



MLK IS JAN. 17
Martin Luther King Junior Day is Monday, Jan. 17. While many are off from school or work for the federal holiday, the day provides an opportunity to reflect on diversity and inclusion.
Page 6



By Brooke Geery
Jayden Pytlik, 11, won best overall male skier.

MINI SHREDDERS

Snowboarders, ages 4-13, took over Red's Backyard at Killington Resort on Sunday, Jan. 9 with music played by DJ Dave Hoffenberg. Spirits were high despite dreary weather.
Page 24

FOOD CENTER ADDRESSES CONTAMINATION

The Vermont Farmers Market Food Center in Rutland is rapidly working to remediate a contamination problem in the air and soil. The Vermont Farmers Market remains open on Saturdays.
Page 3



ARTS, DINING & ENTERTAINMENT

Find 87 local events not to miss this week.
Page 18

Governor Scott doubles down on controversial school Covid policy changes

Staff report

Gov. Phil Scott and other state officials defended their controversial and "abrupt" shift in school policy for combating Covid-19 in the governor's weekly press conference on Tuesday, Jan. 11.

As case numbers have hit record numbers with the omicron variant, Agency of Education Sec. Dan French sent school administrators a letter on Friday, Jan. 7, recommending schools stop contract tracing and stop PCR tests in favor of take-home rapid tests.

Under the changes, if a student tests positive, all students in the class will be notified. Vaccinated kids who are close contacts can still go to school without a test but any unvaccinated staff or students who are close contacts will be offered free at-home kits containing five rapid antigen tests. Close contacts can continue going to school if they have a negative test result each of the five days. But no verification is required. If symptomatic, students and staff are instructed to stay home.

Many educators and parents have been critical of the agency's decision. House Speaker Jill Krowinski called the decision "alarming" on Twitter.

But Scott doubled down on Tuesday and said claims on social media that the state was not testing anymore was untrue.

"It's unfortunate they weighed in before having all the facts," Scott said. "Omicron makes this shift essential to support changes to school testing" > 5



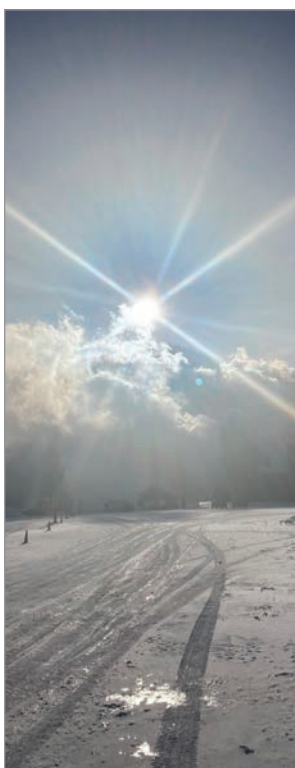
By Glenn Russell

Governor outlines priorities for 2022, legislative session begins — virtually

Governor Phil Scott gave the biennial State of the State speech last Wednesday, Jan. 5. He told Vermonters that "the state of the state is strong" in spite of its issues. (Throughout the speech he hardly mentioned the pandemic, which hit a new record for case numbers that day at 2,188.)

"We have to learn to manage life with this virus and cannot let it derail us from addressing our most fundamental challenges: Our desperate need for more people in our communities and more workers to fill the tens of thousands of jobs available in Vermont today," he said.

Scott emphasized that housing and affordability are tied to recruiting workers. See page 7.



By Lindsey Rogers

Cold blasts

On the morning of Tuesday, Jan. 11, snowmaking clouds billowed over Pico Mountain. The extra cold temps (it was -4°F) are set to return this weekend. Plan accordingly.

'A pretty serious crisis'

Students and staff return to school closures, surging cases, expired tests, changing guidance, frustration

By Peter D'Auria/VTDigger

As students returned from the holiday break, some Vermont schools made it just three days before closing under the weight of Covid-19 cases.

There were so many cases in the building which houses JFK Elementary as well as

cluding Winooski Middle & High School, JFK Elementary, Irasburg Village School, U-32 Middle & High School, Waits River Valley School and Otter Valley Elementary.

Otter Valley Academy @Leicester (K-6) had nearly a third of its students out with

Covid-19, Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union Superintendent Jeanne Collins said.

"Too many cases," Collins said in a text.

Superintendent Chris Hennessy said that some parents have been knowingly sending Covid-positive children to school.

Winooski Middle and High School, that the district advised all community members to simply assume that they had been exposed. "Things are terrible," said Emily Hecker, a spokesperson for the Winooski school district.

Last week, as the Omicron variant surged across the country, Vermonters saw the state's highest caseload of the entire pandemic. Amid a series of record-shattering days, school officials braced for students to return, fearing an explosion of coronavirus cases.

This week, those fears were realized for many.

At least half a dozen schools across the state closed one or more days this week, in-

"Need to move to remote and hope people test over the weekend."

In Winooski, school staff logged 35 positive cases of Covid-19, including 20 who were contagious while at school.

The school is conducting test-to-stay, a testing regimen that allows students at risk of infection to stay in class, as well as surveillance testing, a broader testing program for athletes and other students who volunteer. But, she said, it's unclear how long the district can maintain that.

"To pull off this level of testing, we are taking all three of our principals, our only school

Crisis > 4

Hartland dog named hero for rescuing owner

By Katy Savage

A Hartland dog is being called a hero after leading police officers to a serious crash on Interstate 91 in Hartford, where its owner was badly injured.

The New Hampshire State Police and Lebanon Police Department responded to a report of a loose dog on Veterans Memorial Bridge on I-89 above the Connecticut River around 10 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 3.

Lebanon Police Deputy Chief Matthew Isham said police attempted to corral the dog, a 1-year-old Shiloh shepherd named Tinsley, out of traffic, but when police approached it, it took off running west on the interstate, crossing from Lebanon, New Hampshire to Hartford, Vermont.

"The dog would run toward

Rescue > 2

Chittenden to buy \$75K excavator

By Brett Yates

Aiming to reduce the town’s reliance on contractors, the Chittenden Select Board authorized the purchase of an excavator for use by the municipal road crew on Jan. 10. The town expects to spend \$75,850 on the Volvo ECR50F, plus \$10,900 on a trailer, manufactured by Kaufman Trailers, to transport it.

Road Commissioner Gary Congdon expects to deploy the excavator for cleaning ditches, replacing culverts, and digging the water line for a new well at the town office, an anticipated project.

“It’s a handy tool to have,” Congdon observed. “It won’t mess up the asphalt because it’s got rubber tracks on it. If you have to get off the road, being on rubber tracks, excavators,

they’ll go most anywhere.”

Select Board member Bob Baird, who, with his family, operates Baird Farm, testified to the machine’s utility. “I have one myself,” he related. “It’s maybe twice paid for itself.”

To pay for it, the town will draw from its equipment reserve fund, where Selectman Andrew Quint noted a current balance of about \$281,000.

The board decided to rush the purchase after Congdon found that a distributor in Williston had only one ECR50F left in stock. With steel prices rising, he foresees a significantly higher price for next year’s model.

Congdon predicted that the town would get about 20 years of service out of the machine.

Killington tax rate up 1.8 cents

By Curt Peterson

Killington Select Board’s amendments resulted in an estimated municipal property tax rate of \$.5569 per \$100 of assessed value.

“This is an increase of about 1.8 cents over last year’s rate,” Town Manager Chet Hagenbarth said at the meeting on Jan. 4.

“But remember, the final tax rate isn’t decided until about June,” added Select Board Member Jim Haff.

The residents vote on a budget, not a tax rate, Haff explained. The budget is then divided by the total Grand List value to come up with an estimate.

The Select Board also discussed the Town Meeting informational session format. The

2021 meeting was held remotely due to the pandemic, but Haff said he hopes it can go back to being at the school this year, with Zoom access also provided. He said the state has relaxed some of the rules about school buildings, and more information is expected in about a week.

The board decided to wait for the new guidelines before making a decision, and to talk to school officials in the meantime.

Adding a ballot question about allowing cannabis sales in Killington will also wait, as advised by the town attorney, until the state regulations are announced.

Killington tax rate > 3

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Submitted

Tinsley, a 1-year-old Shiloh shepherd, survived a car crash on Monday, Jan. 3, then led police to the scene of the accident.

Rescue: Dog credited with leading police from New Hampshire to Vermont to the scene of a serious crash from page 1

New Hampshire and then stop and then go to Vermont and stop,” Isham said.

The New Hampshire police continued to follow the dog to Vermont while waiting for Vermont authorities to arrive. As the Lebanon officers were turning around to go back to New Hampshire, police saw a damaged section of the guardrail near the Interstate 91 and Interstate 89 junction and then found a badly-damaged Ford 350 truck that had rolled over. Two men, Cameron Laundry, 31, of Hartland, and Justin Connors, 40, were lying in the snow.

“We stayed with them, gave them blankets, and gave them medical care [until Vermont authorities arrived],” Isham said.

Police said it was clear the “lost” dog was leading police to the accident. “The dog came down to where the two men were and just sat there once the medical people got there,” Isham said.

Police said Tinsley was not injured in the crash.

“It’s the story of the year so far,” Isham said.

Tinsley has made national news and was featured on We Rate Dogs, an organization with more than 12 million social media followers, which takes submissions of videos, photos of dogs to be rated. Tinsley received the highest rating.

“It’s quite remarkable,” said Tinsley’s owner, Laundry, who declined to comment further, explaining he’s still recovering from the accident.

“I’m more worried about my friend that’s in the hospital,” Laundry said.

Laundry was driving home from a restaurant in New Hampshire just before the accident. He sustained minor injuries in the crash, including a concussion and a cut on his hand that required stitches. Connors remained in the hospital with a serious neck injury and a broken leg.

The crash is under investigation by the Vermont state police.

“It became national media before we got our press stuff out,” said Hugh O’Donnell, the lieutenant station of the Vermont State Police Royalton Barracks.

As Vermont police continue the investigation, O’Donnell wasn’t convinced the New Hampshire trooper’s depiction of the crash was portrayed correctly.

“The dog saving the person, I’m not sure that’s accurate,” he said.

O’Donnell said a second dog in the truck, an American bull-dog owned by Connors, was found dead on the side of the road by the Agency of Transportation the following morning.

O’Donnell said Laundry, who was driving, was issued a citation for DUI after failing dexterity exercises. The passenger, Connors, was transported to Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center with serious injuries. O’Donnell said police were waiting on Laundry’s bloodwork and more charges may be coming.

Submitted

Damaged Ford 350 truck and two passengers were found beyond the guardrail near the Interstate 91 and Interstate 89 junction Monday, Jan. 3.

State: Vermont Farmers Food Center needs to fix soil contamination

By Katy Savage

An attempt to expand the Vermont Farmers Market Food Center on West Street in Rutland has uncovered a contamination problem in the air and soil.

The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources sent current and former owners of the property a letter on Dec. 30 explaining they need to provide a corrective action plan by Jan. 17 under state statute.

Kimberly Caldwell, an environmental analyst at the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, said the owners have been told to stop using the building in the meantime.

“The recommendation of the health department is that the tenants find alternate locations,” Caldwell said. “It’s up to them if they do that, we can’t force them out of the building.”

The Phase II environmental site assessment, prepared by Weston & Sampson Engineers, Inc. on Dec. 29, found high levels of tetrachloroethylene (TCE) in the soil beneath the Farmer’s Hall building and both TCE and chloroform in indoor air samples collected from the Farmer’s Hall building.

TCE is a common ingredient in stain remover, carpet cleaner and other degreasing products.

The Environmental Protection Agency has classified TCE as a carcinogen. Long term exposure in the workplace has been linked to several types of cancer including bladder cancer, non-Hodgkins lymphoma and multiple myeloma. Short term inhalation risks, according to EPA, include upper respiratory tract and eye irritation, kidney dysfunction, and neurological effects such as dizziness, headache, sleepiness and unconsciousness. TCE exposure can also have adverse effects on the liver, immune system and on development and reproduction.

“The potentially responsible parties need to provide a work plan with a consultant that proposes how to test moving forward,” said Caldwell, explaining all current and former owners of the property are liable for the contamination.

The Rutland Regional Planning Commission has paid for the environmental studies on the building so far through the

Rutland Region Brownfields Reuse Program.

Rutland Regional Planning Commission Executive Director Ed Bove said the commission has spent about \$55,000 so far on the Phase I study and preliminary Phase II study at the site.

The brownfields program is available for both public and private locations. The program has been around for 20 years and has received about \$2 million in funding in that time.

“With every site, there’s something that gets turned up,” Bove said.

Bove said the planning commission will likely be able to pay for the entire cleanup process of the Vermont Farmer’s Center property, but the solutions won’t be immediate.

“It will be a year or two to get through everything, depending on how they want to attack it,” Bove said.

It’s unclear what the source of the contamination is. The property was formerly a machine shop for General Electric. According to the environmental study, a former General Electric employee notified the owners that he operated a degreasing machine there that used TCE.

More testing needs to be done to understand how widespread the contamination is.

“I know some of the soil gas points that were tested around the building weren’t showing contamination,” Caldwell said. “It seemed to be localized to the Farmer’s Hall building.”

The owners have a plan to add a distribution area, custom meat-cutting room and a commercial kitchen to the building, which necessitated the environmental study. The \$20 million project would improve the farmer’s market property and the long-vacant Lynda Lee dress factory behind it. The Board of Aldermen granted VFFC board president Greg Cox \$32,000 to help pay for a feasibility study in October.

“This is a new development that has come quite unexpectedly to the whole community,” said Kathleen Krevetski, a former board member of the Vermont Farmers Market

VFFC > 11

Killington Select Board approves TIF application

By Curt Peterson and Polly Mikula

Thirty-eight people on Zoom joined at least three dozen others in person on Tuesday evening, Jan. 4, when the Killington Select Board approved the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District plan and financing plan and the state application.

The application now goes to Vermont Economic Progress Council (VEPC) who will spend the next few months reviewing the materials, conducting site visits and asking follow up questions of the town.

Approval for the district could come as soon as April, according to Stephanie Clarke, consultant with White + Burke Real Estate Advisors, the firm hired to assist the town with the TIF application.

The town is hoping to use TIF in order for municipal infrastructure investments to catalyze needed private development. Namely, a municipal water system and the reconstruction of Killington Road — both of which are proven obstacles to future growth—as well as affordable housing.	Development agreements must be put in place in order for any actual development to occur.
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Many members of the public spoke up on Tuesday, creating a lively, informative and civil discussion about the town’s plans — and potential risks associated.

Once a town is approved as a TIF district, it can use a portion of newly generated municipal and state education taxes to pay the debt service created by building public infrastructure. However, development agreements must be put in place in order for any actual development to occur.

“The state does not allow towns to use the ‘build it and they will come’ model. We are not Field of Dreams,” Clarke explained.

In other words, just being approved as a TIF district, doesn’t guarantee development or any specific development agreement — those crucial details will be worked out in the next phase, after the district is approved by the state.

Future development agreements will ensure that public investments will spur enough growth to cover the debt service on the municipal bond, thereby not increasing municipal taxes. It’s a long-term plan that contemplates repayment via the additional revenue over 20 years.

Hartland Select Board appoints new board member

By Curt Peterson

Maple Heights resident Jim Rielly was chosen from among four applicants to fill Hartland Select Board member Curtis Atkisson’s recently vacated seat on the five-person Hartland Select Board. The board interviewed four candidates before making their decision.

The other applicants were David Singer, Mandi Potter and Jacob Holmes.

Rielly, a member of the Hartland Planning Commission since July, will serve as interim selectperson until the next election in March. He is one of at least five candidates busy gathering signatures to run for the balance of Atkisson’s term, expiring in March 2023. Petitions have to be submitted by Jan. 24.

He said he hopes his appointed short term will be a “warm-up lap” for serving as an electee.

The Riellys moved to Hartland in May of 2019. Previously, Rielly managed a team of IT people at IDS (later renamed IDX) Healthcare in Burlington, acting as liaison between their Boston and Burlington offices. IDX was sold to GE in 2005, Rielly said.

He is currently senior healthcare IT professional for Providence Health & Services, of Renton, Washington, which operates 52 hospitals and 1,085 clinics,

and employs 120,000 people in Alaska, California, Montana, New Mexico, Oregon, Texas and Washington, according to the website.

Reilly joined the Woodstock Rifle & Pistol Association and won a trap competition three years in a row. Reilly plans to retire here in about eight years.

“This is our final destination,” he said.

Select Board member Martha McGlinn, Rielly’s neighbor, told the Mountain Times, “I think Jim will be a good addition to the Select Board.”

Fellow Select Board member Phil Hobbie said, “Jim’s very simple presentation to the Board and his background appealed to me when making the decision. He’s pragmatic and aspires to achieve things in Hartland that are feasible.”

Rielly’s wife, Michelle, is Hartland’s assistant treasurer – keeping accounts and receiving tax payments in the town offices.

Hobbie said he didn’t expect having a husband and wife both in-



involved in the finances of the town to create any “conflicts of interest,” but it was a consideration as the board deliberated whom to appoint.

In a telephone interview, Rielly said he has had both private and public management experience that he hopes he can invest in Hartland’s future as a selectperson, making sure residents get value for their tax dollars.

“As a family, Michelle and I have to stick to a budget and spend carefully. I think we have to make sure the town does the same,” he said. “And I’m always willing to learn something new.”

“I hope to form working partnerships with the other select board members and with the residents,” Reilly added. “I’ve attended some board meetings, so I have an idea how things work, how they are done. It is surprising to me how few people attend the meetings.”

**Killington tax rate:** Is up 1.8 cents from page 2

The Killington Select Board also said it will publicize that its regular meeting schedule and venue have changed. There was very low attendance at their first 2022 meeting: five in-person and eight remote, including the town manager, the interim zoning administrator, the chief of police and one of the select board members.

Select Board member Jim Haff said the town needs to put the changes “out there.”

From now on the meetings will be held the second and fourth Monday of each month, still starting at 6:30 p.m. The next meeting will be on Jan. 24.

The venue has changed as well to the new public safety building on Killington Road. Meetings will be available both in-person (masks required) and virtually via Zoom. They are also recorded so people who miss a meeting can review them at their convenience.

In response to suggestions, Town Manager Chet Hagenbarth will be posting the Zoom link at the same time the meetings are warned. He said he had been waiting until a half hour before the meeting started because a meeting was hacked almost two years ago.

Board chair Steve Finneron said people were frustrated by looking for it at the last minute.

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Scott announces plan to send 500,000 free rapid tests to Vermonters

By Lola Duffort/VTDigger

The state is partnering with the National Institutes of Health to send 500,000 free Covid-19 rapid antigen tests to Vermonters' homes in the coming weeks, Gov. Phil Scott announced Thursday, Jan. 6. On Jan. 11, the announced a site would be up on Jan. 12 where families could register to receive two kits (4 tests) per household.

The White House announced in late December that it would begin sending 500 million free rapid tests to Americans who request them sometime in January, although the program has not yet rolled out. The governor's office said the state's initiative would be in addition to the federal effort, and would not replace existing rapid testing programs already in place in Vermont's schools and child care facilities.

"Rapid tests are an important tool, but Americans need to be able to get them easily, quickly and far more affordably. While we wait for more details on President Biden's rapid testing initiative, we are considering ways to simplify and expand our state's testing system," Scott said in a statement.

The QuickVue tests, manufactured by Quidel, will come in packs of two, according to the governor's office. Vermonters will be able to order them online and need to provide their names and mailing addresses. Additional details about how to order will be released next week.

Other states, including Missouri, New Hampshire and New Jersey have also attempted to deploy large numbers of free Covid-19 tests by shipping them directly to residents who ask for them. Basically, all have run into the same problem: extraordinarily high demand, and far too little supply.

The announcement from the governor's office sought to manage expectations, and stressed that the initiative should be considered a pilot project. The state is gauging "how well the system works so we can continue to improve testing options and work with President Biden's team

Free tests > 11

Vermont launches 'Tests For Tots'

On Friday, Jan. 7, Governor Phil Scott announced the launch of the state's "Tests for Tots" program, which will provide rapid antigen Covid-19 test kits to regulated child care providers across Vermont. Child care providers can enroll in the program effective immediately.

Test to Stay has been an important tool in Vermont's K-12 schools, saving thousands of in-person instruction days for students, according to the state's press release. This initiative expands the efforts to child care providers, allowing

Tot tests > 11

← Crisis: Covid takes a toll on school districts with many students and staff out sick from page 1

nurse (the other nurse is out this week), two guidance counselors, myself (the director of communications), the superintendent's executive assistant, and all of our multilingual liaisons off their regular duties," Hecker said via email. "This is obviously not sustainable."

In the Orange East Supervisory Union, where Waits River Valley School was forced to close on Friday due to staffing shortages, Superintendent Emilie Knisley said the explosion of Covid cases was unprecedented. "Our [supervisory union] has had a lot of cases over the course of the year," Knisley said. "But this is coming in at a rate like I have not seen before."

In an email to community members in the Barre Unified Union School District, Superintendent Chris Hennessy said that some parents have been knowingly sending Covid-positive children to school.

"The vast majority of our students and families are doing the right thing by following the guidance and doing their best to look out for the safety of others," Hennessy said, "but the actions of a few are going to make keeping school open and fully staffed increasingly challenging to continue."

It's not just soaring case counts and staffing shortages that have plagued the return to school.

Before the end of the holiday break, the Vermont Dept. of Health announced new guidance for Covid-19 isolation, based on changes made by the federal Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

For example, under the state's new guidelines, anyone infected with the coronavirus can leave isolation after five days — a decrease from the original 10-day duration — if they test negative twice with a rapid test. People must "wear a mask around others" for another five days after coming out of isolation, according to the state guidance.

But if a student comes out of isolation after five days, it's not clear when they have to wear a mask.

"What happens with lunch?" asked Brooke Olsen-Farrell, the superintendent of Slate Valley Unified School District. "They can't really eat lunch in the cafeteria then, can they? Or can't they?"

And now that booster shots are available for many stu-

dents, it's unclear exactly how those will affect students' vaccination status — which determines whether students must quarantine after close contacts.

To make matters worse, some districts are also grappling with outdated Covid-19 tests.

Many rapid tests given to schools by the state agency of education this fall expired in late December, local school officials said.

