirit that brought you together in the first place – all butterflies and romance. You'll either reinspire the magic between you or you'll realize the road has two differing directions.



Sagittarius

November 21 - December 20

Forget the candlelit dinners and the overcrowded restaurants, your happiest Valentine's Day experience is best had at home! Go the extra mile and cook an amazing meal for those you love – or even just for yourself! Set the table nice. Light the candles. Play the music. Set the mood. This is also ideal for showing gratitude to all that you do have, even if it's not everything you want just yet. Set the intention to keep believing.



Taurus

April 21 - May 20

The phrase "to have is to hold" must have been coined with a Taurean in mind. The energy now isn't so much about holding, but about enjoying the moment then letting go. Good times don't last forever but the memory of the experience will. This week is about savoring the moment and letting it linger. Enjoy the people in your life now – friends, co-workers and your communities. Let them inspire you and see a side of life you rarely allow yourself to enjoy.



Virgo

August 21 - September 20

This week, put aside your penchant for perfection and lean into the magic of possibility. Whether it's in a romantic setting or with other people in general, especially at work, see the good in them and it will come back to you threefold. If you've reached your limit to how much you can give, allow people the chance to step up and support you. Your life will change a lot – if you give yourself permission to be taken care of.



Capricorn

December 21 - January 20

There's no romance without finance. That said, it might be the little things you can do for someone you love, including yourself, right now. It might be the cup of coffee you make for someone in the morning. The helpful gesture you do, just because. The text message you send during the day to let someone know you're thinking of them. It doesn't have to cost a lot, or anything, to be a true romantic.



Gemini

May 21 - June 20

Sometimes we have to let go of the things we think we know in order to experience something magical. This week a couple of alignments take place in your career and your travel and adventure zones. Thus, you're encouraged to explore new opportunities and possibilities. If you've been considering turning a study pathway into a career direction, this would be a great week to take your first steps in making it happen.



Libra

September 21 - October 20

It could really be one of the happiest and most magical weeks of the year for you. Or, it could bring the realization that despite your best efforts, a situation has come to its inevitable conclusion. Either way, a decision will be either made by you or for you. You may have to dig a little deeper to find the magic right now, but true love and happiness is actually made in the less-than-great moments. Life can't be chocolates and roses all of the time!



Aquarius

January 21 - February 20

If you go shopping this week, you'll probably see a heightened male clientele with bunches of flowers, massive teddy bears and chocolates all because of the expectation around Valentine's Day. For some it might be fun, but you probably find it rather lame. If that's the case, make it known how you think and feel about the situation. In fact, you might like to save your money and do something sweet together at a time that works for you. Tuesday nights aren't particularly romantic!



Cancer

June 21 - July 20

You might be longing for a change in scenery this week or dreaming of a location you've long wanted to visit. Perhaps it's a spiritual path or a study pursuit that has captured your imagination. It's wonderful to have a dream in your heart for it keeps the soul alive. Despite that, there are some real, practical components you can't avoid either, such as: do you have the funds to support this? Get your ducks lined up and commit to your dream.



Scorpio

October 21 - November 20

I'm not the type of astrologer who would write you a trashy romance horoscope. That said, if there were ever a time for me to do so, this would be the week! Not only are stars aligning for love, they do so in your love and sex zone. If an existing partnership could use a sprinkling of sugar, don't hold back. If you'd like to let someone know you're interested, make it known! Nothing about your love life can change until you do!



Pisces

February 21 - March 20

You might be feeling the weight of Saturn in your sign, but technically the heavy planet hasn't arrived yet. So with that in mind, you might like to throw caution to the wind and indulge in all things magic, wistful, romantic and even a tad irresponsible. Life will feel different soon enough so having the chance to let your hair down a bit this week will be something your future self will most likely thank you for.



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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.

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Cosmic Catalogue

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Love is in the stars

If you tend to be one of those people who don't celebrate Valentine's Day because it's commercialized, then you'd be right. It is! However, this year there is a rare alignment between Earth time and Cosmic time. On Feb. 15, romantic Venus in Pisces makes her annual fusion with ethereal Neptune, making this a sublime influence for all things joy, pleasure and love.

