

THE North Star MONTHLY

Every Small Town's Newspaper

DANVILLE, VERMONT

GOOD FOR THE WHOLE MONTH

\$1.50

FEBRUARY 2006
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- Follow the \$ with
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**Whatever Happened
to Those Cabbage
Patch Dolls?**



HILLDALE LEAGUE BROUGHT INTERSCHOL- ASTIC EVENTS TO SMALL TOWN SCHOOLS

LOIS FIELD WHITE

They called it the Hilldale League. Mention of those words brings a sparkle to the eyes of middle-age grandparents as they recall their own high school glory days of basketball, baseball, sports banquets, music festivals, one-act plays, public speaking and spelling contests, field days and dances in the small gyms and town halls of northeastern Vermont.

Peacham Academy's year-book for the school year 1947-1948, describes the beginnings of the Hilldale League: "For the 1947-1948 (sports) season, the schools in this area organized the Hilldale League. The boys' team played the same number of games this year although we dropped Cabot and added St. Johnsbury Trade. The St. Johnsbury and Wells River Kiwanis Clubs sponsored a banquet for the schools that played in the Hilldale League. The banquet was at the Grace Methodist Church in St. Johnsbury on April 14. A trophy was presented to (Please See *The Hilldale* on Page 8)

Burnham's Shoe Store Is No Fancy Pedi-Boutique



Photo By: North Star Monthly

Nancy Burnham Ranno sells shoes from the narrow aisles and high stacks of boxes at the Burnham Shoe Store in Wells River. Like her mother and her father before her, she understands shoes, and she likes to see customers find what they want. The shoe industry has changed in the last 60 years, but Burnham's is much as it was when it opened for business in 1945.

TERRY HOFFER

"I swore they'd never get me in here," says Nancy Burnham Ranno. She stands in a narrow aisle pinched between boxes of footwear piled to the ceiling in Burnham's Shoe Store in Wells River. The wood floor is dark and worn. Fluorescent light bulbs hardly qualify as boutique decor. Shoes and boots seem jammed together in hopeless disorder, and you might push open the door to find no one here. But give her a minute and Ranno will emerge with a keen understanding of shoes and customer preference.

This is the kind of place that prompts people to drive long distances or call from afar to reorder their favorite make and style of shoe.

Sixty years ago, in 1945, Ranno's father, Mark Burnham, left his retail clothing business in Woodsville and moved across the Connecticut River to Vermont. In the busy village of Wells River at the intersection of Vermont's Route 5 and US 302 he opened this store and called it Burnham's. He moved his family upstairs over the store.

Ranno tells about her father's start of the business. "At first he took orders from old customers for men's suits, and they were made somewhere else, but the specialty of the store was always shoes."

Ranno says her father worked long and hard, and he weathered the first clouds of the modern era as customers and families turned away from the ritual of Friday night shopping. "It used to be that on Fridays every place in town was open 'til 8 or 9 o'clock because that was when everyone went shopping." After World War II, even in northern

Vermont, there were hints of increasing prosperity, and it was common for people to set out for St. Johnsbury to shop at Hovey's or Caplans or for Sargents in Woodsville.

But Mark Burnham kept his head up and maintained a reputation as a businessman who was fair and could be counted on to stock sensible shoes. He had an X-ray machine that allowed him to view a customer's foot inside the shoe, and the result was the proper fit for even the most unusual feet. Ranno says, "As kids we'd stick our hands in the machine and laugh as we watched our hands outlined in the X-rays. We got rid of the machine in the 50's because they were afraid of the radiation."

Ranno says, "I don't remember my father ever having anything called high heels. One lady came in complaining about how much her feet hurt. My father suggested a pair of wedges, and she tried them on. When she described them as looking like old lady's shoes, my father told her to decide whether she wanted good looks or comfortable feet. He suggested that if she didn't like the appearance of the shoes she shouldn't look at them. Some time later she came back saying they

(Please See *At Burnham's* on Page 6)

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Presumed Stolen

One dark Friday evening in January it appears that a young dog was stolen from a Summer Street yard in St. Johnsbury. The dog, a five month old black Labrador retriever puppy, was with an older dog, and like many late afternoons and evenings before they were tumbling about in the snow beside their owner's home.

According to Wendy Fayen, their owner, the dogs had been outside, when she went to let them in and found Katie, the young Labrador retriever to be missing. Fayen tells of her surprise turning to panic when she realized the dog was gone. She and her family canvassed the area, called the police and animal control officials, spoke to neighbors, contacted the mailman, called the radio station and newspaper and placed posters everywhere they could find space to do so.

As Fayen says, "The dog had simply vanished, and everyone we spoke to was helpful and offered concern." She says the police arrived within minutes of her call, and a few days later the police chief, a Labrador retriever owner himself, called and offered his concern.

Police Chief Richard Leighton acknowledges that there is little in the way of evidence to go on, but he is aware of an industry that involves cash for dogs. Leighton is not clear as to who or where, but he thinks people are paid to find and transport desirable dogs to be resold to unsuspecting buyers in southern New England. And young, typically black, Labrador retrievers are a target.

Jo Guertin serves as part time animal control officer in Danville, Walden and St. Johnsbury, and she is similarly puzzled and concerned. Guertin says, "A year or so ago there were 9 or ten black Labs within a radius of 5 miles of St. Johnsbury that just disappeared. All were less than 18 months old except one that looked younger than it was. In one instance we followed the dog's footprints in the snow to a point where he obviously got into a vehicle. From that point the footprints were gone and so was the dog." The pattern and the routine were never resolved, but it did stop. Guertin's fear is that the recent episode with Katie and Wendy Fayen is an indication that it's starting again.

The fact that there may be a predator harvesting pets in the area is more than just a little frightening. As Fayen says, "Was somebody casing the place and if so what were they watching?" Katie spent virtually every day with Fayen at her business in Danville and returned to St. Johnsbury in the evening. "She was gone all day and outside in the yard for 15 minutes. Then she disappeared. It's the most helpless feeling you can imagine."

Fayen is baffled, and beyond the dismay over the loss of Katie, she wishes that there was more she could do.

Guertin says, "I know that it's tough, but people may have to learn that leaving a dog outside is more of a risk than they ever realized."

Ann Mills is a dedicated volunteer and spokesperson for Caledonia Animal Rescue. Mills lives in Peacham. "It's horrific to think what some people are willing to do. As much as we'd like to make this stop now and forever we have to be more conscious of our pets and be as responsible for them as we would be for our own children."

Fayen says, "I guess if one other person learns a lesson from this and that lesson prevents the loss of a family pet - maybe there is value in it. It's not enough to think a pet is safe in your own yard - even for just a few minutes."

And we, too, wish the path was clearer and there was something more any of us could do. As Chief Liegton says if there was information on the people or the vehicle involved there would be a place to start, but "presumed stolen" is a hard crime to solve. Sadly, we all need to be more thoughtful as to the whereabouts of our property and understand that loose dogs are unlikely to respect the human predators of pets for the misguided monsters they are.

Terry Hoffer

That Was a Wasted Trip!

My search for a simple answer to a straightforward question has once again failed. The question: Why can't prescriptions for chronic medications be refilled early (as in before all tablets in the prescription are used up)? The over-simplified answer - no surprise - is money. In fact, prescriptions can be refilled early; it just depends on what drug and who is paying. Barring exceptions due to changes in health status, the so-called "controlled" drugs, principally narcotics, cannot be refilled before the prior supply of medication, taken as directed, has been used up. Otherwise, cash on the counter will buy a refill of all other drugs at any time. However, if insurance is paying for the medication, it gets more complicated.

Many insurers will pay for early refills. "Early" is sometimes two days, sometimes five, sometimes seven days and, rarely, 10 days before the current medication supply is expected to run out; refills requested any sooner are not covered. Whether the period is two or 10 days depends on insurance plan, with many, including Vermont Medicaid, tending to be less lenient toward early refills. How early a prescription can be refilled often is only discovered when an attempt is made to refill the medication before it runs out. Pharmacists have little leeway in making exceptions to the restrictions imposed by insurers. This is a set up for frustration, as when a thoughtful neighbor volunteers to pick up a refill for their homebound friend, or when trying to refill a medication prior to departing on a trip that will last beyond the current supply of medication, and the refill is denied. (Strictly speaking, what is denied is payment from the insurer.)

The argument that people will inappropriately stockpile medications or divert them to others if given premature refills is legitimate to a point. However, there needs to be more discretion allowed for early refills for at least two reasons. First, transportation constraints are real. Time and gasoline are wasted when medications cannot be refilled during a trip into town - both increasingly dear for the many who live a distance from their pharmacy and prefer to limit their driving during the winter months or depend on others for transportation. Second, rigid policies with short grace periods for early refills are an impediment to medication compliance. Chronic diseases such as diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease typically require daily medication(s) for effective control. When opportunities to get to the pharmacy are limited, as they are for many without independent or reliable transportation, compliance with drug treatment is hampered when medications cannot suitably be refilled, even if this is a week before the current supply is depleted. Medications may run out before the next trip to the pharmacy is arranged.

Until common sense regains lost ground, a practical response to the current restrictions on early refills is to plan ahead and call one's pharmacy to find out if and when a prescription can be refilled early.

Tim Tanner

Letters to the Editor:

Guest Chefs at the Meal Site

Dear North Star,
Thank you so much for your

generous donation of a wonderful "chef's meal" at the Danville Senior Meal Site. [See page 22]. I know that those of us who were

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Write to Us



LETTERS: Write to *The North Star*, and let us know what's on your mind. Your point of view or observation is important to us. Letters must be signed.

ARTICLES: We don't have a big staff of writers. So we look forward to you sending your writing. If you have questions or ideas and want to ask us first, please call. We'll send our guidelines. No fiction, please.

PHOTOS: We'd like to see your photos and welcome them with a story or without. They can be black-and-white or color, but they must be clear.

PRESS RELEASES: We prefer press releases that are unique to *The North Star*.

DEADLINE: 15th of the month prior to publication.

All materials will be considered on a space available basis.

there to enjoy it went away with very satisfied tummys and palates. It was a big hit, and we at the Area Agency on Aging appreciate your support.

Jenny Patoine
St. Johnsbury

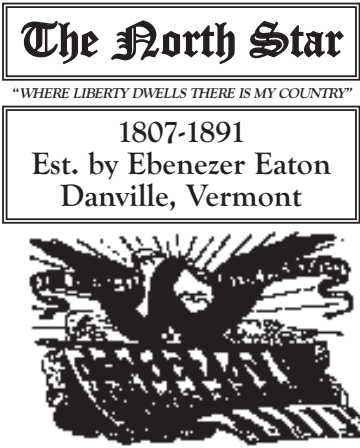
donation of time and financial support for the Danville Senior Meal Site. It was a special day for us all, and you made a lot of people very happy.

Karen Moran
Manager
Danville Senior Meal Site

Dear North Star,
Thank you for your generous

(Please see **Letters** on Page 4)

Senate Debates Abolishing Electoral College Greensboro Train Wreck Requires Relief from St. Johnsbury



THE NORTH STAR

February 5, 1875

Mode of Electing President - The proposed amendment to the Constitution of the United States, changing the manner of electing the President and Vice President and abolishing the electoral college has been under discussion in the Senate. Senators Morton, Thurman, Conkling and Anthony favor a change from the present system under which, it is conceded by all, the country runs some serious risks. The bill under consideration provides that the several states will be divided into electoral districts equal to the number of its Representatives in Congress; the candidate having the highest vote in any district will have the electoral vote of that district; and the highest candidate in any state will have two electoral votes for that state.

Many who desire a change wish to have a district vote of the people of the whole country, under which, without regard to

districts or states, the persons having the largest number of votes for each of those offices will be elected President and Vice President. No vote was taken in the Senate, and doubt was expressed whether any amendment can be adopted in season to take effect at the next presidential election.

Convention of Grangers - There was a convention of Grangers at Brattleboro a few days ago, and notwithstanding the inclement weather, 500 were in attendance. Deputy D.E. Boydon who presided, reported 170 granges in the state, averaging about 75 to each organization. He claimed there are 2,000,000 grangers in the country.

Mr. Robert Meader, our mail carrier to and from the station, has fitted up a new and commodious railroad sleigh. It is nicely painted, has good seats for passengers, plenty of room for baggage and is just what is wanted for the business.

The Fairbanks Scale Company is executing a large order for scales just received direct from Russia. The scales are made to weigh in poods, each pood being about 40 Russian pounds, which is equal to 36 pounds avoirdupois.

February 12, 1875

The selectmen of Rutland have offered a reward for the discovery of the parties who furnished whiskey to MaCauley, the man found frozen to death between Rutland and Sutherland Falls on January 16. By his death his wife and five children become the wards of the town, and by our

laws the parties selling him the liquor at the time, if known, must bear the burden of their support.

Now is the time to buy your thermometers for they never will be much lower. Last Sunday morning the thermometer in this village marked 24 degrees below zero, the coldest it has been this winter.

The Old Pavilion - The Montpelier papers of last week all have lengthy articles on an old landmark of that village, namely the Pavilion Hotel, which is soon to be closed and torn down, to make room for a new and spacious hotel. Last week Wednesday evening there was a grand and final public levee at the house, which was largely attended by not only village residents but by people from out of town. The old hotel opened in 1808, when the Vermont Legislature first assembled in the first State House.

Mrs. Jones, wife of Reverend H.T. Jones, Methodist pastor in Hardwick, was severely injured on February 3 by falling on the ice near the entrance of Mrs. Belding's residence. In falling her head struck with much force on the door steps, rendering her insensible for a time. She is now improving with good prospects of recovery.

February 19, 1875

Some months ago on the eve of Dr. Ayer's departure for Europe, a considerable stir was made in Lowell, Mass by the announcement that nearly \$1,000 worth of Mrs. Ayer's jewelry, left at a trunk at the medicine factory on

Middle Street had been stolen. All the employees were put under surveillance and their premises searched. Recently the whole of the missing trinkets were found in the basement of the building, where they had been placed for greater security, which had been forgotten.

The New England iron men have resolved that a further reduction in wages is necessary to enable eastern manufacturers to compete successfully with those of the West.

The snow is seven feet deep in the streets of Lewiston, Maine.

An extraordinary drought prevails across the Hudson River Valley, with farmers having great difficulty in procuring water enough for their stock.

ADV. Buffalo robes. Good ones cheap for cash. H.K. Haviland, Danville.

February 26, 1875

Windmills in Holland - The continual winds blowing from the Atlantic furnish the power gratuitously to whirl the vanes and turn the water wheel attached to the windmill. There has been little improvement made on this machine in Holland for 1,600 years. No other power is so cheap, so simple or reliable. Without its application two thirds of Holland and one third of Belgium, would even now, in the noonday of steam power of necessity have to be yielded back to the ocean because the cost of steam machinery, fuel, repairs and attendance could not be supported from the profits of

the land.

Winooski claims to be the banner manufacturing village in the state. Its woolen mill employs over 500 operatives. In all nearly 900 people find employment throughout the year and receive collectively \$1,000,000.

Albert Aseltene of Alburgh, age twenty-six years, who has been crazy for several years was found dead in his room at his father's house about twelve o'clock last Wednesday night. He has had to be chained in his room for several years.

A Wrecked Train - Last Monday afternoon a snow plow and two engines were sent over the P&O railroad to clear the track of snow which had drifted into the cuts and obstructed passing trains. The train proceeded to Greensboro without incident but just before crossing a trestle one engine was thrown from the rails, broke through the ties and found a resting place astride the heavy timber of which the trestle was constructed. The machine ran on the timbers for a distance before being finally stopped after considerable damage to the woodwork. The height of the trestle was about forty feet. As soon as the news could be dispatched to St. Johnsbury a relief train started for the accident and the work promised to be difficult and dangerous. Later: The obstructions were all removed Wednesday night, the trestle repaired, and Thursday morning trains commenced running regularly.

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Letters to the Editor:

(Continued from Page 2)

Year Round Recreation

Dear North Star,

I've been mulling over a phrase in your (January 2006) editorial on the Lamoille Valley Recreation Trail: "I believe snow machines have the first right of winter trail use" and have been trying to get my head around a particular aspect of this.

Here's what's bothering me: VAST (along with the Vermont Bicycle & Pedestrian Coalition and other organizations) has done a fantastic job in getting this corridor converted to recreational use, and as I understand it is the actual leaseholder of the right-of-way. For a trail that its members can only use during a quarter of the year, that's quite a bit of effort considering the benefit to folk outside that organization's membership. If the funds to support this project were from VAST dues and private funds I would simply be writing to say how generous this project is and I'd immediately purchase a VAST membership to support the organization even though I do not own a snow machine.

However, this is not the case. Securing \$5.8 million in public money ("pork" seems kind of harsh) does seem to drop this project into another category entirely, namely one where the broad use should be considered and special interests be subordinated to the public weal, if at all possible. Would I be writing this letter if public money were to be used for a skateboard park or tennis courts, two activities in which I do not engage? No, and therein lies the basis for my dilemma: the trail is not a special-purpose facility in the way that a skateboard park is. It is generic in design (merely a 12ft wide path), with public access

along its length. It requires no particular skill, gear or commitment and to a large degree functions much like a public park. The only reason to devote the trail's mid-winter use to snow machines is because of a suggested incompatibility of snow machines and foot/ski travelers. I believe that incompatibility is fictitious. I've traveled many miles along those tracks (when there were still tracks) on my cross-country skis and have found VAST members to be safe and courteous drivers. I always listen for distant engine noise, am careful to yield, and in general travel in the softer snow on the shoulders (so to speak). Waves and nods are the rule and the only part of this experience that in any way suggests incompatibility is that I have to accept the noise and clouds of partially burned fuel as the riders pass, but that same issue exists when I ride my bicycle on public roads.

The state DMV publishes rules of the road and emphasizes the need for mutual coexistence and awareness of pedestrians, bicyclists, motorcyclists, automobiles and commercial vehicles, and except for new drivers, drunks, lunatics and the incompetent, this does not pose an impediment to safe use of public roads. Instead of seeing this trail become a 3-season multi-use/1-season VAST use public space, as long as my tax dollars are paying for it I'd like to see the promotion of trail's safe multi-use all year 'round with emphasis on visibility, safe speeds, awareness, courtesy and the mutual enjoyment of a terrific public access trail spanning the breadth of our beautiful state.

Daniel Zucker
Danville

Follow the \$

Dear North Star,

One reason *The North Star Monthly* is a damn good newspaper is because it has writers like Rachel Siegal. As a long time reader in the

Presidential and Citizen Accountability

Two of the most serious complaints we citizens have about the Bush administration are its secretiveness and deviousness. As time goes on, President Bush is accused more and more of trying to be an imperial president – one who answers to no one and flaunts the law.

Remember when a Congressional committee wanted to know the names of people meeting with Vice President Cheney to develop an energy policy? Not only would Cheney not respond to a subpoena for the information, but he defended his position in court, claiming executive privilege as a defense. Alas, the Supreme Court upheld his position. It is lamentable that executive departments won't be more open and transparent in their operations.

In Great Britain, when the House of Commons is in session, President Bush's good friend Prime Minister Tony Blair responds in public at Wednesday afternoon sessions to the sometimes withering questions of members of the opposition. Of course, he and his ministers divulge only the minimum information they think will satisfy the questioner.

In the United States, at the gubernatorial and local levels, we see countless examples of how the processes of government should be carried on with respect to secrecy and openness. Like his predecessors, Governor Douglas holds regular press conferences to which the public is invited. I know of no complaints about the governor's secrecy. At local meetings of trustees and selectmen, the press and citizens are welcome to ask questions. It is at the national level, however, that openness in government is most essential. It is there that crucial decisions affecting the national welfare are made. Before the president makes decisions on vital matters such as war and peace, the executive department must divulge enough information to justify its policies. Too often we depend on investigative reporters and whistle blowers to provide details about critical issues. The least the president should do is to schedule regular press conferences with no questions barred.

President Theodore Roosevelt, an outstanding president who served for two terms at the turn of the 20th century, gave solid advice that the president and the people should take to heart. My son, Peter, recently sent me the following paragraph, a quotation from an essay/editorial written by Roosevelt and published in the *Kansas City Star* on May 7, 1918. Here it is in full: "The President is merely the most important among a large number of public servants. He should be supported or opposed exactly to the degree which is warranted by his good conduct or bad conduct, his efficiency or inefficiency in rendering loyal, able and disinterested service to the Nation as a whole. Therefore it is absolutely necessary that there should be full liberty to tell the truth about his acts, and this means that it is exactly as necessary to blame him when he does wrong as to praise him when he does right. Any other attitude in an American citizen is both base and servile. To announce that there must be no criticism of the President, or that we are to stand by the President, right or wrong, is not only unpatriotic and servile, but is morally treasonable to the American public. Nothing but the truth should be spoken about him or anyone else. But it is even more important to tell the truth, pleasant or unpleasant, about him than about any one else."