In the Mill River Unified Union School District, school staff were forced to cancel their test-to-stay program several days this week because their tests had expired in late December, Superintendent David Younce said.

"We had parents frustrated because, before the break, they

were hearing, 'Hey, we've got all kinds of tests that we can use,' Younce said. 'And then after the break, it was, 'Well, we don't really have these tests that we can use anymore.'"

Chamberlin, of Orleans Central Supervisory Union, said school officials in her district had received shipments of tests just days before their expiration date in late December.

"We had less than two weeks, I think, of actually being able to utilize the tests in the schools before they expired," she said. Had they not expired, "it would have allowed us to be somewhat predictable with what we were coming back to from break."

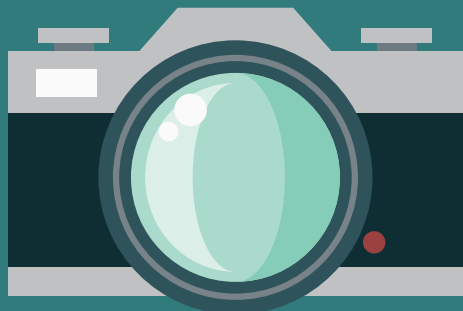
Ted Fisher, a spokesperson for the Vermont Agency of Education, said the problem of expiring kits had been a concern for weeks.

"Some schools had not used up existing stocks of kits that were expiring, and we gave them guidance earlier in December on how to use the kits before they expired, and on ordering replacement kits so they would not be short," Fisher said in an email. "Most SU/SDs did so. If an SU/SD did not order replacement kits, they should contact us ASAP about ordering."

Orleans Central received a new shipment of antigen tests on Thursday, Chamberlin said, and staff are working to sort them and determine the best way to get them to staff and students.

"We're part of the supply chain now, is what we've become," she said. "We're pediatric clinics, and we're now warehouses."

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Teachers' union slams state's abandonment of contact tracing, testing in schools

By Jeralyn Darling/VTDigger

Vermont's teachers' union is calling Friday's decision to end contact tracing and surveillance testing a "demoralizing blow" to anyone involved in the state's school system, including students and their parents.

In a statement issued Saturday, Jan. 8, the Vermont chapter of the National Education Association, the largest union in the state, criticized the Agency of Education's abrupt decision amid record-breaking case counts and school closures.

Previewing the policy shift in an email to local school officials Friday, Secretary of Education Dan French promised more guidance early this week and framed the change as an opportunity to relieve educators' already overburdened workloads.

The state Agency of Education's new approach appears to shift the burden of "test-to-stay," a regimen in which close contacts of positive cases take daily rapid tests before the beginning of class, from school staff to the

family members of students.

The union denounced the state's ever-changing, "tone deaf shifts in safety guidance," saying in the statement, "The secretary of education decided to commemorate one of the most chaotic weeks ever in Vermont

"By announcing the end of contact tracing and surveillance testing, the state has us bewildered in stripping away two important layers of safety with only vague assurances of something better," the teachers' union said in the statement.

"This is unacceptable."

schools by yet another Friday night announcement of yet another abrupt Covid policy shift."

"By announcing the end of contact tracing and surveillance testing, the state has us bewildered in stripping away two important layers of safety with only vague assurances of something better," the teachers' union said in the statement. "This is unacceptable."

The teachers' union called for more tools to mitigate the spread of Covid-19, including rapid tests — a sore subject after teachers and students returned from their winter break to find that many of the rapid tests given to schools by the state Agency of Education last fall expired in late December, according to local school officials.

In a tweet on Saturday, Jan. 8, Senate President Pro Tempore Becca Balint said the Senate Education Committee had asked French, Health Commissioner Mark Levine and the union to testify on the new guidance on Tuesday. "We know this past

week was incredibly hard on schools and families, and this announcement brings more uncertainty and fear for many," Balint said.

"Vermont's school employees — who have been among the front-line heroes of this pandemic — deserve better than late-night policy shifts that will continue to sow chaos in our schools," the union wrote.

Changes to school testing: Governor outlines new policies for schools struggling with Covid from page 1

porting school operations. It's clear that cases will continue to increase for a while."

Scott acknowledged the shift was quick, but said it was based on data and science.

"Nothing about this pandemic has been textbook," Scott said. "Nothing we were doing before made sense (to combat omicron)."

French, the education secretary, also admitted the shift was "abrupt" in the press conference and said his email to educators could have explained the new policies better.

"Omicron is forcing us to move quicker than we otherwise would have wanted," French said.

Dr. Mark Levine, the commissioner of health, said the new school policies are designed to lessen the burden on school staff and shift the state's strategy from managing a pandemic to managing an endemic.

"PCR is too slow to respond to this new variant in this setting," Levine said, explaining the rapid tests will be "more responsive."

However, Levine said that schools can continue PCR surveillance testing if they so choose.

The new policies also shift the burden of testing from school staff to parents.

Levine said the state wants to preserve in-person education and contact tracing was becoming too difficult to manage with the surge in cases.

"We need to move faster to counter this variant," Levine said. "I know what a difficult time this is — probably the most disruptive month we will have endured. We're navigating yet another phase of this pandemic."

Levine said many people will get omicron and for some, it's not a question of if, but when.

"That doesn't mean you're going to become deathly ill," said Levine, as he emphasized the importance of getting vaccinated.

Levine said there will likely be impacts on the workforce, but said there would be waves of the virus that would hopefully not impact businesses all at once. Levine also recommended wearing two masks or "high quality" N95 or KN95 masks.

"Please don't rely on a single ply cloth mask," he said.

Rebecca Bell, a pediatric critical care doctor at UVM's Children's Hospital, acknowledged it had been a challenging two weeks.

Bell echoed other officials, saying the new policies will allow the state to manage the virus "without

letting it break us."

Bell said families with young children should be "prepared for disruption."

"There is fear in the unknown," Bell said.

Testing only the unvaccinated

In the case a student or staff member tests positive for Covid-19, schools would inform parents whose children share a class with the Covid-positive case.

Then families of unvaccinated classmates would be advised to pick up rapid Covid-19 tests at the school and conduct five days of daily testing at home. Unvaccinated staff members who are identified as contacts would follow the same procedures.

Vaccinated students and staff will be given the option to take home rapid tests but are not required to do so. Vaccinated students and staff can continue to attend school without testing or quarantining.

The effective Test to Stay program will also transfer from being school-based to being home based — an honor system.

State officials encourage parents to report positive Covid-19 case information from rapid tests administered in private homes at healthvermont.gov/reportresults. Many expect that reporting to fall short.



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For the Greater Good: Vermonters working on diversity, equity and inclusion

This Monday, Jan. 17, there will be countless commemorations honoring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., one of the greatest civil rights leaders in the world, who was assassinated in 1968.

Across Vermont, several groups working to increase justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion, have taken Dr. King's legacy to heart, and are mobilizing progressive community action.

Their mission, vision and methods are distinctive and innovative. They all share a moral imperative, and they believe that making Vermont a more welcoming place for everyone, regardless of socioeconomic group, gender, race, or religious beliefs, is crucial for Vermont's very future.

Following are profiles of three of these groups.

NAACP student chapter at Castleton University

In spring 2021, Castleton University (CU) became the first university in Vermont to have an NAACP chapter, and it has become a shining example of students, administration, and faculty collaborating to create a welcoming culture on campus.

As Dr. Rich Clark, professor of political science at CU, and faculty advisor to the NAACP students, said: "In the wake of protests following the brutal murder of George Floyd ... and too many others, [the University] made a pledge to combat systemic racism through education.

"Our students responded by forming a group that petitioned the national NAACP chapter for recognition as an official chapter. Student leadership created this organization."

The chapter's current leader, a business major named Tajae Edwards, elaborated, "With the support of the University, what started as an informal discussion group turned into a focused way to implement solutions. Today we have an organized structure, with committees for marketing, events, and fundraising, all led by students. And, we are a safe resource for BIPOC students to share their concerns."



By Liz DiMarco Weinmann

Edwards hopes to continue his education and earn an MBA. "I want to use my business experience and expertise to do good for society," he explained.

No one would dispute he's off to a great start.

Vermont Declaration of Inclusion team

The campaign begun by Vermont business leaders Al Wakefield and Bob Harnish early last year, to have Vermont adopt a declaration of inclusion, which they drafted last February, has enjoyed multiple triumphs.

The most notable occurred last May, when Governor Phil Scott signed a proclamation of diversity and inclusion for the state. The Vermont League of Cities and Towns and

the Vermont Chamber of Commerce are among other champions.

The current declaration of inclusion reads, in part: "[Town] condemns racism and welcomes all persons, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity or expression, age, or disability, and wants everyone to feel safe and welcome in our community."

It has become the centerpiece of a campaign to communicate why race, equity, diversity, and inclusion is crucial to Vermont's economic future.

To date, the team of five volunteers — which includes myself and retired Rutland attorney Norman Cohen — has succeeded in persuading 25 towns to adopt the declaration. The 25 towns include several in the Mountain Times readership: Brandon, Mendon, Middlebury, Middletown Springs, Pittsford, Rutland City, Rutland Town, Shrewsbury, West Rutland, Town of Woodstock, and Woodstock Village. All told, the 25 towns comprise about 100,000 people — or 15% of Vermont's population.

Cohen, who tracks the team's outreach and progress, exudes positivity: "We mine our contacts, work the phones, work the emails, and work the Zooms — despite

no compensation, no donations, no fundraising!"

The team itself is a snapshot of multigenerational diversity, inclusion, and collaboration. Wakefield, who is Black, is a former Manhattan executive who relocated to Vermont more than 40 years ago and ran his global executive recruiting business from Mendon. Harnish, who lives in Pittsford, was a leader in the hospitality business here for most of his career. Elicia Pinsonault, a recent MBA who works in the advancement office at Castleton University and is president of Rutland Young Professionals, joined the team in the fall, helping to transform basic documents into polished presentation materials.

As Wakefield emphasized, "I would love to see Vermont recognized as being the Green State for the vital cultivation of All (its) people, regardless of color."

The Vermont Professionals of Color Network

Formed in January 2019 as a support network for Black & Brown Professionals & Businesses, Vermont Professionals of Color Network (vt poc.net) now has a more definitive mission and vision, led by a board of directors and elected officers.

Founder Tino Rutanhira said: "Vermont Professionals of Color Network aims to build opportunities to improve the experience, representation and success of BIPOC professionals and businesses in this state and to usher in a new era of BIPOC professional mobility.

"We believe that systems that are failing communities of color fail all of us alike, Black, Brown, and White. The goal of our organization is to eliminate the economic and professional gaps between White people and people of color, because prosperity starts with opportunities to climb the economic ladder. A prosperous BIPOC community is a good thing for all of Vermont."

Over the past three years, VT PoC has achieved several critical milestones. Those include the launch of the Vermont Health Equity Initiative (VHEI) — among the first

Greater good > 8



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Differing priorities

The 2022 Vermont legislative session was gavelled in on Jan. 4. The first week provides the governor with an opportunity to give his State of the State address, where he outlines some of his priorities. Legislative leaders also utilize the first week to share their agenda for the session as well.

As should be expected in any democracy, there is overlap and agreement, but also definite differences. Heck, even in our own family, Pat and I are not always on the same page with household priorities...

Workforce

Scott has put this up on the top of his list. It's the same for Senate leader Becca Balint and House Speaker Jill Krowinski. It seems every employer, public or private, is experiencing a shortage of staff. Fewer people are working today than before the pandemic, despite record low unemployment numbers.

The need is especially acute in some areas of health care, particularly nursing. Solving Vermont's staffing shortage will not be easy, but all are committed to taking on the challenge of finding both short- and long-term solutions.

Housing

Intertwined with the workforce issue is the need for more housing. A shortage of

housing has led to higher prices and often hampers employees from moving or staying in Vermont to take jobs. Additionally, declines in our overall workforce threaten to hamper the state's economy. Again, this is a priority with legislator leaders as well.

Abortion

Advancing a constitutional amendment to voters that will guarantee a right to an abortion was on the leaders' list, but not Scott's. Perhaps not surprising as the governor does not have any vote in amendments to the state's constitution.

Climate Change

Investing in climate change is another area that all three (governor, senate and house leaders) have identified. What is less clear is what steps each is willing to take. The appointed climate council (23 members) released a list of over 230 action items to meet our greenhouse gas reduction targets, some of which need legislative action. The four "no" votes from the council were all members of the Scott administration, citing concerns over costs to Vermonters.

Tax Relief

The governor also hinted at tax relief given the surplus funds Vermont currently enjoys. Speaker Krowinski seem to



By Rep. Jim Harrison

Legislative update: Off and running

The 2022 Vermont Legislative Session is off and running. As this is the second year of our Biennium, we dove right in on Tuesday, Jan. 4. Sadly, this is also the second year in which the Covid-19 pandemic is impacting our ability conduct our business in person at the Vermont State House. Given the anticipated post holiday surge of Covid cases coupled with the tidal wave of the Omicron variant just hitting Vermont — it seemed the prudent move to begin our 2022 session remotely to protect the health and safety of the public, our members and staff. While we are disappointed to have to delay in person work — it is wonderful that we have an effective electronic alternative — and can meet via Zoom.



By Sen. Alison Clarkson

As a result of the Legislature's pivot to online meetings the public now has the greatest increase in access to our work in our history. Every committee meeting is available to watch in real time on YouTube. Those links can be found on our legislative webpage: legislature.vermont.gov. If you are interested in following an issue, I encourage you explore this website. Each committee webpage has the agenda for the week, the YouTube links, the bills in that committee and all the reports and documents supporting the committees work.

Never has Vermont's legislative work been so transparent and accessible. Our Legislative priorities revolve around four key areas: workforce, housing, climate change and the continued work of responding to Covid-19's persistent challenges and the needs of Vermonters. Plus, it is a year with a number of things we must do: reapportionment (precipitated by the Census), vote the two Constitutional amendments out of the Legislature and to the public for November's election, act on the climate council's recommendations, and respond to the recommendations made by some key off-session task forces which addressed: pensions, education finance and the weighting formula, and health care affordability. In addition, addressing social equity issues is a priority. Of course there are the perennial requirements for a Legislative session like the budget and judicial retention. And, we only have five months to do this work, as we usually adjourn in mid-May.

Never has Vermont's legislative work been so transparent and accessible.

Clarkson > 8

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Governor Scott appoints three superior court judges, including Heather Gray of Quechee

Governor Phil Scott announced his appointment of three Vermont Superior Court judges: Elizabeth Novotny of Jericho, Heather Gray of Quechee and Justin Jiron of Underhill, Dec. 20. "I have often said there are few responsibilities more important than governors making judicial appointments," said Governor Scott. "The people who are entrusted with interpreting the law and upholding justice are tasked with an enormous duty. People's lives and livelihoods are often in their hands, and it is critical that judges have integrity, honesty, compassion, and impartiality. Beth, Heather and Justin are all incredibly experienced and will bring these qualities, and a strong work ethic, to these new roles."



Elizabeth Novotny

Elizabeth Novotny is a Vermont lawyer with over 30 years of experience in the private and public sector. She served as a deputy state's attorney for the Office of the Chittenden County State's Attorney, an associate at Perry and Schmucker, and as counsel for the Vermont Dept. of Public Safety and the Vermont Dept. of Financial Regulation.

She currently serves as general counsel to the Mosaic Learning Center, an independent school for students with developmental disabilities, and is a government relations specialist for several organizations in the areas of special education, criminal justice and the judicial system.

"I am humbled by Governor's Scott's decision to appoint me as a Superior Court Judge," said Novotny. "It's a privilege to join the current members of Vermont's judiciary who have set a high bar in terms of integrity, commitment to the rule of law, and dedication to equal justice. I will strive to honor Governor Scott's faith in me by continuing my personal commitment to these principles in service to our community and Vermont's judicial system."

Novotny previously served as president of the Vermont Bar Association from 2019 until 2020, ending her membership on the board as past-president in October of 2021. She is a former member of the board for the Vermont Bar Foundation, New England Bar Association, and Vermont Bar Association.

Recently, Novotny completed a six-year term as chair of a Hearing Panel for the Vermont Judiciary Professional Responsibility Board. She has served on a variety of other boards, councils and commissions throughout her career including the

Vermont Council of Independent Schools, Vermont Sentencing Commission, Department of Justice Grant Board for the Vermont Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Sexual Abuse, Vermont Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers and the Act 173 (special education) advisory group. She is currently on the board for Outright Vermont, a non-profit organization serving Vermont's LGBTQ youth.

Novotny is a graduate of the University of Vermont and Suffolk University Law School.



Heather Gray

Since September of 2017, Gray has been a traffic safety resource prosecutor with the Vermont Dept. of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs. Before that, she served as a deputy state's attorney in Franklin County for nine years.

"I am humbled and honored that Governor Scott has provided me the opportunity to serve the community on the Superior Court," said Gray. "I look forward to tackling the challenges that face the judiciary."

Prior to becoming a prosecutor, Gray was an associate attorney at Clark Werner & Flynn in Burlington, practicing in civil and family law. She has been an instructor and trainer at the Vermont Police Academy.

Gray has volunteered with several organizations over the years, including the Ronald McDonald House, the Woodstock Community Food Shelf, David's House and the Chips Teen Center.

She received a bachelor of arts degree in paralegal studies from Notre Dame College and completed a clerkship and became an attorney in 2005.



Justin Jiron

Jiron has served as a prosecutor since 2003 in the Chittenden County State's Attorney's Office and was appointed to serve as a chief deputy state's attorney in 2016. While in the office, he has prosecuted a wide variety of cases, including homicides, robberies, assaults, and drug and property crimes. Since 2006, he has been the primary prosecutor for drug sale cases and has worked closely with the U.S. Attorney's Office in Burlington to coordinate prosecutions between the two offices.

"I'm incredibly fortunate to have had the opportunity to serve the residents of Chittenden County as a prosecutor for the last 19 years," said Jiron. "It's been a joy and privilege to work alongside and learn from so many talented members of the legal community — prosecutors, defense attorneys, judges, law enforcement, and community group members. I am honored and deeply appreciative to Governor Scott for the faith and trust placed in me by this appointment and excited to continue serving my fellow Vermonters as a Superior Court Judge."

Before joining the State's Attorney's Office, Jiron worked in private practice for three years with the law firm of McPhillips, Fitzgerald and Cullum in Glens Falls, New York.

He received his law degree from Albany Law School in 1999 and a bachelor of science at UVM in 1991. Between college and law school, he served in the infantry in the U.S. Army and was honorably discharged in 1993. Jiron and his wife, Dr. Haley Woodside-Jiron, have been married for 26 years and graduated together from UVM, where Haley is currently a professor in the college of education and social services. They are the proud parents of two adult children, Jasmine and Ben.

Clarkson: We have a lot to do in the Legislature in a short time from page 7

This session, I continue to serve you in the Senate as vice-chair of Senate Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs and on Senate Government Operations. In addition, I am the majority leader in the Senate. I have been appointed to work on the Senate Reapportionment Committee and State Workforce Development Board. I am also a member of the Climate Solutions Caucus, the Women's Caucus and the Social Equity Caucus.

We have a lot to do in short order. In response to Covid-19's continuing impact on our ability to gather safely in person, Senate Government Operations moved swiftly to enable the safe functioning of democracy. We set a new record — passing

out three bills in the first four days of session, two of which have passed the senate floor already, and one of which has made it to the governor's desk to be signed.

For a second year we needed to make it possible in 2022 for towns to move Town Meeting, to vote by Australian ballot, to hold informational meetings and public meetings remotely, and for local candidates to not have to collect signatures.

I appreciate hearing from you. I can be reached by email: aclarkson@leg.state.vt.us or by phone at 802-457-4627. To watch legislative committees in action, and to get more information on the Vermont Legislature, the bills which are being debated now, and those which have been proposed and passed, visit: legislature.vermont.gov.

Greater good: Observance of MLK is a reminder there is work to be done from page 6

BIPOC-led community organizations dedicated to health equity in Vermont. Through VHEI, VT PoC administered over 3,500 Pfizer vaccines at its BIPOC vaccine clinics. VT PoC also revamped its

student chapter at Castleton, the Declaration of Inclusion Team, and The Vermont Professionals of Color Network — inspire us with their courage, drive, and ingenuity. That they are working tirelessly to boost

We believe that systems that are failing communities of color fail all of us alike, Black, Brown, and White.

website, which now better connects the BIPOC community through an interactive business directory, a jobs board, and an events calendar.

These three groups — the NAACP

justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion in Vermont is living proof of Margaret Mead's famous quote: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

Liz DiMarco Weinmann, MBA, is principal and owner of Liz DiMarco Weinmann Consulting, L3C, based in Rutland, serving charitable and educational institutions, izdimarcoweinmann.com.

VSAC's final 'check-in' with Vermont's high school Class of 2012 shows students need more support

Since the spring of 2012, the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC) has followed the Vermont high school Class of 2012, collecting data on the students' college enrollment plans and degree completion rates. VSAC released its final study of this group on Dec. 30.

The data revealed that 46% of students from the high school Class of 2012 had obtained a college degree — either an associate or bachelor's degree — within six years of high school graduation. This level of educational attainment is consistent with U.S. Census data on the educational attainment level of the Vermont adult population; as of 2020, 47%

served demographic groups. The research identified challenges for first-generation students, males, and residents of the state's more rural counties.

This latest report, as well as earlier VSAC studies of this student group, showed that first-generation college students — or those whose parents did not go to college — were less likely to obtain a postsecondary degree than were second-generation students; and males, especially first-generation males, were less likely to obtain a degree than females. And while Chittenden and Washington counties had the highest overall six-year degree attainment rates — 54% and 51%,

still often carry the burden of student loan debt.

This final check-in with the Class of 2012 at the six-year mark following high school graduation also offered an opportunity to evaluate some college enrollment strategies that have increased in popularity in recent years, such as taking a gap year, or planning to start at a two-year school and later transfer to a four-year college. VSAC's data suggests that additional supports need to be provided to students seeking to employ these strategies:

- Among the students who planned a gap year after high school graduation, almost half did not enroll in college within six years of high school graduation.
- Among the students who planned a transfer from a two-year institution, only 20% followed through with those plans.
- Among the students who started part-time in a two-year school and did obtain a bachelor's, 95% started at CCV.