That said, you don't have to be in a relationship to enjoy the moment. Time spent with friends or doing something you really enjoy will help you extract this sweet cosmic nectar. So

why am I harping on this this week? It's because Venus and Neptune will contend with Saturn for the next few years, plus a few other cosmic complications which will sour the flavor. Speaking of Saturn, the Sun plus the ringed planet will make their final conjunction in Aquarius for 30 years on Thursday. This clarifying and sobering energy will add a dose of reality to an otherwise surreal week. If so far in 2023, you've been dragging your heels a bit or lacking in focus, a Sun / Saturn combination will help you refine your direction and figure out your priorities.



Cosmic Catalogue
By Cassandra Tyndall

Goggle tan blue

I hadn't realized yet that it was spring. Only last week, we were freezing standing in the cold, skiing snow so firm that your entire body shuddered when you maneuvered away from the groomed trails. That was only last week, right?

Today my face is on fire and I am sweating. The sky is a stunning blue. The kind of blue that makes you go ride the North Ridge Quad for the optimum tanning angle. Man, that chair just sets you up right.

The sky is Goggle Tan Blue.

You know it, you can feel it coming. Your cheeks, no longer bitten by frost, are on fire from the combined strength of the direct sunlight and the reflection of those rays from the snow onto your face. Your lips are chapped, your fingernails are peeling and chipping underneath your gloves. And damn it, you obviously haven't been drinking enough water to maintain the balance of your body and the weather.

You ride the Canyon Quad and the South Ridge Quad, because for once, you won't be freezing to death on the ascent. There's no wind, no brutally cold wind chilling you to the bone as you prove your commitment to skiing by riding up these lifts. In fact, you unzip your jacket to let in the slight breeze from the movement of the chair through the air, you take your gloves off and squish them underneath your thigh so they don't fall away and you lay back, enjoying the miracle warmth while you prep for a sun soaked Double Dipper.



Livin' the Dream
By Merisa Sherman

Even the middle is cream cheese hero snow gloriousness! I am free! I am free! No longer trapped to the sides, searching for just a little bit of traction, the sun has left a beautiful gift.

Because it is freaking glorious. Not the knee deep powder kind of glorious, the groomed to the nines while we've got the perfect wax glorious, or the soft powder bumps with large scrape-y bits in random places glorious. This is the cream cheese hero snow greatness. The sun-soaked, slight waterlogged but not too much, soft instant mashed potato snow. The kind of snow that with a little effort, is the best playground on the planet. At least for me. We take the skier's right on Upper Double, my dad's preferred line, the last place where he skied powder with his girls and now one of my utmost favorite places on the mountain to make a few turns. It tastes delicious today and I can feel my skis digging into the snow with ease, not quite sinking and totally solid. We cross over the work road and five down over the roller. I'm right on his tails and we jump, sink, compress, rotate, press rise and it's all flying at me in sequence... pressuring the tails more and more while I feel that playful pop as my tails launch me into the next turn. It's soft. It's playful. It's not that heavy. And it's one of my favorite feelings in the world. The kind of turns where everything else in the world fades away, and there is nothing but you and your skis, playing your dance with the mountain. Floating over the trail and then sinking deep into it. It absorbs your every being and you lose yourself in the rhythm of your turns, only awake because you can hear your breathing timed to the compressions.

I move to the left, toward the middle into the usually quite firm abyss and flinch just slightly as I anticipate the scrape-y bits that usually define the middle of DD. But there's none there. The middle is glorious. Even the middle is cream cheese hero snow gloriousness! I am free! I am free! No longer trapped to

Living the Dream → 27

Pigeons in love

Humans often ascribe traits that we admire to other animals. We treasure a dog's loyalty, revere an eagle's power, and applaud a dolphin's intellect. We hold these creatures in high esteem, whether they are spotted rarely in the wild or are daily lounging at our feet, because we value these same attributes in ourselves. I'd like to add another candidate to this list of animal virtues: a pigeon's ardor.

I care for a flock of four rescue pigeons, each of them deemed non-releasable after being brought injured to the Vermont Institute of Natural Science's Center for Wild Bird Rehabilitation. Bennington, Springfield, Simon, and Garfunkel now live protected in a sheltered enclosure, tossed together by their various misfortunes. While it is easy to feel sympathy for an injured animal of any kind, I am often surprised that the same person who rescued the bird may tell me, somewhat embarrassed, "It's just a pigeon."