I asked my friend Richard Boera of Lyndonville, a long-time student of Roosevelt and his administration, to comment on Roosevelt's presidency in order to learn what relevancy the quotation might have to the antics of the Bush administration and the citizenry. Boera replied, "Certainly not 'imperial.' T.R. was forceful, decisive, a bit self-righteous as well as self-confident (not unusual since he was usually right), a man of the people (Lincoln was his hero), a compromiser to get the job done (but not at the risk of principle) and an optimist. He may have been the only president who enjoyed the office...since he considered it the ultimate 'bully pulpit' to preach the Square Deal. He believed in a strong federal government (to do good) and a strong military (to prevent war). He was a much more 'benevolent dictator' than his distant cousin Franklin."

With Theodore Roosevelt's words and brief biography in mind, my wish is that President Bush would try to emulate this great president. And at the same time, it is clear that Roosevelt's message to us as constructive citizens is to keep the feet of all public servants to the fire, so to speak. To do less is shirking our duty.

John Downs

discipline of economics I wish to make some timid remarks.

Her January, 2006, article named "The Chairman" mechanically describes the operation and alleged purpose of our Federal Reserve Bank, and it is a good

description. I dub it as a practically perfect "cookie cutter" presentation.

Controlling the nation's money supply is a serious matter; and we must give credit to the Federal Reserve Board for their courage to

serve in the face of the fact that we really do not know a lot about the money supply. In the long run they intelligently fiddle with the money and do a lot of guesstimating. Money is a commodity, and they try to fix the price of it. Elsewhere,

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A Fine Line Between Using and Abusing Relationships

We can all remember days of our youth when we felt comfortable talking with certain adults, asking for advice, sharing hopes and ambitions. I don't mean professionals: teachers, ministers, coaches, counselors, lawyers and doctors, but other kids' parents, older relatives or family friends. These were the people with whom we were comfortable discussing those questions that we didn't want to ask our parents about, such as sex, birth control, careers, college or travel. They may have had the same information to give, but there were always subtle questions lurking in the background. At that age the freedom to exchange ideas often increases with the degree of separation of the related persons involved. We probably acted, in our turn, as confidants for other generations of young people, answering their questions with as much candor as possible.

In December 2005, I read an article in *USA Today* that made me think about these relationships between young adults and older friends and relatives. The article was about the latest attempt by the National Guard to meet its lagging recruitment requirements. A new program, known as the Guard Recruiter Assistant Program, is in effect in 22 states and will be nationwide by the end of the year. Recruiter Assistants (RA's) will be drawn from Guard members in good standing. They will be given an on-line training program that will include ethics and marketing. Names of potential recruits found by RA's will be entered into a database and professional recruiters will then take over. The Guard will pay an RA \$1,000 for enlisting a potential recruit and an additional \$1,000 when the recruit shows up for basic training.

RA's will be closely involved with their recruits, acting as mentors and sponsors to help the new soldiers succeed. This seems to be an ideal set-up for all concerned, but I think there are two potential problems with this program. As previously noted, many young people are more inclined to take advice and suggestions from adults other than their parents, and the United States is engaged in a bloody war in Iraq, and a dangerously uncertain situation in Afghanistan. I think these two factors place an RA in a difficult position.

I wonder whether potential RA's will consider the emotional repercussions if a neighbor's son or daughter becomes a soldier through their support and encouragement, is then sent to active duty and is maimed or killed. What a burden to live with. The \$2,000 might seem to be "blood money" if that scenario happens. It is the financial aspect of the program that troubles me most. Also, parents are well aware of the dangers of current military service. Declining enrollment in most branches of the military, despite huge sign-on bonuses, is testament to that concern. I am concerned about how this program could disrupt relationships between, and even within, families, if a family friend or relative, acting as an RA, encourages a young person to enlist against parental wishes. It is difficult to believe that an on-line program alone can adequately address ethical considerations of these issues.

Official recruiting is a job that is usually less intimately involved with family or community relationships. Good recruiters attempt to build some type of rapport with families of recruits, but this cannot be equivalent to the relationships formed by long acquaintance, shared child rearing or neighborhood and family ties that go back over the years. It is expensive for the Guard to maintain enough official recruiters to enroll adequate numbers of new soldiers, but it seems unfair for the military to exploit family and community ties to further its goals, and not to consider the potentially disrupting impact of their use of RA's on society.

So here are three important issues to address. First, parents need to be involved right from the start of any recruiting process. Parents, potential recruits and RA's need to talk about beliefs and goals related to enlistment and service. Parents who are unable, or do not choose, to be involved should sign-off on the process, clarifying the RA's position. Second, the "Finder's Fee" aspect of the program should be changed. I think it would be more ethical to pay documented expenses related to the mentoring aspect of the program and provide other incentives in the form of extra paid leave or increase in rank for the RA's who successfully recruit. A third issue concerns the recruiting of family members. If this situation is indeed allowed, I believe a second RA should be included as part of the team, to help share the emotional burden in case of an unexpected negative outcome of deployment.

This program seems to have some positive features for both new recruits and the Guard, but only if the ethical training of the Guard Recruiter Assistants is given major prominence and marketing a minor role. It will be interesting to see the results of the pilot programs.

Isobel P. Swartz

Letters to the Editor:

most classical economists tell us

(See *Letters on Next Page*)

(Continued from Page 4)

that price fixing is a no-no. I have never heard, read or thought good reasons for that anomaly.

Alan Greenspan, probably the best obfuscator to ever chair the Board, is leaving after 18 years of service. He was a genius fully in tune with the times. The economics editor of a well-read publication recently stated that the prime quality needed in a Federal Reserve Chairman is his "ability to obfuscate." The new one was clearly selected to meet that requirement and I hope he will. Meanwhile perhaps some new research and thinking will come along which will enable us to better understand the supply of money; but we shouldn't hold our breath.

Kenneth E. Parr
East Burke, VT

Miss Vermont USA

Dear North Star,

Living in the small town of Danville can sometimes offer little excitement for a retired volunteer like myself. But on Saturday I got a real thrill when I stumbled across a picture in *The Caledonian Record* of Danville's own Miss Vermont getting a new car. I've known Amanda since she was little and even tutored her for over six years. In fact I think it's safe to say I'm her adopted grandmother.

When I think of Amanda my eyes tear up with pride just thinking of all she's done not only for me but for so many others in the community. You couldn't ask for a more dedicated, goal oriented or helpful young woman. The time and effort that she put into her preparations for the Miss Vermont USA competition are astounding; she really earned her title. We are so fortunate to have such a kind young woman to represent our state.

I wanted to thank St. Johnsbury Automobile Company (St. J Auto) for providing her with a safe, reliable and sharp looking car for her to drive to and from her various appearances throughout the state. I also want to thank all of the many other businesses throughout Vermont who have offered her support through sponsorships and the many towns who have invited her to participate in their various festivities and celebrations.

It saddens me that her home town (Danville) seems to have offered her less support and encouragement than those several hours away. Only three Danville businesses sponsored her in her pursuit to become Miss Vermont USA, and even now there seems to be a lack of pride that one would assume would come naturally.

Amanda is Danville's own natural resource, and it is my hope that sometime soon we will wake up and see that. We should be assisting and encouraging her in the same way that St. Johnsbury and so many other places are.

Carmen M. Calkins
Danville

Danville Town Plan

Dear North Star,

On behalf of the members of the Danville Planning Commission, we would like to thank you for your kind words [about small town planning] in your January 2006 editorial. As you are aware, it becomes a challenge to undertake a fairly large task on a volunteer basis where motivating and including public involvement is required. Our staying power was challenged more than once!

We are looking forward to the next segment of our task which will focus on revising and updating the zoning bylaws and we will find out very quickly if the residents of Danville are truly committed to preserving the rural character of our Town. Thanks again.

Jeff Framp ★
Danville



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At Burnham's Shoe Store in Wells River They Try To Remember Your Last Order

(Continued from Page 1)

were the most comfortable shoes she'd ever worn."

Wells River was bustling at the time. In addition to Burnham's there were three grocery stores, a hardware store, a five and ten, the Happy Hour Restaurant and the hotel, Hales Tavern. The railroad station was busy, and, Ranno says, there was always traffic on Route 5 and 302.

Shoes and boots seem crammed together in hopeless disorder, and you might push open the door to find no one here.

In 1963 Mark Burnham died, but his wife (Ranno's mother), Marion, took over. She, too, was respected and reliable, and she, too, could fit and adjust leather shoes. The Shoe Store continued on as a landmark in town.

In 1969 the Vermont Legislature voted to join 45 other states and the District of Columbia and enacted a state-

wide sales and use tax. Ranno says the result was a deep chill over businesses along the river separating Vermont from tax-free New Hampshire. "The tax was a terrible thing - for towns like this bordering a town in New Hampshire." In retrospect the impact of the sales tax on businesses in Wells River was much greater, she says, than anything associated with the Interstate highway or customer mobility.

Business at Burnham's dropped. Marion pushed on.

Ranno says, "I was working up the street at the grocery store, and my mother fell down the stairs. As she recovered in the Hanover hospital I waited on her customers after work. They were all very understanding, and they would offer things like 'Oh your mother always looked over there for these shoes ... ' or 'I know she could have ordered them ...'" Ranno would tend to the customers and then head for Hanover with questions for her recovering mother. "Where do you order these shoes?" or "What do you do when they want this?" she'd ask.

In 1985, after a broken hip, several strokes and working through all manner of medical advice to stop, Marion Burnham died. She was 86. The future of

the store was up in the air again.

"People told me I couldn't close," Ranno says, "but my reaction was - watch me. I never liked shoes, and I don't care much for feet, but I was brought up to do the right thing - and I guess this it." In August 1985 Burnham's Shoe Store went into the hands of Mark and Marion Burnham's daughter, Nancy Ranno.

Today the shoe industry is far from what Mark Burnham might recognize. "You can't plan on things the way you did," Ranno says. "Back to school shopping, for instance, isn't the same. When I was young everyone had new shoes for school at the end of the summer. Today everyone wears sneakers, and few if any are made in this country. The workmanship is poor, and when shoes show signs of wear you throw them out and buy new ones. The days of genuine leather and getting shoes repaired by a cobbler are gone." She speaks of Dusty Rhodes in Newbury and Roy Machia in Littleton, both old-school cobblers. "They fix zippers and backpacks today because people just don't get leather shoes anymore."

As for Burnham's, she says, "There are decent shoes, but it's hard to sell them at a couple of



Photo By: North Star Monthly

Burnham's Shoe Store opened in 1945.

hundred dollars a pair." Today, she says, her bread and butter is Birkenstocks, Merrell, Redwing and Wolverine. And she says, "I still sell leather baby shoes,

because it breaks my heart to see a baby wearing plastic sneakers.

"Basically I try to accommodate the working people," Ranno says. She often hears from customers who found this little store in Wells River and moved away. One recent order

(See *There Are* on Next Page)

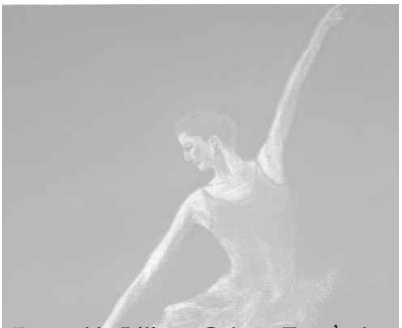


Photos Courtesy of Purdue University

In the 1940's and 1950's a device like this x-ray machine, known as a fluoroscope or pedoscope, was often used as a means to find a better fit for shoe customers. The salesman could adjust the strength of the radiation depending on the size of the foot. There were high settings for men, medium for women and low for children. The customer stood with feet in the lower opening, and looking through the viewing ports the salesman and customer could see an image of the bones of the feet and an outline of the shoe.

Nancy Burnham Ranno remembers one in her father's store in Wells River, but in 1957 the device was banned in Pennsylvania, and by 1960, with considerable unrest in the insurance industry, the machines were all but gone in the United States. Ranno remembers theirs being taken away by the "junk man" and in the 1980's getting a call from the Smithsonian Institution as its conservationists were searching for one for their collection at the National Museum of American History in Washington, DC.

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Up on the Farm Early

Lorna Quimby



I have been rereading one of Mother's cookbooks. The title is *New Delineator Recipes*. Published in Chicago in 1929 by the Butterick Publishing Company, the slender 222-pages volume is five by eight inches. It has a shiny beige cover, decorated with green Art Deco pattern and title. On the inside of the cover, in Gar's clear penmanship, "Merry Christmas to Mrs Helen May Miles Field. From Her Mother December 25, 1931."

The frontispiece shows an elegant place setting: soup bowl, soup plate, dinner plate, butter plate with a ball of butter and butter knife, napkin, with two forks to the left of the plates, two knives and soup spoon on the right, porcelain candlesticks with candles, fruit bowl and flower arrangement. Beneath is the caption, "The social life of a household centers about its dining-table and every accessory that builds the table-picture furthers the art of gracious living. This illustration shows one cover cor-

rectly set, in the dining-room of the Delineator Home Institute."

In another illustration, soup is served in a bouillon cup with bouillon spoon. What a lovely set of dishes! And they all match! Maw's dishes, as I faintly remember, were a mixed lot, the chipped and scarred veterans of many years of her daughters' reluctantly setting the table, fighting over who was supposed to wash the dishes and then banging them down on the cupboard shelves. I don't know whether the ironstone soup bowls I remember were ours or those the school borrowed for its oyster suppers. The bowls were white and thick and would hold about three of the dainty bouillon cup servings. Maw's sauce dishes were a different pattern from the regular plates. We didn't have much truck with salad or bread plates for place settings.

Our "silverware" didn't measure up, either. The forks were of several patterns and most had the plating worn off the heel. Knives were blunt, with the silver

worn off the edge. They were excellent for spreading butter but try using them to cut tough beef! And we had one size knife, one size fork for everything. I don't remember soup spoons, either. Maybe those small dessert spoons were the reason soup filled me with gas.

The cookbook menus for luncheon or supper read like a fairy tale. I can imagine Dad's comments if Maw had served him creamed salmon on toast, graham bread and butter, with sliced oranges with coconut for dessert. He wanted food that stuck to his ribs. Creamed salmon would have been all right - on baked potatoes or corn bread -but needed to be followed by pie or cake and cookies to fill in the blank spots. Cold meat, tomato and celery salad, bread and butter followed by gingerbread and whipped cream might have passed muster. I enjoyed one menu because of the substitutions some one had written beside it in pencil. The original was Cheese Soufflé, mashed potatoes, buttered string beans, radish and cucumber salad with strawberry shortcake. With the penciled changes, it now reads: Salmon loaf, mashed potatoes, creamed peas, tomato and cucumber salad, bread and butter, coffee or tea and

canned fruit mixed.

You can raise your cholesterol level just by reading the recipes, which call for fat, butter, "fat salt pork" and shortening. Most of the frying suggestions are for deep-frying. Maw only used deep fat for doughnuts - she never "egged or crummed (sic)" anything. She never had to worry about chilling frozen desserts in the ice box either.

I think I found Mimi's recipe for Brownies - the ones Deedee and I used for chewing tobacco. Beside the amounts, written in pencil, are the quantities for half of recipe.

(1) 2 squares chocolate
(1/4) 1/2 teaspoon salt
() 1/4 cup fat
(1/4) 1/2 cup flour
(1/2) 1 cup white sugar
(1/4) 1/2 cup nuts
1 egg

Mimi's problem was the flour. Maw bought bread flour and pastry flour in 25-pound bags. Mimi assumed cookies would take pastry flour. After all, Maw had such good luck with her cakes made with that flour. Mimi should have used the bread flour. And the oven on the wood-burning stove was decidedly cranky. If Maw had just cleaned out the all the cinders and soot that hindered the circulation of the hot air from the fire box, it was easy to have the oven too hot. When the oven surrounds needed cleaning, whatever was baking was half done and fell when you took it out. Cakes baked unevenly and you had to turn the cookie sheet so one side could finish cooking (while the first side was overdone). Between the oven and the flour, Mimi's brownies were a

When aunts and uncles or cousins from near and far sat down at her table, they had to put up or shut up.

Typical of the 30's are the "Dishes that are especially good for table cookery:" Crab Rabbit, English Monkey (Welsh Rarebit), Grilled Sardines (in a chafing dish) and Lobster a la Newburg. They remind me of the "jolly good times" the heroine and her friends had in the mysteries I read in my youth. There's a warning about using electric cookers plus a percolator on the same circuit, so you won't melt a fuse. Now that's a problem Maw didn't have to worry about in 1931. It wouldn't be until 1946 that she had electricity. Even then she had neither cooker nor electric percolator.

Why, during the Great Depression, did my grandmother think this cookbook would be useful to a farm woman, who cooked for six people three times a day? Maw did not entertain visitors with elegant teas and sandwiches. When aunts and uncles or cousins from near and far sat down at her table, they had to put up or shut up. Perhaps Gar meant to say to her daughter, "Cheer up, Helen. There's more to life than all those meals?" ★

"There are decent shoes, but it's hard to sell them at a couple of hundred dollars a pair." - Nancy Burnham Ranno

(Continued from Page 6)

arrived from a traveling, or per diem, nurse who worked for a time at the Cottage Hospital in Woodsville. The nurse remembered the store, the selection and (not incidentally) the prices. Ranno holds up a handwritten order sheet with sizes, styles and colors for 32 pairs of Birkenstock sandals. In a few days those shoes will be headed to the traveling nurse and her friends in Michigan.

"I like to think I give good service. I know the routine, and I know when people want to be waited on. Some people just want to climb up a ladder and open all the boxes. That's okay. They might find something I never would have thought about. If I can be fair and satisfy a customer then it all works out just fine."

Ranno will be 65 in February. For one of the first times she laughs as she says, "I'll probably be like my mother. I'll be here 'til I drop." Until then she'll keep going to the annual shoe show in March and wondering at the new styles. "I buy what I think I can sell, but I'm sure I'll never out-guess the public or understand the designers when it comes to new styles. I like to think I'm tra-

ditional and practical."

If you want high fashion or shoes made by companies that spend more money on marketing and superstar endorsement than on materials - keep looking. Otherwise, step into Burnham's Shoe Store on Main Street in Wells River. If Nancy Ranno isn't there she'll be along shortly.

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The Hilldale League Brought Prime Time to the Small Towns of the Northeast Kingdom

(Continued from Page 1)

McIndoes Academy for winning the most games. Those who attended the banquet from Peacham were: Lynwood McLam, Ray McBride, Kenneth Bean, Howard Churchill, Evelyn Farrow, Laura Berwick, Marlene Farrow, Lee Hagen and Principal Mr. Houle." The girls also played a few basketball games.

Boys ran track during that school year, and in the spring the Hilldale baseball teams were divided into sections, the four southern teams playing each other in one section and the teams "up this way" played in the other.

The Hilldale League included Concord High School, Danville High School, Groton High

School, McIndoes Academy, Newbury High School, Peacham Academy, Wells River High School and the St. Johnsbury Trade School. Cabot joined later, and Mt. St. Joseph School of St. Johnsbury participated in some contests. These small secondary schools were the focus of community life and were well supported by townspeople.

In the fall of 1948 Lewis Streeter, principal of the St. Johnsbury Trade School, and Sumner Dole, principal of Peacham Academy met with the other principals of the Hilldale League schools and agreed to broaden the activities of the League to promote educational and social lives of their students. They added music festivals, a

one-act play, speaking and spelling contests, field days and dances. The principals took turns serving as League president. There may have been other officers.

The League was famous for its boys' basketball teams. Basketball was so popular that the small gyms could not hold all the spectators. The foul-line circles in the Newbury gym touched each other at the center line; the gym took up most of the floor, and a balcony hung over the court. Balconies in some gyms had access by means of folding stairs, which were raised and lowered by a pulley, so the spectators were stuck there until half-time and the end of a game.

The Groton teams played in an old creamery or barn until the town agreed to a community building and town hall. Danville teams played in a gym beneath the town hall and upstairs in the main hall. Concord played in the assembly room upstairs at the school. Wells River teams played at the village hall just off the main street, and the team from McIndoes played at the Monroe Town Hall, the best gym in the area except for that of the Trade School in St. Johnsbury.

Girls' teams had six players, three guards and three forwards on each half of the court. Some teams traveled to away games in farm trucks or private cars, and kids carried their uniforms and sneakers in paper bags. Hilldale League teams played each other and teams from as far as Island Pond. Each basketball season began with a "round robin" tour-



Program Courtesy Perley Wright Collection

ament with all teams playing half-games at two different locations. Generally the girls' teams played first, followed by boys' games. Most schools had cheerleaders.