This series of reports marks the third time VSAC has followed a high school class cohort over several years to study college enrollment and completion. VSAC previously studied the classes of 2008 and 2010, and in this report, concluded that the four- and six-year degree attainment rates have remained relatively stable since 2008.

To read the full report visit: vsac.org/about/how-we-influence-policy

Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC) is a public, nonprofit agency established by the Vermont Legislature in 1965 to help Vermonters achieve their education and training goals after high school. VSAC serves students and their families in grades 7-12, as well as adults returning to school, by providing education and career planning services, need-based grants, scholarships, and education loans.

46% of students from the high school Class of 2012 had obtained a college degree... consistent with ... the educational attainment level of the Vermont adult population; as of 2020, 47% of Vermonters 25 and older held at least an associate degree.

of Vermonters 25 and older held at least an associate degree.

"While our results aren't necessarily a surprise, they do remind us that we have work to do," said Scott Giles, CEO of VSAC. "After all, our data show that more than half of the Class of 2012 — 54% — had not obtained a two- or four-year degree within six years of high school graduation. We know that the highest-paying and most in-demand jobs require education beyond high school. So, unfortunately, more than half of our young people are still not prepared for the jobs of the future."

"Our state leaders have, rightly, made it a priority to increase those numbers," Giles continued. "Advance Vermont has proposed a goal that by 2025, 70% of Vermonters will attain a credential of value. To achieve this goal, we must increase Vermonters' educational attainment."

Giles suggested that those efforts begin with more concentrated support and outreach efforts to the most under-

respectively — Lamoille and Orange counties had the lowest degree attainment rates — 34% and 36%, respectively.

These findings reinforce the importance of local and statewide efforts to expand the availability of career and education counseling. Giles noted that state-funded partnerships, such as the VSAC Aspirations Program, have produced significant gains in the FAFSA filing rates and post-secondary education and training aspirations of students at participating schools.

Further, Giles said, those who do enroll in college still need support to make sure they finish with a degree. According to the report, 30% of the students who enrolled in the fall of 2012 had not obtained a degree within six years. The Lumina Foundation estimates that there are 55,000 working-age Vermonters who have some college but no degree — which means they don't benefit from the higher wages and increased opportunities that usually come with a college degree, but they

Harrison: The Legislature is off to a busy start from remote locations for the first two weeks from page 7

dismiss that suggestion unless it was only focused on families with children. More details on Scott's plans will be unveiled as part of his budget address on Jan. 18. Especially telling will be plans for the \$90 million surplus in the Education Fund. Expect the governor to propose lowering property tax rates, while others may have different ideas, including possible transitioning into a new funding formula.

Covid

One item seemingly absent from the Scott's speech was much mention of the pandemic (other than helping our health care system). Leader Balint indicated they would likely advance a statewide mask mandate, even though the governor could do that on his own by declaring another state of emergency (which he has been reluctant to reinstate).

Pensions

On the list for Krowinski and Balint was coming up with a solution for the growing deficit in the pension funds for educators and state employees. While the Governor appears to let legislators take the lead with union conversations, he has made it clear he would not support new tax increases as the solution.

Policing

One area that the leaders and Scott are not likely to see eye to eye is on

Senator Balint's call for removing qualified immunity for law enforcement officers in Vermont. The initiative, promoted by ACLU, could make it more difficult to attract and retain police officers in Vermont according to Public Safety Commissioner Michael Schirling.

Broadband

There was not a lot of mention of expanding broadband last week, although it is an area where there is widespread agreement.

It may be due to the work done last session to set up the Vermont Community Broadband Board and significant allocation of federal funds to get the ball rolling. Now we need the workers to help us with the buildout.

Mental Health

The Governor also emphasized the need to invest in safe and healthy communities, committing to fund additional support for mental health systems and to further address the overdose epidemic. These are more areas of likely common ground with the legislature.

Other

There were a variety of other issues mentioned by Scott, Balint or Krowinski. The Speaker, for example,

highlighted dismantling systemic and institutional racism and advancing racial and social equity as an overarching goal in every policy area. Not that Scott wouldn't agree with that, but it wasn't mentioned in his speech.

Governor Scott highlighted expanding and strengthening after-school programs, early care and learning and trades training, while working to address learning loss caused by pandemic restrictions. Again, leaders

Legislating is a peoples' business and not something that lends itself well to computer screens.

may agree with this, but they weren't necessary in their remarks.

In closing, the Vermont legislature prides itself for civil and congenial discussion of varying issues and points of view. While the session began remotely for two weeks given the uncertainty of the latest Covid surge, let's hope we get back in person very soon. Legislating is a peoples' business and not something that lends itself well to computer screens.

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

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Changes are coming to state's incentivized relocation program

Money could flow in advance of move to incite decision, officials propose

By Fred Thys/VTDigger

The Scott administration and state senators are considering overhauling Vermont's programs that pay people to move to the state.

"(M)y budget will support the Senate's worker relocation incentive program — with some changes — to bring in more families who contribute to our communities, schools and economy," Gov. Phil Scott said Wednesday, Jan. 5, in his State of the State address.

Instead of paying people once they move to Vermont, the administration is considering either paying them before they move or awarding grants before they move and sending the money once they have resettled in Vermont, Vermont Commissioner of Economic Development Joan Goldstein told the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs on Thursday.

Goldstein cited a report to the Legislature commissioned by the Vermont Department of Financial Regulation and conducted by Philadelphia-based PFM Group Consulting LLC that proposed the change.

"We may make that change," she said.

Senators appeared to agree with the proposal.

"Rather than it being an incentive to get people to move to Vermont, it is something that people who have already moved to Vermont then go to seek to collect, but it's not necessarily anything to do with them making the decision to move here in the first place," said Sen. Randy Brock, R-Franklin.

Ziter proposed removing the list of occupations that restricts who can be reimbursed for moving to Vermont.

"If we can fine-tune it to make sure that we don't have people who are already here who had never heard of the program and all of a sudden they say: 'Give me \$5,000,' I think we

want to avoid that situation," said the committee's chair, Sen. Michael Sirotkin, D-Chittenden.

A person relocating to Vermont this year has received an average of \$4,700, Kristen Ziter, financial analyst for the Department of Economic Development, told senators.

Ziter proposed removing the list of occupations that restricts who can be reimbursed for moving to Vermont. She cited plumbers and preschool teachers as people Vermont

needs more of, yet those two occupations are not on the list.

She also proposed doubling the appropriation for the program as the Legislature adjusts the fiscal year 2022 budget for the final six months of the fiscal year, saying it is oversubscribed and the \$480,000 allocated will not cover all applications.

Vermont's fiscal year begins July 1. The Legislature can adjust the budget for the remainder of the fiscal year now that it has reconvened.

"This seems like such a small, productive program," Sirotkin said.

"We need to get in on a course and not have another hiatus where we run out of money," he said, referring to interruptions in funding of the three programs paying people to move to the state that Vermont has implemented since 2018.



Courtesy Molly Gray

Lieutenant Governor Molly Gray, Vermont's 82nd Lt. governor, stands in front of the golden dome of the statehouse.

Gray relaunches 'Lt. Governor for a Day'

Lieutenant Gov. Molly Gray will re-launch, "Lt. Governor for a Day" — a virtual program to engage Vermont students and classrooms in civics education and state government. Gray launched the program at the start of her term in January 2021.

The bi-weekly program hosted every other Wednesday restarts Jan. 19 and will run from 12-1:15 p.m. allowing students to engage directly with the Lt. Governor and to observe

Senate proceedings.

Each "Lt. Governor for a Day" will begin with a Q&A with Gray followed by a behind-the-scenes look into the inner workings of the Office and Vermont State House. Students will also have an opportunity to observe virtual proceedings of the Vermont Senate over which the lieutenant governor presides.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the lieutenant governor will preside over virtual sessions of the

Vermont Senate from the State House with senators participating remotely.

Of the program Gray said, "The Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection made it clear to me that it is imperative that our next generation feels connected to and a sense of ownership of our democracy. Last year we welcomed hundreds of Vermont students into the State House virtually and hope to do so again. By engaging our next generation, we encourage participation in civic en-

agement and government at all levels."

The "Lt. Governor for a Day" program will be open to schools statewide and is intended for students in grades 7-12. School principals and teachers are encouraged to register. One classroom will be hosted per session.

Principals and teachers wishing to participate or learn more about the program can visit: ltgov.vermont.gov/ltgovernorforaday.

Hindman to leave DRP, join Green Screen Graphics as creative director

Nikki Hindman, the Downtown Rutland Partnership's executive director is leaving the organization this month, but she isn't going far. She has taken a job as creative director for Green Screen Graphics, a part of Tuttle Law Print, Inc that also includes Quickprint of Rutland and Tuttle Printing and Promotions.

Hindman has worked at the DRP since 2017 as the marketing and events director before stepping into the executive director role in 2021.

"I cannot be more grateful for the opportunity to grow with and lead the Downtown Rutland Partnership," said Hindman. "I'm thankful for everyone that I've the pleasure of working with and the projects I've been able to contribute to that advance the vitality and image of Rutland City. Downtown Rutland continues to make leaps and bounds since I've moved to Vermont, and I'm so proud of all we've accomplished together."

Over the past four years, Hindman rebranded the Downtown Rutland organization and destination, their annual events, website, and communications in addition to tripling the DRP's social media following and reach throughout the region. She also helped launch an interactive downtown art and architecture tour app, made new partnerships with local and regional partners, developed a series of new pedestrian signs to be installed downtown this spring, and supported local businesses with marketing and social media advice. She is also participating in the Center Street Scoping Study, which hopes to debut redesign options with the future of a pedestrian and business friendly street this year.

"Despite the challenges of the pandemic, I'm confident that downtown is heading in a positive direction, which can be seen with the several new businesses that opened in 2021," said Hindman. "I look forward to seeing downtown's continued success in the coming months and years with the support of our amazing Board of Directors. I'm also excited about my next chapter, which allows me to continue to serve Vermont businesses with creative solutions at an employee-owned company."

With Hindman's departure this month, the DRP's board of directors will begin the search for the organization's next executive director.

"Although I am sad to see Nikki go, I am very excited to see her flourish in her new position!" said Shannon Poole, board president of the Downtown Rutland Partnership. "The Rutland Community is very lucky to have such a talented young professional who is committed to seeing it succeed."

VFFC: Told to address contamination but will continue to operate in building while mitigation measures are planned and executed, vendors and customers informed from page 3

Food Center.

Greg Cox, the president of the Vermont Farmers Market Food Center, said about 60 vendors rely on the market as part of their income. About 500-600 customers attend the market every week.

"They have no other market — this is what they do this time of year," Cox said.

Cox said there are no plans to shut down because of the contamination.

"We're not just going to roll over because somebody tells us to," he said. "We don't want to create panic."

Cox said both the vendors and customers have been provided with all relevant information. Some vendors have chosen to leave, while most have stayed.

"The customers can make up their own mind," Cox said.

The winter market remains open on Saturday mornings with "maximum ventilation" provided before customers arrive. There is also signage on the door, explaining TCE can affect the developing heart of a baby.

"In the conversations we have had with the health department, they determined that consuming food that was prepped or stored in the building was NOT an issue," according to an announcement on the Vermont Farmers Market website.

The announcement also said the soil and air collections didn't account for doors opening and closing.

"The results represent a snapshot in time and can change daily to seasonally based on many factors, including temperature, air pressure, and if doors are opened and closed," the announcement says. "Operation of kitchen exhaust fans can also affect how much soil gas is able to infiltrate through the building slab. Unless samples are collected while the doors are open, there is no way to know how effective those ventilation efforts are at reducing the concentrations."

Rutland Rec Superintendent Kim Peters said she was contacted about a month ago about moving the farmers market to the rec center, but the location was quickly ruled out because it lacks a kitchen.

"It's not the best situation, we're going to make lemonade out of lemons," Cox said. "The TCE is the worst of it, we're working to remediate that right now. It's on the fast track."

Site investigation results are due to the state in March.

"Work that will address the ongoing exposure to indoor air contamination at the Farmer's Hall building is the highest priority," Caldwell said in the letter to the owners.



Submitted

The Vermont Farmers Food Center in Rutland City is addressing a contamination issue.

Free tests: Rapid tests will be available from the state by mail as well as reimbursable from private health insurers if purchased individually from page 4

to make future testing programs successful," the governor said.

"As with every new program, there are going to be unanticipated challenges, the number of kits each household can order will be limited, it could take up to a week for them to be delivered, and we expect that they will go very, very quickly," Scott added.

Also mirroring a federal initiative, Scott announced last month that the state would use its emergency rulemaking powers to require private health insurers to reimburse the cost of rapid tests

purchased at pharmacies. Vermonters can file claims with their insurance company for tests they bought anytime after Dec. 1.

Antigen tests are slightly less accurate than PCR tests, which are still considered the gold standard for diagnosing Covid-19, and emerging research suggests the antigen tests may be even less sensitive to the Omicron variant. But experts say the at-home tests are still an enormously powerful public health tool for interrupting transmission, given their convenience and quick turnaround. While lab-processed

PCR results can take days to come back, antigen tests deliver results within 15 minutes.

Timothy Lahey, an infectious disease physician and director of clinical ethics at the University of Vermont Medical Center, welcomed the governor's announcement as a "great development."

"While Omicron might make the tests a wee bit less sensitive (maybe), they do still work well and are that much more important each day the state breaks records for case counts," he wrote in an email to VTDigger.

Still, Lahey said it's important that the tests be used correctly. If someone is planning to gather unmasked with others, a negative test can provide reassurance they are unlikely to be infectious for the next few hours. But anyone with symptoms who receives a positive result should assume they have a confirmed diagnosis. And close contacts should test five and seven days after their exposure, since tests taken too early can miss infections.

"Dramatically expanding access to rapid tests is a very good

idea," said Elizabeth Winterbauer, a consulting epidemiologist and part-time public health instructor at St. Michael's College and the University of Vermont. But she also stressed that people should test multiple times after exposure — and argued that still more was needed to combat Vermont's latest Covid surge.

"Increased testing alone is not going to reduce Covid's explosive growth in the state," she said. "Right now we must do everything we can to reduce transmission, with layered mitigation measures."

Tot tests: Available for children ages 2-5 to take home from page 4

them to test children and staff when a positive Covid-19 case is detected at their program.

"This approach will safely decrease the burden of contact tracing for child care program staff, while limiting the impact of quarantines on children, their families, and staff," said Scott urging child care providers to take advantage of this and any future programs.

"With a limited supply of rapid tests at the federal level, Vermont has prioritized our inventory for our kids," continued Governor Scott. "As we gain access to greater supply, expanding our efforts to support more families and children is an important priority."

Tests for Tot's will offer tests for children between the ages of 2 and 5, as well as for child care program staff. They can be administered at home. The tests are limited to children over the age of 2, consistent with their emergency use authorization from the FDA.

To participate in the program, child care providers will register for test kits and pick them up at locations throughout the state. The Child Development Division (CDD) will notify providers directly about this opportunity with instructions on how to enroll in the program. Information will also be on the CDD website.

"Early education and child care providers are crucial to the growth and development of our youngest Vermonters," said Interim Department for Children and Families Deputy Commissioner Miranda Gray. "Providing them—and the families they serve—tools to prevent the spread Covid is an important part of our pandemic response."

The state will continue to monitor the CDC's recommendations and explore what other rapid testing options might become available for broader use at child care programs.



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EDITORIAL

Leadership can keep schools safe, open

Vaccination mandates and 'test to attend' programs needed now

By Jim Haff

Editor's note: Jim Haff is the Killington representative in the Windsor Central School District and Killington Select Board member. This commentary was written as an open letter to Vermont's elected leaders on Jan. 10.

You are not protecting our children.

Over the holidays cases in kids ages 0-9 nearly doubled from the week prior and cases in kids ages 10-19 more than doubled, according to a report by WCAX.

The guidelines and tools offered to protect K-12 students

are lackadaisical at best, and it's even worse for those age 5 and under who are not able to be vaccinated and have also been excluded from state testing programs.

Now, after a chaotic first week of school after winter break with Covid case numbers soaring, forcing some schools to close, the state has announced it'll be removing the few mitigation programs that were in place!

Contact tracing is to be stopped, as is surveillance testing. Rapid tests will only be given to those who are unvaccinated once they've been identified as a close contact and administration of those tests left to parents. No proof of a negative result required.

Do we really think the parents who refuse to even wear masks are going to properly test their kids and then isolate as required? This can't be the state's best response to protecting our students and keeping schools open in the worst surge of Covid we've experienced!

We can do better. Much, much better.

Ensuring a student's health at public school is not something that should be left to an honor system.

Leadership needed > 15

On Jan. 6, 'don't look down'

By Angelo Lynn

It is to be hoped Jan. 6, 2021 will be a date that long resonates in our nation's history. That historians will accurately assess the roots of the deadly insurrection on the nation's Capitol, determine those responsible for assembling the crowd and encouraging them to storm Congress in what turned out to be a disorganized and haphazard, but violent, attempt to deny a peaceful transfer of power.

It is hoped that Americans will understand the event for what it was: a misguided reaction by Trump supporters who had been fed lies for the previous two months that the election had been stolen from Trump and that President Joe Biden was not legitimately elected — despite weeks of election challenges and findings to the contrary.

It is hoped that Americans will learn that lies feed on themselves, particularly when those in power — in this case those within the Republican Party and conservative media — promulgated those lies by deliberately feeding misinformation to their followers.

A year later, a House committee investigating the Jan. 6 insurrection is finally getting to the bottom of the story. We can only hope the report will be detailed enough to be irrefutable.

That's the optimistic view of an America that hasn't lost its ability to reason.

The pessimistic view is aptly demonstrated in the well-timed movie, "Don't Look Up." A satire, the movie begins with the accidental scientific discovery of a distant comet

'Don't look down' > 14

ALPHA, BETA, GAMMA, DELTA, EPSILON, ZETA...
ETA, THETA, IOTA, KAPPA, LAMBDA, MU, NU, XI...
OMICRON, PI, RHO and SIGMA...
TAU, UPSILON, PHI, CHI, PSI, OMEGA!
NOW I KNOW MY VAR-I-ANTS!
PLEASE MAINTAIN SOCIAL DIS-TANCE!



The variant alphabet song by John Cole, The Scranton Times-Tribune, PA

LETTERS

What are the valid selection criteria Vermonters should be using to screen Congressional applicants?

Dear Editor,

Please consider this an open letter to Vermont voters.

What are the valid selection criteria we should be using to screen Congressional applicants?

During the 1970s orchestras across the United States became concerned that members weren't chosen by ability, but handpicked by the conductors. They designed an interesting, novel and effective solution to screen applicants. Auditioning musicians played music from behind a curtain. Judges listened and rated the musicians ability unaware of the age, gender and the musician's appearance. The results? Using this blind test meant ability and talent were the deciding selection factors and women's participation in orchestras dramatically increased. The winners? Female musicians and audiences hearing the best music played by the best musicians.

Let's imagine Vermonters decide to screen Vermont's Congressional applicants using a similar blind method. The voters occupy one side of the curtain, and the applicants occupy the other. We don't know their age beyond

25, who they know, their relationship status or other non-relevant factors. We can't see them and they can't see us; there's no cheerleading, no visual cues, no clapping. All applicants receive the same questions on a written form and answer questions via laptops.

However, exactly what are the valid selection criteria Vermonters should be using to screen Congressional applicants?

We were taught the best predictor of future performance is past performance. So perhaps we should be judging the applicants based upon their accomplishments, problems faced and overcome and solutions they provided to help Vermonters. Not what they want to do, but what have they actually done? Oh, and no conductors allowed.

Here are some sample categories and questions voters might present to the applicants.

- Economy and jobs – Give us an example of when you created a job. Tell us what factors made it easier or more difficult to create. What specifically have you done

to strengthen your local economy or the Vermont economy? What were the measured results?

- Covid 19 – What steps have you personally taken to lessen Vermont's Covid-19 pandemic impact? What made it effective? Please share with us the how the effectiveness was measured.
- Education – School boards and Vermont citizens need to address concerns such as remote instruction and curriculum choices. Tell us about a situation where you balanced competing interests. How exactly did you craft the process? What factors did you consider?
- Health care – Describe a health care solution/idea you have crafted to any of Vermont's present health care problems. How did you involve Vermonters/stakeholders in this solution? Name a time when you addressed a facet of Vermont's health care system. What exactly did you do?

These categories aren't mine. They are the top

Criteria > 16

We need to end fossil fuels

Dear Editor,

We, the older Vermonters (including voters and taxpayers), must make it clear to younger Vermonters that our most crucial task and the most urgent job is to fix the broken two-party political system. Why, you ask?

Only younger Vermonters can achieve the political transformation in the shortest amount of time to break up special interest groups and lobbyists.

Here in Vermont, those interest groups are stalling the transformation of our energy systems. The needed transformation will end the business-as-usual emissions and provide all of us a path to maintaining global warming below 1.5 degrees C. If you think what you're seeing with warmer temperatures is of concern, just hold onto your hat as we reach a 2 degree C increase!

We must save our Vermont democracy in understanding the root cause of the problem and let the people organize now. Vermont Proud is about seeing strong small steps forward but lots of them.

End fossil fuels > 14

CAPITAL QUOTES

On the one-year anniversary of the attack on the U.S. Capitol when supporters of President Donald Trump mobilized on Jan. 6, 2021 after Trump lost the presidential election to Joe Biden. The attack cost an estimated \$1.5 million in damage and about 725 people have been arrested from nearly every state. There have been no Vermonters arrested yet, however.

“One year later, there are still cracks in the bedrock of our national unity caused by the actions of that angry mob, however, I believe our leadership in Vermont can be a model for the nation,”

Said Lt. Gov. **Molly Gray** in a statement on Jan. 6.

“The courts are dealing with these crimes, but it is detestable how so many were so callously used as cannon fodder. Their actions were wrong, but many believed they were acting as patriots. The former president told them so, and egged them on, and they believed him. Meanwhile he and so many of his cronies, unlike many of his followers who stormed the Capitol, have paid no price for their roles. They must be held accountable for planning and promoting this travesty, and, in his case, doing nothing to stop the assault, even when appealed to, repeatedly, by his closest advisors,”

Said Sen. **Patrick Leahy** in a statement on Jan. 6.

