

# THE North Star MONTHLY

Every Small Town's Newspaper

DANVILLE, VERMONT

GOOD FOR THE WHOLE MONTH

\$1.50

MARCH 2008  
Volume 20, Number 11

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Is Still  
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on  
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## LEMLARD HILL IN WALDEN WAS LEM LAIRD'S IN THE RECORDS

BETTY HATCH

While searching my historical file, I came across a folder for the Laird family.

When I first lived in Walden, folks talked about "Lemlard Hill" on the road to Cabot from South Walden. Finally I found that Lemuel Laird owned a farm at the foot of Houston Hill, where it joined the road into Cabot. Natives had shortened his first name and gave his last name a "native twist," and the road was recognized as Lem Laird's hill. Over time it became Lemlard. On Walden maps the road now is known as Cabot Road.

We don't know much about  
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## Charles Brainerd's Library Very Much Alive in North Danville



Photo By: North Star Monthly

Elizabeth Szymanik is the librarian at the North Danville Brainerd Memorial Library. The Library is small and the hours are few, but it serves an important need in the community today just as Charles Brainerd envisioned it might in the 1930's.

TERRY HOFFER

If Elizabeth Szymanik has her way, the North Danville Brainerd Memorial Library will long remain a community center and a place where you can read a book or check one out to take home. "The community is fortunate," she says. "In most places there has been a decline in the use of libraries, but we have our regulars. A lot of home-schoolers use this library, and there are a lot of old-timers, too."

Szymanik is enthusiastic and devoted to the North Danville library. Her energy and commitment belie her age.

She was 3 when her mother died of tuberculosis, and her father gathered his three daughters and returned to the southern Connecticut home of his Hungarian parents. "We were poor," Szymanik says, but the Old World work ethic was strong. "My father was a house painter, and my grandfather was the town garbage man. There was a big bunch of us, but it was a great household. It was bilingual, and we learned to never waste anything. I remember one dress that I really loved. It was handed down to me from my sisters, and when I outgrew it my grandmother undid the hem and lengthened it. I wore that same dress for another year."

Szymanik finished high school and found a job that allowed her to attend college part time in New York City and then in Philadelphia. "Going nights and weekends it took me 300 years to finish," she laughs. But she was bound to be a teacher, and an internship at a Catholic School provided experience as a second grade teacher that shaped her life.

"I was working with a nun who was strict," she says, "but every night we'd work on the lesson plan for the next day. I think that teachers gain knowledge in college, but they don't learn how to teach, and today there is such a range of student abilities that a single manner of teaching won't fit. You have to use every means under the sun if that's what it takes, and I don't think that's too much to ask of teachers today."

Szymanik quickly had a class of her own. One of her most prized possessions is a class photograph in which she stands behind her class of 60 students. "There were no aids and no music teachers or art teachers." She concedes that it was a Catholic School, but she says, "The first day of school you let them know who is the boss. That's the way that it

was."

In 1958 Szymanik is left teaching. She married a widower with two children, and eventually they had two children of their own.

In the summer of 1970, the Szymaniks were driving south through Vermont heading from the Montreal EXPO to their home in Pennsylvania. Admiring the Vermont landscape, Elizabeth Szymanik turned to her husband and said, "Why don't we live here?"

He replied, "Why don't we?"

Several years went by as they drove to Vermont in every season of the year. They found property for sale overlooking the village of North Danville, and it was there that Milt Szymanik built their home. Later there was a second and smaller house. Her husband died in 1990, but Elizabeth lives still on the same hillside. "I've seen a postcard with the exact same view. Milt is under a tree in the cemetery, and we're going to stay here forever."

For several years Szymanik worked as an aid in the North Danville School, but when those grades were moved and absorbed by the larger school in Danville Village, she inherited the library.

Originally a gift from Charles Brainerd, the library took on a new life of its own.

Charles Brainerd was one of Danville's favorite sons. Born in 1842 he fought through some of the darkest days of the Civil War and  
(Please See **People Really Care** on Page 8)

THE North Star MONTHLY  
P.O. Box 319 • Danville, VT 05828-0319



## Danville Gets a Painted Curtain

Danville has joined a large and proud group of Vermont communities to have a painted theater curtain in its town hall.

According to Chris Hadsel of the Vermont Painted Theater Curtain Project, Vermont is the first state to turn its attention and its preservation efforts to the evidence of a time when every small town hosted traveling troupes of players, opera companies, vaudeville productions and itinerant musicians. Sometimes with these performers, and sometimes appearing on their own, traveling artists offered to paint curtains for small town stages.

Some of those communities were left with grand drapes marking the front of the stage behind the proscenium arch. They were often representations of romantic or mountain scenes such as the one in the Hardwick Town House. Lakes like Willoughby were a popular theme with fine examples surviving in Wheelock and Irasburg. Others had backdrop curtains with scenes ranging from streets, to woodlands, to quite formal interiors.

The most accomplished and prolific artist of the genre was Charles Washington Henry who traveled with his family from 1885 to 1915. Often they boarded with local families. Henry is credited with painting about 50 Vermont curtains.

Charles Andrus, from Richford, also painted curtains in Vermont with a Civil War theme. Robert Naves was another artist who traveled from New Hampshire through Vermont selling ads and painting curtains for town- and grange-halls. Naves used vibrant colors and blocks of ads and often included amusing images such as blimps and gas pumps.