The local schools had such accomplished boys' teams by the early 1950's that some went to the Barre Auditorium for the State championships. The Concord boys went to the "Aud" for several of those years. Some players had never eaten in restaurants and were clearly puzzled by menus. Coach Bill Miller took

his Peacham Brown Bears to Barre in 1954 to play Proctor in a preliminary game. Proctor beat the Brown Bears, but what a thrill it was for those Peacham boys to go to the city and stay overnight in a hotel.

The Peacham boys became Hilldale League champions and went to the Aud again in 1957 after defeating St. Mary's School of St. Albans. The team advanced to play Stowe and led during the first half of the game, but Stowe came from behind and won 47-39. In 1958 Peacham played St. Michael's School of Montpelier in the semi-finals. Steve White scored 31 points in that game, tying the record for highest individual score in a game at the Aud to that time.

Groton won the state championship for Class "S" schools in 1962, and Danville won in 1964, 1965 and 1966. Girls' teams did not play at the Aud until 1972, following passage of the federal title IX, which gave girls' athletic programs equality with boys' sports.

Grade school kids wanted to play basketball, too, and schools organized teams, mostly for boys. As a result, when boys reached high school they knew the rules of the game and understood how to play, unlike earlier years when new freshmen, some of whom had never seen a game, were pushed onto the floor and told to play. Boys' teams continued to be favored over the girls until the early 1970's.

League schools were very busy with other activities as well.

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Perley Wright, a student and athlete at Concord in the early 1950's and later a teacher and coach in the area, saved some of the programs for these events. The League sponsored one-act play contests at the Danville Town Hall in 1952 and again in 1957. Danville, St. Johnsbury Trade School and Concord participated. Wells River hosted public speaking and spelling contests at the village hall in November of 1953. The Wells River school orchestra played to open the program and again between the contests. Mt. St. Joseph participated that year; eighteen students took part.

played in the dark for a sing-along for an hour until lighting was restored.

Sallyann (Robinson) Chamberlin remembers competing in League speaking contests. She won as a freshman in Danville, reciting "A Bird's Christmas Carol." She was nervous, she says, but she won the first prize, which was probably \$5. She was ineligible to win again even though she competed every year and received high praise. Some recall they were reduced to tears by her portrayals.

McIndoes hosted the public speaking and spelling contests at the Monroe Town Hall in 1967. Cabot students were included by then. St. Johnsbury Trade School hosted the 18th annual Hilldale League Music Festival Spring Concert at the auditorium in 1967. Glee clubs from Concord, Danville, Groton, McIndoes, Newbury, Peacham, Trade School and Wells River sang. The Festival Chorus, with all the glee clubs, performed seven songs for the finale.

The League also sponsored dances at town halls and gyms where kids from one community met those from other schools. The dances were great fun, and more than a few marriages resulted from friendships that began at those gatherings.

School principals and teachers coached sports teams, actors, speakers and singers in addition to their primary classroom

(Concluded on Page 11)



Peacham Academy Yearbook Photos Courtesy of Lois (Field) White
 In 1957 the Peacham Academy basketball team swept the Hilldale League with a 12-0 league record. Peacham lost once during the regular season to Hyde Park and again to Stowe in the class C state tournament at the "Aud" in Barre. Steve White led scoring for the year with 266 points, followed by John Davidson with 223 and Jim Wilson with 101.

A year later Peacham lost to St. Michael's School of Montpelier in the state championship semi-finals. In that game White scored 31 points, tying the existing record for the highest individual score in a game at the Aud. In the state championship final game St. Michael's defeated Stowe.

Above: 1957 Peacham Brown Bears (L-R) Front: Skeele Livingston, Frank White, Donald Achilles, Bert Davis, Steve White, John Davidson, Jim Wilson, Russell Kinerson and David Randall. Rear: David Roy, Kenneth Shields, Wayne Berry, Bryant Griffin, Manager Dean Parker, Coach Wonkka, Kenneth Moore and James Achilles.

Right: In 1957 Peacham Academy junior Steve White goes up for a pair.



Balconies in some gyms had access by means of folding stairs, which were raised and lowered by a pulley, so the spectators were stuck there until half-time and the end of a game.

Peacham hosted the second annual Hilldale League Music Festival in 1951. Three hundred people filled the Congregational Church to hear 230 students sing under the direction of Robert Yingling from Connecticut and the orchestra, directed by Principal Floyd Rising of Groton. Girls wore evening gowns, and it was a festive occasion. Many remember the thrill of participating in the League music festivals. Winona (Peck) Gadapee recalls playing piano for one of the festivals in Danville. The lights went out during the performance, and she

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Gerd Hirschmann

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and champagne is in the picture. The world of wine is full of bubbles. They occur in the fermentation process but usually before the wine gets into the bottle. Only in sparkling wine is this process encouraged to happen while in the bottle. It's called secondary fermentation. The process ruins most other wines, but in sparkling wine it's what

we want, and the more the better. The bubbles are actually carbon dioxide, kind of the same stuff that's in carbonated drinks, but here it happens naturally. The liquid has a higher concentration of CO2 than the air, so when we release it from the bottle that kept it isolated, it joyfully dances in the glass, rising to the top and its final destination.

While we call just about anything that bubbles Champagne, the correct term is really "Sparkling Wine." Champagne is a region northeast of Paris and only when wine is from there can it be named so. Other regions

produce "Sparklers," such as Prosecco or Spumante from Italy, Sekt from Germany, Cava from Spain, or simply sparkling wine from other winegrowing areas including California, Australia and Argentina. Depending on the origin, there may be different grapes used to produce sparkling wine, but for the traditional taste it is made by a process called "Methode Champenoise" using Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier. The last two are red grapes and the skin is immediately removed to make a white wine, although some winemakers prefer a little longer contact and thus a Rose. Others again prefer to make a little richer creamier tasting Sparkler by using only Chardonnay, which is then called Blanc de Blanc; or often for a slightly nuttier, toasty flavor - Pinot Noir is made into Blanc de Noir.

In most cases you will find the word Brut on the label. This is a term only used for sparkling wine, so it often gets confused as another name for Champagne, but it is really meant to show the degree of sweetness and indicates a very dry sparkler. Occasionally some are called extra brut, which would be still drier than brut, but traditionally brut is the driest, then "extra dry," "sec" or "demi-sec" for increasing indication of sweetness. However, a demi-sec champagne is still pretty dry. If you like it sweeter, look for a Sekt, Prosecco or Asti Spumante or Moscato d'Asti.

Most champagnes have no vintage and are ready to drink

when you buy them, and in general you pay for what you get, so a little extra money is well spent when you want a good champagne.

If you have good eyesight, you may want to look for a small index number on the label (it really is very small, you may need magnifying glasses). Only true champagne will have a six digit license number preceded by two tiny letters, which can be: RM, NM, RC, CM or MA.

Without going into too much detail, mostly you will find NM, which most of the famous labels have. It means the Champagne is made by someone who buys the grapes and spends a lot of money selling and marketing an image. This may not be all that bad, it just shows where some of your money goes. If you can find one with the index RM, you found a champagne made by the actual grower, usually hand-crafted in smaller quantities and thus much harder to find, but worth the search. Locally you can find "Gaston-Chiquet" or "Gimmonet." Both are to be highly recommended.

Last not least, be careful when opening the bottle. The cork is under high pressure and can really create damage. Try to open the bottle gently without too much of a pop to get the bubbles into the glass and not all over the table. Do use a champagne glass or flute to give the bubbles a chance to perform their magical dance in the glass.

It is said that Champagne is the only drink that leaves a woman still beautiful after drinking it and the only wine to give brilliance to her eyes without flushing the face. So for your next special occasion, celebrate with a bottle of Bubbly and make it an especially romantic evening.

Gerd Hirschmann is a wine distributor of the VT Wine Merchants Co. ★



Pope Notes

Dee Palmer,
Library Director

Lance Comfort, Danville's most avid metal detecting enthusiast, will be back to present "What's Under Danville, Part 2" on Wednesday, February 15 at 6:30 p.m. After hours of hunting around town, Lance has unearthed many amazing artifacts. He has uncovered buttons, buckles, tools, coins and everyday items in Danville dating to the 1700's. His collection has grown since he brought it to the library in 2004 so we look forward to seeing new treasures. We hope you will join us for an interesting evening of looking back into Danville's history. Call the library for details.

Our discussion book for this month is *Pelagie-La-Charrette* by Antonine Maillet. Maillet

chronicles the story of the French speaking population of Acadie which was evicted from farms and villages in 1755 by British soldiers and forced into boats, separating families and communities. This historical novel tells the story of Pelagie and her family who over more than two decades, struggled to return to their homeland, inhabited by new British soldiers.

This discussion will be lead by scholar Bob Johnson on February 22 at 7:00 p.m. Books and schedules are available at the library.

Our newest book acquisitions are *Wicked* by Maguire, *Conjurer's Bird* by Davies, *In the Company of Crows and Ravens* by Marzluff, *The Good*

Housekeeping Light and Healthy Cookbook, Double Tap by Steve Martini, *Mary, Mary* by James Patterson, *Mr. Emerson's Wife* by Brown and *Radicals in Robes* by Sunstein.

From the Children's' Room

Please join us for story hour on Monday mornings at 10:00 a.m. The children have been enjoying our new collection of Libri Grant books. A few of these titles are: *The Seals on the Bus* by Hort, *The Amulet of Samarkand* by Stroud, *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus* by Willems, *How I Became a Pirate* by Long, *Lizzie Bright and the Buckminster Boy* by Schmidt, *The Race to Save the Lord God Bird* by Hoose, *The Blues Singers* by Lester, *Building Big* by Macaulay and *Easter Island* by Arnold. ★ Come in and check



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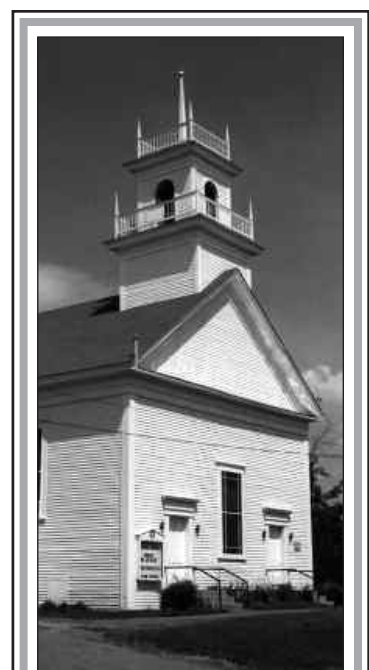
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Getting Out of the Ditch

VAN PARKER

Our family has had experience getting into and getting out of ditches. It usually happens when we gather in Danville over the Christmas holidays. This year it happened again.

Some of us were trying to negotiate a small stretch of a class 4 road in the area, and the car, not a four wheel drive vehicle, slipped into a ditch. A neighbor and family member pulled us out. Then, as we tried to back up to a better stretch of road, the car slipped off into a ditch yet again. Thankfully, another neighbor came with a tractor, and this did the trick.

The next day the neighbor who had helped us out got stuck himself. Then it was the turn of one of the Vermont members of our family to get him out. Our conclusion from it all is this: in the winter Vermonters help one another, as well as flatlanders, get out of ditches. It really is a very practical way of being a good neighbor.

This, I would judge, is another illustration that the illusion of the self-made man or woman is just that, an illusion. There's a story about a southern preacher who was noted for his prayers. They seemed to touch people and elicited many "amens" from the congregation. One of his prayers

went something like this: "Lord, prop us up on our leaning side." The image of a wall about to fall out or fall in comes to mind.

It's common for those who write books to list all the people who helped. I looked through the introduction of a book where the author thanked so many people I finally skipped over the list. But that author had a point. A vast number of people had encouraged him, helped him, perhaps pulled him out of ditches and certainly propped him up on his leaning side.

I've been fortunate that way. There have been people along the way who have pulled me out of ditches, maybe without even

knowing they were doing so. That's what being a neighbor is all about.

This theory of "everyone for themselves and the devil take the hindmost" just doesn't work. It's what this overused word "community" is all about, helping each other out of ditches. If we didn't do that, we would all be lying on the ground somewhere.

It seems lately as though our country has gone off the road, fallen into a ditch. The national debt is astronomical and growing by the day. CEO's of large corporations get paid four or five hundred times the salary of their lowest paid employees. The number of people without health care continues to grow. Government officials defend torture. Scientists tell us global

warming is melting the polar ice cap, and the poor of New Orleans are first trapped in their own city and then told they can't go back.

Knowing we are in the ditch always seems to be the first step in getting out of it. That could mean literally calling a neighbor to pull you out, or it might involve asking the help of someone who has a better perspective on a problem than you do. It means giving and receiving, to and from other people, other members of the community where we spend most of our time, other countries, other parts of the world.

I'm impressed by how much help is available, how much we can do together, if we just realize that it's a ditch that we are in. ★

One by One the Hilldale Schools Closed under Pressure to Upgrade

(Continued from Page 9)

duties. Some had little experience with the sports they were expected to coach. One former principal, when asked how he learned to coach sports, replied, "I asked a lot of questions." Edmond Houle, principal at Peacham in 1947-1948, always liked to say when his boys lost, "Never mind, boys, we're having a good time!"

A lot was expected of League school principals and teachers. Edmond Houle and teacher Ruth Bartlett Chandler carried the whole load of administration, teaching and coaching 25 students at Peacham Academy during the 1947-1948 school year. Grace Harris Roy taught freshman English, Latin II, algebra I and II, geometry and business arithmetic at Peacham in 1950-1951. If required she taught trigonometry, coached girls' basketball and served as assistant principal and student government advisor and helped with other school activities. Her

salary was \$2,500.

In addition to his principal duties, Sumner Dole taught general science to students in high school and 7th and 8th grade. He also taught general mathematics, economic geography, United States history and mechanical drawing that year. He coached all the boys' sports and carried the responsibility of student activities.

These schools and their teachers continued to do their best for pupils; however, the curriculum was geared for the college preparatory student, with (except for St. Johnsbury Trade School) little in the way of vocational, commercial and technical training. Vermont imposed minimum standards for schools by the mid-1960's with 1967 a deadline for progress to be made towards meeting those standards and stringent requirements and regulations. Clearly the state was promoting centralized union schools, to educate students from multiple small towns. The

schools simply could not afford to add the space, equipment and teachers required for vocational studies. Groton and Wells River had little land other than that occupied by the school buildings. They had no space to build additional classrooms even if funds were available.

One by one the Hilldale League schools closed as the state placed increasing pressure on towns to improve their facilities and curriculum. Mt. St. Joseph School closed in the early 1960's. Groton High School closed in 1965 followed by Newbury, McIndoes Academy, Wells River and Peacham. Peacham Academy closed at the end of the school year in 1971.

Blue Mountain Union School was built for students from Groton, Ryegate and Wells River, graduating its first class in 1971. Oxbow Union School in Bradford included other pupils from Newbury. Peacham students went to Danville, Blue Mountain and others. The St.

Johnsbury Trade School was absorbed by St. Johnsbury Academy when Streeter Hall, a technical/vocational center for the area was constructed in St. Johnsbury. Mt. St. Joseph students went to Lyndon Institute and St. Johnsbury Academy.

Concord, Danville and Cabot were fortunate in having the physical space around their buildings to expand and continue to operate through thick and thin to this day. Eventually those schools joined other sports leagues and have kept pace with school programs across the state.

The Hilldale League, once the center for local athletic, educational and social activities of our small schools, villages and towns, faded away, and it remains in the fond memories of those who had so much fun enjoying its activities. Another part of the past is gone but not forgotten.

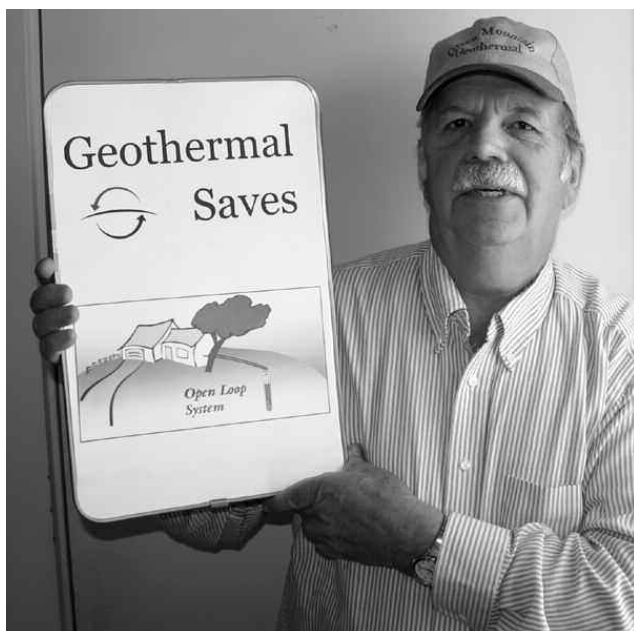
Valuable information for this article was found in "The Gyms

Were Gems," an article by Tom Haley of the January 14, 2001 *Rutland Herald* and *Montpelier Times-Argus*, which included an interview with Dan Thurston, the last principal of McIndoes Academy.

Other sources were *Peacham Academy, 1795-1971* by Lorna Field Quimby, which includes interviews with Allen Thresher PA '56 and Perley Wright who played for Concord and coached at Cabot and St. Johnsbury Trade School and *The Peacham Anthology*, published by the Peacham Historical Association.

Other data and reminiscences are from Perley Wright's programs of League school performances, Peacham Academy yearbooks from 1947 through 1957, interviews with Merle Fitzgerald, teacher and coach at Groton and from other alumni of those small schools whose memories are gratefully acknowledged. ★

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Winter Reading at Its Best for the Dark Nights of February: Anthony Trollope

R.L. BERENBAUM

Nothing beats winter blues, in my opinion, better than curling up with a titillating Trollope. No, not that kind. I refer, of course, to Anthony Trollope, that most prolific of 19th century English novelists.

Clerics and politicians, beautiful women and hags, lords a leaping, murderers, intrigue (in the Church of England, in Parliament and in the hunting of suitable husbands), scandals, thievery, knavery, sex and lies but without the videotape – Trollope has them all, throughout more than 45 novels, with an average length about 500 pages. And all of it written in the most proper way imaginable. There is nothing to embarrass even the most squeamish reader, which I confess I am. Thus I prefer to remain in the pages of Victorian literature.

Many are familiar with Trollope's most renowned works, the chronicles of Barset,

in six volumes and the Palliser novels, another six volumes. Both were made into BBC miniseries and shown on *Masterpiece Theater* many years ago. (The St. Johnsbury Athenaeum has the complete Palliser production on video, and I highly recommend it, but mind you - read the books first.)

There is a great deal more in store for the avid Trollopi-
an.

Trollope, whose writing career spanned from 1847 to 1884, wrote a huge volume almost every year and sometimes more than one. For many of those years he worked full time for the postal service (trivia item of note: Trollope invented the corner mail box) and he traveled extensively, both for work and for pleasure. He rose at 5 o'clock every morning and wrote a set number of words, stopping when he reached his quota even if he was in the middle of a sentence. He wrote on trains, on ships and in carriages. And all of this without a word

processor. He made time to write travel books and an autobiography and even stood for Parliament, coming in dead last however.

This astonishing career began when Trollope was serving with the postal department in Ireland; his first novels are termed the "Irish" stories. Many critics have panned these, and they were not terribly successful at the time. I have read only one; my frustration at not being able to find the others is slightly mollified by the scorn that is heaped on them. Apparently even Trollope could write a bad book. Perhaps this is why some have been out of print for practically ever.

There are many gems in the rest of the collection. I have over 40 volumes in my Trollope collection, the results of assiduous digging through bookstores of all sorts all over this country and the UK. Oddly enough, my greatest find was in a tiny, dusty used-book store in a small town in West Virginia. I almost swooned with ecstasy when I discovered six volumes of what I call "stumpy Trollopes," the little hardcover pocket editions

published years ago by the amount of public censure. His Oxford University Press. And all priced at \$3 apiece! The proprietor seemed a bit taken-aback at my excitement. Apparently the books had been there for many years without claiming the least bit of interest.

While the Barset novels deal mostly with the clergy, with a few politicians thrown in, and the Palliser novels are considered the political ones, with some clergy thrown in, the stand-alone books comprise almost every aspect of Victorian life, though mostly concerning the lives of the rich and titled. Or the poor and titled, which often makes for better intrigue, as these characters must "marry money." For the truly seamy aspects of that era, one must turn to Dickens, which I do often but not for a good pick-me-up in the middle of a hard winter. Trollope, like Dickens, did intend to hold up for public scrutiny or ridicule certain British institutions. He chose to shine his spotlight on the upper classes rather than the slums, schools and orphanages. He also came in for a certain

I almost swooned with ecstasy when I discovered six volumes of the little hardcover pocket editions published years ago by the Oxford University Press.

novel *Rachel Ray* brought outraged clergy down upon his head for his cynical treatment of a certain man of the cloth.