“Pretending that a protest was actually a failed coup is the Democratic Party’s entire strategy to win this year’s midterm election. At this point it’s all they’ve got — governing didn’t work,”

Said **Tucker Carlson**, the Fox television host, on Jan. 6.

“Last year, our democracy was bent to the point of nearly breaking. Fortunately, it did not. It is essential that Congress act to create minimum standards for states. It’s time for the destructive lies to end. Election denial and voter fraud ‘cry-wolf’ tactics have done nothing but tear our country apart. It’s time that we come together to heal, in the interest of ensuring our democracy stands strong for generations to come. The test ahead of us is one of our biggest yet,”

Said Sec. of State **Jim Condos** in a statement on Jan. 6.

COMMENTARY

The Legislature needs different voices

By Corey Parent

Do you think the most wide-sweeping change to the Vermont Legislature should be rushed through in the first 72 hours of the legislative session?

I don’t.

Let me back up. Over the few years, we’ve heard about the importance of protecting our democracy—across the nation, and right here in Vermont—from forces that cast doubt on our electoral processes. Under this sentiment, we’ve passed reforms that strengthen our democracy—like universal mail-in voting. I agree with these notions.

But now, the majority party in the Vermont Legislature has made it clear that they are only interested in protecting democracy when it is politically expedient for them. Otherwise, they are content with rushing major legislation without adequate testimony or time for proper vetting.

Right now, the Vermont House Committee on Government Operations is debating legislative apportionment—basically, how the legislative districts for representatives and senators will be drawn for the next decade.

The committee was provided draft district lines from the tripartisan apportionment board, a committee made up of Democrats, Republicans, and Progressives from across the state. The majority of the board agreed to adopt single-member districts. Vermont is currently the only state in the nation that has multiple members per legislative district in both chambers, which other states have abandoned due to underrepresenting racial minorities. An estimated 75% of Vermonters support moving to single-member districts.

Nevertheless, on Tuesday Jan. 4, the Government Operations Committee began taking testimony on the multi-member map approved by the Democrat minority of the apportionment board, rather than the single-member map approved by the majority of the board—with the goal to get an initial draft of the map voted out by Thursday, Jan. 6.

The minority map is beneficial to the Democrats—who also happen to control the Government Operations Committee.

This unnecessarily rushed process would push through a poorly-vetted map without adequate public testimony in the first 72 hours of the legislative session. Currently, the committee is scheduled to take testimony from a single member of the apportionment board—a Democrat, who drew the minority map—and that’s it. No one else. No public comment. No time. Just quietly advancing the most significant legislative alteration in record time as Vermonters and the press are focused on COVID-19 and the governor’s State of the State address.

This is outrageous—and directly conflicts with the notion of protecting democracy.

It reminds me of a similar situation from earlier in the pandemic. These same Democrat legislators pushed forth a universal mail-in voting bill—supported by myself and other Republicans—to expand access to the ballot box. But they only wanted the bill to apply to

Voices > 16

We should be concerned about Proposal 5

By Anne Donahue

Editor’s note: Anne B. Donahue is a House representative for the Washington-1 district (Northfield, Berlin).

The importance of conscience protection for health care workers, most often in the context of permitting hospital staff to request to be excused from participation in abortions, has broad public support and is endorsed by the Vermont Medical Society.

Yet few have addressed the current risks of erosion of those rights of conscience in Vermont if Proposal 5, the “reproductive liberty amendment,” were to become a part of our state’s constitution.

There should be deep concern about the impact that Proposal 5 could have on our state’s hospitals, health care delivery and workforce crisis through overturning such protections.

There are inaccurate perceptions about the scope and intent of this constitutional amendment, as reflected in a November article in VT Digger which described its purpose as to “protect the abortion rights spelled out in the U.S. Supreme Court’s 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision.”

In fact, the unusual wording of the constitutional amendment would do three key things: it would protect any abortion for any reason until the moment of birth (unlike the

balance of state interests created in *Roe* for third trimester pregnancies), likely rendering null any individual hospital’s abortion policies including conflict of care policies; it would extend protection to any health care service that relates to ‘personal reproductive autonomy’ with no known definition of how far that concept might extend; and it would turn any debate on that high bar of what constitutes a “compelling state interest” over to the Vermont courts.

It offers no final word, but rather would be subjected to any number of future court interpretations.

I have again introduced a bill – H. 497 – for conscience protection for health care providers this year. Vermont is one of only two states that does not provide it by law.

Given the breadth of Proposal 5, there is a significant risk that hospitals could not independently choose to assure such protection. Extant shortages in medical professionals, particularly in ob/gyn practice and in nursing, would worsen as some providers decide to leave their chosen professions. In fact, it might be deemed discriminatory to permit conscience protections – or even for any hospital to fail to perform abortions.

If the Legislature fails to act on con-

Prop 5 > 15

CARTOONS

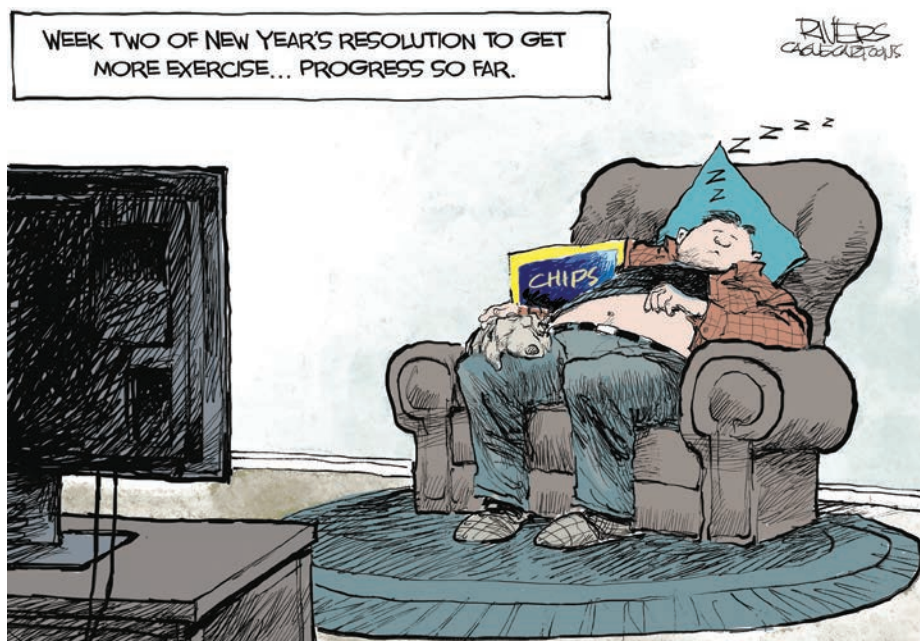


Flight Delays by Steve Sack, The Minneapolis Star-Tribune, MN



"It made me lose my sense of smell, but I never lost my sense of taste."

Covid Lost Senses by Peter Kuper, PoliticalCartoons.com



New Years Resolution Progress by Rivers, CagleCartoons.com

← 'Don't look down': There are lessons to be learned from the insurrection from page 12

hurting its way toward Earth by a college professor and a graduate student (played by Leonardo DiCaprio and Jennifer Lawrence). Being responsible scientists, they report their finding of the large, planet-killing comet, get their findings peer-reviewed, and let proper federal authorities know. Soon they are whisked in front of a probusiness, media savvy president (Merle Streep), who plays a president more intent on boosting her image and gauging every issue by its polling numbers than making decisions based on what's good for the American people.

At a critical point in the movie, the president and her backers determine that the existence of the comet's imminent collision with Earth is bad publicity ahead of the midterms and they begin to deny the science and downplay the imminent threat. Hence, the tag-line, "Don't Look Up," which becomes a campaign theme of a president, and her party, who are denying fact and spreading an outright lie (that the comet won't hit the Earth so just don't look at it getting closer), while also blaming the responsible media for spreading "fake news."

If that sounds familiar, it's supposed to. Like all good satire, the theme parallels many prevalent issues in today's politics: the Trump-inspired "Stop the Steal" lie that captivated many Republicans and the party despite dozens of legal court challenges of election results that proved beyond doubt the election results were fair and accurate; the denial of climate change in spite of the overwhelming scientific evidence; and the overarching willingness of millions of Americans who respond favorably to calls of violence — and willful ignorance — as a legitimate way to express their political perspective.

The movie also mocks those media stars who pursue ratings over truth, and "news" shows that treat all items with a light, feel-good approach and who are more devoted to a candidate than the truth.

The movie's brilliance is in showing how far some people are willing to believe obvious fallacies before they realize the consequence. In the movie's storyline, mankind's impending doom. In real life, look at how far Nazi Germany drifted under Hitler for reasons that resemble the white-supremacist movement in America today; or look at how far the Republican Party has taken the "Stop the Steal" theme

even as GOP leaders agree that President Biden was elected legitimately; or consider how reluctant the world is to accept the science of climate change even in the face of deadly wildfires, powerful hurricanes, melting ice shelves, worsening droughts, the loss of biodiversity on land and at sea, and much more.

The movie's real-life lesson shows that a section of the public is more gullible to political salesmanship (and how big money manipulates the conversation) than citizens and political leaders want to believe. The majority keeps thinking the nation's better angels will prevail; that truth will overcome falsehoods; that democracy will triumph over a party willing to back a dictatorial leader. But history, and the movie, demonstrates that is often not the case.

The lessons of the Jan. 6 insurrection are yet to be fully defined, but it's not hard to already see that many Republicans will refute whatever the House committee reports. They'll turn their backs on the truth, do their best to discredit those authors, and believe the storyline — not the facts, but their own "alternative reality" — of how their world

The hope is that the majority of Americans recognize the danger of allowing falsehoods to prevail speak out.

should be, perhaps right to the bitter end.

The hope is that the majority of Americans recognize the danger of allowing falsehoods to prevail and they speak out forcefully to reiterate the facts. Democrats, Independents and like-minded Republicans should also understand the importance of championing a pro-democracy agenda (loudly and clearly) and reject any movement that embraces deliberate falsehoods and political violence — as Trump did throughout his presidency and during a Jan. 6 speech prior to the insurrection. Such speech should be treated as the pernicious threat to our democracy it is.

If that's the lesson learned from the infamous Jan. 6 insurrection, school children decades from now will know, at least on this one issue, we had the courage to "look up," to believe the facts and the science, and to recognize lies and misinformation for the dangerous propaganda they are.

Angelo Lynn is the editor and publisher of the Addison County Independent, a sister paper to the Mountain Times.

← End fossil fuels: We should be more concerned about climate change from page 12

For example, we during this 2022 summer can have our governor declare that all 251 towns will mow town greens with non-fossil fuel mowers, be it a rider electric mower, a good old hand push blade mower or sheep.

This is Vermont Proud's small steps forward. Since we're at it, the governor needs to declare that Ver-

mont will build a shipyard now to create, in record time, non fossil fuel ferries for Lake Champlain and beyond. This is not a pipe dream but jobs for Vermonsters.

Again a small step in removing fossil fuels from Lake Champlain and for all Vermonters to feel proud in our struggle to maintain

below 1.5 degree C.

What else? You can run as a Vermont independent candidate this 2022 political cycle. Good luck to you younger folks, many of us older folks will do our best in supporting your struggle for the pursuit of Vermont Proud happiness.

Mason Wade,
Rochester

Leadership needed: Let's implement equal programs for students age 3-18 as we do for 18-22
from page 12

Vaccinate

The state must go back to "following the science," as the governor did in the first half of the pandemic, and take actions accordingly.

First, we know that many vaccinated people are getting and spreading Covid, so it's irrational to now exclude this group from school testing programs. We also know that frequent and proactive testing will catch cases soonest and can prevent days or even weeks of further spread.

Second, the definition of "vaccination" must be changed to mean "boosted once eligible." We now know that the efficacy of the original vaccine decreases to about 30% after six months and continues to wane, so without a booster you're not protected and you're not protecting others.

Third, mandates work and are used all the time to keep communities safe. Six vaccinations are currently required to attend pre-K-12 public schools in Vermont — Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis (DTaP), Poliovirus (Polio) (IPV), Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR), Varicella (Chicken pox), Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis (Tdap), Meningococcal ACWY (MCV4) — these are required even though there is not an eminent threat of infection, like there is currently with Covid. Similarly mandates about smoking also protect public health. No longer can you light up in a restaurant, airplane, etc.

Simply put: You don't have the right to put others' health in jeopardy.

The state knows mandating Covid vaccines works to protect students. It's why it did it for its public universities and state colleges. In fact, Castleton University, part of the Vermont State College system, now requires all students to have boosters to qualify as "vaccinated" AND required and facilitated PCR testing for all students prior to the beginning of classes this spring semester.

So why not treat all public school students equally regardless of age? Why is there no requirement for vaccination in our public elementary, middle and high schools?

Gov. Phil Scott blames the 5% of Vermonters who remain unvaccinated for the current Covid surge. Well, it seems our student population is partially to blame, making up a significant portion of that group. Take the current vaccination rates in my school district's elementary schools (Windsor Central):

- Woodstock Elementary: 35.7%
- Killington Elementary: 36%
- Barnard Academy: 41%
- Prosper Valley: 41%
- Reading Elementary: 50%

Of the 568 elementary students in the district (pre-K-6), 100 are in pre-K (which are not included in the above vaccination percentage — and would make them even lower if included).

The Pfizer-BioNTech Covid-19 vaccine was approved for kids ages 5-11 in October 2021 and

was authorized for kids ages 12-15 in May 2021 — plenty of time for all who want it to be vaccinated by now. But the uptake has lagged.

So the state thinks handing over responsibility for public health to parents of these kids — who have chosen not to vaccinate their students — is the best way to detect Covid, mitigate exposure and spread?

At Woodstock Middle School/High School the vaccination rate is around 80%, which is better, except that now only 20% of the the students will be eligible for any sort of testing!

The state's plan is one of willful ignorance.
It's reckless.
It's abandonment.

Figure out what will keep our students safe and schools open, then find a way to do it! That's leadership.

If we want to see higher vaccination rates so that schools can remain open with less disruptions for students, teachers and parents, a mandate will get us there fast! It's logical and equitable to make vaccination requirements apply equally to all public school students Kindergarten through college (and pre-K, once eligible).

Ask yourself: how is it justified *not* to provide the same expectation for all Vermont students?

But Scott stops short of action, despite making vaccinations his main public health strategy against Covid.

It begs the question: do we actually want to find cases and decrease the spread of Covid in schools?

If we did, actions would certainly look different!

Test to Attend

In addition to mandating vaccinations, the state should be doubling down on testing. Instead of removing current testing programs, the state should have announced an additional "Test to Attend" program where all students and staff (vaccinated and unvaccinated) had to show a negative rapid test result before attending class daily. If positive, they'd be given a PCR test to confirm and sent home to isolate for five days, per new state guidelines. Knowing that students, teachers and staff were not currently contagious each day would be a huge relief for all and go a long way to preventing unnecessary infection.

Ensuring a student's health at public school is not something that should be left to an honor system.

I'm sick of hearing what can't be done. I'm sick of hearing excuses. Step up and start thinking about how it *can* be done! Think outside the box, if necessary, like we teach our students to do. If teachers and administrators are overwhelmed by the testing then call in for back up: local police, fire departments, EMS personnel, nurses, trained parents could help.

Figure out what will keep our students safe and schools open, then find a way to do it! That's leadership.

It's been nearly two years that we've been navigating Covid-19. We know very well that vaccination (for those eligible) coupled with frequent testing (for all) helps to stop the spread of Covid-19. We no longer have to let the virus circulate in the classroom infecting students unnecessarily until someone gets sick enough to be tested, then wait days to receive their results. It's not 2020, it's 2022 and we have learned a lot. Let's put that knowledge to use!

If we want life to go back to normal (and we all do) we have to get serious and use *all* the tools we have at our disposal.

With record high Covid cases, and rising hospitalizations and deaths, the time to act has never been more urgent!

Mandating vaccinations (including boosters) to attend all public schools and mandating regular testings for all students (vaccinated and unvaccinated as both can spread Covid) are tools we know work. They significantly minimize infection rates and the worst effects of Covid — which include

not only severe illness but also the social, emotional and economic costs of missing school or work. Our hospitals are stressed and so is our economy.

It's up to our elected leaders to do as much as each of them can to protect Vermonters, our schools and our economy from further damage. Or Covid will do the job itself — schools and businesses will continue to close due to illness and lack of staffing.

You have an opportunity to create a model not only for future outbreaks of Covid but for other diseases we're likely to face in our lifetime. Will you? Or will you let political calculations of "popularity" or apathy render you immobile?

Stop with the excuses, you can and must do more — and soon.

Prop 5: Legislation impacts health care
from page 13

science protection before voting to move forward with Proposal 5 this year, it will form an explicit legislative intent in the record that could inform the court to rule that a future-passed conscience protection bill would be unconstitutional. Even if such a bill passes, it is not clear that it will withstand the breadth of the amendment, but I think it is still worth the effort.

I hope that Vermonters will actively support this legislation.

The issues buried within Proposal 5 warrant consideration of the impacts on quality health care before making decisions about the constitutional change. Conscience protections and the impact on the workforce are a prime example of unforeseen consequences.

Full consideration of the implications — and the ways in which they go far beyond the instinctive appeal that "protect *Roe v. Wade*" has for many people — is crucial.



TOWN OF
KILLINGTON
VERMONT

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Development Review Board will hold a public hearing on **Thursday, January 20, 2022 at 6:30p.m.** at the Sherburne Library Meeting Room at 2998 River Road with attendance available in person or via video conference (Zoom) to review the following application:

Michael and Irene Fitzsimons will be appealing the decision by the Zoning Administrator to deny a permit for application 21-069, which was submitted to add a garage with living space above the existing structure located at 60 Brookside Drive, parcel 43-044. The permit was denied for violating the maximum coverage of 5% as currently stated for Residential 3 zone in the town's zoning regulations.

A copy of the appeal may be viewed at the Town Offices at 2706 River Road between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday by appointment by calling 802-422-3241 Ext. 3. The appeal with multiple attachments may also be requested, in whole or in part, in portable document format (PDF).

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

For participation via videoconference (Zoom), a meeting link will be on the day of the hearing on the Town Website Calendar (www.killingtontown.com).

Dated at Killington, Vermont this 27th day of December 2021.

Chuck Claffey, Zoning Administrator, Town of Killington, Vermont.

Criteria: How should we judge who our leaders should be? from page 12

four issues Virginia voters considered during their recent election. I live in rural Lamoille County, and we have the same issues. Should November elections be decided on answers to questions like those above? Might we select different applicants using this method?

If it were up to me, I'd add one category and these questions as my greatest concern: inflation. The prices of gasoline, food and services increase almost daily. What steps and actions have you personally taken to lower the cost to Vermont citizens? Tell us how they were effective and what was the actual impact on Vermont citizens?

Please begin with rising energy costs.

Let's shift for a moment and look at routine problems our citizens face. It's January and you have a frozen water pipe. Do you care what the plumber looks like when they arrive to unthaw your pipe? Should looks be a selection factor when choosing anyone to work on your home or in any other occupation? (BTW, I'll bet you're thrilled when they knock on your door!)

Your "late model vehicle" has a mechanical issue. You take it to a local mechanic to fix. Do you consider the mechanic's religion, gender or race? Or do you care that they can fix your clunker for

under \$500?

Your teenage daughter has a medical issue and needs to see a health care professional. Do you choose them based upon their age or marital status? Or do you choose them for their bedside manner, questions they ask, explanation of treatment options, etc.?

Congressional openings are a generational opportunity to choose the very best leaders for all Vermonters. Shouldn't the selection process be at least as fair, rigorous and impartial as choosing a musician in an orchestra? Can we agree they shouldn't be treated like coronations, entitlements, or political beauty pageants? Should Vermont media help facilitate an open, honest, and inclusive discussion? And do we have an obligation as voters to spend as much time on the relevant selection factors as we do looking for our plumber, our mechanic, and our health care provider?

Matt Krauss, Stowe

Editor's note: Krauss is a happily retired state employee (by his own definition) and former Vermont legislator.



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The Mountain Times encourages readers to contribute to our community paper by writing letters to the editor. The opinions expressed here are not endorsed nor are the facts verified by the Mountain Times. We ask submissions to be 300 words or less. Email letters to editor@mountaintimes.info

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Voices: The Legislature shouldn't be in such a rush this session from page 13

general elections, when higher turnout might help the Democrats. I suggested having the bill apply to *all* elections in Vermont—including town meeting and school budget votes—so as to truly advance democracy. If higher turnout is good for one election, why is it not beneficial for all elections held in Vermont?

It seems Vermont democracy is only worth protecting when it is in the interests of the majority party to do so.

Now, House majority leadership will say that they need to rush through an initial legislative apportionment bill this week in order to get input from Boards of Civil Authority (BCA) and other stakeholders around the state because the Apportionment Board was delayed. This is nonsense. First, the apportionment board approved the maps weeks ago—where has the Legislature been? Second, BCAs have already provided input on the majority-recommended map. Third, there's nothing preventing the legis-

lature from hearing public comment before they advance a plan rather than after they advance it. Fourth, if we're going to rush it, isn't it awfully odd that we need to rush it with the majority-rejected, Democrat-favored map? And finally, doesn't this argument really just come down to "we need to skip public hearings now so we can hold public hearings later"?

Even the non-partisan legislative council has recommended we don't enact an initial plan until the "mid-2022 legislative session", which would be some time in March—not the first week of the legislative session.

Let's stop the nonsense. We need to take the time to get this done right—not get it done quickly at the expense of deliberation. Democracy needs to be protected 100 % of the time—not just when it's politically advantageous to one party or another.

Sen. Corey Parent (R-Franklin) represents the Franklin district in the Vermont State Senate.

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WORDPLAY

'Get organized' Word Search: Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally and backwards.

SUDOKU

Solutions > 32

How to Play

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

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

Level: Advanced

Guess Who?

I am a rapper born in Miami on January 15, 1981. I was once on the wrong side of the law, but I got my act together thanks to music, gaining fame for my 2009 album.