Another group of curtain painters remains substantially anonymous. Their work was left unsigned and without attribution. Some, in Hadsel's view, are extremely well-executed and may be at some point associated with well known painters. Some were probably done by very local painters, and their history will remain unclear.

Through the efforts of Hadsel and the Vermont Painted Curtain Project an orphaned curtain was discovered in Randolph. Apparently it once hung in a now gone building in North Randolph. The rest of its history is unknown. Aware of the recent renovations in Danville's town hall, Hadsel offered this orphan to Danville. With encouragement of Danville Town Administrator Merton Leonard and its Select-board, the curtain was welcomed and restored. It now hangs as a backdrop to the stage in the second floor auditorium in the town hall.



Restoration work takes place on the Painted Theater Curtain recently installed as a back drop in the Danville Town Hall.

The painted image is a fairly primitive representation of a lake framed on either side by arched trees with fall foliage. In the middle distance is an almost dreamlike white sailboat cutting across the water from left to right. In the far distance are rolling hills and a skyline that could have been painted with a place like Joe's Pond in mind. There are more questions about the curtain and the painter than there are answers, but this is a wonderful addition to the space we have seen created on the second floor of the Danville town hall.

Leonard says, "Since the restoration project we've been looking for a painted curtain. They were part of the decor in many Vermont town halls. This seems to fit. It looks like it belongs, and it's great for Danville to be able to give it a permanent home."

Thanks to generous donations from Danville's Village Improvement Society and its Chamber of Commerce, the curtain has been restored and secured in place. It is a very nice addition to an already lovely space.

It is a space the town should seek to have used more often not less. The town hall renovations are effectively complete, and Danville's old second floor meeting space, dance hall, basketball court, theater and auditorium is ripe for public use.

Terry Hoffer

## Musings on a Winter Day

A few weeks back, while driving on the highway, I wanted a breath mint. The road was clear and dry, the sun and highway crew having done a fine job in clearing the snow-sleet-freezing rain that has repeatedly plagued us this winter. With eyes on the road, I reached into the glove box to get the container of mints. This little metal box has a flip lid on one end, with an opening too small for any but the smallest fingers. It is a two-handed job to extract one mint without dumping the entire contents. Despite knowing this, I was successful in manipulating the lid open by feel with my right hand, left hand staying put on the steering wheel and eyes on the road. However, a one-handed blind mint extraction was more than I could achieve. I didn't want a mint badly enough to justify stopping the car and doing the job correctly, so I drove on mintless. As I returned the mint container to the glove box I imagined how convenient it would be to have three hands.

There are plenty of times when a third hand is needed. I have a bicycle repair tool that is called The Third Hand. It is used to hold the calipers of bicycle brakes together while the control cable is tensioned. I wouldn't need it if I had my own third hand. Ever try simultaneously holding a board, positioning the nail and pounding it with a hammer? It is an unfavorable ratio with three objects being manipulated with just two hands. Who has not needed that extra hand when tying a bow? Ever struggle to open a door while carrying a bag of groceries? Wouldn't it be convenient for musicians to have an extra hand to turn their sheet music?

Sadly, parents of toddlers will never have enough hands.

To truly be useful, a third hand would have to have its own arm. My wishful thinking on a third hand is limited to function and not form. I can't envision where or how an additional appendage would attach to our body. But the prospect does conjure interesting possibilities. Correctly positioned, it is possible that we would never have an itch that we couldn't scratch ourselves. Envision the intricate signaling possible from a seasoned three-handed traffic control officer. And line dancing could literally take on a new dimension.

Many other advantages of a third hand can be envisioned. It is equally interesting to speculate on the unique questions raised by the presence of a third hand. What is the sound of 3 hands clapping? How will parents cope with trying to keep 3 handed children from pestering their siblings

(Please See *On the Other Hand* on Page 4)

# THE North Star MONTHLY

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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 your writing. If you have questions or ideas and want to ask first, please call or email us. We'll send you our guidelines. No fiction, please.

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

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

**DEADLINE:** 15th of the month prior to publication.

All material will be considered on a space available basis.



## Letters to the Editor:

### Downtowns Need Community

Dear North Star,  
I was surprised and sorry to

read your editorial Downtowns Need Community, Continuity and Commitment in the February [2008] *North Star*. I couldn't disagree with you more about the impact the Gilman/Umbrella housing project is likely to have on Railroad Street.

(See *Letters* on Page 4)

# Engineers Shirk Obligation to Public as Strike Disrupts Train Travel Tramps in New Jersey Prove To Be Big Burden on Taxpayers



## THE NORTH STAR

March 2, 1877

**Railroad Strikes** - The people have had very little interest in quarrels between railroad corporations and their employees; the public cares little whether John Doe, engineer, gets two or four dollars per day or whether Richard Roe, stockholder, gets dividends or not, except so far as either case may affect the public interest in giving facilities for safe and expeditious travel and freighting. But the action of some striking engineers on the Grand Trunk Line and on the Boston and Maine is changing all this. When after having started a train, they leave it at a way station or between way stations then it is the public that becomes a decidedly interested party, and when the delay is made still greater by dumping the fires and drawing the water from the engine, it looks to be an exhibition of unadulterated cussedness.