One of the more endearing aspects of Trollope's writing is that when he created a particularly interesting

character, one he seemed to like a great deal himself, he was loath to let him or her go at the end of a novel or series. Some of these characters pop up in totally unrelated stories, usually as a peripheral guest at some country house party. Lady Glencora Palliser and her husband Plantagenet (known as Planty Pall before he becomes, most unwillingly, a duke) appear briefly in one of the Barset books; in *The American Senator*, which I am reading now, Lady Glencora, now the Duchess of Omnium, floats around in the background at a house party, making known, in a perfectly ladylike and non-vulgar manner of course, her disapproval of the villianess of the piece.

Each novel contains several plot lines, some interwoven and some parallel to the main story. On a first reading it can be confusing, there being a difficulty in keeping the characters and intrigues straight. *The Way We Live Now*, considered by many, then and now, to be Trollope's masterpiece, is a good example. This does not imply a fault on the part of the author; it is masterfully written, and it is the reader's task to keep up.

Trollope is not quite so cutesy with his names as Dickens (i.e., Mr. M'Choakumchild, an evil teacher in *Hard Times*), but he does have his little jokes, as in the Duke of Omnium, reputed to be the wealthiest man in England, whose estate is called Gatherum Castle. And takes care not to



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From left: Cindy White, Donna Percy, John Blackmore, Joan Field, George Coppentrath, Betsy McKay, Sam Kempton, Darlene Pilbin, Sue Coppentrath and Cindy Hastings.

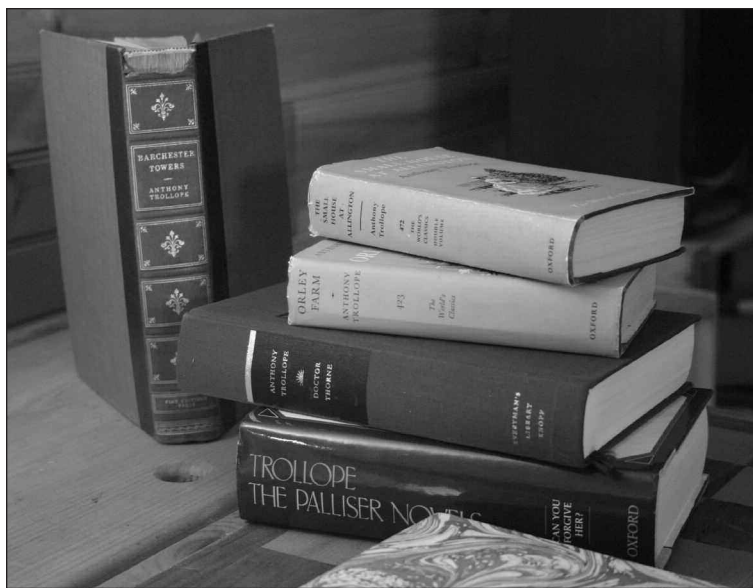


Photo By: North Star Monthly

give pleasant-sounding names to despicable people. Uriah Heep has his equivalent in Obadiah Slope, a most lubricious bishop's chaplain in *Barchester Towers*, the second book of the Barchester chronicles. His characters, however, are never quite the caricatures as are many of Dickens'.

I love Dickens, but I find many of his characters to be one-dimensional, whereas Trollope's tend to be more human. If someone is wicked with no redeeming qualities, the reader knows that Trollope truly despises that character and will deal with him (or her) accordingly. Poor Lizzie Eustace in *The Eustace Diamonds* (one of the Palliser novels) hasn't a chance.

As with Jane Austen, lovers and romances frolic through these novels but, unlike with Miss Jane, a happy ending for all is never guaranteed. Sometimes a young man, "unexceptional in every way," no matter how good and true and how hard he strives, does not win fair lady. Sometimes one feels almost angry with Trollope for having it so. Why, in the two final volumes of the Barchester novels, must young Mr. ___ not be successful with young Miss ___? Why must young Miss ___ be so pigheaded? And yet the pat, happy ending would seem trite.

If the reader insists on a happy ending always, the reader must stick with Miss Jane. Trollope falls somewhere

between Austen and the Bronte sisters. Or Thomas Hardy. Hardy is one of my favorites, but I would never recommend *Jude the Obscure* unless I felt the recommender was already suicidal and needed some perspective.

If Trollope has one failing, it is with fox hunting. He himself was an avid hunter, plunging headlong into the sport as soon as his writing was bringing in enough money to support it. He seemed to think that "riding to hounds" would be as fascinating to his readers as it was to him, and almost every novel has a long, drawn-out hunting scene. Pages and pages of foxes darting hither and yon, hounds yelping and chasing, horses and riders thundering through the fields or wandering around disconsolately due to uncooperative foxes, descriptions of this rider sailing over a fence and that one ending up in a ditch.

I have come to learn that rarely does anything pertinent to the plot occur during these tedious episodes. One cannot skip them completely, as sometimes something dramatic or tragic happens during a hunt, so what I do is skim over the pages to make sure an accident has not befallen a major character ("A ball, with a dead man in one of the bedrooms, would be dreadful."), or an offer of marriage popped unexpectedly (the latter unlikely; only the "fast" females hunt). I would advise anyone not enamored of the sport to do the

same. I do not think Trollope had an editor to advise him on such things. However, this is the only real flaw I have ever found in his work, and it is negligible.

Trollope fans might also be interested in wallowing in a delightful work by Anthony's mother, Fanny. Her nonfiction *Domestic Manners of the Americans*, penned after an extensive jaunt through this country, is about as good as it gets if one is interested in a Victorian Englishwoman's view of the barbaric behavior of the "cousins" (her comments on spitting are worth the price).

I do feel a little guilty recommending good winter reading that is so difficult to come by. I am not averse to lending from my own collection to people who are thoroughly responsible and reliable, always return loaned volumes, never spill coffee on them and won't add to the chocolate stains already present. Applicants would need to be seriously vetted. I can be reached at: rlberen@gmail.com.



Tea Party

Today I'll sip
my tea
from the delicate rim
of a thin china cup
and remember
as a child
I would sigh
and chat away
with my small dog
Cricket
dressed in baby clothes
and my sisters doll
with the long hair
and the following eyes
sipping pretend tea
from a miniature service
and picture myself
an adult
with fancy dresses
and lipstick
to leave its print
on my grownup
tea cup
I raise it high now
all these years later
in a toast
to that little girl
as I sip my tea
from a thin china cup
in my bare feet
and dirty
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Dartmouth College's Barbary Coast Jazz Ensemble Brings Conrad Herwig to Hanover

The Barbary Coast is the award-winning student jazz ensemble of Dartmouth College. Specializing in music of the African American and Latin jazz traditions, students in the Coast (mostly non-music majors) enjoy opportunities to learn from and perform with some of the finest jazz artists in the world. The repertoire of the group extends from original compositions by its director Don Glasgow and student members of the ensemble to early works by Duke Ellington and Fletcher Henderson, from the Latin jazz of Eddie Palmieri to the challenging hard-core funk of Joseph Bowie and the out-of-this-world compositions of Sun Ra.

Barbary Coast Director Don Glasgow has taught classes in jazz and literature, jazz history, jazz composition, jazz ensembles, American music and world music at Dartmouth, Hamilton College, Lyndon State College and Goddard College. He has written over 75 jazz compositions and arrangements, many of them premiered by the Barbary Coast. Glasgow plays the valve trombone. This is his 29th year as director of the Ensemble.

On Saturday, February 11, the number one jazz trombonist in the 2002 *Downbeat* Critics Poll, Conrad Herwig will perform in a guest appearance with the Barbary Coast. Described as the "best trombonist on the planet" Herwig will join special guests Walter White on trumpet and Robby Ameen on drums and percussion at the Dartmouth College winter festival concert, dedicated to the 30th anniversary of director Don Glasgow.

The Barbary Coast will celebrate Director Don Glasgow on February 11



Dartmouth College Photograph

Barbary Coast Jazz Ensemble Director Don Glasgow will be celebrated at the Hopkins Center for the Arts on Saturday, February 11 during the annual Dartmouth College winter festival. Glasgow is in his 29th year, and the February 11 concert is dedicated to his 30th anniversary.

The Coast is famous in the Connecticut River Valley and literally around the world for the breadth of its music. The Coast slides into the old time big band sounds of Fletcher Henderson or Duke Ellington and soars with space age numbers by the likes of Sun Ra. The Barbary Coast offers the remarkable talent of music majors and non-music majors alike. Coast audiences will include fans with canes and fans who are just finding their own voices in elementary school music groups. A Coast concert is never a disappointment.

the ARTS around

February

- 2 INXS, Wang Center, Boston.
- 3 Sarah Broges Band, Middle Earth Music, Bradford.
- 3-9 *The Passenger* (1975, Italy) [PG-13] Director: Michelangelo Antonioni. Originally released in 1975, *The Passenger* is, on the simplest level, a suspense story about a man trying to escape his own life. This haunting film is a portrait of a drained journalist, played by Jack Nicholson, whose deliverance is an identity exchange with a dead man. Catamount Arts, St. Johnsbury. (802) 748-2600.
- 3&4 Dartmouth College Glee Club, Hopkins Center for the Arts, Hanover, NH.
- 4 Jabe Band with Bow Thayer, Middle Earth Music, Bradford.
- 5 The Samples, Nectar's, Burlington.
- 7 Warabi-Za, Hopkins Center for the Arts, Hanover, NH.
- 8&9 The Orlando Consort, Hopkins Center for the Arts, Hanover, NH.
- 10 Northeast Kingdom Classical Series presents Pianist Ignat Solzhenitsyn, North Congregational Church, St. Johnsbury. (802) 748-5451.
- 10 The Perfect Train Wreck, Middle Earth Music, Bradford.
- 10-16 *Paradise Now* (2005, France/Germany/Israel) [PG-13] Director: Hany Abu-Assad. The story of two young Palestinian men as they embark upon what may be the last 48 hours of their lives. Catamount Arts, St. Johnsbury.
- 11 Barbary Coast Jazz Ensemble, Hopkins Center for the Arts, Hanover, NH.
- 11 Drunk Stuntmen, Middle Earth Music, Bradford.
- 14 Roomful of Blues, Iron Horse, Northampton, MA.
- 16 Guy Clark, Joe Ely, John Hiatt and Lyle Lovett, Capitol Center, Concord, NH.
- 17 Dartmouth Wind Symphony, Hopkins Center for the Arts, Hanover, NH.
- 17 Stacy Earle & Nmark Stuart, Middle Earth Music, Bradford.
- 17-23 *Ushpizin* (2004, Israel) [PG] Director: Giddi Dar. A revelatory and humorous look at the daily lives of ultra-Orthodox Jews in modern-day Israel. Moshe Belanga, a devoutly religious member of the Breslau Chasidim, finds himself broke until he and his wife receive an anonymous gift of \$1,000 from a local charity organization and they take it as a holiday miracle.
- Catamount Arts, St. Johnsbury.
- 18 The Gully Boys, Middle Earth Music, Bradford.
- 18 The Newstead Trio, Hopkins Center for the Arts, Hanover, NH.
- 18 Mardi Gras Celebration with Mango Jam, Lyndon State College.
- 18 Grace Potter & The Nocturnals, Paradise, Boston.
- 19 Dartmouth College Gospel Choir, Hopkins Center for the Arts, Hanover, NH.
- 23 Grace Potter & The Nocturnals, Opera House, Barre.
- 24-March 2 *Ballet Russes* (2005, U.S.) [NR] Directors: Daniel Geller & Dayna Goldfine. What began as a group of Russian refugees who never danced in Russia became not one but two rival dance troupes who fought the infamous "ballet battles" that consumed London society before World War II. Catamount Arts, St. Johnsbury.
- 24 Brooks Williams with Paul Asbell, Middle Earth Music, Bradford.
- 25 Los Blancos, Middle Earth Music, Bradford.
- 25 Dartmouth Symphony Orchestra, Hopkins Center for the Arts, Hanover, NH.

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String Worth Saving

Bill Christiansen

Potable water is becoming a scarce commodity. In this part of the country we give little thought to the subject. Local water supplies are for the most part safe and palatable. In this country, today, we seldom hear about outbreaks of disease caused by water supplies, but this has not always been the case.

Back at the time that mankind was hunting and gathering and moving from place to place, most any water source was a good one. It was only when agriculture became widespread that polluted water was a problem. People settled into small and concentrated areas, and water sources soon developed problems. No - pollution is not new. Fortunately, those early settlers found a solution to make their water safe to drink. The old solution is with us right into modern times.

One way to make water safe to drink is to boil it. In many cultures, raw water was never thought to be drinkable. Instead, much of the moisture needed to stay alive was derived from soups and stews. This was an ideal way to make water safe. Early in the era of agricultural, another method of making water safe was discovered - fermentation.

When sugars are dissolved in water and yeast is added, the process of fermentation begins. The yeast "eats" the sugar and extracts energy by breaking the chemical bonds in the sugar molecule. The waste products from this process are carbon dioxide and ethanol, commonly called "grain alcohol." As the waste products build up in the solution, the yeast dies, and the process stops. Yeast consists of a family of single-celled fungi. There are over a thousand species identified.

Probably the first occurrence of deliberate fermentation happened about 8,000 years ago. When stored grain gets wet, it begins to sprout. The new plant converts starch in the grain seed to sugar. The farmer, trying to save the grain might have put it in water, hoping to make soup. The converted sugar dissolved in the water, and wild yeast invaded the mixture, and fermentation was in process. This was the first beer.

While the liquid was safe to drink, because of the alcohol content, it is believed to have tasted terrible.

The whole family, even the youngsters, drank "beer." The alcohol content of the brew was

probably less than five percent.

Ethanol is produced whether you are brewing beer or making bread. In bread making, the ethanol evaporates or is evaporated in baking.

Throughout history - brewing and baking have gone hand in hand.

In places where grains were not common, fruit juices were used. The sugar in the juice would ferment much in the same way as would the grain mixture. The result, of course, was called "wine." Beer and wine have been "invented" by every civilization in the world. In places where grains or fruits were not common, any sugar would do. So honey was used.

To the best of our knowledge, these brews all tasted very bad. This was in part due to the uncontrolled introduction of various wild strains of yeast. Yeast spores were in the air and would land on any open vat. The particular strain of yeast had a great deal to do with the final product.

However it tasted drinking the brew was preferable to drinking water. Over time, as people began to understand the process, the yeast was controlled.

Another problem confronting early brewers was oxidation of the alcohol. When ethanol is exposed to oxygen, in the pres-

ence of certain bacteria, the result is vinegar. Vinegar made the beer or wine even less palatable. At the fermentation step, some bacteria would get into the brew and start the oxidation. Some vinegar was a part of all early brews, hence the sour taste.

To try and prevent oxidation, the brew was sealed in jars or barrels. As fermentation progressed, carbon dioxide gas accumulated and pressurized the vessel. If the pressure was too great, the vessel would explode.

All through history, attempts have been made to add things to the beer or wine to improve its flavor. Every spice known to man has been added to raw beer in the hope of improving its taste. A second hope was that an additive could be found to add to the products shelf life. One substance that did both of these things was hops. When hops are added to beer during the brewing process, a bitter taste is imparted to the brew. This bitter taste is an improvement over the original. It also helps to preserve the product.

So, for 8,000 years or more, we have been brewing alcoholic beverages. The days when the purpose for making water safe to drink are long gone. We have tried every combination of brewing that can be imagined. But in the end, it is the same, yeast converting sugar to alcohol and carbon dioxide.

Making wine is easy because the sugar is already a part of the fruit juice. In a grain culture, there is a problem. Grain seeds

store the sugar as starch. The starch must be converted to sugar to be useful in the fermentation. As mentioned before, sprouting seeds start this conversion. However, left to grow too long, the plant begins to use the sugar to grow, and the sugar is lost. One way to avoid all of this was

alcohol content of the brew. Keep in mind that the alcohol is a waste product of the yeast. Under the best conditions, the yeast is killed when the alcohol content of the brew reach about 14%.

This is the top alcohol content that can be achieved with natural fermentation. Usually yeast dies at concentrations far below this level. This alcohol content can be raised by adding straight grain alcohol to the brew. The brew is then "fortified."

So, here in the middle of the winter, with cold temperatures outside, a little antifreeze might be good for the soul. Incidentally, ethanol is the same stuff whether its in wine or beer. Ethanol is a tasteless, odorless liquid. So any taste in the beer or

So, here in the middle of the winter, with cold temperatures outside, a little antifreeze might be good for the soul.

found early on; soaking the seeds in water would dissolve the starch.

There is an enzyme in saliva that converts starch to sugar. Take a piece of white bread, starch, and hold it in your mouth. It will begin to taste sweet and the starch is converted to sugar. So some early brewer discovered that if one spit into the batch of starch water, the conversion process would begin.

One misconception about beer and wine has to do with the

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TERRY HOFFER

As Railroad Street goes - so goes St. Johnsbury.

In any court of cultural judgment about St. Johnsbury there is lengthy testimony about the Fairbanks legacy: the Athenaeum and the Museum, the Academy, beautiful churches and, of course, the company that made scales and shipped them all over the world. Those are remarkable monuments, and the town and Vermont are fortunate to have them, but day in and day out it's the rhythm of the retail and service community that keeps the town alive. And for many years it has been Railroad Street, St. Johnsbury's primary commercial neighborhood, where the pulse of the community has been checked to see how well it is doing.

Since 1852, when traveling salesmen first stepped off the train in St. Johnsbury and offered their wares to merchants on Railroad Street, the area has been the point of first impressions.

Much has been said about St.

Johnsbury's central business district, and there are plans being made for its expansion, in some manner, onto Bay Street on the other side of the tracks. So maybe, I thought, it would be interesting to talk to someone at one of the places on Railroad Street and see what I could find.

I went to the Artisan's Guild marked by a purple awning on the east side of the street between Landry's Drugstore and Podo Shoes. The Guild is across from the vast windows of the Rent-A-Center, one of more than 2,700 stores owned by a Texas corporation, where you sign up for easy monthly payments and lease big screen televisions and furnishings for your home.

The Northeast Kingdom Artisan's Guild is a cooperative craft shop where members sell their hand made and one-of-a-kind products. The Guild is busy, and I've watched it expand since 1997 from a small room in the Catamount Arts building on Eastern Avenue to this location, first as a single storefront and



Photo By: North Star Monthly

Board members and staff of the Northeast Kingdom Artisan's Guild on Railroad Street in St. Johnsbury include (L-R) Joan Harlowe, Cathy Dwyer, Carol Krochak, Amanda Weisenfeld and Delsie Hoyt. Here in the Guild's Backroom Gallery is work on display by Guild members and by Nicolas McGowan.

more recently as it pushed into additional space next door.

I thought I was going to meet with Cathy Dwyer, Guild manager, but it's a cooperative, and no single voice speaks for the Guild. Instead I discovered a group of its directors - they were considering the work of prospective members - and I found enthusiastic voices, a chorus of entrepreneurs from among the membership of this unusual organization with brave ideas and proven experience.

Amanda Weisenfeld is one of the Guild's founding members and currently a director. She describes the first steps as shaky. There were 10 original members,

and she remembers their products on display at the Catamount building in the fall of 1997. "I was away for two weeks," she laughs, "and when I came back someone said there was good news and bad. The good news was I had sold one of my felted sheep for \$18. The bad news was that that was the total sales volume for the entire two weeks."


Weisenfeld remembers watching the activity along Railroad Street on the day before Christmas that year and realizing that if the Guild didn't move it would close. She and Jeanne Gallerani, another felter, were the driving force at the time, and with

their urging the Guild was reborn on Railroad Street in March 1998.

Since then sales at the Guild have grown, and prospective members have sought out its shelves and display space. Delsie Hoyt, a rug braider, says, "People in town didn't understand the business model of the coop when it started. It seemed that because we weren't an employer in the traditional sense we weren't a real business. Since then we have grown to 100 members. The Guild represents a sizable share of the sales of 100 small businesses. There is nothing unreal or incidental about that."

Members of the Guild bring their work to the Guild, and some volunteer as clerks in the store. Members receive 60% of the price of the product when it sells. If a member volunteers at the Guild the percentage increases to 70%, and for members of the board it's 80%. The balance goes back to the Guild for overhead expenses including rent, utilities, marketing and wages for three part-time employees.

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Carol Krochak makes fine ceramic ornaments. She says, "This is a part of the Vermont tradition where people put a lot of small pieces together to make it

and forms - and it's wonderful."

Krochak says, "We are all owners. We understand the process, and we know the producer when someone picks out something to buy. Customers (be they local shoppers or tourists) understand that, and they appreciate an association with the producer. We often hear that this represents the 'true Vermont image.'"

Cathy Dwyer explains the value of the space known as the Backroom Gallery. There on a rotating basis is the work of some artists who are not necessarily Guild members. "It puts us on the map in a different way," she says. "It's like a museum gallery with objects that are from beyond the region and beyond the scope of the members. People who have never been in the Guild before have been in to see these exhibits."