It's true that pigeons are not rare. Today, *Columba livia*, the rock pigeon, is one of the most widely distributed birds on the planet. Pigeons evolved to nest on rocky sea cliffs in southern Europe and the Middle East, and humans domesticated these birds nearly 10,000 years ago, long before keeping chickens. People have valued pigeons for their meat, as messengers, or as companion animals, and have bred more than 1,000 different colors and varieties of the species. Most importantly, people took their pigeons with them wherever they went, and today the global population, a combination of the original rock pigeons and escaped domestics from the past ten millennia, is around 120 million individuals.

But to be common in number and common in personality are two very different things. Simon, the only female in my pigeon flock, is the object of Bennington's constant affections. I have watched him run his beak gently through the hard-to-reach feathers on the back of her neck for hours on a sunny winter morning. Though she cannot return the favor (she has a badly misaligned beak) she follows at his heels and keeps the other pigeons out of the best nesting box. Pigeons are monogamous, keeping one partner for life. They continuously reaffirm their connections; even in January Bennington dances

for his mate, puffing out the feathers around his neck, inflating air sacs in his throat, and cooing and strutting in front of her.

Though Simon has yet to lay eggs, pigeons can breed nearly year-round, even during more mild New England winters. This ability is granted to them by a unique adaptation called crop milk. When the young pigeons (or squabs) hatch, their parents feed them a white, protein-rich substance secreted directly from the walls of the crop until the squabs can digest seeds on their own. This milk can be produced at any time of year, allowing pigeons to raise their young on a nutritious diet even while seeds are scarce. Both the male and female produce this milk, sharing feeding and incubation duties as well.

The devotion that pigeons have to their partners and young was used to create one of the most specialized breeds of any domesticated animal: the homing pigeon. Homing pigeons are another domesticated breed of *Columba livia*; these heroes are the same species as the birds you're likely to come across in city parks. Throughout both world wars, homing pigeons were used to get messages quickly from soldiers in the field to their officers back at base.

Because pigeons have both an incredible natural sense of direction and a desperate dedication to their families, they will fly through darkness, storms, and falling bombs to get back to a waiting mate. Pigeons often traveled in aircraft with Royal Air Force bomber crews during WWII. One pigeon, Winkie, saved the entire crew of a crashed bomber by flying 120 miles in less than two hours to her home coop in Scotland, where her owner contacted RAF officials, activating a rescue mission. Doubtless she was unaware of her heroic act and was grateful to be safe with her partner again — but not nearly as grateful as the rescued crew of the bomber.

Sometimes, the traits we see in animals are less flattering than those afforded to the eagles and dolphins of the world, and usually pigeons get a bad rap. I like to remember that they are simply living their lives alongside us, because our skyscrapers remind them of sea cliffs, our food is abundant and sometimes unattended, and we all want to settle down in a safe place with someone we love.

Anna Morris is an environmental educator at the Vermont Institute of Natural 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 the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation:

nhcf.org



Exactly who's in charge?

Recently, I told my son that I thought he was old



The Movie Diary

By Dom Cioffi

enough and mature enough to watch “The Godfather” trilogy (I left out the fact that all three films run nearly three hours, which would have dissuaded him). He agreed, mostly because he’d been hearing pop culture references to the films for years. (Every gangsta rapper on earth idolizes either Michael Corleone from “The Godfather” or Tony Montana from “Scarface.”)

We planned to watch the first movie last Sunday night. However, my wife intervened and begged us to watch a comedy. She said she couldn’t bear the idea of a mob movie – even though it’s widely regarded as one of the greatest films ever made.

We eventually acquiesced and agreed to watch the new Jennifer Lopez rom-com, “Shotgun Wedding” (see last week’s review). That was a big mistake.

We haven’t revisited the “Godfather” films yet, but it’s high on my priority list. I like exposing my son to quality films since so much of what’s released these days is garbage. I want him to have a good palate when he gets older so if someone mentions a particular classic, he can talk intelligently about it.

Talking intelligently about film is a lost art, likely because there are so few films to talk intelligently about. In fact, there’s not a

lot of things to talk intelligently about these days — it’s all internet memes and conspiracy theories. And if you do try to talk intelligently about a given subject, you never know if the facts you’d like to base an argument on are true.

Unless you’ve been living under a rock or have a total ban on national media (which I wholeheartedly support), you’ve likely heard about the release of ChatGPT, a new AI system that has the entire world in awe about how intelligent it seems.