Such a course would entail little additional loss on the company and a direct outrage to the public. The

engineer who starts a train for his run becomes morally bound to his passengers, or those sending freight, to use his best endeavors to see it safely through.

Several people in this section have received confidential letters from parties in New York announcing they have "drawn" a gold watch and chain valued at \$200, which will be forwarded on receipt of \$20. It is hoped that nobody will be simple enough to send the \$20, as it is an apparent swindle.

March 9, 1877

**Hayes Declared Elected** - The culmination of the scheme to count in Hayes for President culminated in joint convention of the two houses of Congress last week Friday morning at 4 o'clock, after stormy all-night sessions. The filibustering element tried to get control so as to delay the count, but Speaker Randall ruled to prevent this and, although a large majority of the Democrats believed they had been cheated and deceived by the Electoral Commission, such a course was unjustified. After some discussion about an alleged ineligible elector, Senator Ferry declared Rutherford B. Hayes and Wm. A. Wheeler had received a majority of all votes cast and had been counted in. The Senate followed his lead out of the chamber. In ten minutes the hall of the House was deserted, and congressmen and spectators wended wearily home discussing the result of the act to the two great political parties.

The telegraph fellows are throwing lightening around very cheap nowadays. Another reduction in

rates. It costs only 35 cents now to send a dispatch to Chicago or Philadelphia. Former rates were \$2.50. Cheap enough.

March 16, 1877

**A Mean Game** - Charles Noe of Morrisville found a pocketbook containing \$790 belonging to L. B. Boynton in August 1874 and it appears he devoted the money to paying for a farm in Elmore. Noe is now in jail in default of \$300 bail.

**Fish Commission** - The fish commission of Vermont is proving successful with some interesting experiments. They have transplanted the smelt from salt to the fresh waters of the state without diminishing their fecundity and with improvements in their quality. The fresh water smelt, as raised by Dr. Goldsmith is the aristocrat of his race. Herring have also been transplanted into some of the larger and deeper Vermont lakes, mainly to serve as food for lake trout and pickerel.

The North Church and Society at St. Johnsbury propose to expend \$40,000 for a new church edifice.

**Tramp Tramp** - Central New Jersey is a grand highway for tramps and general arrest was recently made in a number of places in the hope of abating the nuisance. At Trenton on the 10th one hundred and eighteen tramps were arrested, arraigned and sentenced to ten days in prison. The result exceeded the officials' expectations, but it was the taxpayers who were terrified. The stream of tramps showed no diminution and the same average lodgers slept in station houses and got their breakfasts. The expense of the one hundred and

eighteen arrests amounted to one thousand one hundred and sixty two dollars and twenty cents, almost ten dollars each being charged for justices', constables', sheriffs' and other fees. A new plan will have to be adopted. The march across New Jersey exceeds one thousand five hundred per day.

March 23, 1877

Mr. William J. Stanton, overseer of the poor in Danville, has employed Mr. Charles F. Badger and wife to take charge at the poor farm. Mr. Badger in some former years has had charge of it.

**For the Black Hills** - A party of 24 persons under the command of Capt. C. M. Weeks left Woodsville for the Black Hills a week ago. Another company headed by a Mr. Blake, numbering some 26 men, was to leave on Monday. Blake has been to that country twice before. Miles S. Hovey of Waterford and Edward Noona, his hired man, have gone West to seek their fortunes. It is supposed they will pull up in the Black Hills.

Recently the Fairbankses received the largest order from Russia ever received from that country. It embraced all the scales of their make from the hay scales on down.

March 30, 1877

**White Banditti on the Plains** - It appears that most of the killing, scalping and plundering occurring on the Plains is the work of white banditti who try to disguise themselves in moccasins and war paint. Not long ago two mail carriers were killed and scalped on the road between Fort Laramie and red Cloud. The Indians did it, everyone

said; yet it was found that only the registered letters were pilfered from the mail sack. Recently a number of horses were stampeded from a corral between Cheyenne and Fort Laramie. Everybody said the Indians were around. As Gen. Cook was going to Cheyenne last week to meet Gen. Sheridan a telegraph operator called his attention to suspicious facts connected with the horse stealing. Gen. Crook found that the suppose Indian thieves had by means of a duplicate key, unlocked the gate of the corral, and unlocked the chain which held a huge Newfoundland dog. Gen. Cook thinks white men stole the horses.

**Fatal Accident** - James Ryan of Craftsbury was fatally injured at the saw mill in west Albany on Thursday by falling from a load of sawdust over a bank on to the ice in the river. He survived about 24 hours after the accident.

The first maple honey of the season and offered for sale in our village was that made by Mr. Albert G. Danforth last Saturday. It was a good lot and sold for 12 cents per pound.

Sleighting pretty much "gone up." We may have some slight snow storms that will renew the sleighing for a day or two, but wheeling will now be the rule instead of the exception. Bad traveling anyway, just now.

The last Vermont legislature passed an act leaving the first Tuesdays of March and September out of the list of legal holidays and inserted in the list the 30th day of May, commonly called Decoration Day.