Answer: Pitbull

Eat, Drink, Shop *Locally*

MOUNTAIN TIMES

KILLINGTON FOOD SHELF



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Sherburne UCC "Little White Church," Killington, VT

L	T	B	G	T	C	L	E	A	N	U	L	E	B	A	M	I	T	T	E
E	W	E	A	T	T	I	U	H	D	L	R	F	L	D	H	G	G	D	F
B	O	Z	R	V	Y	I	B	Y	V	A	Z	I	C	C	L	B	H	L	I
A	E	I	A	S	B	R	O	L	D	S	D	O	S	S	T	C	I	E	L
L	Z	R	G	D	T	A	E	T	R	O	S	H	R	I	Y	V	A	I	I
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C	N	G	P	A	T	R	E	O	Y	T	S	G	O	L	Y	N	C	V	G
M	A	E	M	A	U	G	S	M	Z	C	A	P	W	E	K	V	E	K	M
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M	R	A	B	B	F	P	S	G	A	G	V	E	I	K	S	E	D	Y	G
E	O	C	W	D	S	S	H	H	D	N	I	K	S	D	D	P	R	K	A
T	G	I	T	O	D	E	T	A	O	K	O	S	A	R	R	V	D	T	B
S	Y	L	G	W	O	Y	R	S	B	U	K	I	S	Z	E	O	A	F	R
Y	D	C	V	R	B	C	T	O	H	E	S	Y	S	A	A	W	O	I	A
S	F	B	L	C	Z	E	B	S	H	E	T	E	I	S	Y	G	A	C	G
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ALPHABETIZE
ASSIGNMENTS
CATEGORIZE
CHORES
CLEAN
CLOSET

COORDINATE
CULL
DESK
DONATE
DRAWERS
FILING

GARAGE
GARBAGE
HOUSEHOLD
LABEL
MESS
ORGANIZE

PROFESSIONAL
RECYCLE
SHELVING
SORT
SYSTEM

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Solutions > 32

CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Requests
- 5. Calendar month
- 8. Invests in little enterprises
- 12. Bird sound
- 14. S. American plant cultivated for tubers
- 15. Car
- 16. Bullfighter
- 18. Hill (Celtic)
- 19. Strong criticism
- 20. Detector
- 21. When you hope to get there
- 22. Having the skill to do something
- 23. Legendary MLB broadcaster
- 26. Vulcanite
- 30. C. Asian mountain range
- 31. In a way, healed
- 32. Midway between east and southeast
- 33. Small appendages of insects
- 34. __ Greene, "Bonanza" actor
- 39. A place to bathe
- 42. Postal worker accessory
- 44. Classical music
- 46. A way of wrecking
- 47. Terminator
- 49. You eat three a day

CLUES DOWN

- 50. Pointed end of a pen
- 51. NATO official (abbr.)
- 56. Genus of clams
- 57. Boxing's "G.O.A.T."
- 58. A colorless, odorless gas used as fuel
- 59. Covered thinly with gold paint
- 60. Bachelor of Laws
- 61. Red fluorescent dye
- 62. Engineering group
- 63. Female sibling
- 64. Adjacent
- 1. What a thespian does
- 2. Footwear
- 3. Adjust spacing between
- 4. Witnesses
- 5. Who shows excessive fondness
- 6. Distinct form of a plant
- 7. National capital
- 8. Hunting expedition
- 9. Related to medulla oblongata
- 10. European country
- 11. Cola
- 13. Excluded from use or mention

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			

- 17. Speak
- 24. Bloodshot
- 25. Make better
- 26. Keyboard key
- 27. Type of degree
- 28. Paddle
- 29. Peacock network
- 35. Not young
- 36. Baseball stat
- 37. One's grandmother

- 38. Breakfast food
- 40. Bathroom features
- 41. Disease-causing bacterium
- 42. NY ballplayer
- 43. Got up
- 44. Prophet
- 45. Part of the mouth
- 47. Unnatural
- 48. Acronym for brain science

- study
- 49. Three are famous
- 52. Languages spoken in Patagonia
- 53. Freedom from difficulty
- 54. Widely used OS
- 55. Many people pay it

VERMONT SNOW SCULPTURE FESTIVAL & COMPETITION AT SUICIDE SIX

JAN. 14-16 ALL DAY

Courtesy Suicide Six

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 12

Baptiste Flow yoga

9 a.m. True Yoga Vermont, 22 Wales St., Rutland. \$49 for a month of unlimited classes. Join True Yoga Vermont for an hour long morning Baptiste Flow session. For more info visit trueyogavermont.com.

Fit and Fun exercise class

9:30 a.m. Godnick Center, 1 Deer Street, Rutland. \$15/month. Low impact, aerobic, and stretching routines; move to lively, sing-a-long music led by Marilyn Sheldon. Feel better, increase strength, balance and flexibility. Preregistration required. Limited space. Call 802-773-1853 to reserve your spot.

Fiber Floosies

10 a.m. Godnick Center, 1 Deer Street, Rutland. Free. This fun group will be meeting in the Goodnick Center Craft Room starting in December. Attendees bring their projects in rug hooking, knitting, cross-stitch, or any fiber arts. Attendees must complete a membership form for the Godnick Center. No cost to participate. For more info call 802-773-1853.

VeggieVanGo - Free Food Distribution

10-11 a.m. Woodstock Union High School and Middle School in Woodstock. Free. The VT Foodbank will be distributing fresh produce. They will also be distributing Boyden Farm in Cambridge. The distribution site is located near the Union Arena Entrance. Please be aware the parking lot will be full with school back in session full time and they ask for your patience while they direct traffic. Future distribution dates are Feb. 9 and March 9. Please contact Gretchen Czaja-WCUD School Nutrition Program Director with any questions at gczaja@wcsu.net or at 802-457-1317, ext. 1123.

Movers and Shakers

11 a.m. Godnick Center, 1 Deer Street, Rutland. Free. This free 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.

Picturing Difference: Photography, Democracy, and Race in the 19th Century

7 p.m. Virtual. Free. In this talk, Dr. Smiley will discuss American daguerreotype portraiture, its uses as both as a scientific instrument and as a means of picturing loved ones, as well as the photographic portrait as a medium of democratic participation, particularly for African American, Asian, and women subjects. She will explore how nineteenth-century photographic portrait studios shaped conceptions of "self" and "other" and the sometimes-unlikely places where we may uncover these visual histories in museums and archival collections. To learn more and to register visit henrysheldonmuseum.org/elephant-in-the-room.

Al-Anon and Alateen

7 p.m. A Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 6 Church Hill Road in Rutland. Free.

Al-Anon and Alateen are organizations that aim to help relatives, friends, coworkers, and others affected by the drinking of people they know. Al-Anon meetings are open to everyone, while Alateen meetings are for teenagers (and occasionally preteens). Collectively, the meetings are known as Al-Anon Family Groups (AFG). For more info visit good-shepherd.org/events/al-anon.

THURS. JAN. 13

Baptiste Flow yoga

6 a.m. True Yoga Vermont, 22 Wales St., Rutland. \$49 for a month of unlimited classes. Join True Yoga Vermont for an hour long early morning Baptiste Flow session. For more info visit trueyogavermont.com.

Free Thursday Meditation

6 a.m. and 6 p.m. Eagles Nest Studio, 2363 US-RT4, Killington. Free. Reoccurring Free Thursday Meditation offered in the former Mountain Meadows building, below Base Camp Outfitters. Limited to 8 people. Please RSVP at 802-356-2946 or email VTeaglesnest@gmail.com.

Line Dance: Groovey Grannies

9:30 a.m. Godnick Center, 1 Deer Street, Rutland. \$5/class. Intermediate line dance, mostly country with a little variety. No partner is needed. Marilyn Sheldon leads the dancing on Thursday mornings at 9:30 a.m. For more info call 802-773-1853.

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. To find a group appropriate for you, call 1-800-CHILDREN (1-800-244-5373) or 1-802-229-5724 or email pcavt@pcavt.org.

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 call Pat 802-422-3368.

Meditation for Your Life

11 a.m. Godnick Center, 1 Deer Street, Rutland. Free. Meditation for Your Life is easy to learn and easy to practice. Meditation creates the ability to improve all of our daily challenges. We believe that meditation will be beneficial to seniors and we will gear our classes to accomplishing a healthy attitude and spirit for all. Sessions are lead by Brian Salmanson. All participants will be sitting on a chair. To reserve your spot call 802-773-1853.

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 or to make a reservation call 802-773-1853.

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 and to join a group contact Amber at amenard@pcavt.org or 802-498-0603.

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/support/peer-support-groups/.

Circle of Parents for Grandparents

4 p.m. Virtual. Free. Meets weekly online. Run by Prevent Child Abuse VT. For info and to join a group contact Amber at amenard@pcavt.org or 802-498-0603.

Kids Yoga

5 p.m. Chaffee Art Center, Rutland. \$10/class. Learning the basics of yoga and mindfulness to increase focus and concentration. A fun way to stay playful and healthy inside and out. Students must pre-register by the day before class. For more info and to register visit chaffeeartcenter.org.

"Finlay Donovan is Killing It": Elle Cosimano in conversation with Kellye Garrett

7 p.m. Virtual. Free. Sign up to participate in the next event in Macmillan's Book + Author series, a virtual book club event with award-winning author Elle Cosimano for the paperback release of "Finlay Donovan is Killing It". Registration is free, but book purchases are welcomed and appreciated. For more info and to register visit bit.ly/FinlayDonovanisKillingIt.

FRIDAY, JAN. 14

Vermont Snow Sculpture Festival & Competition

All Day. Suicide Six, 247 Stage Rd. in South Pomfret. Free. Come see the intricate snow sculpture designs at Suicide Six this January. Spectators can watch the artists at work and enjoy browsing the final snow sculpture results. Each team will then vote on the "winner" and they will ultimately go on to compete in the U.S. National Snow Sculpting Competition in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. For more information, visit artistreevt.org/vermont-flurry.html

Inferno Hot Pilates

6 a.m. True Yoga Vermont, 22 Wales St., Rutland. \$49 for a month of unlimited classes. Join True Yoga Vermont for an hour long early morning Inferno Hot Pilates session. For more info visit trueyogavermont.com.

American Red Cross Blood Drive

10:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. Killington Grand Hotel's Northstar Room in Killington. Free. The American Red Cross is hosting a Blood Drive. Anyone who donates blood throughout the month of January will be entered for a chance to win a Super Bowl LVI getaway in Los Angeles for you and a guest. Plus, you will be entered for a chance to win a home theater package and \$500 e-gift card. Visit redcrossblood.org and enter keyword KILLINGTON to schedule an appointment. You can also call 1-800-RED CROSS (800-733-2767) to reserve your time slot over the phone.

Noon time hockey

12-1 p.m. Wendell A. Barwood Arena in Hartford. \$5/play. Season passes available. Noon Time Hockey is for the hockey enthusiast, ages 15+. This program is open play. Participants are required to have some hockey experience and must have complete hockey gear to play. For more info and to purchase tickets and season passes visit bit.ly/Noontimehockey.

Hartford general public skating

1:15-2:30 p.m. Wendell A. Barwood Arena in Hartford. Prices vary. Season passes available. Enjoy public skating at the Wendell A. Barwood Arena (WABA). Skate rentals and sharpening are available on site. Rentals are \$5 per pair and skate sharpening are \$5 per pair. Public Skating Memberships are available online, at the Rec office, or at the WABA. For more info and to purchase season passes visit bit.ly/HartfordSkate.

Torchlight Snowshoe

4:30-6:30 p.m. Billings Farm & Museum in Woodstock. \$10/adult and \$5/youth and BFM members. Snowshoe or walk the Billings Farm trail by torchlight as evening begins. Gather around the fire pit and warm up with complimentary s'mores and hot drinks. Learn about the wildlife here and the history of the land, guided by National Park rangers. For more info and to purchase tickets visit bit.ly/JanTorchlightSnowshoe.

"Baby It's Cold Outside" exhibit opening

5-7 p.m. Chaffee Art Center, 16 S Main St. in Rutland. The Chaffee Art Center invites the community to the opening of a new exhibit "Baby It's Cold Outside" with solo featured galleries of work by photographer, Lowell Snowden Klock and fine artist, Heather Wilson. For more info visit chaffeeartcenter.org.

SATURDAY, JAN. 15

Vermont Snow Sculpture Festival & Competition

All Day. Suicide Six, 247 Stage Rd. in South Pomfret. Free. Come see the intricate snow sculpture designs at Suicide Six this January. Spectators can watch the artists at work and enjoy browsing the final snow sculpture results. Each team will then vote on the "winner" and they will ultimately go on to compete in the U.S. National Snow Sculpting Competition in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. For more information, visit artistreevt.org/vermont-flurry.html

Winter Regulars and Rarities birding trip

8:30 a.m. Otter Valley Union High School in Brandon. Free. Rutland County Audubon will be reviving our Regular's and Rarities birding expedition to points north of us, such as Dead Creek and Champlain Bridge. Meet at 8 a.m. at Otter Valley Union High School to caravan. Dress warmly, bring lunch and a beverage. Covid-19 restrictions will be followed. For more info contact: birding@rutlandcountyaudubon.org.

← **Calendar:** Email events@mountaintimes.info from page 18

Winter Wildlife Celebration

10 a.m. - 4 p.m. VINS Nature Center in Quechee. Included with general admission. Celebrate the wildlife of winter at the VINS Nature Center with a fun-filled day of family activities! In the morning, visit Fairy Court to begin your journey through the woods to hunt for fairies. The celebration continues in the afternoon with a visit from Braeburn Siberians where you will meet a team of sled dogs and learn how they are built for the winter! You can also join in for winter games, attend a program to learn how raptors survive winter, and take a stroll with an educator along the canopy walk. Snow or no, it's sure to be a great way to discover the wonders of wildlife in winter!

Dinosaur World Live

2 p.m. Paramount Theatre in Rutland. \$24/person. Using stunning puppetry to bring remarkably life-like dinosaurs to the stage, Dinosaur World Live presents a host of impressive pre-historic creatures including every child's favourite flesh-eating giant, the Tyrannosaurus Rex, along with a Giraffatitan, Microraptor, Segnosaurus and Triceratops. The show introduces Miranda, daughter of paleontologists, who grew up surrounded by dinosaurs on a far-away island off the coast of South America. She has brought her pre-historic pals to our shores and would love you to meet them. The Paramount requires proof of full vaccination or a negative Covid-19 test from all ticket holders age 12+ before entering the theater. Please note that we do not accept at-home tests. All attendees, regardless of age, must wear a mask while inside the venue. The Paramount requires all its staff, crew, and volunteers to be vaccinated. For more info visit paramountvt.org/event/dinosaur-world-live.

"The Loneliest Whale"

3 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. Billings Farm & Museum in Woodstock. \$15/person or \$12/BFM member. "The Loneliest Whale" is a nature mystery, an unanswered question that needs to be solved and a chronicle of Zeman's seemingly impossible journey to find his white whale. With a little data and a whole lot of hope, Zeman sets sail for the Channel Islands off California with a team of oceanographers and biologists in tow, using Navy sonar equipment, drone cameras and tracking tags to try and find Whale 52. For more info visit billingsfarm.org/filmseries.

Hartford general public skating

4:15-5:45 p.m. Wendell A. Barwood Arena in Hartford. Prices vary. Season passes available. Enjoy public skating at the Wendell A. Barwood Arena (WABA). Skate rentals and sharpening are available on site. Rentals are \$5 per pair and skate sharpening are \$5 per pair. Public Skating Memberships are available online, at the Rec office, or at the WABA. For more info and to purchase season passes visit bit.ly/HartfordSkate.

Sing and Skate Throwback Karaoke Night

5:30 - 8:30 p.m. Giorgetti Arena, 2 Oak St. Ext. in Rutland. \$5/person. Enjoy a night of karaoke with Birch Ridge Music. Skate rentals are included in admission. Visit <https://bit.ly/3nbRb7R>

Swampalachian Trail

7:30 p.m. Next Stage Arts, 15 Kimball Hill in Putney. \$18 in advance or \$22 at the door. Walter Parks, longtime guitarist sideman to Woodstock legend Richie Havens joins accordionist Rob Curto to present "Swampalachian Trail". The show is the soundtrack to the building of America encompassing historic songs of European and African origin with hollers, reels, spirituals, work songs and hymns, all manifested in a contemporary way. In their live show Parks and Curto frequently use back-stories to preface songs, be they historic or original compositions or the occasional tributes to Richie Havens. For more info and to purchase tickets visit nextstagearts.org/event/walter-parks.

SUNDAY, JAN. 16

Vermont Snow Sculpture Festival &

Competition

All Day. Suicide Six, 247 Stage Rd. in South Pomfret. Free. Come see the intricate snow sculpture designs at Suicide Six this January. Spectators can watch the artists at work and enjoy browsing the final snow sculpture results. Each team will then vote on the "winner" and they will ultimately go on to compete in the U.S. National Snow Sculpting Competition in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. For more information, visit artistreevt.org/vermont-flurry.html

Original Hot Yoga

8 a.m. True Yoga Vermont, 22 Wales St., Rutland. \$49 for a month of unlimited classes. Join True Yoga Vermont for an hour long morning Original Hot Yoga session. For more info visit trueyogavermont.com.

Rutland Winter Farmers' Market

10 a.m. Vermont Farmers Food Center, 251 West Street in Rutland. Free. The Vermont Farmers' Market is proud to hold an indoor market in Rutland throughout the winter time. From farm fresh veggies to artisan cheeses, handcrafted breads, maple syrup, Vermont crafts, hot prepared food, and more - find it all at the indoor market. Every Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

MNFF Selects presents "From the Wild Sea"

2 p.m. Town Hall Theater, Middlebury. \$16/person or \$7/children under 12. Buy a Selects Pass for \$105. The Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival is bringing back MNFF Selects, its monthly in-person screening series at the Town Hall Theater in Middlebury. MNFF Selects will kick off its eight month run this October, spanning through May 2022. For its "comeback" edition, MNFF Selects presents Humans and Animals: Shared Experiences, Intersecting Worlds. The series will be geared toward families, with six of the eight films rated G or PG. The fourth movie is "From the Wild Sea". For more info visit mddfilmfest.org/selects-2021-22.

Hartford general public skating

3:10-4:30 p.m. Wendell A. Barwood Arena in Hartford. Prices vary. Season passes available. Enjoy public skating at the Wendell A. Barwood Arena (WABA). Skate rentals and sharpening are available on site. Rentals are \$5 per pair and skate sharpening are \$5 per pair. Public Skating Memberships are available online, at the Rec office, or at the WABA. For more info and to purchase season passes visit bit.ly/HartfordSkate.

MONDAY, JAN. 17

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Inferno Hot Pilates

6 a.m. True Yoga Vermont, 22 Wales St., Rutland. \$49 for a month of unlimited classes. Join True Yoga Vermont for an hour long early morning Inferno Hot Pilates session. For more info visit trueyogavermont.com.

A Community of Parents

10 a.m. Wonderfeet Kids' Museum, 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 wonderfeetkidsmuseum.org.

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 call Pat at 802-422-3368.

SING & SKATE THROWBACK KARAOKE NIGHT AT GIORGETTI ARENA

SATURDAY, JAN. 15 AT 5:30 P.M.



Zoom Course: The Fragile Electric Grid

10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Virtual. \$45/course fee. What happened in Texas, when they had over forty hours of grid blackout, and over 700 deaths? And what about California? And why did our own New England grid operator write a report with 23 scenarios of the future grid and 19 of the scenarios had rolling blackouts? Could Texas happen here? Is our grid resilient enough for truly bad weather or the outage of a major power plant? In this course, we will look at the root causes of these relatively new problems. Meredith Angwin has wide-ranging experience in power and transmission technologies. As a chemist employed by utilities, she headed research projects on pollution control and corrosion control. More recently, she served on a consumer advisory group to our grid operator. She is the author of the recent book Shorting the Grid: The Hidden Fragility of Our Electric Grid. This course runs on Mondays from Jan. 17 through Feb. 7. For more info and to register visit bit.ly/FragileGrid.

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. Call (802)773-1853 for information or to make a reservation for pick-up. For more info or to make a reservation call 802-773-1853.

Bone Builders

1 p.m. Godnick Center, 1 Deer Street, Rutland. Free. An Osteo Exercise Program. All you need to bring with you is a bottle of water. The weights are provided. For more info and to RSVP call 802-775-8220.

Open Discussion and Support Group for Frontline Workers

3:30 p.m. Virtual. Free. Join this facilitated discussion to share and learn from your peers in front-line positions about how best to manage during this time. Covid Support VT staff will provide a structured environment for discussion and tips for coping and wellness. For more info visit bit.ly/frontlineworkerssupport.

Calendar > 20

'DINOSAUR WORLD LIVE' AT PARAMOUNT THEATRE

SATURDAY, JAN. 15 AT 2 P.M.



Courtesy Paramount Theatre

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Calendar: Email events@mountaintimes.info
from page 19

Fair Haven Historical Society annual meeting
Virtual. Free.
The Fair Haven Historical Society would like to invite their members and friends to join them virtually for the Annual Meeting. Special guest, Polly Allen, will give a history of the Stephen Fish house or, as it is more commonly known, the Red House. The meeting can be accessed at bit.ly/FHHSAnnualMeeting.

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/support/peer-support-groups or contact Nick Martin at nickmartin@namivt.org.

TUESDAY, JAN. 18

Inferno Hot Pilates
9 a.m. True Yoga Vermont, 22 Wales St., Rutland. \$49 for a month of unlimited classes. Join True Yoga Vermont for an hour long early morning Inferno Hot Pilates session. For more info visit trueyogavermont.com.

'My Daddy is a Pretzel'
9:30-10:30 a.m. Stone Valley Arts, 145 E Main St. in Poultney. \$12/pre-registered or \$13/drop-in.
Stone Valley Arts will team-up with WoodSpryte Arts Early Learning Adventures for literacy-based integrative arts program for the very young led by instructor Rosemary Moser. Classes are open to children ages 2-8. For this session, let's warm our bodies with yoga, games, and stories! For more info visit stonevalleyarts.org.

Line Dance: Country
9:30 a.m. Godnick Center, 1 Deer Street, Rutland. \$5/class.
Join the Godnick Center on Tuesday mornings at 9:30 a.m. with Marilyn Sheldon. Come for a fun cardiovascular workout with both new and old-line dances. No experience necessary. No partner needed. For more info call 802-773-1853.

Tai Chi Level 3
10:45 a.m. Godnick Center, 1 Deer Street, Rutland. Free.
Often described as "meditation in motion," Tai Chi is a mind-body practice, originating in China as a martial art. This six week class is a fun, relaxing, and enjoyable way to move with mindfulness and enjoy the camaraderie of others while practicing. For more information call 802-773-1853 or email aprilc@rutlandrec.com.