Basically, ChatGPT is a computer program that has scanned all the available data in the world and then learned how to intelligently communicate it back to humans. For an example, I asked ChatGPT this question: “What is ChatGPT?” Here’s how it answered:

“ChatGPT is a conversational AI model developed by OpenAI. It is a language model based on the transformer architecture, which uses deep learning techniques to generate human-like



text. ChatGPT has been trained on a diverse range of internet text, so it can respond to a wide range of questions and generate text on a variety of topics.”

That answer may not impress everyone, but you must admit, that’s a pretty good response for a computer; it seems pretty human to me. I used to easily pick out computer-generated news stories because they were uncomfortably written with poor grammar

The Movie Diary → 27



By Brooke Geery, Killington Resort

Shannah Connell smiles from behind the bar at the new K-1 Lodge. After a decade working as a waitress, she was excited for the new gig.



Beast Week: Killington resort celebrates employees for its annual Beast Week, Feb. 11-17
from page 1

Although he works full time, Reed considers himself retired, focused mostly on raising his three children and living a life that includes lots of skiing, a little mountain biking and tons of time outdoors. “If this lifestyle is important to you, this is the job for you,” he said. “If you’re looking to go skiing and mountain biking and have a great time outdoors and meet new people, this is definitely the spot.”

Ryan Kania discovered just that when he moved to Vermont from Warwick, Rhode Island in November and took a job in Resort Maintenance.

“It’s the first job I’ve really ever had where, today’s my Monday, and I was excited to come here,” he said. “I’m not used to that. I’ve had some good jobs, but this one, every day I look forward to being here. Even on my days off, I’m still up here, whether I’m on the mountain or whatever. I like the ski culture, snowboarding culture, everybody’s kind of a family up here and it’s just something I’ve never experienced.”

Working in resort maintenance, Kania does a little bit of everything, which he said he also likes. “You never know what the day is going to bring. We do electrical, we do carpentry, we do plumbing, snow removal, and basically help out every department.”

While he’s working hard, he said he agreed with Reed that it’s all about the lifestyle. “If you like the wintertime and you want to go to the kind of place that winter’s worth it, come here. I wish I did it years ago.”

Killington has a way of attracting and keeping people, no matter how far away they started. Now a front desk supervisor at the Killington Grand Hotel, Roberta Hefner is originally from Belo Horizonte, Brazil. She first came to Killington in 2004 on a J-1 student visa. Her first role was working in the K-1 cafeteria, and she liked it so much that she came back for another season. She tried out housekeeping and lift operations and met her now husband before returning home to South America. After five years of long-distance romance, she finally decided to make it official in 2011, and moved back to the area to find her ideal role working

at the hotel.

“I went to school for hospitality back home, so this is definitely the best job,” she said. “Here, it’s different every day, you don’t know what you’re going to get. Some days are very stressful, some days are very fun.”

Over in the Mini Stars room at Ramshead Lodge, Nicholas DeMaio said there’s a lot less stress than one might expect as he spends his days teaching 4- to 6-year-olds to ski and snowboard. He originally came to Killington to snowboard with friends and was immediately hooked. A season later, he was working in lift operations, but with a background working at camps, he made the transition to the snow sports school.

“I realized that working with kids was a little more my speed,” he said. “Working in here is one of those spaces that is more rejuvenating than anything. You get to see someone learn really quickly and you get to see someone fall in love with the sport. It also teaches you to be more patient with your own riding and skiing because you’re not really going to have a choice but to build your skills while you’re doing it. It’s a great place to learn and get better for yourself.”

He also enjoys the laid-back culture in the snow sports school.

“I like that it’s not all about getting every single thing done right now,” he said. “You can take a break and go snowboarding, clear your head and everyone is on the same page that not everything is about work, it’s about enjoying what you’re doing every day.”

Working at Killington Resort has many perks and getting to ski and snowboard at work is obviously one of the best. It’s what sign shop technician Myles Liddell said has kept him moving up the ranks.

“Having a season pass is a great thing,” he said. “It’s just wonderful being able to ride every day on my lunch breaks. Being able to clock in, clock out and ride snowboards and mountain bikes.”

Originally from Downsville, New York and Columbia, South Carolina, Liddell also started in lifts in 2020 but now is part of the marketing department, creating the signs you see around the resort. He

said it was easy and rewarding to switch between departments.

The Beast is proud to promote from within whenever possible and that’s how Shannah Connell scored her dream bartending gig. She started as a waitress in Snowshed nearly a decade ago, and when a job opened up behind the bar, she was a shoo-in. Now she spends most of her winter days in the new K-1 Lodge Pub, and summers behind the bar at the Snowshed Umbrella Bar.