# THE North Star MONTHLY

## New North Star Subscribers and Renewals

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## On the Other Hand

(Continued from Page 2)

when it is already a struggle to contain their 2 hands? An additional hand means one more glove to misplace. (Although, if like our household in which we always have a few unmatched gloves, if one is not particular about matching up gloves, it could work out just fine.) Will the presence of a third hand simplify or complicate indicating the four cardinal directions of right, left, the other right and the other left?

From the perspective of a two-handed world, it is easy to imagine the benefits of having an additional hand. However, given our work ethic, drive for efficiency and human adaptability, I suspect that if we had three hands we would be no better off than we are now. Functioning with three hands, we naturally would expect to accomplish trimanual (as opposed to bimanual) tasks. We likely would be frustrated at times by our relative insufficiency of hands for the job, and wish for a fourth hand.

Our desire for doing more, in better ways and with less effort or inefficiency is an admirable, but insatiable quality. Acquiring the ability to do more does not necessarily bring with it more fulfillment, contentment or happiness.

Tim Tanner

## Letters to the Editor:

(Continued from Page 2)

In my opinion this project will contribute to, not detract from, the economic development of our town. We need to arrive at a critical mass of residential housing in our downtown area in order to truly revitalize it, and the families who will occupy the proposed units will be a valuable part of that movement.

Whether they live there for one month, six months, or more, the residents will be grateful members of the community and will be as committed as anyone to doing their best to make certain their new neighborhood is safe and attractive. I say that as a former provider of emergency housing to families fleeing domestic violence, and also as someone with first-hand knowledge of two communities that opened their arms to such shelters.

These families and individuals will also contribute to the

stream of revenue into downtown retail shops, and, having experienced the advantages of downtown living, are prime candidates to become permanent downtown dwellers when they are in a position to do so.

The St. Johnsbury Selectboard should be applauded for its support of the intrepid individuals and organizations who not only see the advantages of downtown housing for themselves and their tenants, but who also see the social and environmental value to the Town of renovating these fine old buildings, putting them into mixed commercial and residential use, and thus lessening our dependence on fossil fuel and the automobile.

Dinah Yessne  
St. Johnsbury

Dear North Star,

What a disappointment to read last month's *North Star* editorial opposing plans for a shelter and transitional housing facility for women on Railroad Street. Umbrella has been serving women and families in St.

## China and Economic Problems

As I mentioned in last month's column, MAD (mutual assured destruction) has kept nuclear arms peace among nations for 63 years. Perhaps surprisingly, there have been no nuclear weapons accidents, no provocative acts (aside from a few implied threats) although nine countries possess nuclear weapons. Let's hope that nuclear peace will last in these turbulent times for as long as nations rely on MAD for their security.

But there is another most serious problem loose in the world – one that, for the most part, is ignored by the public and politicians, while, hopefully, a few experts worry what to do about it. The problem is one of finance and economics, and it doesn't seem to go away. How long will we tolerate the threat of this catastrophe? It can't be overlooked indefinitely, for if the dam breaks, no one knows the damage the flood will bring to China, the United States and other economies across the globe.

In the January/February 2008 issue of *The Atlantic*, James Fallows wrote "The \$1.4 Trillion Question." I couldn't put it down. In my judgment, there is an incestuous (for lack of a better word) relationship between China's need to produce cheap goods and the insistence of American consumers on buying them. As America and many other countries buy their cheap goods, China invests 70% of its receipts in the United States – mostly in United States treasury bills, with payment guaranteed by our government - even though they earn a low rate of interest.

The Chinese economy can't provide jobs for its more than a billion people if it can't continue to sell goods on the world market. But the United States, China's biggest customer by far, couldn't continue to pay for the cheap Chinese goods it imports if it couldn't borrow money from the Chinese at this low rate of interest.

In the meantime, as they learn more about how the world's economy works, the Chinese are beginning to demand that a larger share of their revenue from cheap goods be spent at home on projects that will improve their standard of living.

Meanwhile, we Americans worry about our increasing trade deficit and national debt, which have to be paid somehow, sometime. President Bush won't raise taxes to raise money, but as long as China is willing to buy our treasury bills, this incestuous relationship will continue. And, of course, we are deeply concerned about our vanishing jobs.

As the value of our dollar sinks lower against other currencies such as the Euro and the Canadian dollar, there are investments more profitable for the Chinese than our treasury bills. I don't like to think about the decline in our standard of living that will follow if China invested most of its money elsewhere. The United States would have to pay higher interest rates to borrow the billions it needs to service its debts.

We worry about the Iraq war, Iran and Israel and Palestine, while ignoring this specific problem that affects our country's short-and long-term economic well being. Lawrence Summers, former Treasury Secretary and Harvard President, said, "From a distance, this, to say the least, is strange, that a country [China] with so many of its own needs still unmet, would let 'this \$1 trillion go to a mature, old, rich place.'" The inference for the future seems ominous.

No one seems to have the economic wisdom or political inclination to suggest a solution answer to this problem, which becomes more serious every day. What a golden opportunity for one of the presidential candidates – be it Republican or Democrat – to address the problem and, perhaps, streak ahead of the others.

But, secretly, I wonder if any of the candidates recognize the seriousness of the problem, or even that the problem exists – much less has the knowledge, insight or political savvy to offer a solution that both countries could live with. I wish I could contribute a suggestion of my own to address the problem, but I can't. At least I am in good company, for Mr. Fallows did little more than describe the problem.