Hoyt says the concept is working. "Last year, in terms of sales volume, it was nearly our best year ever. And last December was the best month we ever had."

Weisenfeld says, "The store has been good to me, and our following has grown. We are one of the specialty shops that are part of the fabric of this great old town, and we hope to stay. The stores that do well here are those that do what they do well - and it shows. We can be an important part of the future of Railroad Street, and we are very happy to be here."

It's a convincing theory, and the Guild is among those that are proving it. There is a strong pulse on Railroad Street, and the Fairbanks, themselves, would be pleased.

The Northeast Kingdom Artisan's Guild is open Monday - Saturday from 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Look for the purple awning. ★

Some Dreams Come True

BETS PARKER ALBRIGHT

My country-bred children find it hard to believe that my New York City childhood was anything but miserable. I lived in high-rise apartments, with no friendly neighbors, no community, no strong church affiliation and always moving from place to place. We could not play outside unattended or even go to nearby parks to roller-skate without an adult until we were 10- or 12-years old.

We had playgrounds at our schools, but most after-school hours were spent at home. We had plenty of indoor games, and on weekends and during vacations we went to our grandmother's house in the country an hour or so outside the city.

My parents were divorced, and we lived with our mother, a talented artist who provided us with paints and clay and drawing boards and left us to our own devices much of the time. My older brother and I got along well, and the years went by quite smoothly. Dick went away to boarding school at 13, and I was alone a great deal after that. I missed him, but spent long hours reading and putting together

large jigsaw puzzles - perhaps hard to believe in this era of obsession with television and computer games.

At 14, I was sent to a girls' boarding school in the Eastern Townships area of Quebec. I was happy in my school, which was run by a delightful Englishwoman. Two years later I entered a good-sized college - a bit of a shock after a very small school, but I had a good four years and was engaged to be married at the end of my senior year.

During all of those formative years, I was aware that I had missed out on the wonderful family life described in the books I read. I was determined to try to create a family that would meet my longings and expectations. Though it was hard scuffle at first on our small Vermont farm, our love and caring for each other, and the invaluable help of neighbors, sustained us.

The years offered a great variety of challenges, and I have been fortunate, in spite of times of deep sorrow, to find myself part of a family that is full of delight: a wonderful husband, children and grandchildren - and now even a great-grandchild.

I have far more to be thankful for than to regret, and I realize that even as a rather lonely city child, I had hopes and dreams that kept me going. It is my great good fortune now to find myself in Vermont in a beautiful place with a delightful cozy home and a community about which I care deeply.

God has been very good to me.



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For many years it has been Railroad Street, St. Johnsbury's primary commercial neighborhood, where the pulse of the community has been checked to see how well it is doing.

work. People talk about the creative economy, and this is one way that it works. Most of us have other jobs or other outlets for our work, but there are some who make more than half of their income from the Guild."

The Guild members are all from Vermont - most from the northeastern corner of the state, and their work is judged by a committee for quality, originality and the fact that it is substantially handmade. Work on display currently includes pottery, fiber arts, woodwork, glass, jewelry, baskets, brooms, photography and braided rugs. It's a striking display of the creative process ranging from small pieces at modest cost to larger examples of crafts and fine arts marked with serious prices.

Beyond the sale of goods, repayment of members and covering the expenses of the Guild is the spirit of camaraderie enjoyed by its members. Hoyt says, "We get feedback from each other - we are always talking about colors

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What's Happening at the Town Hall?

Barnet

Town Clerk: William Hoar
Selectboard: Ted Faris, Stanley Robinson and Gary Bunnell

January 9, 2006

Barnet Village School Building – J. Patton Hyman, representing Karme Choling, met with Board to discuss lease renewal for former Barnet Village School building. Board agreed to renew lease for five years with an annual amount of \$6,000 per year up from \$4,800 per year.

Certificate of Highway Mileage – Board signed certificate of highway mileage with no change in total mileage. Mileage in town is 103.38 miles including 21.19 of State Highway roads and 10.95 miles of Class 4 town roads.

Travel Trailer Building Permit – Board discussed letter sent by zoning administrative officer to East Barnet resident who is living in a travel trailer on state land next to US 5. State highway officials are aware of this and working on it.

McIndoe Falls Bridge – Board noted preliminary plans for reconstruction of Monroe to McIndoe Falls bridge.

Town Web Site – Board agreed to have town clerk discuss creation of new web site for town.

Cabot

Town Clerk: Chris Kaldor
Selectboard: Larry Gochey, Caleb Pitkin and William Walters

January 4, 2006

Bridge Repairs – Board noted a letter from VTrans indicating \$760,000 earmarked for the Saw Mill Road bridge.

Wastewater Plant – Board discussed letter from VT Department of Environmental Conservation describing operations at town's wastewater treatment plant as "Excellent." Board acknowledged outstanding service provided by Jim Brimblecombe of Earth Tech, contract operator for the plant.

Utility Easement – On request of Washington Electric Coop Board voted to approve a permit request to construct a 7200 volt electric distribution line on Walbridge and South Walden Road.

Budget Work – Board discussed various budget worksheets prepared by Chris Kaldor and agreed to warn an article for town meeting to consider buying land for proposed town garage. Board also agreed to include an article for a \$300,000 paving bond.

Civil Action – Following executive session to discuss a matter of civil action, no action was taken.

Danville

Town Clerk: Virginia Morse
Selectboard: Marion Sevigny, Larry Gadapee, Rick Sevigny, Marvin Withers and Michael Walsh

December 22, 2005

Road Crew – Kevin Gadapee reported road crew has been doing a lot of plowing, sanding and salting. One truck slid off road when operator cut corner too sharp. Truck was sent to Clarks and Tenco for repairs. On Kevin Gadapee's request Board voted to authorize him to review files of people he supervises. Board discussed a certain proposal from Susan Terry to serve as a conciliator and after discussion voted to not accept it.

Curbside – Merton Leonard reported town attorney has sent a letter to a landowner who is in violation of his curbside permit. Board directed Leonard to look into policy prohibiting a person in default of one permit from obtaining any other town issued permit.

State Owned Gravel Pit Land – Larry Donna of VTrans requested a release of 2½ acres town has leased from state for a gravel pit.

Route 2 Improvements – Tim Ide, representing fire district, and Tom Nesbitt, of Duffrense-Henry, and others met with Scott Rogers of VTrans on Route 2 project and agreed to get final engineering drawings of water lines to be included in state's act 250 permit. Merchants have expressed concern with construction projected to last over two years.

Aquatic Nuisance – Board voted to support 2006 aquatic nuisance control project at Joe's Pond for up to \$750.

Budget Review – Board reviewed preliminary 2006 budget.

Town Hall Reconstruction – Board voted to transfer any balance as town hall renovation budget item to town hall building fund.

January 19, 2006

State Land – VTrans representative Larry Donna met with Board to follow up on his request for a release of 2½ acres leased by the town from the state. Larry Donna and Kevin Gadapee will view site and determine right of way requirements.

Road Equipment – Kevin reported road and weather conditions have been hard on equipment. Road crew is dealing with breakdowns and repairs but nothing major.

Covered Bridge – On request from Shirley Warden for permission to use Greenbanks Hollow covered bridge for a September wedding for her daughter, Board voted to grant permission so long as Wardens take charge of traffic control and closing the bridge.

Waste Management – Board approved request by waste management district to expand fall bulky day to collect hazardous wastes such as paint, batteries, oil, household chemicals and so forth.

Sewage Treatment – Merton Leonard reported radio alarm system for sewer

plant could cost up to \$7,500, which is included in sewer budget.

Town Hall Renovations – Leonard reported sprinkler installation in town hall is near completion, and handicap access lift is set except for changing entry lock.

Lyndon

Town Clerk - Lisa Barrett
Selectmen: Martha Feltus, Bruce James and Rob Elmes

December 28, 2005

Highway Department – At 96% through year total budget is 76% expended.

Loan Renewal – Board voted to renew current loan of \$15,713.79, known as "Oscar's lot loan," from Community National Bank at 3.22%.

Budget Review – Board worked on 2006 budget preparation.

Charles Carter Building Project – Board voted to approve an extension of community development program project deadline for certain goals at Charles Carter Building at the industrial park.

Town Village Merger – Martha Feltus reported merger committee has submitted its report to Village Trustees and Town Selectboard.

Fairgrounds – Art Sandborn noted the intent of a Canadian tour company to use fairgrounds in August as a campsite for a large bicycle tour group.

January 9, 2006

Catering Permit – Board approved catering permit for Echo Ledge Farm for an event at LI on February 11.

Lyndon Rescue – Board reappointed James Gallagher as town representative to Lyndon Rescue with Bruce James as alternate.

Budget Review – Board reviewed 2006 budgets.

Coin Drop – Board denied request by Make-A-Wish Foundation for a coin drop on a town road.

Peacham

Town Clerk: Patrick Downes
Selectmen: Gary Swenson, Richard Browne and Tim McKay

December 21, 2005

Recreation Budget – Dick O'Leary offered proposal for renovation of tennis court in town at a cost of \$6,500. Board reviewed letter from Barry Lawson, noting proposed village plan may include options for recreational facilities.

Transfer Station – Board discussed transfer station. Locks have been changed. Swenson sent information on augur compactors to waste management district for cost analysis. Board voted to seek bids for sale of recycling trailer located at transfer station. Board will consider suggestion from Dick Blair that a concrete pad be placed under dumpster reserved for construction materials. On request of Martha Evangelista, Board discussed having transfer station open

some time other than Saturday morning. No action taken.

Road Reclassification – Board voted to deny reclassification of Peacham Pond Road.

Town Vehicle – Phil Jejer submitted proposal for new dump truck with plow with a cost of \$120,482. Board asked for cost if agreement was based upon lease-purchase.

Town Hall – Gary Swenson asked administrative assistant to see that sidewalk at town office gets maintained and to ensure non-functioning water closet in men's room is repaired pronto.

Old Town Office – Board discussed Old Town Office including annual costs and capital expenses. If building is leased, existing septic tank should be replaced. A one-year lease would include monthly rent of \$400 plus utilities. If a lease is not signed by mid-January 2006, Board will warn article for town meeting proposing sale of Old Town Office.

Treasurer's Report – Treasurer presented delinquent tax report showing total delinquent taxes to be \$83,653.11. Tax collector has collected nearly \$100,000 since November 16.

Certification of Highway Mileage – Board signed certificate of highway mileage with no changes.

Cemetery – Board signed deed of cemetery lot for Patrick Downes.

St. Johnsbury

Town Manager: Michael Welch
Town Clerk: Sandy Grenier
Selectboard: Bryon Quatrini, Dale Urie, Reg Wakeham, Jerry Rowe and Gary Reis

December 22, 2005

Municipal Building Concept Plans – Board discussed municipal building concept plans with Architect Jay Ancel and

reviewed options. Discussion centered around appropriate location for a police "sallyport" and an entrance to dispatch center.

December 27, 2005

Zoning By-Law Amendments – Following discussion of proposed by-law amendments to establish development review board Board voted to approve the bylaw amendments.

Development Review Board – On recommendation of Priscilla Messier Board voted to appoint Alan Boye, Ray Labounty, Rich Lyon, Robert Mayhew, Milton "Will" Rivers, Alan Ruggles and Jim Rust to development review board.

Planning Commission – Board voted to appoint Martha Hanson, Chris Hardman, Ross Hart, William Merrow and Stan Wilkins to planning commission and, further, after executive session to discuss the appointment, appointed Larry Sharer and Daniel Kimbell to planning commission.

Charter Amendments – Town Attorney presented Board with redrafted charter amendments including provisions that Board shall set compensation for town manager, town clerk and treasures, constable and board of assessment. Further, amendments would abolish town office of fence viewer, inspector of lumber-wood-shingles, second constable and weigher of coal; establish department of assessment and establish an undesignated reserve fund to be expended as authorized by the voters at a regular or special town meeting. Board agreed to schedule hearings on amendments.

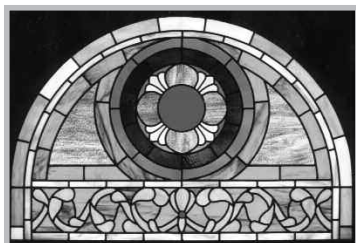
Retirement Plan Resolution – On recommendation of town attorney Board voted to amend town retirement plan to be consistent with state statute.

Tax Anticipation Note – Board voted to ratify action authorizing a delinquent tax anticipation note of \$332,000 at an inter-



Photo Courtesy of Judy Garland

On a beautiful day in December, with snow lightly falling and everyone bundled up, the "Dangerously Red" group of Danville's Red Hat ladies gathered for a wagon ride through the village and to the home of Marilyn Berard for a Christmas party - with food, games and a gift exchange. Burt Frye's horses pulled the wagon with Gordon Hale and Jason Sweet assisting Burt. Those enjoying the event were: (L-R) Marilyn Berard, JoAnn Fisher, Ginny Frye, Lynda Laferriere, Vaughn Hoe, Karen Moore, Kathy Crucitti, Donna Hale and Judy Garland. Bert Frye and Linda Leone are in back row.



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Excerpts from Selectboard Minutes from Area Towns

See your Town Clerk for complete minutes of the meetings

est rate of 3.22% from Community National Bank.

Budget Review 2006 – Town Manager presented draft budgets for 2006 for general, highway, special service and recreation funds. Manager explained various factors that impacted draft budget including wage adjustments of 3.5% - 4%; fuel oil cost increases, gasoline and diesel cost increase; health insurance cost increase of 6-8%; restoration of funds for highway capital improvements; restoration of funds for fire department equipment and additional funding for a portion of town-wide reappraisal.

Equalization Study – Manager provided Board with state equalization report.

Housing Planning – Reg Wakeham reported he and Joel Schwartz will be collecting \$20,000 as a housing planning grant from VT Community Development Program. Board discussed housing needs and opportunities in St. Johnsbury.

January 9, 2006

Grants to Encourage Arrest – Following presentation by Michelle Fay, executive director of Umbrella, Board voted to apply for Grant to Encourage Arrest in the amount of \$400,000 for next two years.

Moose Lodge Tax Exemption Request – Following presentation by James Buck, David Timson, Ron Noyes and Gary Munson of St. Johnsbury Moose Lodge and their request that Board place an article on town meeting warning requesting property tax exemption for Moose Lodge, Board voted to not do so.

Delinquent Taxes – Sandy Grenier reviewed delinquent property tax listing. Currently there are 25 properties with two or more years delinquent taxes and no valid payment agreement. Seventeen are mobile homes. Board will consider recommendation for tax sale in March.

2006 Municipal Budget Review – Board met with Highway Superintendent Larry Gadapee to review proposed 2006 highway budget and discussed plans for equipment replacement, capital projects and engineering services. Projects for 2006 include a portion of Libby Road, Portland Street Bridge, Gilman Avenue, Pleasant Street sidewalks, Main Street sidewalks, South Main Street retaining wall and Railroad Street sidewalks and lighting. Gadapee asked Board to discuss stairway from Portland Street as structure cannot be replaced with grant funds and will be expensive to repair. Board met with Police Chief Leighton to review special services budget and discussed equipment needs and vehicle replacement plan. Leighton stated one cruiser has been ordered, to replace a vehicle with 113,000 miles on it. The other primary cruiser has 103,000 miles on it and is in need of replacement.

Emergency Operations Plan Review – Fire Chief Troy Ruggles reviewed emergency operations plan for town.

Regional Hazmat Resources – Ruggles informed Board St. Johnsbury

has been designated as a regional response agency for Hazmat incidents. A new vehicle and the Hazmat response trailers have been acquired through homeland security grants.

Scenic By-Way Grant (Pomerleau Building) – Following presentation by town manager, Board voted to enter into agreement with VTRANS for preliminary engineering totaling \$122,500 for Pomerleau Building under Scenic By-Way Grant program.

State Equalization Study – On recommendation of town manager, Board voted to sign letter of appeal of state equalized grand list for 2006 in order to protect its right of appeal.

St. Jay Auto – Town manager presented Board with proposal from St. Jay Auto to offer town employees a vehicle purchase program. Board agreed to make department heads aware of program and keep information on file.

Employee Evaluation – Following executive session to discuss evaluation of an employee, no action was taken.

January 10, 2006

Municipal Facility Planning Meeting – Board met with Architect Jay Ancel and reviewed potential sites under consideration for fire station. Locations discussed were Fairbanks site at intersection of Central Street and Western Avenue, Park & Ride Site - at intersection of US 2 and VT 2B, Water Department Garage located off Western Avenue, Back Center Road, McKinstry Property on Concord Avenue and land in back of former Ames building on Portland Street. Ancel agreed to perform additional review of sites discussed.

Municipal Building and Police Station – Ancel presented revised conceptual layout for existing municipal building. Various suggestions were made by Board.

January 16, 2006

St. Johnsbury Athenaeum – Lorna Higgs and Werner Heidemann reviewed Athenaeum's special appropriation request for \$110,000 up from \$105,000 approved in 2005.

Recreation Department – Joe Fox and Carol Lyon reviewed proposed 2006 Recreation budget. Total recreation expenditure as proposed is \$135,616 with a property tax transfer from general fund in amount of \$47,116. Recreation department closed year with a deficit of approximately \$3,673 and a cumulative deficit of \$95,759. Board discussed grant funding for building improvements and long term idea of a regional recreation program.

Reserve Funds & Undesignated Fund Balance – Manager reviewed preliminary estimates for reserve fund and undesignated fund balance for all funds subject to audit.

Parking Fund – In a discussion about negative balance of the parking fund town manager said that to eliminate the deficit in fund – expenses will need to be

reduced or revenue increased. Cost of full-time position in police department to enforce meters is not currently covered by meter fund. Board has referred a study of parking meters and enforcement to St. Johnsbury Works.

NVRH Capital Fund – Bryon Quatrini suggested \$5,000 considered by the Board for NVRH Capital Fund be allocated from Economic Development Reserve Fund due to economic benefit derived from these capital projects.

St. Johnsbury Works – Board discussed request for St. Johnsbury Works. St. Johnsbury Works Chair Mark Desrochers indicated organization could live with a town allocation of \$5,000.

Budget Review – Mike Welch reviewed proposed general fund, special service fund, highway fund and recreation department budgets with Board. General fund: \$2,063,503 (8.1% increase); highway fund: \$1,906,131 (10% increase); special services fund: \$977,855 (5.97% increase); and recreation fund: \$135,616 (2.6% decrease). Town manager reviewed property tax impacts based on proposed budgets, estimated fund balances and use of reserve funds. Board asked town manager to review all accounts and report back on costs that can be controlled by Board.

Municipal Charter Amendments – Board reviewed "official copy" of proposed charter amendments warned for public hearing and voted to adopt proposed amendments to St. Johnsbury Municipal Charter.

Fire Truck Lease Purchase – Town manager reported new fire rescue/pumper truck is in Vermont and fire department will take delivery shortly. The manager informed Board truck was purchased for \$349,962. Town made down payment of \$200,000. A discount of \$6,000 and Homeland Security Grant proceeds of \$21,089 leave a balance due of \$122,873. On manager's recommendation Board voted to apply approximately \$50,000 to balance due and finance remainder payable by means of lease purchase agreement.

Liquor Catering Permit – Board approved catering liquor permit for January 20 for Sodexo.

January 23, 2006

Northern Counties Health Care – Representatives from Northern Counties Health Care asked Board to consider "throwing-up" cul-de-sac at end of Sherman Drive to allow NCHC to use area for parking and for access to a new building near its existing facilities. After discussion Board directed town manager and road superintendent to seek a mutually agreeable solution.

Passumpsic Fire District – Board discussed a bill to Passumpsic Fire District in the amount of \$1,086.70 and the volume of water (5 million gallons) used by the district in 2005, which exceeds its maximum authorized by town (3.96 million gallons). Passumpsic Fire District

has asked for a multi-year agreement. Board agreed to refer matter to finance committee for recommendation.

Budget Review – The Town manager reviewed areas of possible budget adjustment including expenses in general fund, highway fund and special services district. Manager reviewed impact on property tax based upon adjustments discussed. Board agreed to continue review of budgets for 2006.

Special Education Fund – Board voted to include a non-binding article on town meeting warning regarding use of State Education Fund taxes for purposes other than education.

Revaluation – Board discussed possible town revaluation by contract assessor Caroline Lockyer and agreed not to proceed without competitive bidding.

Real Estate Purchase Option – After executive session to discuss option for purchase of real estate, no action was taken.