Knitting Group
12:30 p.m. Godnick Center, 1 Deer Street, Rutland. Free.
Gather your knitting (or crochet) project and let's come together! We are trying a new way of gathering with our creative interests. To RSVP call 802-773-1853 or email aprilc@rutlandrec.com

Chess Club
4 p.m. Godnick Center, 1 Deer Street, Rutland. Free.
Are you new to the game or have you been playing for years? This is an opportunity for players of all levels and ages to play chess. Bring your own chess set if you are able, some sets will be available. For more info contact club organizer Gregory Weller at gawchess802@gmail.com.

CIRCLE OF FATHERS ONLINE TUESDAY, JAN. 18 AT 4 P.M.



Circle of Fathers
4 p.m. Virtual. Free.
Fathers Support Group. Run by Prevent Child Abuse VT. For more info contact Amber Menard, Family Support Programs Coordinator, at 802-552-4274 or amenard@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 contact Cindy Atkins, Family Support Programs Coordinator, at 802-498-0608 or catkins@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. To register call 802-855-4533.

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Email your upcoming event to email
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Choices Restaurant & Rotisserie

Choices Restaurant and Rotisserie was named 2012 "Ski" magazines' favorite restaurant. Choices may be the name of the restaurant but it is also what you get. Soup of the day, shrimp cocktail, steak, hamburgers, a variety of salads and pastas, scallops, monkfish, lamb and more await you. An extensive wine list and in house made desserts are also available. choicesrestaurantkillington.com (802) 422-4030.



Dream Maker Bakers

Dream Maker Bakers is an all-butter, from-scratch bakery making breads, bagels, croissants, cakes and more daily. It serves soups, salads and sandwiches and offers seating with free Wifi. At 5501 US Route 4, Killington, VT. No time to wait? Call ahead. Curb-side pick up available. dreammakerbakers.com, 802-422-5950.



Inn at Long Trail

Looking for something a little different? Hit up McGrath's Irish Pub for a perfectly poured pint of Guinness, live music on the weekends and delicious food. Guinness not your favorite? They also have Vermont's largest Irish Whiskey selection. Visit innatlongtrail.com, 802-775-7181.



Jones' Donuts

Offering donuts and a bakery, with a community reputation as being the best! Closed Monday and Tuesday. 23 West Street, Rutland. See what's on special at Facebook.com/JonesDonuts/. Call 802-773-7810.

killington market

Take breakfast, lunch or dinner on the go at Killington Market, Killington's on-mountain grocery store for the last 30 years. Choose from breakfast sandwiches, hand carved dinners, pizza, daily fresh hot panini, roast chicken, salad and specialty sandwiches. Vermont products, maple syrup, fresh meat and produce along with wine and beer are also for sale. killingtonmarket.com 802-422-7736 or 802-422-7594.



Liquid Art

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



Lookout Tavern

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



Moguls

Voted the best ribs and burger in Killington, Moguls is a great place for the whole family. Soups, onion rings, mozzarella sticks, chicken fingers, buckets of chicken wings, salads, subs and pasta are just some of the food that's on the menu. Free shuttle and take away and delivery options are available. mogulssportspub.com 802-422-4777.



Mountain Top Inn

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



Rosemary's Restaurant

Rosemary's Restaurant at the Inn at Long Trail is serving dinner Thursday through Saturday, with casual fine dining specializing in comfort foods. Our chef blends the flavors of Ireland and New England, featuring locally sourced products. Enjoy the scenery of our indoor boulder and illuminated boulder garden view. Reservations appreciated. 802-775-7181



Rutland CO-OP

The Rutland Area Food Co-op is a community-owned grocery and wellness market situated in downtown Rutland. As a food cooperative, we are owned by a membership base of around 2,000 members. We aim to provide affordable access to high-quality, local, organic and sustainable foods and goods. At the same time, as a mission-driven, community-oriented business, we proudly strengthen our region by carrying products of more than 180 local businesses. 77 Wale St. Rutland. rutlandcoop.com 802-773-0737



Sugar and Spice

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



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[MUSIC Scene]

By DJ Dave Hoffenberg

Listings for Jan. 12-18 (Some places require reservations, some proof of vaccination or a negative covid test within 72 hours, so please call ahead before making a drive.)

WED.
1/12

KILLINGTON

5 p.m. Wobbly Barn – King Arthur Junior

9 p.m. Moguls Sports Pub – DJ Dirty D

LUDLOW

6 p.m. Du Jour VT – Jim Yeager and Melissa Dee Phipps

POULTNEY

7 p.m. Taps Tavern – Open Mic hosted by Danny Lang

QUECHEE

6 p.m. The Public House – Matt Seiple

RANDOLPH

7 p.m. One Main Tap & Grill – Open Mic hosted by Silas McPrior

RUTLAND

5:30 p.m. Moose Lodge – Ryan Fuller

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

THURS.
1/13

BRANDON

6 p.m. Ripton Mountain Distillery – Open Jam

KILLINGTON

5 p.m. The Foundry – Ryan Fuller

6 p.m. Liquid Art – Open Mic

6 p.m. Rivershed – King Arthur

6 p.m. Wobbly Barn – Acoustik Ruckus

8 p.m. Pickle Barrel Nightclub – The Sideways

8:30 p.m. Jax Food & Games – Jenny Porter and Friends

LUDLOW

6 p.m. Du Jour VT – BYO(Damn) Mic: Open Mic hosted by George Nostrand

PROCTORSVILLE

5 p.m. Neal's Restaurant & Bar – Sammy B

QUECHEE

6:30 p.m. The Public House – Name That Tune Bingo with DJ Dave

RUTLAND

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

9 p.m. Center Street Saloon – International Night

FRI.
1/14

BOMOSEEN

6 p.m. Bomoseen Lodge & Taproom – Aaron Audet

CHESTER

6 p.m. The Pizza Stone VT – Plumb Bobs

KILLINGTON

4 p.m. The Foundry – Jamie

4 p.m. Wobbly Barn – Krishna Guthrie

6:30 p.m. Wobbly Barn – Chris P Trio

7 p.m. The Foundry – Jenny Porter

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

8 p.m. Pickle Barrel Nightclub – Goodman Fiske

9 p.m. Moguls Sports Pub – Fiddle Witch

9:30 p.m. Jax Food & Games – Jamie

9:30 p.m. Wobbly Barn – Fat Mezz

LUDLOW

5:30 p.m. Calcuttas – Kim Wilcox

6 p.m. Du Jour VT – George Nostrand

MENDON

8 p.m. Flannels Bar & Grill – Rick Webb

SAT.
1/15

CHESTER

6:30 p.m. The Pizza Stone VT – Eavesdrop

KILLINGTON

4 p.m. Killington Distillery – Sammy B

4 p.m. Pickle Barrel Nightclub – Jamie's Junk Show with guest opener Jenny Porter

4 p.m. The Foundry – Happy Hour with Jacob Butler

4 p.m. Wobbly Barn – Chris White Duo

6 p.m. North Star Lodge – Tom Irish

6 p.m. Summit Lodge – Fiddle Witch

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

7 p.m. The Foundry – Jenny Porter

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

8 p.m. Pickle Barrel Nightclub – Goodman Fiske

9:30 p.m. Jax Food & Games – Aaron Audet Band

9:30 p.m. Wobbly Barn – Turning The Tide

LUDLOW

5:30 p.m. Calcuttas – Jim Yeager

6 p.m. Du Jour VT – Dustin Marshall

MENDON

8 p.m. Flannels Bar & Grill – Rick Webb

POULTNEY

7 p.m. Taps Tavern – Silas McPrior

RANDOLPH

6 p.m. 802 Pizza – Chris Pallutto

RUTLAND

9 p.m. Center Street Alley – DJ Mega

SUN.
1/16

KILLINGTON

4 p.m. Wobbly Barn – Dustin Marshall

5 p.m. The Foundry – The Foundry Jazz Trio

6 p.m. Liquid Art – Tee Boneicus Jones

6:30 p.m. Wobbly Barn – Kenny Mehler

8 p.m. Pickle Barrel Nightclub – Goodman Fiske

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

9:30 p.m. Wobbly Barn – Turning The Tide

LUDLOW

6 p.m. Du Jour VT – Krishna Guthrie

STOCKBRIDGE

1 p.m. The Wild Fern – The People's Jam with Rick Redington

MON.
1/17

KILLINGTON

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

LUDLOW

8 p.m. The Killarney – Open Mic with host Silas McPrior

PROCTORSVILLE

5 p.m. Neal's Restaurant & Bar – Sammy B

TUES.
1/18

KILLINGTON

4 p.m. Wobbly Barn – Rick Redington

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

LUDLOW

7 p.m. Du Jour VT – Taco Tuesday with Kim Wilcox

POULTNEY

7 p.m. Taps Tavern – Open Bluegrass Jam

QUECHEE

5 p.m. The Public House – Jim Yeager

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Did we miss something? Email djdavehoff@gmail.com and we'll be sure to include your next event on this page!

Test your culinary chops with quiche

Cheese is a comfort food that boasts a sizable fan base. There are all sorts of appealing cheeses to cater to any craving, ranging from soft varieties like ricotta or brie to hard cheeses like pecorino romano or gorgonzola.

Cheese features prominently in many dishes, including quiche. Quiche is a rich, cheese custard tart that originated in France. While there are many varieties of quiche, Quiche Lorraine is perhaps the best-known and the blueprint upon which all other quiches are based. Individuals who want to try their hand at crafting this beloved dish can utilize this recipe from “French Classics Made Easy” (Workman Publishing) by Richard Grausman.

Quiche Lorraine

Serves 6 to 8

Ingredients:

Tart pastry

- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- 8 tablespoons cold, unsalted butter, cut into eight pieces
- 1 egg
- ⅛ teaspoon salt
- 1½ tablespoons cold water

Filling

- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 2 eggs plus 1 egg yolk
- 1½ cups milk
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ⅛ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- Pinch of freshly grated nutmeg
- ¼ pound ham (boiled, baked or smoked), diced or 8 strips of cooked bacon, crumbled
- ¼ pound Swiss-style cheese, such as Gruyère or Emmentaler, diced, sliced, or grated (about 1½ cups)

Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 475°F with the rack set in the middle position.
2. Place all of the tart pastry ingredients into the bowl of a food processor fitted with a metal blade and process until the mixture blends together to form a mass, about 20 seconds. If it doesn't form a mass after 25 seconds, add another teaspoon of water.
3. Turn the pastry out onto a lightly floured work surface, dust the pastry lightly with flour and begin the blending or kneading process known as “*fraisage*”: With the heel of your hand, push the pastry down and away from you a little at a time and repeat this process three or four times or until the pastry is smooth and does not stick to the work surface.
4. Lightly dust the pastry with flour and shape into a flat round, much like a thick hamburger. The pastry can be used immediately, unless it is too warm and soft. In which case, wrap it in plastic wrap and refrigerate for 10 to 20 minutes.
5. Line a 9½- or 10-inch tart pan with removable bottom with the pastry.
6. Prick the pastry, line it with aluminum foil, and weight it with 1 pound of dried rice or aluminum pie weights. Bake until the edges of the pastry begin to color, about 20 minutes. Remove the pan from the oven and remove the foil and beans from the pan. Spread the mustard over the bottom of the pastry. Lower the oven temperature to 425°F.
7. In a bowl, beat the eggs and yolk lightly. Blend in the milk, salt, pepper, and nutmeg.
8. Spread the ham and cheese evenly over the bottom of the tart shell. Pour the custard into the tart shell to within ⅛-inch of the top of the crust. Holding the tart pan by the outer rim (so as not to dislodge the bottom), place the pan in the oven.
9. Bake until the custard puffs, 25 to 30 minutes.
10. Unmold as soon as possible. Allow to cool for at least 10 minutes before cutting into wedges and serving. The quiche is delicious served at any temperature.



Courtesy VTF&W

Hunters took over 15,000 deer in 2021

While the official number of deer taken in Vermont's 2021 hunting seasons will not be available for a few more weeks, the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Dept. reported the final tally was around 15,600 deer, according to a preliminary report released Dec. 29. Those deer will provide approximately 3.1 million servings of local, nutritious venison.

The buck harvest was around 9,000, which is down slightly from 2020 (9,255) but near the 10-year average of 8,938.

The final antlerless deer harvest was around 6,600, down considerably from 9,735 in 2020, but similar to antlerless harvests prior to 2020. Some of that decrease was due to the department issuing fewer muzzleloader antlerless permits this year. However, the archery season harvest, which accounts for much of the total antlerless deer harvest, was also down substantially from 2020.

“Some decline in the harvest was expected this year, as we've been working to reduce deer numbers in some areas to keep them in balance with the available habitat,” said Nick Fortin, the department's deer project leader. “Hunting conditions were also challenging again this year. Warm weather and abundant fall foods limited deer movement and made it difficult for hunters to locate them. Changes in hunting participation and effort related to the pandemic likely affected this year's harvest as well.”

The primary goal of Vermont's deer management strategy is to keep the deer herd stable, healthy and in balance with available habitat. “Maintaining an appropriate number of deer on the landscape ensures deer and the habitats that support them remain in good condition and productive,” said Fortin.

The 2021 White-tailed Deer Harvest Report with final numbers will be on Fish & Wildlife's website in early March.

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This week's living Arts, Dining and Entertainment!

*"Best overall male skier," Jayden Pytlik.**Top snowboard supergrom Derek Lin.**Top snowboard supergrom Syra Wolf.**Killington events manager Mike Sutcliffe announces the winners.**Photos by Brooke Geery**The KMS crew posed for a picture at the Killington Mini Shred Madness last Sunday, Jan. 9.*

Killington's Mini Shred Madness spotlights the future of action sports

By Brooke Geery

Mini Shred Madness took over Red's Backyard at Killington Resort on Sunday, Jan. 9. The sickness was real, in the best way possible, as groms ages 4-13 got the chance to session the hike park with a little help from the Woodward Killington park crew, Killington Mountain School and Killington Snow Sports School coaches.

For the youngest riders, their parents served as board caddies and human tow ropes, as needed.

DJ Dave Hoffenberg was on hand to spin tunes and keep the energy high, while Terrain Park Supervisor Taylor Zink and Killington Events Manager Mike Sutcliffe manned the bullhorn.

"Everyone we see here is the future of action sports," Sutcliffe said. "We love having a venue to bring everyone out, progress and have fun. This is what it's all about and hopefully some lifelong friendships are made, too."

Although Mother Nature decided freezing rain was in the forecast, spirits stayed high while clothes got wet, as nearly 40 competitors participated in two half-hour jam sessions.

First the supergroms, ages 9 and under, got a chance to show their stuff. The boxes were popular with the tiniest humans who seemed to slide effortlessly across them, whether on skis or snowboards. For the second

"Everyone we see here is the future of action sports," Mike Sutcliffe said. "We love having a venue to bring everyone out, progress and have fun."

heat, the older kids ripped with their own unique styles, many riding well beyond their years.

Excited parents watched from outside the fence, cheering for their kids and encouraging them to keep going in the face of a few inevitable meltdowns.

Local legend Harley Ruffle, 4, was hiking nonstop, dropping jaws as he nailed a 180-out and dragged his oversized mitts with style. His antics scored him some extra tokens from the judges, who handed them out anytime they saw something they liked. Tokens earned riders a better shot in the raffle.

"Harley loved it," his mom, Jill Ruffle, said of the event. "You should have seen the look on the guys' faces when he pulled off the steez!"

Harley was deemed the people's champ, an unofficial award, but in line with the real spirit of the competition.

Mini Shred Madness is designed to promote learning and growth, with just a little taste of competition. So while the real prize was fun, some athletes also walked away with extra recognition and goodies from the event's sponsors.

The best overall awards for the older division went to Jayden Pytlik, 11, (male ski) and Lindsey Barrows, 11, (female ski), Beckett Hickey, 13, (male snowboard) and Cameron Crossmon, 12, (female snowboard).

Best tricks were performed by Eli Depue, 10, (skier) who did a 540 and Michael Lynch, 12, (snowboarder) for his stylish frontside boardslide.

In the supergrom division, the awards were gender neutral with the "Beast" skier award going to Sophie Jordan and the "Beast" snowboarder award being claimed by Derek Lin, 9.

The "smooth operator" awards went to Tyler Barrows, 7, (ski) and Syra Wolf, 9, (snowboard). Finally, the "110%" award, for the most overall effort, went to Owen Rogers, 8.

The event culminated with a raffle around 12:30 p.m., by which point the rain had turned to snow, and it was time to go freeride!

Vermont Institute of Natural Science announces winter wildlife celebration

Jan. 14-15 — QUEECHEE — The Vermont Institute of Natural Science (VINS) is very excited to announce its upcoming winter wildlife celebration.

First, join VINS on Friday, Jan. 14 at 6 p.m. for their free public virtual event. A donation of \$10 per household would be greatly appreciated. This virtual event is in conjunction with VINS' annual winter wildlife festival on Saturday, Jan. 15, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the VINS Nature Center in Quechee.

Celebrate the wildlife of winter at the VINS nature center with a fun-filled day of family activities. In the morning, visit Fairy Court to journey through the woods to search for fairies. The celebration continues in the afternoon with a visit from Braeburn Siberians. Meet their team of sled dogs and learn how these amazing canines are built for the winter. Join in for winter games, attend a program to learn how raptors survive winter, and take a stroll with an educator along the canopy walk. Snow or no, it's sure to be a great way to discover the wonders of wildlife in winter.

Schedule

- 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. **Fairy hunts** – Come visit the Fairy Court for an adventure sprinkled with the magic and wonder of forest fairies with a visit from the fairy grandmother and friends. Wearing wings is encouraged.



- 11-11:30 a.m. **Raptors in winter** – Join for an intimate encounter with live raptors and learn about how they've adapted to our cold winter months.
- 11:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. **Guided forest canopy walk tour** – Follow a knowledgeable VINS naturalist to discover how the forest canopy walk was created.
- 12-3 p.m. **Winter games** – Part of surviving chilly winter conditions is staying active! Join to celebrate wildlife with exciting activities for the whole family.
- 1-3 p.m. **Dog sledding demonstration** – Visit with a local dog sledding team: Braeburn Siberians. Learn how sled dogs are built for winter. Meet the dogs and learn what makes a sled dog team "mush."
- 2-2:30 p.m. **Raptors in winter** – Join for an intimate encounter with live raptors and learn about how they've adapted to the cold winter months.
- 2:30-3 p.m. **Guided forest canopy walk tour** – Follow a knowledgeable VINS naturalist to discover how the forest canopy walk was created.

This event is included with admission to the VINS Nature Center. Please note that a limited number of tickets are available for this date, and advance purchase is encouraged. Snowshoes are available for use on our nature trails at no additional charge.

Winter activity passport program available for kids and adults

Come Alive Outside has winter passports for adults and kids in 2022. The winter passports for kids and adults are chockful of activities to help people have fun outside this winter. This year, Come Alive Outside will distribute over 8,000 winter passports to kids and adults.

Come Alive Outside's winter passport for kids has been going strong for six years. In 2021, CAO passports were given to every student in Rutland County in pre-K through sixth grade. A perk of the passport program is that students can earn points and redeem them for prizes after completing a series of outdoor activities in their community. Kids' passports are free and open to anyone. Anyone can download a passport for the child in their life at: comealiveoutside.com/passports.

Adult passports are relatively new to Come Alive Outside. With activity levels to suit any ability, everyone can find a fun, approachable activity. If passport participants complete at least 12 activities, they may choose a prize from Come Alive Outside's online shop. Activities include everything from creating nature art to trying a new winter trail. Community activities are also part of the passport, like taking a photo of your favorite view in your hometown and discovering locally grown food in your area. One offering participants shouldn't miss out on are the live virtual classes like kitchen scrap gardening and wildlife photography.

"My favorite thing about the passport is that it gives people the opportunity to discover their own community and themselves in new ways, such as taking a sensory walk on a favorite trail or discovering the joys of an art walk in their town," program director Myra Pepper said. "Looking at your community and yourself in a different and deeper way is one of the best experiences the passport can give you."

"We've really bridged the generational gap with these two passports," added program coordinator Haley Rice. "There are a few overlapping activities that parents, grandparents, and caregivers can do with their children, which



Submitted by Come Alive Outside
Eva and Dafni participate in Come Alive Outside activities. Passports are now available for 2022.

not only gets them outdoors, but also might create some delightful memories that will last a lifetime."

Adult passports are available for free at some places of employment but are also available on Come Alive Outside's website for \$5. For more information or to get your own adult passport, visit comealiveoutside.com/passports-for-adults/. Passports for kids are free and may be downloaded at comealiveoutside.com/passports. For comments or questions, contact program director Myra Pepper at myra@comealiveoutside.com.



Courtesy Henry Sheldon Museum
Portrait of an unidentified African American woman by Samuel Broadbent, ca. 1850.

Henry Sheldon Museum's virtual lecture 'Picturing Difference: Photography, Democracy, and Race in the 19th Century'

Jan. 12 at 7 p.m. — VIRTUAL — The Henry Sheldon Museum presents a lecture by historian Michelle Smiley via Zoom. This is the fourth talk in the "Elephant in the Room: Exploring the Future of Museums" series convened by the Stewart-Swift Research Center.

In this talk, Dr. Smiley will discuss American daguerreotype portraiture, its uses as both as a scientific instrument and as a means of picturing loved ones, as well as the photographic portrait as a medium of democratic participation, particularly for African American, Asian, and women subjects. She will explore how 19th-century photographic portrait studios shaped conceptions of "self" and "other" and the sometimes unlikely places where we may uncover these visual histories in museums and archival collections.

Michelle Smiley is a historian of 19th-century photography and American science. Her research examines the history of the daguerreotype in the antebellum United States, and how the objects and processes of photography came to be viewed as democratic media.

This talk, funded by Vermont Humanities, is free and open to all. Additional support for this talk is provided by Dinse. To learn more about the "Elephant in the Room" series and to register for the talk, visit henrysheldonmuseum.org/elephant-in-the-room.

The Henry Sheldon Museum offers a diverse, in-depth look at the history and art of the mid-Lake Champlain region of Vermont. The museum is located at One Park Street in downtown Middlebury across from the Ilsley Library. The museum and research center are closed for the winter effective Dec. 30, 2021 and will reopen in May 2022.