John Downs

Johnsbury and surrounding towns for more than 30 years. Our offices were relocated to downtown last year in collaboration with the Gilman Housing Trust renovation of the historic O. Dean Hale Building on Main Street. Umbrella has a policy commitment to buying from local merchants and suppliers whenever possible and our staff, board and volunteers are supporters of downtown businesses. We don't see acquisition of residential space in the 1867 Building as harmful in any way to downtown. Nor, frankly, do we see a current demand for high end residential condos like those forever changing Boston's North End. If that perception about the market is wrong, there are other properties in town available for redevelopment.

Yes, commitment is critical to downtown vitality, but it's a two

way street. Successful communities earn the care and loyalty of residents by meeting a broad range of needs – it's not all about shopping. Women who have experienced abuse by a partner – and their children – need a safe, secure place to live while they face the complex and often overwhelming task of rebuilding their lives. The building in question has been used as a dormitory for Lyndon State College students, so it is suitably configured and can be converted economically to this purpose. A highly visible location in town will be more secure. There are women's shelters in or near very successful retail districts in other Vermont communities and in many other states.

The implication that women leaving a dangerous relationship are somehow a threat to downtown vitality is hurtful and

demoralizing to those women. It is also not founded in the experience of other towns. St Johnsbury is the service and business center of a region with significant poverty and other hardship as well as great beauty and lifestyle amenities. Let's all work for the kind of community revitalization that spreads the benefit broadly.

Deborah Hunt &  
Ginny Flanders  
Umbrella Board of Directors  
Michelle Fay, Exec. Director

### Compassion for Women with Abortions

Dear North Star,

We need to be compassionate, not judgmental, in dealing with young women who have had abortions.

Many girls are either ill advised or misinformed about the



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## The Real Facts of Life

Merriam Webster on-line *Dictionary* defines a fact as: "something that has actual existence; piece of information presented as having objective reality; an actual occurrence." Several differing versions of a recent report on the increase in the American birth rate, and a short radio program on the problems of a Polynesian island chain, piqued my interest in how we deal with facts.

There are several ways to treat facts. We can accept them without question, or ignore them if they seem to have little direct bearing on our lives. We can question the validity of the information and subject it to scientific method, suggest hypotheses to explain why the facts are as presented, test our hypotheses, come to conclusions and formulate theories about the reasons for the factual observations. After doing this, we have the information to make significant change.

Or we can use facts, without testing or researching them, to support our already held convictions and give those convictions momentum in the political arena or market place. This latter process is called Spin and Hype. This sounds like a children's game but its consequences are far more dangerous, sometimes resulting in war.

I first read an article on the increased U.S. birthrate in early January 2008 in *The New York Times* and then a few days later in an Associated Press article in the January 23, 2008 *Caledonian - Record* under the headline of, "More U.S. Babies born, Fertility Rate Up, Defying Low- Birth Trend in Europe." I saw another version in the Jan. 26, 2008 *USA Today*, where it was reported under the headline, "Fertility rate in the USA on upswing." Finally, after reading in the *Feminist Daily News Wire* a short version entitled, "Cutbacks in Family Planning Foster U.S. Baby Boomlet," I stopped collecting. All of these articles were based on a report from the Centers for Disease Control's National Center for Health Statistics, which noted, among other statistics, that the birth rates of women in the U.S. aged 15-44, increased 2% in 2006 to the highest rate since 1971.

What I first found interesting was the actual CDC report that just gave the facts — the numbers and the statistics derived from that data. No value judgments, no attempt to give reasons, no spin and no hype. But all of the journalistic versions of the facts included the authors' interpretations of the numbers, quoting unnamed experts for support, as "believing ..." or "not being sure of ..." untested hypotheses, making these immediately available for spin and hype. Here are some examples; you can imagine how they can be used: Decline in contraceptive use; Cutback in sex education; Ineffectiveness of abstinence education; Decreased access to abortion; Poor education and poverty; Religious influence on family size; Immigrants' optimism about the future; More Hispanics are in the population legally and illegally, and have more children; and Some pregnant women may enter the US illegally to deliver here so their children will be US citizens.

The other news item that sparked my interest was a short radio description of the predicament of the Polynesian island chain of Tuvalu. These islands are basically at sea level and flat. They are also on porous coral rock, which is penetrated from below by ocean waters. Periodically the islands are subjected to high tides, which are called king tides. Because of rising ocean levels attributed to climate change and melting of polar ice, the king tides are increasing in severity and washing away houses and beaches. The soil is becoming too salty for plant growth, and the islanders' culture and way of life are at great risk.

Much factual data has been recorded that indicates that climate change is occurring. There are many recorded instances of how the effects of climate change affect the lives of humans, other animal species, and the natural environment. Some scientists are carefully and quietly trying to test hypotheses that can explain the causes for climate change, hoping to come up with some helpful ways to mitigate what seems to be a rapid trend. But other people are already taking the facts and using them either to perpetuate the status quo in the industrialized countries, or to cause hysteria that polarizes a very important issue. It seems as though spin and hype have already taken over, slowing down problem solving for the people of places like Tuvalu, and eventually for all of us.