Walden

Town Clerk: Lina Smith

Selectboard: Perley Greaves, Daniel Lamont and Douglas Luther

December 27, 2005

Abuse of Power – Dan Lamont read a letter addressed to Doug Luther and sent to Board accusing Board of abuse of its power. For the record, Lamont clarified Board decision regarding summer mowing last year. He explained Board received a bid of \$2,500 for mowing and opted instead to purchase a mower for approximately \$800 and have mowing done by road crew using a tractor donated by Perley Greaves. In response to claim in the letter that Board was "punishing" the mowing contractor for signing a letter to overturn the ATV ordinance, Lamont explained the town saved \$1,600 in mowing costs this year and expects to do so in the future. Assumptions by letter writer about other motives were inaccurate.

Bank Account – Lina Smith noted she has moved checking account from Union Bank to Passumpsic Bank for the sake of convenience.

Internet Connection – DSL has been installed in town office and will be compared to previous Internet service for four months.

Green Up – After recommendation by Lina Smith that Board budget more money for disposal of tires at Green Up Day no decision was made.

School Plowing – Board agreed cost of winter plowing at school this year will remain at \$2,250.

Budget Review – Board reviewed 2005 financial report and 2006 budget.

Tax Anticipation Loan – After review of bids for tax anticipation loan, Board voted to accept proposal from Lyndonville Savings Bank at a rate of 3.15%.

Equalized Property Value – Board

noted report on equalized property value from the state. Coefficient of Dispersion for 2006 is 23.81% and Common Level of Appraisal is 72.35%.

Certificate of Highway Mileage – Board signed certificate of highway mileage adding upgraded section of Cobb and Keene Roads.

January 10, 2006

Town Meeting Elections – Board discussed petitions from candidates for public office.

Utility Easement – Board approved utility easement for Fair Point New England on Keene Road.

Beaver Trap Tampering – Dan Lamont reported a letter suggesting road crew was tampering with beaver traps on private land. Road crew expressed offense that anyone would think such a thing. Constable was notified to investigate the vandalism.

Road Policy – After discussion Board voted to accept road policy as written.

Town Meeting – Board discussed request from Judy Clifford that specific times be established to start town and school district meetings on March 7. Board will make a decision at next meeting.

Budget – Board reviewed year end financial reports.

January 24, 2006

Truck Repair – Dan Lamont reported International truck had new clutch. Total cost was \$2,002.

Erosion Control – Lamont reported Better Backroads grants were approved for erosion control on Bayley Hazen, Coles Pond Road, Ferguson Hill and Houston Hill.

Second Constable – Board agreed to seek voter permission at town meeting to appoint a second constable.

Education Funds – Board agreed to warn article to ask governor and legislature not to spend money from the education fund on anything but education.

National Guard – Board agreed to warn article to acknowledge and thank Vermont Air and Army National Guard for its service.

Recreation Committee – Board noted resignation of Leanne and Steven Judkins from recreation committee. Patty Foster and Kelly Greaves have taken over for them.

Town Meeting Elections – Lina Smith read list of petitions received representing candidates for election.

Town Salaries – Town clerk requested a 4.1% cost of living wage increase for road crew and town clerk. Board agreed to discuss request at another time.

Budget – Board reviewed 2006 budget.

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Attention Book Lovers - and Book Worms

TERRY HOFFER

Peter and Polly would love this place.

It seems almost unnecessary to explain that Peter and Polly were the children whose fictional lives in East St. Johnsbury were made famous by the author and Montpelier teacher Rose Lucia. Lucia wrote four collections of short stories, one for each season. Easy readers we call them, they are about Peter and Polly based upon Paul Willard and his sister, Cecile, who actually lived in a farmhouse on the East Village Road not far from US 2 and the Moose River. The illustrations and narrated adventures describe the lives of young Peter and Polly in their neighborhood in the early 1900's.

Today twin strips of Interstate highway leading from St. Johnsbury into central New Hampshire pass nearby. Like families themselves, the village of East St. Johnsbury has changed dramatically from the way it was known one hundred years ago, and young children are ruthlessly tugged by all manner of electronic distraction. The thought of playing with sticks in the river and sliding on the hill in the winter is almost painful for the depth of its nostalgic charm.

Yet above the old farmhouse that many of us came to know from Peter and Polly's experience is the new home of Kingdom Books, and there is a place where good stories and great books live on.

The Kannells relocated into a wonderful house where a gaggle of rooms takes the browser through their collection of used books specializing in mysteries, poetry and signed press work.

Beth and Dave Kannell, who established Kingdom Books on the second floor over Railroad Street in St. Johnsbury, have taken their collection and moved to a wonderful setting on the East Village Road. From the crowded shop space and a cluttered apartment the Kannells relocated into a wonderful house where a gag-

gle of rooms takes the browser through their collection of used books specializing in mysteries, poetry and signed press work.

"The shelf-life of a new book is short," Dave says. Publishers and bookstores need precious space for the incoming tide of new material, and "books are typically introduced in hard cover as a first edition and featured for five or six months, then reintroduced as a paperback and finally offered as a steeply discounted remainder." Most new books come and go, and only rarely do they reach the honorific status where an author and title find lasting appeal for book-sellers and -buyers.

So where does one go to seek out information about books or a specific title that's no longer hot?

Beth says, "There's a whole new life for used bookstores. There are street-level bookstores like Green Mountain Books in Lyndonville where titles and authors span a vast range of subjects and vary with collections that are bought and sold." Green Mountain Books has regular hours and is a great source of titles at secondhand prices. "Then there are specialty places like Lyders in Peacham or Kingdom Books in East St. Johnsbury (technically it's across the town line in Waterford) where the proprietors have a narrow niche - expertise in a more specifically defined range."

Lyders specializes in modern literature and sells first editions in fine condition for collectors. Beth and Dave Kannell describe their expertise as that of first edition mysteries, poetry and signed press work, which likewise are sought out by book lovers as something more than a book to



Photo By: North Star Monthly

In January Dave and Beth Kannell relocated their second floor downtown St. Johnsbury bookstore from Railroad Street to a house and new home in East St. Johnsbury.

Beth & Dave Kannell

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read represented quite simply by ink on the page.

Dave says, "We work at staying in touch with what's in and what's out, what's headed up and what's going down, and we will drop everything to hear authors read and get acquainted with what they think." Dave describes a group of ladies who recently came to their store for advice on titles for a book club specializing in mysteries. He offered all kinds of suggestions as to titles and authors that he finds, in many

ways, more satisfying than best sellers. "John Grisham, Dean Koontz and Stephen King, for instance, are contemporary superstars, but for my money and from my point of view the lesser known Charles Todd, Henning Mankell or K.C. Constantine are hands down better writers."

Beth Kannell says, "I compare them to buying beans in a can as opposed to seeking out organically farm-grown vegetables. Some like the familiarity where others are willing to take a chance on finding a much better bean."

Kingdom Books carries a wide range of poetry. As Beth says, "You mention Robert Frost and you wait for someone to say they remember meeting Frost or hearing him read at President Kennedy's inauguration. We are always looking for poets who will prove to have that cachet in

(See *We Appreciate* on Next Page)

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4	Saturday	Northfield @ Danville	1:00/2:30
7	Tuesday	Danville @ Williamstown	6:00/7:30
9	Thursday	Hazen @ Danville	6:00/7:30
11	Saturday	Danville @ Blue Mt.	6:00/7:30
14	Tuesday	Danville @ Stowe	6:00/7:30

BOYS BASKETBALL
 FEBRUARY

1	Wednesday	Peoples @ Danville	6:00/7:30
8	Wednesday	Danville @ Stowe	6:00/7:30
10	Friday	Hazen @ Danville	6:00/7:30
13	Monday	Northfield @ Danville	6:00/7:30
15	Wednesday	Danville @ Richford	6:00/7:30
18	Saturday	Danville @ BFA Fairfax	1:00/2:30
21	Tuesday	Williamstown @ Danville	6:00/7:30

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Ask the Shrinks

Alice S. Kitchel and Burton Zahler

Dear Shrinks,

My wife of 23-years, Gwen, is a fine looking woman. Since I met her she has always thought she was overweight. At first it wasn't clear to me whether she was joking or fishing for a compliment. Later, I came to see that she really believed she was fat and that nothing I said was going to change her mind.

So, why am I writing after all this time? Because finally Gwen is doing something about it. She calls it dieting, but it looks to me like she's starving herself, and I'm really scared she's hurting herself. I've argued with her 'til I'm blue in the face, it doesn't help.

I want two things from you, please. First, why is my wife acting like this and second, how should I handle things?

Scared in New Hampshire

Dear Scared,

Let's tackle the why first. You're probably aware that our whole culture has an obsession with beauty. In recent years, at least the past 40 years or so, feminine beauty in our culture has

been, in part, defined as slimmness. We believe there are several roots to this complex phenomenon.

There is some thought that because we have so much food and nourishment available to us, and it is therefore much easier to be overweight, the alluring look to strive for is slimmness. In contrast, at other times, during periods of the middle ages for example, when it was more difficult to consistently find enough food to eat, the culture considered plump figures the sexually alluring ones.

Another root that we think is a factor is our messages to our children. Think for a moment about what people say to (and about) little children to let them know they are loved. To little boys they are likely to say, "You're so strong!" or "Aren't you brave!" or "What a big boy!" To little girls people almost always say, "What a pretty girl!" or "You're so beautiful!" or "Don't you look nice in that dress!" For little girls it soon becomes obvious that they are loved because they are beautiful.

And, in their youthful logic, whenever they feel unloved it follows that they are not beautiful enough. Well, everyone feels unloved at times, and for many women the thought then grows into a conviction that they are therefore also physically unattractive.

She calls it dieting, but it looks to me like she's starving herself, and I'm really scared she's hurting herself.

What makes this vector of eating disorders dangerous is that there is no correlation between slimmness and feeling loved. The woman can become more and more slim and never feel more loved, and then continue to slim down even unto death.

There are other dimensions that may come into play. Perhaps there is a power struggle between the dieter and angry (and frightened) loved ones. If no more direct ways of expressing anger or autonomy are available, refusing to eat may preserve the dieter's honor, regardless of the cost. Or perhaps a family's

dynamic allows the dieter to function as a lightning rod, diverting possibly destructive arguments (between parents for example), into nagging the dieter.

As to how to act, Burt's suggestion is to offer full and complete support for Gwen's project, with the proviso that you'd like to understand how her physician sees the best way of proceeding. Alice wants to emphasize the

importance of getting a physician involved. She also believes that Gwen could benefit from counseling, once someone, perhaps the physician, has convinced her that she needs assistance sorting out her reasons for wanting to be so "slim."

Alice S. Kitchel and Burt Zahler, each have a private practice in St. Johnsbury. ★

Old Chairs Inquire Within

Perk begs a score of spoiled third-cut square bales each fall, enough to stack just in the barn past peeling warped propped-open doors so as to barricade the gaping maw.

Holsteins, milking machines, grain scoops, tools and tractor all sold off, the barn's a dusty shell, a mausoleum of a way of life, hiding how a failed farmer yet contrives to thrive.

Perk's daubed "For Sale" Bailed Hay on a scrap of mill slab, nailed it to his mailbox post next to an older better-lettered sign routed on nicely worm-bored finish pine. The in-set caps in faint barn red proclaim with partial truth OLD CHAIRS INQUIRE WITHIN.

Those bales of rotting hay, their scruffy sign, are what entice antiquers in new vans for Boston rockers, Hitchcocks, milking stools he's cobbled from odd parts bought at auction or turned anew from weathered wood, and glued.

Find enough shards, one fraud can fabricate a faith; another charlatan, a chair.

William Biddle

We Appreciate Books as an Art Form

(Continued from Page 20)

the future." Beth smiles as she carefully opens volumes from her favorites - Galway Kinnell, Hayden Carruth and James Hayford.

She says, "We appreciate books as an art form. If you pick up a glass of water and it's chipped you put it down. If you hold a fine book in your hands - there is something that has a voice - it speaks about the author and the time that it was published. It's never the same if the book is stained or damaged - or smells like some reader's damp basement or his cigarette smoke. We appreciate fine books, and we sell them in mylar or plastic sleeves to protect them."

Beth and Dave talk about their January relocation to this new setting for Kingdom Books. "We never imagined a place like this, but it's wonderful," he says.

And it is. There are sweeping views into the Moose River Valley and down along the same hillside that Peter and Polly climbed pulling sleds in their fictional life created by Rose Lucia. Inside the space is comfortable, and the books are engaging. The Kannells appreciate book lovers, and it shows.

Beth likes to say it's about "passion." Both she and Dave have that for their books - on one hand a library on the other a

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February		February	
1	Montpelier @ Lyndon, 5:30/7:00	1	Lyndon @ Rivendell, 6:00/7:30
3	Lyndon @ U-32, 5:30/7:00	3	Lyndon @ Montpelier, 6:00/7:30
8	Lamoille @ Lyndon, 5:30/7:00	7	Oxbow @ Lyndon, 5:30/7:00
10	Lyndon @ Randolph, 6:00/7:30	9	Randolph @ Lyndon, 5:30/7:00
15	Lyndon @ Oxbow, 6:00/7:30	14	Lyndon @ Harwood, 6:00/7:30
17	Hartford @ Lyndon, 5:30/7:00		
21	Harwood @ Lyndon, 5:30/7:00		

FROSH BASKETBALL Girls/Boys

February	
1	Lyndon @ Peoples, 6:00/7:30
6	North Country @ Lyndon, 5:00/6:30
10	Missisquoi, 5:00/6:30
13	Enosburg @ Lyndon (Girls only), 5:00

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Boys Basketball ~ Varsity and Junior Varsity				Girls Basketball ~ Varsity and Junior Varsity			
Varsity Game follows JV Game				Varsity Game follows JV Game			
February				February			
3	CVU	H	5-6:30	2	@ North Country	A	5-6:45
7	@ Colchester	A	5-6:30	6	@ Mt. Mansfield	A	5-6:45
10	@ Rice	A	5-6:30	8	@ CVU	A	5-6:45
13	@ Essex	A	5-6:30	10	Brattleboro	H	5-6:45
17	So. Burlington	H	5-6:30	14	Burlington	H	5-6:45
21	Burlington	H	5-6:30				

Hockey				Wrestling			
February				February			
1	@ Mt. St. Joseph	A	5:00	4	Mt. Anthony Duals	A	10:00
8	@ Middlebury	A	5:45	8	Spaulding	H	6:00
11	@ Harwood	A	6:00	11	NVAC Tournament @ SJA	H	10:00

Gymnastics			
February			
4	Milton	H	2:00
10	U-32	H	7:00

Go Hilltoppers!



Danville Senior Meal Site on the Green

Danville, Vermont

January 17, 2006

Luncheon Menu

Roasted Rosemary Cider Pork Loin
served over a warm Ten Fruit Compote

Braised Sweet and Savory caraway flavored
Red and Green Cabbage

Red Bliss Potatoes

Homemade Rolls served with Maple Butter

Cucumber and Roasted Sweet Bell Pepper Salad

Dessert:

Vermont Mystic Apple Pie with
Ben and Jerry's Vanilla Ice Cream

Beverages



The North Star kitchen team featuring Irv Gelber, Mark Fixter,
Suzanne Tanner and Terry Hoffer
consider the opportunity to prepare this meal a great privilege. Thank you.

We are especially grateful for generous assistance provided by Karen Moran,
the Danville Meal Site,
The North Star Monthly and
the Vermont Mystic Pie Co. of Stowe.



On Tuesday, January 17
The North Star and friends
provided lunch for the
Danville Senior Meal Site
as part of the Meal Site's
rotating celebrity chef
program ... and what
a great time they had.
Meal Site Manager
Karen Moran offered the
invitation, and following the
lead of Executive Chef Irv
Gelber, *The North Star* crew,
including Sandy Lazerick,
Suzanne Tanner, Mark Fixter
and Terry Hoffer, served a
roast pork loin dinner to a
standing room only gathering
at the Methodist Church
on the Danville Green.
In addition to support from
The North Star, Apple Pies
and Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream
were donated by the
Vermont Mystic Pie Co.
of Stowe.

\$ Follow the Money

by Rachel Siegel

“Neither rain, nor...”

Postage rates have gone up again. Actually, in the last 35 years, since the creation of the US Postal Service as a “government corporation,” postage rates have been raised, on average, 4.63% per year – not much more than the rate of inflation – without cutting significant services. The experiment seems to have worked.

Postal delivery, historically, has been provided by governments, rather than left to private suppliers, because it has been seen as critical in protecting the nation’s trade. Trade creates paperwork – purchase orders, bills of lading, bills, receipts, confirmations and, most especially, the exchange and clearance of financial notes. In order for this paper to facilitate trade, traders had to be able to trust in its prompt and accurate delivery.

Before there was even a United States, the Continental Congress, in 1775, authorized the Postal Service, under the leadership of Benjamin Franklin. It was a matter of strategic imperative that the rebellious colonists could control communications in the colonies. As we became a nation, establishing postal service was one of the first things that we did: Article I of the U.S. Constitution created the U.S. Post Office as a government department, with the Postmaster General reporting directly to the

President of the United States.

The USPO changed its methods over time - adapting new transportation technologies such as stagecoach, waterways, railroad, pony express, automobile and finally air routes – but it remained a government department. In 1863, reforms introduced free city delivery to residences and businesses (previously, mail had to be picked up at the post office). In 1890, Rural Free Delivery was introduced to provide delivery service to rural residents.

The introduction of a delivery service was not just a matter of convenience; it was vital for the development of national markets. (It also required that cities establish sidewalks, name streets and number buildings to qualify.) In 1902, when rural delivery service became universal, about 65% of Americans lived in rural areas, so it was critical for our economic development to include them in the national markets and information flow of the 20th century.

This level of service was deemed necessary, but it was costly. Although the Post Office started out being self-supporting, over the years Congress mandated reduced rates for certain classes of mail, which cut into revenues. Management was based on political patronage, not on effectiveness. The population and the volume of mail increased (from over 7 billion pieces annu-

ally in 1900 to over 84 billion in 1970), but the USPO had not benefited from enough modernization and automation. Although the USPO had usually operated at a deficit, by 1970 it was widely perceived as a bureaucratic failure, and, most important, the system was increasingly unable to keep up with the mail.

Divestment or privatization of the Post Office would have forced profitable operations through increased efficiencies but probably also forced a reduction of “unprofitable” services such as our rural delivery - and may have even forced bankruptcy. The need to insure postal services still had to be met, and the federal government was not ready to give up its sovereign role. The compromise was the Postal Reorganization Act, passed in 1970, which created the U.S. Postal Service as a self-supporting “government corporation,” a hybrid experiment in business structure.

The new Postal Service had the authority to raise capital through bond issues, as an independent corporation could. It had the authority to collectively bargain directly with employees, and management was divorced from the patronage system, answering to a board of directors rather than Congress. Perhaps most importantly, rates were to be set such that processing and delivery of mail would cover costs, with Congressional appropriations to cover the mandated free and reduced mail rates, such

as 2nd, 3rd and 4th class.

The USPS has faced competition, especially in parcel delivery services, from private companies such as UPS and Fedex. It has also faced the change in its services necessitated by new technologies, such as the Internet. The Internet, like the telephone before it, was predicted to make most mail – certainly personal and business correspondence – obsolete. Instead, it has not decreased the volume of mail. It turns out that for all our Internet shopping and transmitting of funds, we still want a written receipt, while personal correspondence had already been minimized by the telephone – and has increased the volume of parcels processed, as Internet retailing still requires delivery.

The advantages of a private corporation have given the USPS the flexibility it needed to survive into the 21st century. Yet it is a government corporation, not a private provider. The government still protects the mail. Although hardly our only access

to information and communication, it remains a vital component of our markets.

Postal delivery, historically, has been provided by governments, rather than left to private suppliers, because it has been seen as critical in protecting the nation’s trade.

Rachel S. Siegel, CFA, consults on investment portfolio performance and strategy, and on accounting and tax dilemmas. She has an MBA from Yale; she is a professor in the business administration department at Lyndon State College. ★

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Walden Hill Journal

ELLEN GOLD

February 2, 2005 - Groundhog Day. February finds us comfortably stuck in winter doldrums. Calm winds and high pressure marooned Vermont in a sea of sunshine with daytime temperatures warming into the 30's and clear cold nights hovering in the single digits. Mount Washington was reporting 19° and 100 mile visibility. In practical terms these welcome doldrums mean we can open the quilts to winter sun instead of lighting the woodstove, and the snowblower and shovel are getting a rest. Snowshoes, however, are finally seeing daily use as we partake in this exhilarating winter playground. Regardless of what the Punxsutawney groundhog sees today, we're in for at least six more weeks of winter, and if the doldrums persist, there'll be no complaints from Walden Hill.

February 5, 2005 - It's been 10 days in a row of sunshine, calm winds and no precipitation. The same is forecast for the weekend. It continues to be crystal clear and cold at night with a shocking display of millions of stars. The big dipper is in its question mark position, wondering if we haven't somehow skipped February and moved into March. With daytime temperatures above freezing and nights plunging into

the teens, it seems like sugaring weather. The snow pack is giving way to bare ground, and the snowshoe trail has turned slushy. Took advantage of another amazingly clear night and more friendly 20° temperatures to look for comet Machholz. With navigational help online and Cassiopeia as my guide, I found the comet.