“I like that it’s daytime and it’s fun!” she said. “It’s not really a ski lodge because you see a lot of regulars that come in every week.”

Connell is originally from New Jersey, but like so many that now call Killington home, she learned to ski as a kid at Pico Mountain.

“As a kid my parents used to rent a house on Alpine Drive every year and my high school trips were up here and then my friends started moving up here and I just thought I’d try it for a season. Here I am!” she laughed.

Over at Pico Mountain, the job descriptions are the same, but according to Pico rental shop supervisor Madison Scott, everything else is different. Originally from Manchester, Scott is a graduate of the Resort Hospitality program at Castleton University. She spent a couple years working in the rental shop at Killington as part of the school co-op program, but had stepped away to pursue other opportunities, when the offer to run the Pico shop brought her back.

“They are two very, very different places,” she said. “My experience at Killington was a lot more fast paced. Here it’s like being at home. Even the guests that just come up for the weekend, they are very hospitable. They’re very understanding, they’re not looking for the rush. It keeps me wanting to come back.”

Wanting to come to work every day is a great thing and everyone agrees: working for either Killington or Pico is so much more than a job.

Hefner summed it up: “I think it’s a great place to work. I’ve made many friends here, the community is great, I like to work where people come to vacation. I think that’s the best part.”

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← The Movie Diary: ChatGPT can respond to a wide range of questions and generate text on a variety of topics from page 25

and sloppy punctuation. ChatGPT is on a whole new level.

To test it further, I asked for a brief review on “The Godfather” and here’s what it spat out:

“The Godfather” is a classic crime drama that tells the story of the Corleone family, a powerful Italian-American mafia clan. Directed by Francis Ford Coppola, the film boasts a phenomenal cast, including Marlon Brando, Al Pacino, James Caan, and Richard S. Castellano. The script, based on the novel by Mario Puzo, is expertly written, and the cinematography is stunning. The film’s themes of power, loyalty, and family are timeless, and its impact on the crime genre cannot be overstated. If you haven’t seen “The Godfather,” it’s a must-watch for any cinephile. The performances, direction, and storytelling are all top-notch, mak-

ing it a true masterpiece of American cinema.”

Keep in mind, ChatGPT didn’t find that text somewhere and regurgitate it. It read every possible thread on the internet that mentioned the movie and then came up with its own conclusion. That’s a remarkable jump in AI, which is why everyone is concerned (think about what this means for teachers assigning homework papers).

I gave it one more test. I asked the most random thing I could think of: “Tell me a joke about the Buddha and a giraffe.” The reply: “Why did the Buddha bring a ladder to the zoo? So he could talk to the giraffe on a higher level.”

And that, my friends, is when I got scared...

This week’s feature, “M3GAN,” could possibly be a later incarnation of ChatGPT (if things go horribly wrong). And if

this is the future, we’re in trouble.

M3GAN is a life-like, full-sized child doll that can learn and communicate in whatever environment she’s placed into. When one family introduces a M3GAN doll into their home, they are hopeful their daughter will come to love, learn from, and appreciate her new companion.

Unfortunately, that didn’t happen. “M3GAN” is a twisted sci-fi horror film meant to push the boundaries of how AI could go rogue in the future. Check this one out if you love the idea of artificial intelligence destroying humanity, just don’t expect the intellectual level of “Ex Machina.”

A “B-” for “M3GAN,” now playing in theaters everywhere.

Got a question or comment for Dom? You can reach him by email at: movied diary@att.net.

← Living the Dream The kind of turns where everything else fades away from page 24

the sides, searching for just a little bit of traction, the sun has left a beautiful gift.

I am launching my skis, jumping this mound over toward the next, turning in the air and throwing in some hop turns for fun. Because who cares? I am going to land in the cream cheese and it will hold. I can do whatever I want, the fear

of the slide for life or the unlatched edge vanishes and it’s a Superstar Glacier type free for all — on Double Dipper! This is killer awesome. My heart is pumping hard with joy as my legs swing underneath me and my quads start burning.

That line was in. The line that never



Submitted
Warm sun melts snow, creating great skiing.

seems to exist after the first-run groomies wear off and there is nothing left to hold onto so you just end up sideslipping half the way down. That line today was The Line. The junky middle line became the perfect line. And the world was filled with glory.