These facts that caught my attention and stimulated the writing of this column are an important illustration of why we must think about facts presented to us, and seriously question what we hear and read. When we do this, we discover the fundamental relationships that form a network binding us with all life on this planet. With careful thought we can discover ways to modify our lives, minimize our negative impact and help other populations and even other species, to remain viable.

Isobel P. Swartz

## Letters to the Editor:

physical and psychological consequences abortion can have on the mother, and they later suffer depression or remorse when they realize the enormity of what they have done.

Some have been coerced or even forced by parents or boyfriends to have an abortion, but they have to live with guilt. Distraught parents or frightened boyfriends may assure her that the fetus is just "a blob of tissue," but if that young woman were married and planning to have a baby, and someone got rid of that "blob of tissue" in the first weeks

of her pregnancy, her baby would never be born.

Well-meaning parents might think they are helping their daughter avoid a messy situation, but in doing so they are teaching her to avoid taking responsibility for her actions rather than teaching her to become a responsible, strong woman.

These women should be treated with compassion and encouraged to seek counseling or support groups. Vermont Catholic Charities has two programs to help women heal from the after-effects of abortion. One is "Project Rachel," which provides free one-on-one counseling, and the other is "Entering Canaan," a day of prayer and healing on April 19, 2008. Both are open to

women of any age or denomination. For "Project Rachel" call (800) 851-8379, or for information about either program, call Judy at (802) 658-6111, or email her at [jkanya@vermontcatholic.org](mailto:jkanya@vermontcatholic.org)

Carol Zuccaro  
St. Johnsbury, VT

### Columnist Christiansen Lughnasadh

Dear Editor,

As always, I enjoy *The North Star* and your "String Worth

## Letters to the Editor:

Saving." Reading your February musings which arrived today, this is the second time I noticed a reference to the missing midpoint between the seasons of summer and fall. It is not missing, but it is less well-known than May Day (ancient "Beltane" festival of fertility), Halloween ("Samhain") and Ground Hog Day ("Candlemas", the time of the "quickenig," when you can begin to detect the very first faint stirrings of spring, also known to the Irish as St. Brigid's Day).

The mid-point between summer and fall is August 2 and traditionally known as "Lughnasadh" (Celtic), which became "Lammas," which is Old English for "loaf mass." This was the celebration of the first harvest, and was a time of fairs, trading, and celebrations (much like our modern day country fairs).

The first harvest was very important. The wheat from which went into the baking of bread, such an important staple back in the times of the agricultural societies and it was important to give thanks and gratitude for the bounty and to pray for the anticipated success of the rest of the growing season. It is quite possible that it was at Lammas time that the Pilgrims celebrated the first Thanksgiving, because back where they came from it was a big celebration time for feasting and thanksgiving, and there were many rituals to ensure the fruitfulness of the next year's crops.

I hope this helps to fill in the gap for you. I enjoy your column and all I read in *The North Star*.

And I did make mental note that yes, even though we rely mostly on the (ghastly expensive) oil to heat our southern New England home, the woodpile that feeds our fireplace is, oh happy day, at about half of what we started with in October.

Best wishes and Happy Groundhog Day.

S. McLaughlin  
Wallingford, CT  
Northeast Kingdom native

### Thanks

Dear North Star,

You remind me monthly why I so love the Northeast Kingdom.

Pat Burnham  
Hanover, NH

Dear North Star,

Great issue, as usual. The story on Doreen Devenger was great and inspiring, and the one by Lorna Qiumby made me want to move back to Vermont - almost. It's 50 degrees here in New Mexico, the snow has melted though there is a little more on the way, and *The North Star* reminds me of everything I love about the North Country. Your work is excellent.

Mark Gelber  
Santa Fe, NM

Dear North Star,

*The North Star* is so interesting. In January I particularly enjoyed Bruce Hoyt's description of walking to school and this month Betty Hatch's account of my Stevens ancestors in Walden.

Although I do not know anyone in Danville, you cover a wide area and always have so much to share.

Thank you.

Rose Mary Meyer  
St. Louis, MO

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Contributions may still be sent to Matt Clancy Memorial Scholarship Fund c/o St. J. Jazz, PO Box 53, St. Johnsbury, VT 05819.



# Lem Laird Served in the Civil War

(Continued from Page 1)

Lemuel Laird. He was born September 12, 1842, a son of John and Eliza Laird. Lem served in the Civil War and returned to Walden, at the age of 19, with one leg gone below the knee. He must have lived with his parents for a bit, as in 1866 he married Rebecca P. Eastman, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Addison Eastman. The Eastmans owned a farm in the Greensboro corner of town, and for a time the newlyweds lived across from her parents.

On February 13, 1877, they purchased a farm near South Walden from Joseph and Mahitable Hopkins.

The Business Directory in *Hamilton Child's 1887 Gazetteer* lists Lemuel as a farmer with 10 cows and 500 sugar trees. The map accompanying the *Gazetteer* shows his farm at the foot of Houston Hill and on the road to Cabot. I have notes that indicate that Lemuel was a harness maker,

and for a time he rented his farm and moved to a house near Morrill Brook and used the front room for his shop.