February 7, 2005 - As Hal Borland observed, "A mild day in January is a break and a momentary relief, a chance for man to catch his breath; but when February relaxes for a day or two it is a promise." High 40's over the weekend brought record breaking temperatures across the U.S. We're seeing lots of open ground, especially around the trees. Hopefully the maple trees are paying more attention to the length of daylight rather than to unseasonably warm days. Sending the sap flowing now would leave buds too vulnerable to our inevitable return to winter. The frost must be very deep this year with cold months in January and December.

February 10, 2005 - We're literally being dumped back into winter. It's been snowing all day with 12 to 14 inches accumulation so far. It's wet, heavy snow, more indicative of March or April than February. It's a good thing we had previously shoveled the porch because today's snow alone is

halfway up the doors.

February 11, 2005 - The morning tally brings our snow up to 2 feet. At least the last half of that was much lighter snow with considerably less water content. Falling temperatures no doubt account for the change in consistency. It's snow that's much more susceptible to drifting and that's exactly what the wind is accomplishing now. It should be beautiful snow for skiing, snowshoeing and snowmobiling with wet snow pack underneath and a foot of fluffy snow on top. It finally looks like February.

February 14, 2005 - Happy Valentines Day. It's good to feel the warmth of the sun this morning after seeing the thermometer drop below zero last night. Along with frigid temperatures came a sparkling, clear, starlit night. The moon shone briefly before setting to make room for the milky way and a firmly stanced Orion. Not much animal activity visible in the new snow. They must be waiting out the storm.

February 15, 2005 - The temperature rose into the 40's, turning deep heavy snow into deep, heavy slush. Even the snowblower had trouble as the slush compacted in the blades. This snowfall must have started out as lighter flakes because drifting was substantial.

February 18, 2005 - More thawing, ice and finally snow to keep our snowshoe trail cushioned but firm. This last snowfall left trees thickly outlined in snow with minimal wind to disturb these beautiful sculptures. Tenacious, dried beech leaves hang onto their branches adding that unique rustling sound and golden color to the winter landscape. Temperatures are dropping with the setting sun, and the wind



Photo By: Jeff Gold

has picked up, erasing our tracks in the field, leaving a clean slate for whatever ventures out in the night. Meanwhile we continue to take advantage of the lengthening days to enjoy the long afternoon shadows and a snowshoe in the woods.

February 20, 2005 - Took a long snowshoe across Gore Road to the edge of the woods then back across the open road, up the hill and back home. The White Mountains were very white and striking in the late afternoon directional light. It was a chilly walk made comfortable by heading into the sun on the return trail. I got some much needed aerobic exercise, climbing back up to the top of the road. Sunset is around 5 o'clock now but twilight lingers well past 5:30. It may feel like we're gaining over winter's darkness, but with the setting sun the thermometer quickly drops to the minus side of zero. Winter retains its grip.

February 22, 2005 - More light, fluffy snow today. The weatherman says we've had six days in a row of snow with snow fall on 12 out of the past 14 days. The ski industry is happy especially since this is a vacation week for many schools.

February 23, 2005 - Strong gusts of wind are clearing the snow-laden trees, creating clouds of snow. Swirling snowdust sparkles in the sun. Snow "smoke" gently settles in the valley until the next gust of wind stirs it all up again. Retreating clouds form a brief steel gray screen to dramatically offset the bright white winter scene. Supper's entertainment was the full moonrise through bare poplar branches.

February 28, 2005 - We're ending February under cloudy skies after several days of glorious winter sunshine. It was Presidents' Day vacation week for New England schools and a great extended week for winter sports. Fresh powdery snow and sunny days helped Vermont put on her best winter face for the tourists. I made two new bird discoveries with the help of friends. The purple finch and house finch are not the same but rather two distinct birds. What we tend to see at our feeders is the purple finch. Also, there are two common nuthatches, the white-breasted and the red-breasted. I'll be more observant to detect who's visiting the feeder. I've been out creating a more extensive series of snowshoe trails through our woods and am enjoying access to the swampy areas, which are only accessible with a good snow cover. I discovered a small fur ball, which on closer inspection turned out to be a mouse "cloak" complete with tail. I'm sure the cats would have enjoyed playing with it, but I opted to leave it in the woods. You never know when a cold mouse might be looking for an extra fur coat to keep warm.

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Whatever Happened to Those Cabbage Patch Dolls?

RETA MORSE

Cabbage Patch Dolls were a remarkable craze in the 1980's. They were the brain-storm of 21-year-old Xavier Roberts, who sculptured in cloth these endearing figures.

In 1978 Roberts opened an old doctors clinic in Cleveland, GA and called it Babyland General Hospital. The building had several rooms where Cabbage Patch Dolls were displayed in various modes of activity. One room was the maternity ward where nurses in hospital attire tended to birthing. It was there among the cabbage leaves that a Cabbage Patch Doll was "born." Following birth the dolls were wrapped in a blanket and placed in an incubator to await adoption. No two dolls were exactly alike.

By 1987 Roberts was extremely wealthy.

The early dolls were of great demand to collectors, and some sold for over \$200. The legal rights to Cabbage Patch Kid Dolls changed hands several times. Coleco, then Hasbro and Mattel were owners.

One wouldn't say that these Cabbage Patch Dolls were pretty. They had a round face, eyes close set, a smirky little mouth and little dimples in their cheeks. Some had hair. Others were bald. The first dolls had a vinyl face but a sculptured cloth body. When Coleco had ownership the doll's body was vinyl.

There was some strange attraction that drew to a great desire to own one. Not only did children want one, but elderly people were fascinated with them as well.

Besides the original Cabbage Patch Dolls various other dolls are made. There were the Kid Cabbage Patch Dolls, called Little People. And Baby Bunnies, Bunny Bees, Babyland Premies dressed in long old fashioned nightgowns tied at the bottom to keep the feet in and others. Babyland General Hospital is now a tourist attraction, and Xavier Roberts still has his residence in Cleveland, GA.

There are still stores where these dolls are sold, and they have become quite a collectors item.

Nineteen years ago my granddaughter, Breanna, then 4 and her sister, Candice then about 7, were each given a Cabbage Patch Doll. Upon opening the boxes a scent of baby powder filled the air. A birth

certificate and adoption papers were enclosed. On the back end of each doll was Xavier Roberts' signature.

Breanna's baby was named Wade Jasper and given the family's last name. He was dressed in shorts and a shirt. He was bald. I don't recall the name Candice had for her doll. Her doll was a girl. She was bald also. At that time these dolls sold for about thirty dollars in discount stores.

Breanna took caring for Wade to heart. To her he was almost human. A neighbor's son became the "father." If the family went away Wade had to go, too. At mealtimes Wade sat in a highchair next to Breanna, and she tended to feeding him. Breanna's father made Wade a crib. Later he made a bed. There was a tiny mattress and bedding to make him comfortable.

Naturally, Wade had his bed next to Breanna. Whenever Breanna and Candice came to spend weekends with me Wade came, too, and was pushed about the yard in an old baby carriage. At

his first birthday he was given a carrot cake. At one time when Breanna had to appear in Court she took Wade. I made him a dark pair of pants and jacket and a white shirt with a bow tie. The judge at that time included Wade in the court records. At one time his body seams came unstitched, and his head needed attention. A neighbor performed major surgery on Wade while Breanna held his hand.

Breanna played with Wade until she was about 12. Right now Wade is packed in a shoebox in the bureau drawer for safe keeping.

Now that Breanna has daughters of her own she wants them to experience enjoying a Cabbage Patch Doll. Jada's doll, named Jada Mary-Kate, is blonde and has green eyes. She is dressed in a long sleeved flowery blouse with a blue jean jumper and purple shoes. Daisha's doll is a boy. He is named Issac Clinton and has brown hair and brown eyes. He wears blue shorts, a green and yellow shirt with a red jacket and brown boots. Alexis has a baby doll with blond



Photo By: North Star Monthly


Author Reta Morse (right rear) and her granddaughter Breanna haven't let their old favorite Cabbage Patch family get very far. They are still much admired by Breanna's children (front L-R) Jada, Alexis and Daisha.

hair and blue eyes and named Gloria Pauline. She is dressed in an old fashioned night gown.

Candice enjoyed her doll, but she didn't have the same feeling about it as Breanna did. A while ago I found a Cabbage Patch Doll in a yard sale. She has long brown hair, and she, too, has Roberts' signature. Candice's doll and the

other one sit in the highchair awaiting new clothes.

I imagine if a search was made in attics or storage places one might find a Cabbage Patch Doll that was put away and forgotten. They are still unusual, and their owners, older now, can recall when everyone played with Cabbage Patch Dolls.




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No Small Potatoes

Vanna Guldenschuh

Risotto is one of the ultimate comfort foods. Rich, creamy, delicious and satisfying. It is how Italians do rice. There are many variations of this dish, but they all follow the same basic techniques. Learn them, and you will learn to make the many different recipes that are all called risotto.

WHAT IS RISOTTO?

It is a rice dish started by sautéing basic ingredients (they vary) in either butter or olive oil to release the flavor then adding raw rice to the mix and cooking it in order to heat and flavor the rice. You then add hot liquid a ladle at a time (stirring constantly) until the rice is cooked and has yielded its starch to make a wonderfully creamy dish. Add either a little butter, oil or other ingredients to further the flavor, and voila you have created the fragrant and savory ambrosia they call risotto.

THE RICE:

There are special types of rice used to make risotto. They all have a characteristic soft starchy outer layer (amy-

lopectin), which dissolves when you cook it, and a harder inner starch (amylose) that stays firm throughout the cooking process giving the finished product substance. Don't make this dish with any other rice types. They will not work as well.

The most popular rice is Arborio. It is available in most supermarkets, and it has more of the soft starchy outer layer and less inner core than its relatives. You can make a very creamy risotto from Arborio rice, but you have to be careful to control the liquid and cooking so it does not become gummy. This is the rice variety I have used in all these recipes.

Another rice used in risotto is Vialone Nano. It is harder to find and contains more of the dense starch core creating an 'al dente' risotto, which is less creamy and more soupy.

THE TECHNIQUE:

Decide on the base ingredients and dice or chop them to specifications. These ingredients can vary greatly and make this a versatile dish. Saute them in butter or olive oil depending on

what matches. Don't really brown the ingredients – you only want to gently extract the flavors from them.

Turn up the heat a little, and saute the raw rice in these ingredients until the rice is warmed and has had a chance to absorb the flavors from this mix.

You need to have the hot liquid on hand – on the stove near where you are making the risotto. The liquid is usually a light broth diluted with some water or on occasion a little wine. I like to use the organic broth that comes in a box. Just choose the type you want – chicken, beef, mushroom or vegetable. I mix this with some water depending on how much flavor I want the broth to add. Remember, you want the sautéed ingredients to create most of the flavor in risotto. Add the hot liquid to the rice a ladle at a time, and stir constantly. When the rice has absorbed the added liquid and begins to dry – add another ladle of the hot liquid. Repeat this until the rice is cooked and the right consistency has been achieved. This usually takes about 20 minutes. You will be using a medium high heat.

It is now the time to finish the risotto with a little butter, olive oil, parmesan cheese or other ingredients that you do not want to cook but just use for flavor.

THINGS TO REMEMBER:

Make sure you use the proper rice. Make sure the liquid you add to the rice is hot and you only add a ladle full at a time – so it incorporates slowly. Make sure you stir constantly – clean-

ing the bottom of the pan so the risotto does not stick. This stirring is what makes risotto the creamy dish it is – coating all the ingredients with dissolved starch and binding them together. A wooden spoon with a flat bottom is best. Taste the risotto after about 20 minutes adding the ladles of liquid for doneness. When it is creamy with a slight resistant bite it is done. If you haven't used all the liquid it is okay – just save it for something else. If you need more liquid – hot water will do. The pan you use should have a heavy bottom and not be too tall. A big sauté pan is best. A well seasoned cast iron skillet makes a great risotto pan. A tall sided sauce pan is not a good pot to use.

Use a good grated cheese when finishing the dish. I strongly suggest Parmigiano-Reggiano or at least a freshly grated cheese. You can substitute – just don't make me watch.

The recipes below are fairly simple and serve about 6 people. Once you start making risotto you will want to experiment with different combinations – and believe me they are endless. Just make sure the ingredients go well together.

Once you get the knack of risotto it will become second nature. And, even though it takes 20 minutes of constant stirring the result will be worth it. Remember, you only need to serve simple foods alongside risotto to make a great feast.

Mushroom Risotto

This risotto is a simple and classic one. You can make it vegetarian by using vegetable broth, but I prefer a light beef broth. Baby Bella mushrooms are readily available, but button mushrooms are okay to use. Add a light Italian sausage (out of its casing) or ground pork to the ingredients at the sauté stage and turn this risotto into the main entree.

- 1 box beef broth mixed with 3 cups water (can substitute vegetable broth)
- 2 cups Arborio rice
- 1 clove garlic – diced
- 1 medium onion – chopped
- 1 lb fresh mushrooms – sliced
- ½ lb fresh Italian sausage (out of the casing) or plain ground pork – optional
- 1 bunch scallions – chopped
- ¼ cup chopped parsley
- ½ cup pine nuts – lightly toasted – optional
- ¾ cup Parmigiano- Reggiano cheese – grated (you can substitute)
- 4 tablespoons butter
- Salt and pepper

Saute the garlic in two tablespoons of butter until barely colored. Add the chopped onion and scallions, and continue cooking until the onion is soft and pale gold. Add the chopped mushroom and cook for another 5 or 6 minutes. Add the meat if you are using it, and sauté until it is barely done.

Don't forget to have the broth heating on the stove near where you will be making the risotto.

Turn the heat up a little, and add the rice – warming and coating it with all the flavors in the pan. Add one ladle of the broth and stir constantly until it is absorbed. Keep repeating this procedure for about 20 minutes. Taste the rice to check if it's done. If you add too much liquid it will make a gummy risotto – so stop when it is done. Only a tasting by you, the chef, will tell.

Take the risotto off heat, and add the finishing ingredients - the remaining butter, parsley, grated cheese and if you opt - the pine nuts toasted lightly in the oven for just a few minutes.

Serve with grilled sausages and/or zucchini and a salad.

Shrimp Risotto

I will give you this recipe with advice to get adventurous. You can use just shrimp or add other seafoods – monkfish, scallops, squid or mussels. Use chicken stock or just water for the broth, and add the actual seafood near the end of making the risotto depending on how long the product takes to cook. Mussels, shrimp and scallops should be added after about 10 or 15 minutes of ladling broth into the rice.

- 2 cups Arborio rice
- 1 lb medium size raw shrimp - you can leave the tail shell on if you want
- Any other seafood you want to use

(See You Only on Next Page)

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	8 A.M. Weekend Edition	
Classical Music with Walter Parker	9 A.M. Car Talk	Sunday Baroque
	10 A.M. What, What... Don't Tell Me!	
Performance Today	Noon Interlude	A Prairie Home Companion
Fresh Air with Terry Gross	1 P.M. Saturday Afternoon at the Opera with Peter Fox Smith	All The Traditions with Robert Resnik
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Marketplace	3 P.M. A Prairie Home Companion	From the Top
(Wed) Living on Earth (Thu & Fri) Switchboard (Wed) Song Traveler (Fri) Human Neighbors	4 P.M. The Blue & Shurelock	Concurrence Folio
Riverwalk	5 P.M. My Place	Soy Ya
The NPR 100 with George Thomas	6 P.M. Hearts of Space	The American Life
Classical Music	7 P.M. My Place	Sound and Spirit
	8 P.M. Hearts of Space	Classical Music
	9 P.M. Hearts of Space	Classical Music
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- February 26 *North* by Donna Jo Napoli

Snowmobile Racing to Pin Your Ears Back

The excitement and thrills of full-throttle snocross snowmobile racing will fill Champlain Valley Exposition's Grandstand on February 11-12.

The Rock Maple Snocross Snowmobile Racing Series (RMR) is new to Chittenden County, and the speed and height the racers reach on the closed race course may surprise some who have never seen it.

"You'll feel like the snowmobiles are coming right at you as they soar over jumps on the L-shaped race course," says Tom Oddy, CVE's director of special events. Bumps and jumps on the specially constructed snow course send

snowmobiles and their riders up to 30-feet in the air, traveling more than 100 feet. "Seeing more than a dozen high-powered snowmobiles flying through the air is something you don't want to miss."

With the introduction of Ski-Doo's new Freestyle model, a racing class has been created for 8-10 year-olds. Other classes include Sport Open, Semi-Pro Open and Pro Open. There are classes for women racers and children from 6 to 10 who compete on smaller snowmobiles.

"We're proud of the friendly, family-oriented, sportsmanship-like atmosphere that RMR is known for, and we are looking

forward to another successful season," says Chris Walling, RMR's race director. Rock Maple Racing's event at the Exposition is one stop on a 10-week circuit in the Northeast. RMR is the eastern affiliate of the World Powersports Association.

Organizers at the Champlain Valley Exposition expects the weekend of racing could draw between 7,000 and 10,000 fans from across the Northeast to Essex Junction. About 8,500 fans attended a similar race in January at Malone, NY.

While wintry weather can be fickle in January and February, crews at the Exposition have been stockpiling snow for the course since December so "we expect there will be more than enough snow for a great weekend of snowmobile racing," says



Rock Maple Snocross Photograph

Stephen Mease, director of public relations at CVE.

In addition to outdoor action in front of the grandstand, an indoor exhibit area will offer spectators a warm place to eat and study the latest models of snowmobiles and other winter sports equipment, supplies and services.

RMR plans to offer fans a chance to experience snocross action first-hand by offering rides on the racing sleds. "If you like the Winter X-Games, NASCAR or the Four-Wheel

Jamboree and Monster Trucks, you are going to love this extreme winter sport," says Oddy.

Gates open at 8:30 a.m. both days with racing to start at 10:00 a.m. Admission at the gate is \$13 for adults, children under age 10 are free with an adult. Coupons for discounted admission at the gate are available at participating New England Dodge dealers.

You only need to serve simple foods alongside risotto to make a great feast

(Continued from Page 26)

- 2 cloves garlic – diced
- 1 bunch scallions – chopped
- 2 medium size zucchini - chopped
- Pinch of saffron (best) or ½ teaspoon Old Bay Seasoning
- 1 box chicken stock mixed with 3 cups water
- 1 roasted lemon
- ¼ chopped parsley
- 4 tablespoons of butter
- Parmesan cheese – optional

Cut the lemon in half and roast in the oven for about 20 minutes at 350. Shell the shrimp and set aside with any other seafood you have.

Heat your broth. Sauté the garlic and scallions in two tablespoons of the butter until soft. Add the zucchini and continue cooking for a few minutes. Add the saffron or Old Bay Seasoning. Turn the heat up and add the rice stirring to warm and flavor.

Start adding the hot broth one ladle at a time – stirring constantly as in the recipe above. When the rice is nearing comple-

tion (about 10 to 15 minutes into the process) squeeze the roasted lemon over the shrimp and add them to the risotto. You want to time it so that the rice and the seafood are done at the same time. You don't want to have to continue cooking the rice beyond the time it is done to cook the shrimp, and you don't want to have to cook the rice beyond the time the shrimp is done. It's a little tricky – and you want to err on the side of cooking the shrimp

a little more than necessary than undercooking the rice.

When all is done – remove from the heat, and add salt and pepper to taste, parsley and the remaining butter. I don't particularly like cheese with seafood, but you can stir in grated parmesan at this point if you wish.

Serve with extra sautéed shrimp and a salad for a most memorable meal. ★

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Maple Syrup

Sugar Ridge Farm
Pure Maple Syrup & Maple Products. "Vermont Seal of Quality." Available by mail. MC & Visa accepted. Free brochure. Stephen & Diane Jones, 566 Stannard Mt. Rd., Danville, VT 05828. (800) 748-0892.

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Broadview Farm Maple
Pure VT Maple Syrup available in Grade A Fancy, Medium Amber, Dark Amber and Grade B. "Vermont Seal of Quality." Maple Cream, Maple Candy and Maple Sugar are available. We ship via UPS or Parcel Post. Joe Newell, 442 York Street, Lyndonville, VT 05851. (802) 626-8396. email: joe@newells.net

Goodrich's Maple Farm
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Cabot Hills Maple
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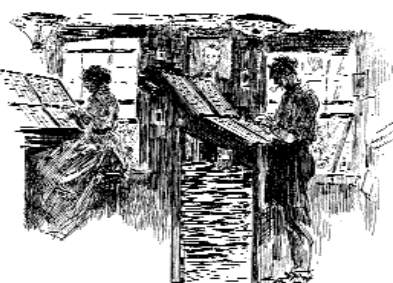
Harold Dresser, Realtor
Reynolds Real Estate, Inc. 791 Broad Street, Lyndonville, VT 05851. (802) 626-9357 office. (802) 626-5302 home. Multiple Listing Service. www.reynoldsre.com Email: reynoldsre@charterinternet.com

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David A. Lussier Real Estate
Farms, Acreage, Homes and Investment Properties. 540 Main Street, PO Box 872, Lyndonville, VT 05851. (802) 626-9541 or (802) 626-8482. Email: Lussier@kingcon.com

Sara Heft, REALTOR
Century 21 Quatrini Real Estate, 1111 Main Street, St Johnsbury, VT 05819. (802) 748-9543 or (802) 684-1095. saraheft@mac.com Danville resident able to help with all your real estate needs.