Courtesy BF&M

Martin Luther King Jr. Day Weekend at Billings Farm & Museum

Jan. 15-17 — WOODSTOCK — Billings Farm & Museum will be open Jan. 15-17, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. for the Martin Luther King Jr. Day Weekend. Visitors of all ages will enjoy engaging activities indoor and out during the long weekend.

In observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day, the Museum will air "A Time for Justice," the 38-minute award-winning documentary film by Charles Guggenheim that captures the spirit of the civil rights movement. The film will be shown daily in the Visitor Center Theater. On Saturday, the last showing begins at 1:15 p.m.

Guests will be able to enjoy samples of Billings Farm Cheeses from 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. in the Lobby, and see video demonstrations on how to make Billings Farm's delicious hot chocolate, cheddar biscuits, cheese fondue and butter in your own kitchen.

Families can create a dove of peace paper craft, hunt for the snowmen in the Farm Life Exhibits and follow the StoryWalk along the pasture fence, featuring "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" by Robert Frost. Take a step back in history with a self-guided tour of the 1890 Farm Manager's House.

Horse-drawn Sleigh Rides will be offered on Saturday-Monday from 11 a.m. - 3 p.m., conditions permitting. Reservations for rides will be taken upon arrival at the Ticket Desk, on a first come, first served basis. Rides are approximately 10 minutes. The cost is \$5 per person in addition to the purchase of a general admission ticket.

Guests can meet the Farm's animals including Jersey cows, sheep, chickens and goats all cozy in the Animal Barns. There will be daily milking starting at 3:15 p.m. in the Cow Barn.

Explore the Billings Farm Trail on snowshoes or cross-country skis and venture through the picturesque snow-covered farm fields and along the Ottauquechee River. Bring your own or rent from the nearby Woodstock Inn & Resort Nordic Center. Bring your sled to speed down the small hill next to the orchard. Gather round the fire pit and warm up with hot chocolate, coffee and s'mores, available for purchase on site from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

New Chaffee Art Center exhibit opens

Jan. 14 at 5 p.m. — RUTLAND — The Chaffee Art Center, Your Center for Creativity, invites the community to the opening of a new exhibit, "Baby It's Cold Outside," with solo featured galleries of work by photographer Lowell Snowden Klock and fine artist Heather Wilson.

There will also be an installation to celebrate Black History Month with artistic works and historical content. February is Black History Month, which started as a method of remembrance of vital events and people in the history of the African diaspora. Today, it is an important month of both remembrance, recognition, and education. It is a time for people of any color to look at the incredible figures in Black history, and to raise awareness about the issues that are still present in society in terms of racism. Importantly, it is a great

opportunity for people from all walks of life to broaden their horizons and expand their understanding. The Chaffee Art Center believes art has the power to transform lives and communities.

Join the exhibit opening on Friday, Jan. 14 from 5-7 p.m.

Masks are required. There is no charge for admittance. A donation would be greatly appreciated.

Chaffee artist members will also have work on display and for sale in the upstairs galleries, as well as in the Gallery Shoppe.

This exhibit will be up until Feb. 25.

As the Chaffee celebrates 61 years as an art center in the Rutland Community, it also invites joining as an artist, single or family member to help the Chaffee to continue to inspire and cultivate creativity, while positively impacting the vitality of our community through the arts.



Courtesy Next Stage Arts

Walter Parks and Rob Curto

Walter Parks and Rob Curto present 'Swampalachian Trail' at Next Stage Arts

Saturday, Jan. 15 at 7:30 p.m. — PUTNEY — Walter Parks and Rob Curto present "Swampalachian Trail" at Next Stage Arts.

Walter Parks, longtime guitarist sideman to Woodstock legend Richie Havens, joins accordionist Rob Curto to present "Swampalachian Trail." The show is the "soundtrack" to the building of America encompassing historic songs of European and African origin with hollers, reels, spirituals, work songs and hymns, all manifested in a contemporary way.

With music and actual stories, "Swampalachian Trail" is a tribute to the many unsung folks who did the heavy lifting to create the infrastructure for the country as we know it today. In this non-religious, non-political, but historical show, we present slave spirituals, work songs and the blues and jazz to which both gave birth, alongside hymns and the Appalachian reels and hollers that poor European-American homesteaders contributed. We tie all these forms together with contemporary music inspired by the aforementioned. Parks also includes some originals and a few Richie Havens classics to mark his 10 years with the Woodstock legend.

In 2020 the American Folklife Collection Center at the Library of Congress featured and archived Parks' research work on the music of southeast Georgia's Okefenokee Swamp. For this new project with Curto, Parks has modernized the hollers, shaped-note hymns and banjo porch songs performed by the swamp homesteaders. Parks was a founding member of the popular cello/guitar folk duo called The Nudes.

Since relocating to Philadelphia from New York, Curto has been passionately pursuing the Irish "button box," which has become a defining aspect of Parks and Curto's swampalachian sound. Curto was a founding member of the Brazilian bluegrass band Matuto, which gained a following across the U.S., Canada and Europe, and more recently he led the accordion-centric American Roots band, Fish Harmonics. Curto also currently studies under the tutelage of Irish button accordionist Billy McComiskey.

In their live show Parks and Curto frequently use back-stories to preface songs, be they historic or original compositions or the occasional tributes to Richie Havens.

• 12TH ANNUAL •
Woodstock Vermont Film Series
2021-2022

Billings Farm & Museum Theater • Woodstock, VT

Sat., January 15 • 3:00 & 5:30 PM

The Loneliest Whale

"Zeman's voyage into the heart of the sea, a modern-day Moby Dick with a conservationist bent, surprises, delights and will keep you on the edge of your seat."

— LOS ANGELES TIMES



Masks & Proof of Vaccination Required

PURCHASE TICKETS ONLINE BY FRIDAY AT NOON
Tickets may be available Saturday at the Ticket Desk
billingsfarm.org/filmseries • 802-457-5303



Courtesy Billings Farm & Museum

The search for 'the loneliest whale'

A Woodstock Vermont Film Series feature documentary

Jan. 15 at 3 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. — WOODSTOCK — "The Loneliest Whale" is a cinematic quest to find the elusive creature known as the "52 Hertz Whale," which scientists believe has spent its entire life in solitude calling out at a frequency different than that of any other whale.

Identified as a whale by the marine scientist Dr. William A. Watkins, who tracked the solitary signal for a dozen years until his death in 2004, "52" had not been followed since. No one knew whether the whale was even still alive. Equipped with sophisticated sonar equipment and accompanied by a cohort of scientists, director Joshua Zeman led the expedition to find "52."

"The Loneliest Whale" is a nature mystery, an unanswered question that needs to be solved and a chronicle of Zeman's seemingly impossible journey to find his Moby Dick. With a little data and a whole lot of hope, Zeman set sail for the Channel Islands off California with a team of oceanographers and biologists in tow, using Navy sonar equipment, drone cameras and tracking tags to try and find "52."

Over two showings on Saturday, Jan. 15, at 3 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. in the Billings Farm & Museum Theater, "The Loneliest Whale" will take viewers on an engrossing journey, audiences will explore what this whale's lonely plight can teach us, not just about our changing relationship to the oceans, but to each other.

This season, the 12th annual Woodstock

Vermont Film Series will present a selection of 10 diverse films reflecting Billings Farm & Museum's 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. The Woodstock Vermont Film Series is curated and directed by award-winning filmmaker Jay Craven and produced by the Billings Farm & Museum, with generous support from local sponsors.

In reopening the Billings Farm & Museum Theater to the film series, the health and safety of guests is a top priority. The theater has been upgraded with a MERV 13 filtration system, a hospital level standard for air filtration that is more effective in capturing small airborne particles. Film attendees are required to wear masks in the theater at all times and to show proof of vaccination to enter.

Reservations are strongly recommended as seating is limited. Purchase advance tickets online at billingsfarm.org/filmseries or reserve by phone at 802-457-5303 by noon on Jan. 14. Tickets may be available for purchase at the ticket desk on the day of the film if seating allows.

Masks and proof of vaccination are required to attend. We recommend providing proof of vaccination online in advance to avoid lines. Find the form at billingsfarm.org/proof-of-vaccination-form.

For a complete list of screenings and to purchase tickets visit billingsfarm.org/filmseries.

Poultney hosts annual plant sale

The Poultney Mettewee Natural Resource Conservation District is holding its annual plant sale fundraiser. A variety of native trees and shrubs for landscaping, naturalizing and foraging as well as a variety of berries and fruit trees are available. There are many benefits to using locally grown, native plants in your landscape. Native plants are more likely to thrive in our regional climate and they provide critical resources for wildlife. Consider these plants for backyard birds and pollinators, stabilizing stream banks and shorelines, or for use in rain gardens. In addition to plants, the sale includes a 2022 calendar featuring photos taken by staff, photographer Scott MacLachlan, and local producers. The calendar is available for early pickup.

Many of the native plants are locally grown at the Champlain Valley Native Plant Restoration Nursery located in Poultney. Through the district, the nursery also provides educational opportunities for local schools and the community. All funds generated by this sale are used to support district and nursery educational and technical programming.

Visit pmnrcd.org/champlain-valley-native-plant-restoration-nursery/ to view the catalog and order form. Orders will be taken until April 10. Pickup is Saturday, May 7 at the Champlain Valley Native Plant Restoration Nursery. Questions? Email sadie@pmnrcd.org or call 802-287-6606.

CHOICES

RESTAURANT & ROTISSERIE

In-house made pasta, breads, and desserts

21+ Wines by the glass Chef owned

Dine in or take out:

2820 Killington Rd
802.422.4030
ChoicesVT.com

Thurs-Mon 5-9PM
Brunch Sundays
11am-2:30

Eat, Drink, **Shop Locally**

MOUNTAIN TIMES

Casual Fine Dining in

Rosemary's

Restaurant

Serving dinner Thursday - Saturday

Reservations appreciated 802-775-7181

Inn at Long Trail

McGrath's

Irish Pub

Pub menu served daily

Mon - Fri 3 - 9 p.m.
Sat & Sun 11:30 a.m. - 9 p.m.

Jan. 14 & 15

Erin's Guild

Live Music at 7:30 p.m.

Deer Leap 2.2 mi. from start to

GUINNESS

ESTD 1759

Rte. 4 between Killington & Pico

802-775-7181

innatlongtrail.com

Rooms & Suites available

**AGNES**

I am a beautiful 8-plus year old female mixed breed. I came in as a stray and was never claimed. I am housebroken and very well behaved. I am such a good girl I get to live in an empty cat room instead of in the kennel area. I adore people and food, but I do not do well with other dogs. I have not been cat tested yet, but willing to meet a cat if you have one. I am very smart and know Sit down and Shake. I enjoy belly rubs and will be your very best friend in the whole world. If I sound like the girl for you please fill out an application or give us a call.

This pet is available for adoption at

Springfield Humane Society

401 Skitchewaugh Trail, Springfield, VT • (802) 885-3997

*Open by appointment only. spfldhumane.org

**SOPHIE**

I'm a 5-year-old spayed female. I am super friendly once you get to know me. I love life, and one of my favorite things to do is to sit atop a cat tower. I think I'd like to live in a home that is quiet and calm with some kind of cat tower. That's something of a deal-breaker for me... but, I am open to negotiation just so long as you promise to love me forever as I will you. If you'd like a sweet little kitty like me in your life, then call the shelter today to make an appointment to come meet me.

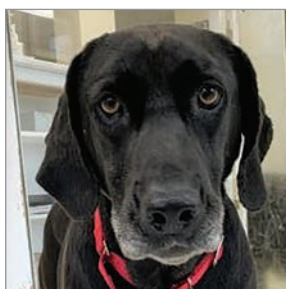
This pet is available for adoption at

Lucy Mackenzie Humane Society

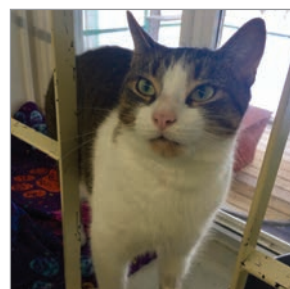
4832 VT-44, Windsor, VT • (802) 484-5829

*(By appointment only at this time.) Tues. - Sat. 12-4 p.m. & Thurs. 12-7 p.m. • lucymac.org

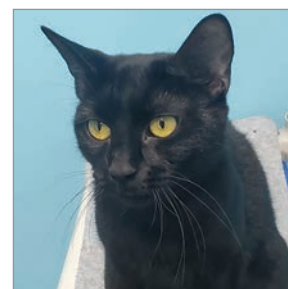
Rutland County Humane Society



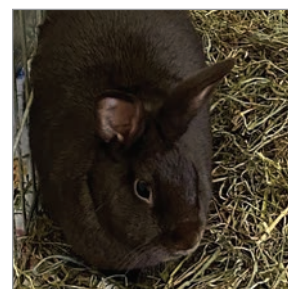
HUNTER—3-year-old. Neutered male. Lab mix. Black. With my sad looking face, who wouldn't want to take me home and love me forever.



MYLA—3-year-old. Female. Domestic shorthair. Brown and white. I have a chill and down-to-earth demeanor.



PUMA—2-year-old. Spayed female. Domestic shorthair. Black. They call me Puma, but I can be a bit shy and laid back.



COOKIE—Adult. Spayed female. American Rabbit. Brown. I am a lovely velvet black rabbit who likes to sit and watch the world go by in between eating and playing.



DEXTER—4-year-old. Neutered male. Hound mix. Black and tan. I love people and hanging out with them.

**BUCKY**

3-year-old. Male. Boxer mix. Tan and white. I am an energetic boy that loves people, playing with toys and just hanging out with my family.



FREDDIE—Adult. Neutered male. American Rabbit. Brown and white. I am inquisitive and like to investigate any new toys, especially cardboard boxes and tubes.



GOOSE—6-year-old. Neutered male. Rottweiler mix. Black/brown. I just don't understand why I am still here at the shelter, I'm such a lovely funny guy!

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

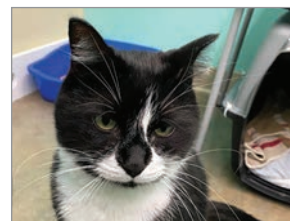
765 Stevens Road, Pittsford, VT • (802) 483-6700

Tues. - Sat. 11-5p.m. for adoptions

Closed Sun. & Mon. • www.rchsvt.org



TULIP—2-year-old. Female. Pit mix. Black and white. I love people and am excited about the possibility of finally finding my forever home.



JACK—6-year-old. Neutered male. Domestic shorthair. Black and white. I'm a bit bashful when you first meet me, but I do warm up pretty quickly.



LUNA—5-year-old. Spayed female. Domestic shorthair. Brown tiger. I enjoy ear scratches, lots of attention and long cozy naps.



JELLYBEAN—Adult. Sex unknown. Gerbil. Brown. Am I not the cutest thing ever? I am playful, curious and inquisitive.

Catamount Pet Supply Company, inc.

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



OPEN

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

Grooming by appointment | 802-773-7636

Make your pet a part of your 2022 New Year's resolutions

The new year is the time for setting goals and starting fresh, including for your pets. It is a time to make their health and happiness a priority too. RCHS would like to offer some ideas for your pet. It's very easy for your pet's weight to gradually increase over time, so make sure you are measuring out their food daily and choosing an age-appropriate diet. Incorporate more play time into your routine or try a new activity to keep your pets active and help maintain that healthy weight. Don't forget to schedule regular checkups with your veterinarian to stay up to date on vaccines and help to detect any concerns early on. The vet can also offer tips on practicing good oral hygiene, grooming habits and mental health for your pets. Teaching new tricks or replacing old toys with new can help with your pet's mental stimulation. Make sure to update your pet's identification information in case of an emergency. For more information and tips, please contact the adoption center at 802-483-6700.

Cosmic Catalogue

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Aries

March 21 - April 20

If you're a bit like me, and prone to an Instagram procrastination scroll, it would appear that everyone has got things together. Advertising their goals, proclaiming their best year yet! All power to them. Your job this week is to allow your soul to guide the pace, not the date on the calendar. Sometimes, the longer you take to get started, the longer you'll have to catch up! Carve out some time just to dream, imagine and create.



Leo

July 21 - August 20

Even the most laid-back Leos don't tend to cope well in subordinate positions. Perhaps you've been overstretching yourself to go the extra mile with or for someone else. In the process, you may have created a rod for your own back. Step out of the spotlight and empower others to do for themselves what you've become accustomed to doing for them. Free up your time by taking back your power and being less available to everyone else!



Sagittarius

November 21 - December 20

If you lose focus this week, it may pay to remember that not all who wander are lost. In fact, you're a wanderer by nature, so if you can, get yourself off a busy schedule or give yourself some downtime. Yes, the holidays are over, but that doesn't mean you have to be all work and no play. A little time to relax, daydream or imagine might bring you an intuitive inkling or an inspirational spark you might have otherwise not received.

Slow down and be open to more adventures

Many moons ago, I took an interstate drive to a city I hadn't been to before. I drove from Sydney for my first visit to Melbourne, about 900 kilometers or 550-mile trip. This was before social media and smart phones, so it was a bit of an adventure especially during bushfire season.

visited Melbourne again. That time, I opted to fly. In the space of under two hours, I walked through one tunnel in an airport and exited another tunnel in a different airport. It felt so immediate. And clinical. There were no stories to tell to the person who was waiting for me on the other side.



Taurus

April 21 - May 20

You're kind of in a one step forward and two steps back phase right now. While your progress may appear stalled, it is really only important that your overall trend is in the right direction. You wouldn't pull your investments out just because of a bad day on the market, would you? Learn to think long-term and take the daily actions required to get to your end point, even if the progress feels painfully slow.



Virgo

August 21 - September 20

Some important decisions can be made this week involving how you spend your time, as well as your health and wellness habits. That said, with your patron planet, Mercury, applying the brakes this week, you may have to experiment with some routines before you perfect your ideal plan. Trial and error are likely, but if you persist, a long-lasting solution will arrive. Once it does, you'll be glad you persisted with issues that only served to help you make the right choices.



Capricorn

December 21 - January 20

You might not be exactly where you want to be just yet, but you are sure a lot closer than you were. A big part of the success, joy and happiness you want is to decide you're worthy of it. This week, the chance to reclaim your power and make some right-for-you choices may arrive. This may help you with any issues around cash, confidence or the way you value what you have to offer, either at work or in your personal life.

It felt so immediate. And clinical. There were no stories to tell to the person who was waiting for me on the other side.



Gemini

May 21 - June 20

This week sees your ruling star, Mercury, begin its first retrograde or reverse phase for 2022. Be gentle on yourself if you're still undecided about what it is you want out of this year. For the next three weeks, you'll slowly gain a new perspective around opportunities that you wouldn't have otherwise recognized if it weren't for a few delays, a change of heart or a change of mind. The chance to do something twice is the chance to do it better.



Libra

September 21 - October 20

Life at home has been a significant focus for you over the past several weeks. Not that Venus, your guiding star, is out of her retrograde phase just yet, but it's likely you're feeling the shift. Solutions are arriving as feelings may be different or your perspective on an issue has shifted. When you can identify how you feel, it becomes easier to talk about it. This week, open a discussion that may help you make some important choices.



Aquarius

January 21 - February 20

When the proverbial spanner gets in the works, you have two choices. You can get frustrated and feel defeated or you can rethink the problem and come up with a better solution. As Mercury embarks upon its first retrograde of the year in your sign, take this as an opportunity to get to know yourself better. When you do, you're better positioned to make choices and decisions that are right for you, especially when under pressure.

I drove along what felt like an endless straight road. I stopped on the way as little places piqued my interest or my stomach told me it was time to eat. My time in Melbourne was lovely, but it was the drive I remember most.

Several months later, I

This week, you too might be rushed to a destination or some kind of end point. If you can, take the longer route. Be open to creating the adventures, the stories and the memories if you just took a little more time to stop and wonder.



Cancer

June 21 - July 20

It can be so easy to do things by force of habit. Those tasks, duties and obligations we routinely perform without consciously even realizing it. Chances are, you made a promise to yourself that you weren't going to do certain things in 2022 and you've already slipped back into old habits. If that's the case, then pay extra attention this week to what feels OK for you and what irritates or prompts you to lose focus. Adjust accordingly.



Scorpio

October 21 - November 20

When it comes to goals and resolutions for a New Year, many people focus on cash. Your stars suggest you do the same! Where I'd advise differently is not just to see your money goals involve slashing spending or creating a tight budget. Instead, dream up an ideal life, even if it seems totally impractical now. Though it may feel like a stretch, keeping your dreams in the forefront will create more abundance than focusing on debt or lack ever will.



Pisces

February 21 - March 20

It's possible you could feel the initial wave of motivation that you began the year with wane this week. If it does, this doesn't have to mean throwing in the towel and giving up on your goals. What it might mean is that you may need to discover whether what you want is sustainable all of the time. Rather than relying on the flash-in-the-pan motivation, consider long-term habits and discipline. It ain't sexy, but it works!