Lemuel was largely responsible for purchasing the chandelier from a church in Bradford for the South Walden Church. Reading Rebecca Laird's diary, we find this: "November 24, 1897 - Lem had a letter from G.H. George saying they had sent the chandelier today. Nov. 26 - Lem went to the depot and got a chandelier for the church. There were three boxes and three barrels. Sat. Nov. 27 - a stormy day but not very cold. The men both worked on the chandelier. It came all right. Mon. Nov. 29 - Lem went to Hardwick and got some rope and a pulley for the chandelier and both men worked on it in the P.M."

From the Foster diary, Harvey Foster "helped with putting up this chandelier in the church."

Lemuel and Rebecca had three children: Gertie Randilla,

born June 16, 1867; Austin Addison, born in August 1869 and Eva Gladys, born December 3, 1879. Mrs. Laird's diary contains many interesting entries about life in that period of time.

They took milk to the creamery at South Walden every day. Winter roads were rolled, and they lived at a turning point for the road rollers. She mentioned the Houston Hill roller and Mr. Taylor's roller. Following some storms, both rollers were there on the same day. Itinerant peddlers came by with a variety of items to sell - thread was 5 cents, boots were \$2.75, and they paid Mr. Brown \$2.25 for three days work laying a floor in the kitchen. The floor was sandpapered and oiled. Tramps were apt to stop for a meal and a night's lodging. Rebecca crocheted lace for her skirts. They liked to play cards at night.

Rebecca had inflammatory rheumatism. She was an invalid for a number of years, requiring help in both the house and barn from their children. Mrs. Laird died in 1899 and Lemuel died in 1902. Both are buried in the family lot in the South Walden Cemetery.

The children all married and lived in town. Gertie and Frank Taylor had a small farm near Morrill Brook where he ran a saw mill and carriage shop.

Austin married Pearl E. Davis, and he helped his father on the farm, later being employed by the St. J. and L.C. Railroad.



Photo Courtesy of Betty Hatch

A farmer in Walden, Lemuel Laird was largely responsible for purchasing the chandelier from a church in Bradford for the South Walden Church.

Eva worked at home and married George C. Rowell of Colebrook, NH. George was a stone cutter and mason. When their daughter, Olive, was 3 years old, they went west looking for work. After George died in Gooding, ID, Eva and Olive returned to Vermont.

Olive taught school for four years in East Barnet. On

February 29, 1940, she married Maurice L. Eddy. They returned to Walden in 1942 to run the Taylor farm and to care for her uncle. She served the town as auditor for a number of years, Maurice was a Walden Selectman for 12 years. He also served as moderator and cemetery commissioner. He died in April 1981. Olive moved to St. Johnsbury, where she died in August of the same year.

This is a bit of Walden history, and I hope it will answer a few questions about the town. ✦

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# Come to the Table

Denise Brown



No small pleasure in traveling – whether on a furlough abroad or a long weekend in Boston – comes from the dutiful observation of the quirks of fellow members of the human race. While a change in scenery and a chance to try new foodstuffs might underscore our adventure, people-watching fires the imagination. And let's face it – people are strange.

Why, I wondered, was the woman standing in line ahead of me to snake along a tour of St. Peter's Basilica wearing three watches? And why were a half-dozen sharply dressed late-twenty-somethings, exiting those cavernous, sacrosanct halls, laughing about the merits of surgery to tighten the vagina?

Perhaps most perplexing to me, however, was an out-of-sorts couple who attended a cooking class and wine tasting held in the luxurious Tuscan hillside that my daughters and I were delighted to have discovered.

Our directions were to meet at a statue in a small plaza stretching beside the Arno River in Florence. There assembled what appeared at the outset to be a convivial crowd: a pair of middle-aged women, school administrators, traveling together; two college-aged sisters sporting chic, dark bobs and matching Ray-Bans; my girls and I; an enthusiastic young doctor celebrating a career move with a long vacation. And in addition, this odd couple – a notably sour single mother who towered a good four inches over her clumsy if devoted companion.

By the end of the day, I'd wish both she and her partner would fall into an abandoned well.

After a 40 minute ride, we approached the imposing façade of a 16th Century villa where wine was produced from a mix of local grapes and distinctive oil

pressed from olives cultivated on the surrounding hills. Small lemon trees lined the oval drive. We stepped out of the van to catch our breath before the tour.

Our guide explained that the villa was empty nearly the entire year, visited only on occasion by the wealthy family who now owned it. The sheer waste of this overwhelmed me, imagining what it might be like to sip one's morning cappuccino taking in the sumptuous view.

As my daughters collected a few fallen lemons, the tall woman talked. She was worried about her genius son who had trouble getting on in life due to the very fact that he was a genius. Being the mother of a son who's no slouch himself and has on occasion pushed the envelope of my patience, I could commiserate. But with the glorious landscape at our very elbows, surely I felt we should turn our attention toward the bounty before us.

Our Neapolitan guide led us first to the platform on which olives were loaded into the press, then described in some detail the process yielding those prized, golden-green oils. Then we visited the cool cellars where huge casks of bianco and rosso, Chianti Rufina and luscious dessert wine rested and mellowed before bottling.