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Veterinarians

Danville Animal Hospital
Small animals. Office hours by appointment. Stanley J. Pekala, DVM and Lisa Whitney, DVM. Route 2, Danville, VT 05828. (802) 684-2284.

Northern Equine Veterinary Services
Steve B. Levine. Practice limited to horses. Saturday appointments available. (802) 684-9977. 254 RT 2, Danville, VT 05828. www.northernequine.com

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Small animal medicine & surgery. Bob Hicks, DVM and Sally S. Calamaio, DVM. 54 Western Ave., St. Johnsbury, VT. (802) 748-2855.

Volunteers

R.S.V.P.
Do you have some free time? Do you want to help an organization in the Northeast Kingdom as a volunteer? For information call the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program and the Volunteer Center at (802) 626-5135 or (802) 334-7047.

Water Systems

H.A. Manosh Corporation
Well Drilling & Hydrofracturing, Water Systems & Treatment, 24-hour Plumbing, Video Well Inspections, Water Fountains. Morrisville, VT 05661. (802) 888-5722 or (800) 544-7666. www.manosh.com

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THE North Star MONTHLY

Send your friends a taste of the Northeast Kingdom. Give them a subscription to *The North Star Monthly*. See page 3 for details

Who Ever Said Funding Public School Systems Would Be Easy?

BETTY HATCH

The topic of headlines in newspapers and discussion at local school meetings this winter has been the cost of education - teachers' salaries, high school tuition, health insurance premiums and the cost of whatever else must be paid.

Several months ago, I was fortunate enough to receive a box of letters, papers and other memorabilia from the I. John Farrow estate. John's father was school director in Walden from 1926 to

1940, and he served as chairman of the board for many of those years.

A search of that collection and historic file produced this interesting item.

A Special Bulletin regarding *Seventy-five Dollar Charge for High School Tuition*. Your special attention is called at this time to a bill now before the Legislature - *House Bill Number 113*.

This bill provides that the minimum high school tuition to

be paid by towns not maintaining a high school shall be \$75 instead of \$60 as heretofore. The bill has already passed the House, has been favorably reported by the Senate Committee on Education and has been ordered to its final reading in the Senate with no opposition. There is, therefore, a reasonable certainty of the bill becoming a law, effective for the next school year.

If your town has hitherto been paying less than \$75 per pupil for high school instruction,

the extra expense involved by increasing the rate should be adequately provided for in the appropriation for schools to be voted on at the March Town Meeting. The difference will be easy to compute - multiply \$15 by the prospective number of your high school students for the next year.

Very truly yours,
Charles H. Dempsey,
Commissioner of Education

The letter was dated February 27, 1931

A list of high school students from Walden was listed in hand writing on the letter as follows:
Ruth Greaves - Montpelier

Academy, Julia Tanguay - St. Johnsbury Academy, Wilfred Cochran - Craftsbury Academy, Verna Gilman and Dorothy Woods - Cabot Academy, Leslie Allen, Louise Houston, Olive Houston, Helen Perkins, Eva Salls and Isabelle Sevigny - Hardwick Academy, Erlene Patterson, Hazel Hatch, Julia Fournier, John and Helen Farrow - Danville Academy.

Another undated newspaper item from the *Caledonian Record* had this headline: *Walden Voters Reject Added School Tax - Eight Schools May Be Closed Because Of Lack Of Funds*.

By a vote of 48 to 18, the people of Walden at a special town meeting yesterday, decided not to raise funds to support the schools of the town after Friday of this week and at that time the children of the town will shut their books and the eight school-houses there will be closed for the winter.

The special town meeting was called to see if the voters would raise taxes of 33 cents on the dollar of the grand list to sup
(See Funding on Next Page)



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MLS #207008: Cozy comfortable well maintained home. This home has all it takes, to move in and be all set. Nice country kitchen and dining area, large living room. Detached garage and multi-purpose room. New roof and insulation this summer. **\$136,000**

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3 Bdrm. Raised ranch with 2 baths on 5+/- acres with an additional 3.9+/- acres across the road. Listen to the brook off the back (handicapped accessible) deck. Also includes a 3 car garage and a large shed. Near Ski area and snowmobile trails.



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Clif Muller

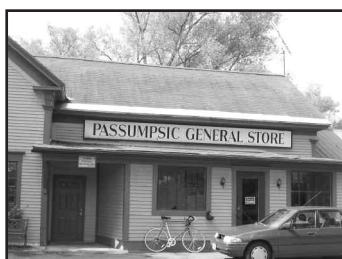
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69 Meadow Street
Littleton, NH 03561
(603) 444-7781 or (800) 998-7781
or call me on my cell at (603) 616-9655

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The housing market always slows down in the winter but it doesn't stop. If you are thinking of selling your home don't let the cold months put a stop to your plans. Loan money is still affordable at about 6% and there are still buyers out there looking for a second home or a get-a-way camp. It will take a little longer to sell your property but you can still expect to get the full market value when you do find a buyer. So don't be put off by the cold winter months from pursuing your plans, call me Clif Muller, to discuss all I will do for you to market and sell your home. I have all the resources of one of the biggest and most recognized brokerage firms at my disposal.

My latest offering is a large historic home in Passumpsic village on the corner of Bridge Street and Rt#5. This unique home includes a coveted US Post Office lease with 4 years left on the lease. At the end of the lease there are two 5 year optional lease periods which the USPS could use. This means the owners could see up to 14 years of additional income from the best client on the planet. There is also a non operating General Store that could be brought back to life. Add these features to the house itself which has 18 rooms, 5-7 bedrooms, hardwood floors, tin ceilings, oil and wood heat, 200 amp service, on one acre, and you have a house that must be seen to appreciate. **Offered at \$230,000 MLS# 223948**



Danville Senior Meal Site

February Meal Schedule

February 2 - Cantaloupe, Scrambled Eggs, Pancakes, French Toast, Corned Beef Hash, Orange Juice. Library Day.

February 7 - Meat Loaf and Gravy, Mashed Potatoes, Biscuits, Peas & Carrots, Tomato Juice, Brownies.

February 9 - Sweet & Sour Pork with Pineapple and Green Peppers, Fried Rice, Spinach Salad with Mandarin Oranges and Homemade Croutons.

February 14 - Cheese and Crackers, Fruit Punch, Chicken Breasts with Madeira Cream, Cranberry Raspberry Jell-O Mold, Winter Squash, Valentine Heart Cookies.

February 16 - Guest Chef: Marion Beattie. Library Day.

February 21 - Cheeseburgers with Lettuce & Tomatoes, French Fries, Baked Beans, Carrots, Tomato Juice, Cherry Crisp.

February 23 - Baked Pollock, Pasta with Broccoli and Alfredo Sauce, Oranges, Garlic Bread, Gingerbread and Whipped Cream.

February 28 - Southern Hospitality: BBQ Ribs, Collard Greens, Cornbread, Potato Salad, Sweet Potato Pie.

Sing-a-Long with Winona Gadapee on Tuesdays at 11:30

Meals at Danville Methodist Church. All meals served with beverage, homemade breads and desserts. Reservations are appreciated by calling (802) 684-3903 before 9:30 a.m. on day of the meal. A donation of \$3.00 for guests 60+ (Others \$4.00) is appreciated.



Naturalist's Almanac

Gale Lawrence

If people born on February 29 think they have it tough, what about people born on February 30?

There was only one February 30 in human history — in Sweden, in the year 1712. It was a delayed response to the calendar confusion unleashed on Europe by Pope Gregory XIII in

1582. That was the year he decreed that all Catholic countries would drop the 10 days that had been October 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14, go straight from October 4 to 15 and henceforth omit the leap years in century years except those divisible by 400.

Most Catholic countries of

western Europe adopted the new Gregorian calendar in 1582, and after a certain consternation in October of that year, they learned to live by it. But Protestant countries were a different story. Each had to come to its own decision about the new calendar, and for some countries it was harder than others.

By the late 1600's, the Swedes were still using the old Julian calendar, but they had begun to think that maybe they should join Protestant Germany and the other Scandinavian countries in a turn-of-the-century con-

version to the Gregorian. Someone in Sweden, however, had the brilliant idea that if they merely skipped the next 11 leap years, they wouldn't have to drop 10 days all at once, and they would eventually be fully converted to the Gregorian calendar by 1740.

So while Sweden's neighbors dropped 10 days at once, skipped the leap year in 1700 as did the Gregorian calendar and thereby made the conversion, Sweden skipped the leap year and otherwise left its old calendar intact. It didn't take long for the Swedes to realize that they were a full day out of sync with the other countries that were still using the Julian calendar and 10 days out of sync with the countries using the Gregorian calendar.

They concluded that it would just be too confusing to be different from everyone else for 40 years. So they didn't skip anymore leap years, and in 1712 they added back the one they had skipped in 1700 by including a



one-time-only February 30. And there they were back in sync with the Julian calendar, which was 11 days longer than the Gregorian.

Finally, in 1753 (a year after England's conversion) Sweden, having resisted dropping 10 days all at once back in 1700, dropped 11 days and joined the rest of Europe.

I find myself wondering what ever happened to the Swedish babies born on February 30, 1712 — those who never once got to celebrate their true birthdays.

www.NaturalistsAlmanac.com

Funding Education Has Been a Budget Problem Since There Were First Teachers

(Continued from Page 30)

port the schools until town meeting next March when the usual annual appropriations are made. The people of the town voted no by nearly 3 to 1.

The matter has been placed in the hands of the three members of the school board, Mrs. Carrie Clifford, chairman; R. J. Farron and Mrs. Myrtie Houston. They said this morning that they would see what action the state could take, if any. In the meantime plans are under way for closing the schools at least until March meeting, the second Tuesday of that month in 1934.

The school board previously had offered plans whereby two of the eight schools could be closed as an emergency measure. The eight schools would

need between \$1,400 and \$1,500 to carry on until March. By eliminating two schools and two teachers the figure was cut to around \$1,200. This the voters did not see fit to provide and gave the proposal an overwhelming disapproval.

The Walden school board members say they know of nothing the state can do but nevertheless will make a last plea. It was planned to lose no time in the hope the state might help and the board headed for Montpelier over the icy roads today in the

hope of having an understanding one way or the other by the close of the school week.

You will note that I.J. Farrow's name was changed by the reporter.

Sounds like they had troubles in those days, too, and the voting public was not easy to work with. I didn't find any communications that went along with this article and will check at the Town Clerk's Office to see if I can find how the problem was resolved. ★



Sheffield: Nice cape on 35 acres. House has 2 bedrooms, 1 1/2 baths, fireplace and a deck. Full basement with a finished room. Property is close to snowmobile trails and would be great for horses. **\$180,900**

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ML#244578 Sit on your front porch and just relax or watch your animals graze at this St. Johnsbury log home. The cozy home is well decorated and offers 3 bedrooms, a convenient kitchen with breakfast bar, all appliances, a back door mud room and a full basement with wood or oil heat. The large out-building could keep 4 or more vehicles under cover and/or serve as a woodworking shop or barn. Situated on 22 acres for **\$249,500**



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West Barnet Senior Action Center

February 2006

February 1 - Beef Stew, Tossed Salad, Biscuits, Pineapple Upside Down Cake.

February 3 - Buffet.

February 8 - Meat Loaf, Mashed Potatoes, Fresh Carrots, Assorted Breads, Jell-O with Fruit.

February 10 - Liver and Onions, Mashed Potatoes, Spanish String Beans, Dark Breads, Pudding with Topping.

February 15 - Hawaiian Chicken, Mashed Potatoes, Mixed Vegetables, Cole Slaw, Homemade Rolls, Jell-O with Topping.

February 17 - Macaroni and Cheese, Sausage, Stewed Tomatoes, Biscuits, Fruit Cup.

February 22 - Baked Beans, Brown Bread, Cottage Cheese with Fruit, Cake and Frosting.

February 24 - Hot Hamburg Sandwich, Mashed Potatoes, Buttered Carrots, Ice Cream.

Happy Valentine's Day

Meals served at West Barnet Church. All meals served with a beverage. Reservations not required. Suggested donation of \$3.00 per meal is appreciated. Phone (802) 633-4068.

BEGIN REALTY ASSOCIATES



ML #243098: Barb's newest listing: Here is a unique opportunity to own a large parcel of unspoiled beauty in the Northeast Kingdom. 98.5 surveyed acres with over 3,000 ft. of frontage on two Class 3 roads. The land has about 40 acres of sloping fields looking out over beautiful pastoral vistas to the south and east. The balance of the land is mixed woodlands with a year-round brook, beaver pond and wildlife galore. Listings like this are becoming very rare, so don't miss out.

Offered at \$279,000



ML #23721: A wonderful family home in a great location. It's all here in one appealing package: neatly positioned on a well-landscaped 2.2 acre lot in a rural neighborhood setting in Waterford and midway between St. Johnsbury and Littleton. This 4-bedroom home has many recent upgrades including new windows, siding and flooring. There's a large brick fireplace, woodstove hearth, 2-car garage, family room, den. High School choice. **\$234,900**



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AROUND THE TOWNS



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Daily - Northeast Kingdom Artisans' Guild Holiday Show, Backroom Gallery, Featuring new artwork from guild members and invited guest artists.

Mondays - Story Time, St. Johnsbury Athenaeum Youth Library, 10:30 a.m. (802) 748-8291.

Mondays - Story Time, Pope Library, Danville, 10 a.m. (802) 684-2256.

Mondays - Just Parents meet with concerns for drugs and kids, Parent Child Center, St. Johnsbury, 7 p.m. (802) 748-6040.

Tuesdays - Baby & Toddler Story Hour, Cobleigh Library, Lyndonville. 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. (802) 626-5475.

Tuesdays - Bridge Club for all experience levels, Cobleigh Library, Lyndonville, 6:30 p.m. (802) 626-5475.

Wednesdays - Preschool Story Hour, Cobleigh Library, Lyndonville. 10 a.m. (802) 626-5475.

Wednesdays - Read 'n' Stuff, Cobleigh Library, Lyndonville. 3:30 p.m. (802) 626-5475.

Thursdays - Introduction to Computers, Cobleigh Library, Lyndonville. 10 a.m. (802) 626-5475.

Thursdays - Danville Town Band Rehearsal, 7 p.m., Danville School auditorium. (802) 684-1180.

Fridays - Read and Weed Book Club, Cobleigh Library, Lyndonville. 3:30 p.m. (802) 626-5475.

Saturday & Sunday - Planetarium Show 1:30 p.m., Fairbanks Museum, St. Johnsbury, (802) 748-2372.

Saturdays - Bridge Club for all experience levels, Cobleigh Library, Lyndonville, 1 p.m. (802) 626-5475.

1st & 3rd Mondays - "Six O'Clock Prompt," Writers' Support Group, 6 p.m. St. Johnsbury Athenaeum. (802) 633-2617.

2nd Monday - Cancer Support

Group, NVRH Conference Room A, 4 - 5:30 p.m. (802) 748-8116.

2nd & 4th Tuesday - Bereavement Support Group, Caledonia Home Health, Sherman Drive, St. Johnsbury. (802) 748-8116.

2nd Thursday - Parkinson Support group, Caledonia Home health Care, Sherman Drive, St. Johnsbury. (802) 748-8116.

3rd Wednesday - Cardiac Support Group, Cardiac Rehabilitation Room, NVRH, 6:30 p.m. (802) 748-7401.

3rd Thursday - Caregivers Support Group, Riverside Life Enrichment Center, 10 - 11:30 a.m. (802) 626-3900.

3rd Saturday - Breast Cancer Support Group, Caledonia Home Health, Sherman Drive, St. Johnsbury, 10 a.m. (802) 748-8116.

Last Monday - Diabetes Support Group, Conference Room B, NVRH, 6:30 p.m. (802) 748-7433.

Last Monday - Alzheimer's Support Group, Caledonia Home Health, Sherman Drive, St. Johnsbury. 7 p.m. (802) 748-8116

February

1 First Wednesday Series with Peter Saccio and "Henry V: War in Shakespeare, Olivier and Branagh," St. Johnsbury Athenaeum, 7 p.m. (802) 748-8291.

3 Danville Old Time Contra Dance with Union Suit Hull's Victory String Band and Caller Chip Hedler, Knights of Pythias Hall, Danville. 8 p.m. (802) 563-3225.

4 Men's Ecumenical Breakfast, Methodist Church, Danville, 7 a.m. (802) 684-3666.

4 Scrabble Club, St. Johnsbury Athenaeum, Noon - 4 p.m., (802) 748-8291.

4 Skier-Boarder X - Head to head races down obstacle course of jumps, berms, rollers and gates, Jay Peak. (802) 327-2198.

4 Holland Pond Snowshoeing with North Woods Stewardship Center, East Charleston, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. (802) 723-6551.



Photo Courtesy of Robert C. Jenks, Jenks Studio of Photography

In the days before the grand old YMCA building burned on Eastern Avenue in St. Johnsbury businesses like J.D. Sullivan's spilled out of its ground floor onto the sidewalk and urged "Bienvenue Canadiens." Our story on page 16 of this issue goes to the Northeast Kingdom Artisan's Guild on Railroad Street to check the pulse of the retail and service community in St. Johnsbury and finds it very much alive. This building designed by Lambert Packard and built in 1900 is gone, but we have no trouble still admiring its details and those braided rugs and a snowshoe lounge chair offered for sale on Eastern Avenue in the mid-1960's.

- 5** Winter Ecology on Snowshoes, North Woods Stewardship Center, East Charleston, 7 p.m. (802) 723-6551.
- 6** Northeast Kingdom Audubon Informational and Planning Meeting Fairbanks Museum, St. Johnsbury. 4:30-6 p.m. (802) 748-8515.
- 7** Book Discussion: F. Scott Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby, Barton Public Library, 7 p.m. (802) 525-6524.
- 7** Representations of the North - Figures & Discursive Systems with Daniel Chartier, 6:30 p.m. Sterling College, Craftsbury. (802) 586-7711.
- 9** Film discussion following 7 p.m. film at Catamount Arts, St. Johnsbury. (802) 748-8813.
- 10** Sacred Circle Dance, Danville Congregational Church, 7-9 p.m. (802) 684-3867.
- 11** 2nd Annual Radonee Race, Ski Mountaineering competition at Jay Peak, (802) 327-2198.
- 11** Nearly Full Moon

- Snowshoeing, North Woods Stewardship Center, East Charleston, 7 p.m. (802) 723-6551.
- 14** Book Discussion: Annie Dillard's Pilgrim at Tinker Creek, Walden Community Library, 7 p.m. (802) 503-2630.
- 15** "What's Under Danville Part 2" with Lance Comfort, 6:30 p.m. Pope Library, Danville. (802) 684-2256.
- 16** Being Your Own Boss - What's it All About? with Susan C.B. Mazza, 6:30 p.m. Sterling College, Craftsbury. (802) 586-7711.
- 18** Northeast Kingdom Audubon snowshoe bird walk in Victory Basin. Meet at Damon's Crossing on the Victory Road at 8 a.m. Register by calling (802) 626-9071.
- 18** Torchlight Parade, Burke Mountain. (802) 626-7395.
- 19** Annual Penguin Plunge, Raise Money for Special Olympics at Gateway Center on Lake

- Memphremagog, Newport. (802) 639-1603.
 - 22** Book Discussion: Pelagie-La-Charrette by Antonine Maillet, 7:00 p.m. Pope Library, Danville. (802) 684-2256.
 - 23** Free Vermont - A Secession Centered Film and Discussion with Rob Williams, 6:30 p.m. Sterling College, Craftsbury. (802) 586-7711.
 - 23** Winter Survey Results from Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge with Holly Gaboriault, Nearly Full Moon Snowshoeing, North Woods Stewardship Center, East Charleston, 7 p.m. (802) 723-6551.
 - 27** Northeast Kingdom Legislative Breakfast, 8 a.m., Black Bear Tavern, St. Johnsbury. (802) 748-3678.
 - 28** Ecumenical Shrove Tuesday Dinner, Danville Inn, 5:30 p.m. (802) 684-2176.
- See also the Arts Around the Towns Calendar Page 14.

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