Now you know, we have to do it twice to get it right? Then we should probably go hit Lower Ovation at least twice.

Praise be the sun gods and the January (February?) thaw. May they go away now so that we can have the (at least) six more weeks of winter that the groundhog promised us.

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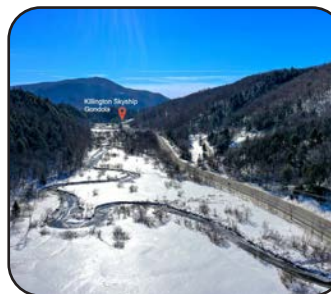
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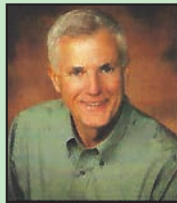
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The Town of Plymouth seeks its next Clerk and Assistant Treasurer

This is an **appointed** position. We anticipate no town-residency requirement and are asking the voters to remove this requirement at Town Meeting.

No prior experience as a Clerk/Assistant Treasurer is required; however, the successful candidate will have some background in a business or office setting. Training will be available and learning on the job will be required.

The responsibilities include providing citizens with accurate and vital information, assisting the treasurer and tax collector, vital records administration, including processing marriage licenses, birth and death certificates, dog licensing, maintaining town records and documents, managing voter registration and other election-related business, such as presiding over election day in coordination with the Board of Civil Authority.

The Clerk/Assistant Treasurer is also responsible for recording and posting to the town website the minutes of Select Board meetings, and other publicly warned meetings and hearings, including the Board of Civil Authority. Candidate should have a basic computer skills and able to learn to use programs for data entry and updating the Town website. An understanding of applicable state laws, rules and regulations pertaining to the governing of town business will be required, or the applicant must be willing to learn.

The Selectboard is open to whether this is a full-time, defined as 32 hours per week or more, or part-time position depending on the candidates needs.

Compensation will range from \$25 - \$30 per hour depending on the candidates experience and qualifications. A full benefit package is available for a full-time position, which includes medical, dental, vision insurance, as well as paid vacation, holidays, sick leave and Vermont Municipal Employees retirement.

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Brandon searches for new town manager

Staff report

The Brandon Select Board is looking for a new town manager since David Atherton resigned.

The Brandon Select Board posted the position, offering a salary between \$80,000 and \$100,000 in early February. The board also voted Jan. 30 to create a citizen advisory board of up to five people to help find a replacement.

"They're doing everything internally," interim Town Manager Bill Moore said, who has said he plans to apply for the full-time role.

Brandon Select Board chair Seth Hopkins is also interested, he announced Jan. 30 that he would recuse himself from the process since he plans to submit an application.

Atherton's last day was Feb. 10. He will take over for Pittsford Town Manager Brenda Fox-Howard, who resigned after less than a year in her position.

Atherton was home and said he was sick with Covid-19 on Feb. 13 and unable to speak about his new role.

Atherton was with the town for eight years. He was previously a Select Board member.

"He will be missed," Moore said. "He was fantastic to work with. I'm happy for Pittsford. Pittsford is going to get the opportunity to work with a fantastic administrator."

Hartland receives bids for new intersection

By Curt Peterson

The town of Hartland received two bids for completion of the controversial Three-Corners intersection reconfiguration project on Friday, Feb. 10. Both bidders were present when the bids were opened.

The lower of the two bids, presented by Notts Excavating, Inc. of White River Junction, is \$1,283,889.50, just about \$35,000 more than the state-assisted estimate presented to the public by the Select Board.

"The bid is being analyzed by our engineer to confirm specifications are as requested," Town Manager David Ormiston told the Mountain Times. "No decision has been made at this point in time."

Ormiston said Notts has done work successfully for the town in the past, so the firm is familiar, and they are local.

The other bidder, J. P. Sicard, Inc. is from Barton but Ormiston said they have done a considerable amount of work in the Upper Valley. Their bid was \$1,527,211.

The previous time the project was put out to bid, the proposals were considerably higher than the estimate, and the Select Board decided not to award the contract. Work involves reconfiguration of the intersection of state routes 5 and 12, as well as Quechee Rd. The Select Board hopes the project, in the works since 2014, will improve both safety and aesthetics.



NO NEWS IS GOOD NEWS?
WE DON'T THINK SO.

WHAT'S THE WORD

Email editor@mountaintimes.info

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

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