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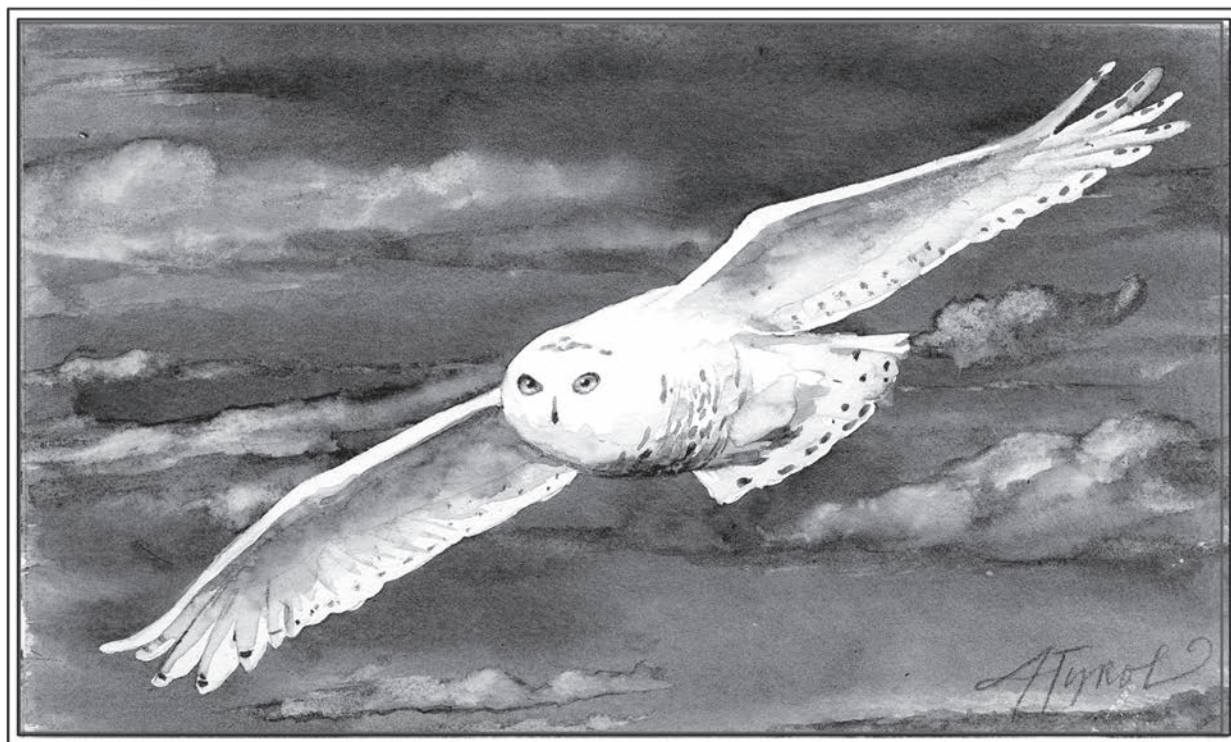
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Cassandra has studied astrology for about 20 years. She is an international teacher of astrology who has been published all over the globe.



Snowy owls erupt in number

Here's a quiz for Harry Potter fans: What kind of owl played Hedwig in the movies? If you guessed a snowy owl, you're correct. With their bright yellow eyes, bulky-looking bodies, and white feathers that cover everything from their beaks to their large feet, these owls strike an impressive pose. And this winter, we may have a greater chance of glimpsing one of these amazing raptors from the far north.

Although they breed high in the Arctic, many snowy owls (*Bubo scandiacus*) fly south for the winter — at least as far south as northern New England and New York (and, yes, occasionally a snowy finds its way to Great Britain). In some years, a greater number of snowy owls migrate from the north and travel farther south than usual in what's known as an irruption, and this winter is shaping up to be one of snowy owl irruption.

"There clearly are more birds coming this year than we've seen in a few years," said Kevin McGowan of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, although he noted a general increase in the numbers of snowy owls that have been flying south over the past decade. "It seems they are coming further south on a more regular basis. I've seen a snowy owl 10 years in a row in upstate New York."

Snowy owls are the northernmost breeding raptor in the world and are well adapted to the cold and harsh conditions of the tundra. While most snowies remain in the far north during the winter, hunting seabirds along the pack ice, the ones that venture south cause quite a stir. Irruptive winters tend to occur following summers of booming lemming populations in the tundra. One owl can eat upwards of 1,600 of the small rodents in a year, and owls adjust their clutch size based on the amount of food available to feed hungry owlets.

"In low years, they'll only lay maybe three eggs, and in really boom years they'll lay up to eight eggs," McGowan said. "Then you have eight baby owls, and then when those baby owls grow up, you have lots of competition."

That means more owls heading south in search of winter food. Adult females tend to stay closest to the breeding grounds, with males traveling a bit farther south, and young owls migrating the farthest. And for an owl that was hatched and reared in the tundra, the southern realm is a strange — and often dangerous — place.

"They have absolutely no idea what people are. They've never seen a car," McGowan said. "They're completely ignorant of what dangers there are."

This naivety results in many owls being hit by cars. Because they prefer wide, open spaces, many snowy owls end up at airports, where they can both be harmed and cause harm. Some airports, including in Boston and Montreal, have programs to catch snowy owls and release them to a safer place. Snowy owls also often show up on coastal dunes, along open lakeshores, and in large agricultural fields.

"They don't like the forest," McGowan said. "They like to be out in the open country where they can see all around them. And they like to sit up high. You'll often see them on the tops of buildings and silos."

The snowy owl's winter menu extends beyond rodents to include sea ducks and gulls. The owls are able to expand their hunting, McGowan said, in part because of their large feet and their wings, which are longer and narrower

than those of most other owls. That wing shape allows snowy owls to fly fast enough to chase down their prey. The huge feet and large talons allow the owls to grasp mammals and birds that are far larger than lemmings.

Those feet, and the rest of the owl's head and body, are encompassed by thick layers of insulating feathers, which make snowies the heaviest owl species in North America, at around four pounds. For comparison, great horned owls weigh in around three pounds, great gray owls (the tallest on the continent) are about two pounds, and barred owls typically weigh under two pounds.

All those insulating feathers are part of what makes snowy owls so well-suited for life in the Arctic, but they can also cause the owls to overheat in warmer temperatures. McGowan notes that when the thermometer creeps above freezing, the owls will often sit on piles of snow to stay cool.

Females tend to have dark brown barring amid the snowy white. Young males also have heavy barring and generally become whiter as they age. Some adult males are almost entirely white. For those of you paying attention, that means Hedwig, who is a female character, was actually portrayed by a male owl.

Meghan McCarthy McPhaul is the assistant editor for Northern Woodlands. The illustration for this column is 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: www.nhcf.org.



The Outside Story

By Meghan McCarthy McPhaul

The demo ride: is testing key to new skis

For many skiers, new skis lining the racks of our area mountain shops bring a distinct appeal. And, with the pandemic impacting skiing dramatically last winter, many of us deferred on new skis and boots. Still, new, sharp skis are enticing. The graphics are unmarred! Still, how can you find the ski which is best for your needs?

Consider a test ride.

"Many years ago I did lots of research and spent lots of money. What a failure! I had to live with that ski," reflected one liftmate.

A demo ride can save aggravation!

Given the expense and the dramatic differences

between skis a test ride is a key tool. The truth is that new skis are not all the same! Having tested many skis over the years the differences are often dramatic. Wider skis float in powder. Narrow skis can excel in racing. Some shine in the park.

Fortunately, area mountain shops on the

access road here at Killington and at nearby Okemo can help. In fact, many shop personnel have tested many models. Still, are the differences real?

"I couldn't believe the differences!" noted Keith Morris.

Unfortunately, because there are so many different

Mountain journal > 33



Mountain Journal

By Tony Crespi

2021 was good for investors

This past year was a good year for investors. The S&P 500 Index, which is made up of 500 U.S. companies, finished the year up almost 27%. The Nasdaq is up over 21% and the Dow is up almost 19%.



Money Matters

By Kevin Theissen

Corporate profits were better than expected, the economy expanded, and the Federal Reserve had an easy monetary policy. Concerns about the continuing Covid pandemic and high inflation were muted by low interest rates and increasing profits.

What can we expect from 2022? Over the last 60 years, there have been 26 years in which the total return of the S&P 500 was

The S&P 500 Index ... finished the year up almost 27%. The Nasdaq is up over 21% and the Dow is up almost 19%.

up 20% or more. In the following year, the S&P 500 was up 20 times, or 77% of the time. The average up year was 18.1%, while the average down year was 6.4%. These performance statistics, however, have no bearing on what might happen in 2022. It will depend on the year's specific and actual economic conditions.

Will we see the Covid pandemic and reactions to it continue? The economic impact of Delta and Omicron has been limited, but what will happen next?

Stock prices are often driven by corporate profits. We will
Money matters > 33

Raising the bar

There's a little bar a mile up the road from where I live. It's part of a strip mall that houses the prerequisite pizza joint, nail salon, drug store, and karate center. There's also a



**The Movie
Diary**
By Dom Cioffi

grocery store sitting on the end that acts as the anchor for the property.

The couple who owns the bar live on our road, albeit the other end. I know of them because they have a son close to my son's age, but I don't "know" them. From what I can gather, they are a nice couple just trying to make a living. He obviously runs the show, while she acts as an occasional waitress, likely filling in when the staff is thin.

The bar serves typical fare for a small kitchen establishment:

burgers, a few hot and cold sandwiches, and a salad or two. It's not great food, but if you're hungry while having a beer, it serves the purpose.

I've been to this bar on a few rare occasions. My wife and I tried it out when it first opened, hoping it might be a culinary diamond in the rough, but that wasn't the case. Other than that, I think I've been there two other times, both because friends insisted that we meet them for a drink.

But don't get me wrong, it's not all bad. The little bar's claim to fame is its buoyant selection of craft brewed beers, of which it claims to have over 100 different varieties. This unique feature attracts a sizable crowd at happy hour throughout the week. They also make the effort to bring in an occasional solo guitarist on Fridays or Saturdays for added ambiance.

I've never seen anyone perform there, but I often hear the muffled music when I'm stopping next door to grab a take-out pizza. I'm a sucker for any acoustic guitarist who stands in the corner of a bar and sings old rock standards at a less-than-deafening level.

They also did a fantastic job with the décor. The owner is obviously a sports buff or at least chose to market his bar that way. The inside is littered with paraphernalia from every major sport. There are football helmets, golf clubs, hockey jerseys, and several autographed baseballs. There's also one entire wall that features license plates from around the country with sports teams' names spelled out in creative combinations of letters and numbers.

And as you might guess, there are multiple big screen televisions scattered throughout the premises. From any seat, you are guaranteed a view of at least three different sporting events.

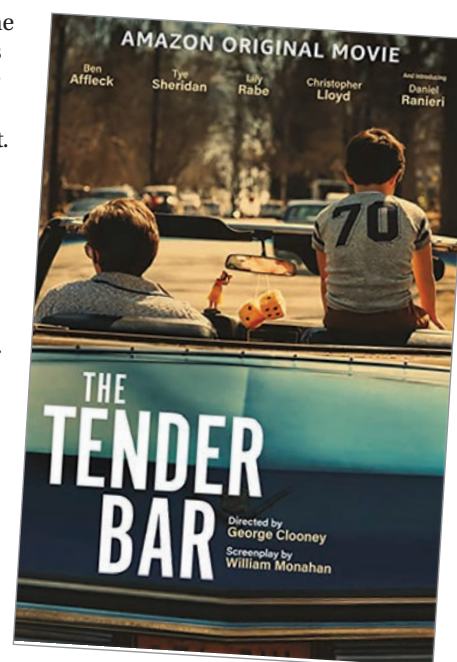
Personally, I've never been someone who heads out to the bar alone for a drink. I've got several friends that enjoy the camaraderie during a football game, but I've always preferred my quiet living room to a noisy bar.

However, last weekend an odd convergence of events compelled me to visit that little neighborhood bar.

It was Saturday afternoon and my wife had left town to visit her mother while my son had made plans to sleep over at a friend's house. I was completely alone, but while I normally covet those moments and fill them with any number of solo activities, I found myself pacing around the house bored.

Admittedly, I've also been suffering from a bit of pandemic overload. I'm exhausted from the last two years both physically and mentally and for some reason it was coming to a head last weekend.

Nothing sounded appealing so I hopped in my truck



with the sole intention of just driving around, which is exactly what I did for an hour, listening to music and taking in the sights. And when I got tired of that, I headed home. However, while stopped at the traffic light near the strip mall, I made the rash decision to pull in and have a beer.

I walked into the bar, which was half full due to the weekend football games, ordered a draft beer, and found a seat off to the side where I basically had a whole tv to myself. Before long, a middle-aged couple sidled up next to me and we started a conversation that lasted a good hour. I even ordered some chicken fingers just to round out the experience.

In the end, I had a great time and appreciated the change of scenery and pleasant banter with strangers. It also made me realize the importance of socialization and how we've all lacked that during these last two years.

In this week's feature, "The Tender Bar," starring Ben Affleck and directed by George Clooney, we meet a middle-aged man who has realized that his ship has sailed. But rather than wallow in resentment about his own life, he's decided to invest his energy into his nephew who is desperately in need of a father figure.

Check this one out if you're in the mood for a well-made, well-acted drama that shows how humanity can be found in the most unlikely of places.

A dingy "B" for "The Tender Bar," available for streaming on Amazon Prime.

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

There's beauty in the cold

The sky is stunning, a perfect blue filling the sky. There is not a single cloud in the sky. In fact, it feels like there are no clouds blocking the sun at any height. Like the sun rays are a dagger through the layers of sky. With the below freezing temperatures, it's the one time of year where the sun's rays truly feel like a laser beam focused on the earth. And you are so cold that your body is simply drawn to the light, pulled like a magnet into its beautiful rays.

Because it is cold in the shadows. So cold that you can feel your skin breaking apart in just a few minutes of exposure. A deep cold that seeps down into your bones and causes

the water at the edges of our bodies to begin to freeze. Just walking to the mailbox, I can feel my hands start to stiffen and I curse myself for thinking I was tougher than the weather. I literally had my gloves in hand and then chose no.

Because Mother Nature lays down her deepest trick on these super cold days,

as they are the most beautiful of all. The snow glitters in the cold sunlight, making the world seem like it is covered in magic. The sun beckons you outside, her straightforward beauty calls like a siren and you are quickly fooled into her clutches. Who wouldn't want to sit out there, absorbing all the warmth from the sun?

I cannot resist the call, and so I prepare for battle. I gather my -20 degree down sleeping bag, my warmest hat and mittens, my goggles and a thermos filled with hot chocolate. The door

is extremely loud as it squeaks open in the cold, a long, slow sound which echoes across the valley. The sun is so low in the sky, that it is almost horizontal as it shines onto the covered porch. It's

the perfect day for settin'.

I close my eyes. Even my fancy goggles aren't strong enough for sun like this as it reflects off the white snow and quadruples its power somehow. In many ways, these negative temperature days have the strongest, most dangerous sun. It's a

Livin' the dream > 37



**Livin' the
Dream**
By Merisa
Sherman

The snow glitters in the cold sunlight, making the world seem like it is covered in magic.

Remembering 'feel-good' writers

With the challenges that Covid has brought into our lives it makes many of us look for "feel good moments" in our day. At times we need to replace negative thoughts with positive ones and how we accomplish that is up to each individual.

For me reading something light and watching movies on the Hallmark Channel lets me escape into someone else's world for a little while.

Even in my younger days I enjoyed the positive writing that I found in area papers. The words I looked forward to reading weren't written by famous people. They were written by locals. Their words brightened my day. I knew nothing about their personal lives. I just knew that their words momentarily took me to a "happy place" and the world looked a whole lot brighter as I read what they wrote.

One of my favorite columns was Jo's Jottings which appeared in the Mountain Times. It was written by the late Josephine Blanchard, who died in 2011 at age 91. I remember her telling readers about events in her life like she was entering the information into a diary. Sometimes an entire column would be about her trips to the mailbox that week and the contents she found therein. I used to get a kick out of her talking about mail that was a request

for money. She would call them "begging letters." Somehow Josephine managed to make even that subject interesting!

Everything was "right with world" each week as long as Josephine was in print. I looked online to see the date that she passed away and noticed that the online condolences were still there. One in particular gave me a glimpse into the personality of my favorite local columnist. Josephine was referred to as "strong, kind, friendly, caring and a credit to her friends, family and community."

Another person had posted that she was saddened to pick up Mountain Times and find Jo's Jottings absent. She added, "Sometimes we do not realize the lives we have touched just by living." That is so true!

I noticed that Josephine had attended Mt. St. Joseph Academy in Rutland where I also went to high school. Must be the Sisters of St. Joseph instilled a love of writing in both of us.

Another local person whose words I always looked forward to reading belonged to Jeanne Zingale. Quite often during the course of a year she would write a "Letter to the Editor" of the Rutland Herald. When I looked online I learned that she passed away in 2017. She had been an employee of the Rutland Herald for 31 years. Apparently

Looking back > 33



**Looking
Back**
By Mary Ellen Shaw



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Money matters: 2021 was good for investors. Will 2022 be a successful year? from page 30

have to wait and see if they continue throughout 2022.

With the uptick in inflation, the Fed has had to adjust its projections. In its recent December meeting it forecasted a possible ¾ percent rate increase in 2022. In the coming months, we will see if these possible increases have already been factored in by investors or not. Also,

will inflation diminish soon or will it continue or even uptick? Bond yields have remained historically low in this environment of high inflation, and strong economic growth so we will see if there will be any adjustments to the overall long-term bond market.

We may see a continuation of recent years, or we might see some sort of downturn. Nobody can ever

really predict.

Hopefully you have a financial plan based on your goals, time horizon and risk tolerance. This allows you to grow in up years and be protected in down years. Whatever 2022 brings, know that there is always opportunity.

Kevin Theissen is the owner of HWC Financial in Ludlow.

Mountain journal: Is running a demo ride key to purchasing new skis? from page 30

types of shapes and models, it can feel overwhelming.

Start by thinking about where you ski. How fast do you ski? What kind of turns do you most enjoy? Do you mostly ski groomers? Do you ski intermediate trails or steep pitches? Be honest! Someone who races will likely elect a different ski than one seeking moguls! And someone who prefers intermediate terrain may not seek a racing Firebird.

They vary in grip, fun, and width! From Blizzard to Volkl and from Head to Rossignol there are many choices. Skiing front side? The Volkl Deacon or Blizzard Thunderbird offer great all-mountain fun. Head Supershape? Fischer RC? Test! They vary! On Blizzard two years ago I am enamored with the Firebird collection for hard snow, finding the traditional camber perfect. But

Be aware.

Shop with care.

Take a demo ride.

Look at the magazine ratings. Try to narrow your choices. Then, talk to a shop employee. Explain whether you prefer steeps, moguls, explain if you ski fast or faster, and tell the shop your favorite runs.

Take a test flight.

I typically ski the same run with different models. This helps provide an equal playing field for comparison. If you test more than three skis make a card. Glide? A, B, or C. Edge grip? A, B, or C. Ease in turning? A, B, or C. Fun?! A, B, or C.

Understand, the good news is that there are lots of great skis. But they vary!

while the Firebird Race Ti seems versatile the HRC is, well, more powerful. But I'm eager to test the new Thunderbird!

From the Stockli Stormrider to Nordica Dobermann the options are wide. And width counts! Consider a test ride. Above all else, choose a pair which best meets your needs.

Be aware. Shop with care. Take a demo ride.

Tony Crespi has served as both a ski school supervisor and development team coach. A contributor to publications throughout snow country, his column is published throughout the season.



Submitted

Looking back: Remembering "feel-good" writers who would boost readers' spirits from page 31

her writing skills did not go unnoticed by the owner/publisher of the paper, Robert Mitchell. He called her "The Poet Laureate" of the Herald. To many of the readers she was simply the lady who wrote uplifting letters to the editor. When I read that section of the paper I always looked to see if there was a letter from Jeanne. If I was fortunate enough to find one it got my immediate attention.

Jeanne was also a graduate of Mt. St. Joseph Academy. I see a "recurring

theme" here! It didn't matter if you went to school in the '30s, '40s or '60s, the nuns taught all of us verbal skills that came in handy later in life.

At times we need to replace negative thoughts with positive ones and how we accomplish that is up to each individual.

Katie Couric made a comment on a talk show recently that most of us can probably relate to. She said there is always someone "out there" who

is going through tough times. You don't know who will be touched by something you say.

So never hesitate to pass along in writing or verbally something that can boost a person's spirits. I try to keep my columns light and positive. After all, the nuns who taught Josephine and Jeanne at Mt. St. Joseph

Academy would definitely be happy that yet another MSJ graduate is continuing to write some "feel good" words just like both of them did for years.



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Livin' the dream: There is beauty in these negative temperature days

from page 31

beaming, penetrating sun that combines with the wintry Vermont wind to create the most amazing goggle tans.

Yep, goggle tans. If you want one, then venturing out on a clear blue sky day like this is absolutely the perfect and fastest way to get one. Even slabbed in Dermatone, your skin will lose the battle on a day like

make their way out of their burrows to venture forth into the sunlight. I can see their footprints in the freshly fallen snow and I know that they, too, have chosen the warmth of the sun.

Many years ago, the now defunct American Skiing Company used the phrase "Live in the Outside" as the

company motto of the year. ASC was famous for many failed things, but they did slogans super well, making hashtags before the internet even existed. "A Whole New Animal" was




In many ways, these negative temperature days have the strongest, most dangerous sun. It's a beaming, penetrating sun that combines with the wintry Vermont wind to create the most amazing goggle tans.

today. Instead, you will see most people covered from head to toe, leaving no exposed skin. The colder it is, the faster the frostbite will get you. Once the temps hit 0, it takes 30 minutes to get frostbite. At -15, it takes 15 minutes. It's -3 outside, so I'm thinking I've got just enough time to finish my hot chocolate before having to think about warming up inside.

It's beautiful out here, snuggled in my sleeping bag. I'm warmer than I have been in days and I am just here enjoying the view down the valley. It is glorious, this sunny warm-cold weather. A classic Vermont contradiction. I finish my cocoa and I cannot help but sit a little longer, waiting for the cold to slowly seep into my body. How long can I remain out here, sitting silently while the animals slowly

a dumb idea, an absolutely fantastic pun that was supposed to be exciting but felt more like a punch to the gut. But I absolutely loved "Live in the Outside." To always be outside, to cherish nature just a wee bit every day was exciting, mesmerizing and strengthening all at once.

I felt it could be Vermont's motto, not just the resort's. No matter the time of year, no matter the temperature, you will always see Vermonters out and about, getting done the work that needs to be done or skiing the trails that need to be skied. There is no bad weather, just bad dress. Nothing proves that phrase more than Vermonters do every day. Because, motto or not, we live in the outside. So grab your Dermatone and your thickest down jacket. And I'll see you on the hill!

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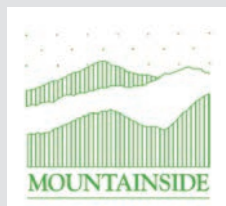


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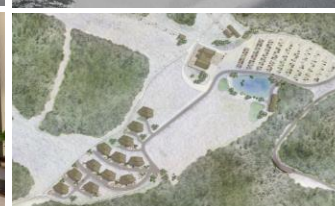


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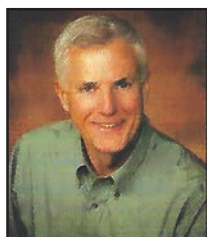
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