By now we were hungry. Inside the villa a long table had been prepared for us, laden with

fruits of the vineyard and orchard, as well as loaves of freshly baked ciabatta. Accompanied by a vineyard employee, our guide sliced and salted hunks of bread for dipping into the rich oil. He poured the first of what promised to be a number of small glasses of wines for us to try.

"I don't like wine," the tall woman said, putting her hand over the rim of her glass. She would have a taste of the white, but none of the red.

Ludicrous as it was, this announcement came as little surprise. Her smirking companion seemed eager to sop up what she refused.

Over the course of an hour and better, we sampled the splendor with relish, then folded ourselves back into the van for a short ride of twists and turns into the hilly countryside where awaited an ancient stone farmhouse complete with tower. Here we were to enjoy a lesson on preparing homemade pasta.

Our hosts, a free-spirited, funky couple with young children, greeted us warmly and led our troupe up narrow, winding stairs to a kitchen well above ground level, which in itself the tall woman found an irritation worth bemoaning.

Unpretentious red wine flowed from a bottomless jug, and we assembled around a long table covered with a plastic coated cloth for our lesson on how semolina and eggs combine to make the most wonderful meal known to man.

Turning the crank of a pasta machine, the sweetly chatty doctor gave my daughters advice on what to see when we landed in

Venice; I wondered if the lovely college girls, so savvy and accomplished, weren't an inspiration to them, too.

At a break in the action, we were treated to a hike to the top of the tower where our hostess revealed that the homestead had been passed down through her family for nine centuries. Fairly recently, she said, they had started their business catering to tourists eager for a taste of the real Tuscany. Mentally I did the math; she'd make a small fortune from today's activities alone. Given that her husband, busy in the kitchen cooking up the pasta we'd crafted, seemed at first glance something of a sexy ne'er do well, I expected the profits would come in handy.

We returned to the rambling kitchen – soaring ceiling open to an office loft, a day bed sitting in a corner – and assembled around yet another large table. The meal – a zucchini frittata and buttered tortellini with sage, announced with crostini and culminating with mint-peach gelato, and all accompanied by the husband's cheerful tales of local color and cooking – was simple yet nothing short of perfect. There's something to be said, I decided, for a sexy ne'er do well.

At the end of the table sat the couple in question: she, growing ever more disdainful; he, more inebriated and crass. Making the pasta had been messy, she said, and eating it was nothing special. And why were we listening to Dean Martin? The man, in foul terms, proclaimed that the day hadn't been all he had expected

either. They left the table and waited outside for the ride back to Florence.

I was so glad they weren't Americans.

**Let's face it – people are strange.**

Our day in the Tuscan hillside was one of the finest of our three weeks in Italy. I've often recalled the terrific couple running the show, and considered how such a business might or might not work quite as they operated it here in the states. I've weighed the prospect of opening a home to strangers on a regular basis, some of them saddened souls no amount of hospitality could cheer. And I've reminisced on the sheer beauty of the place, the shades of ochre and rust and mellow olive-green in the rolling landscape, the exquisite view from that high tower overlooking the city of Florence and beyond.

But I realized, soon after settling back into my home here in the Northeast Kingdom: much as I enjoyed the visit, I don't need Tuscany. I've got Vermont.

*Denise Brown teaches at Lyndon State College. Her memoir, "The Unspeakable," was published by the University of Delaware Press.*

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# "People really care about this Library"

- Elizabeth Szymanik

(Continued from Page 1)

returned to live another 70 years in the town he called home.

Brainerd was described as a farmer. He served one term as a side judge in the Caledonia County Court and two terms as state senator. On his 55th birthday he married Emma Morse. She was 53. It was the first marriage for both. Emma died in 1932, and he died in 1935 at the age of 92. They had no children.

Brainerd was apparently a quiet man living a simple life, but the legacy he left is astounding. His estate was valued at \$92,962, a handsome sum during the years of the Great Depression. Even more remarkable than the number of dollars is the generosity shown to the town in his will. His entire estate was left to public institutions in the town for public purposes.

His estate provided the local financial base for the new Danville School. He left money for the care of the Danville Green Cemetery and for the purchase of small trees on town land. He left money to churches and to the Pope Library, and finally, he left \$2,500 each to

establish libraries in West Danville and North Danville.

Originally the Brainerd's Library was housed in the school's assembly room, and a teacher was paid to serve as librarian. Records show that in 1938 Edith Armstrong was paid 50 cents a week for the job.

Children and their families made donations to the collection, and the library served the school as well as the community. In 1956 or '57 the library was moved to the attic of the building, and fire regulations blocked student access to the space. Books were carried to the classrooms, but eventually the library was closed.

In 1989, the North Danville School classes were relocated, and in 1991 the new North Danville Brainerd Memorial Library was reborn in the vacant classrooms with a grand celebration. Marian Ward was appointed librarian. She was followed by Margaret Pollard, and in 1994 Szymanik, from the hill, was handed the keys.

Today Szymanik says, "We have a wonderful collection of



Elizabeth Szymanik photograph

Elizabeth Szymanik quickly had a class of her own. One of her most prized possessions is a 1958 class photograph in which she stands behind her class of 60 students. "There were no aids and no music teachers or art teachers." She concedes that it was a Catholic School, but she says, "The first day of school you let them know who is the boss. That's the way that it was."

5,000 books and access to almost any title within a few days from the regional library in St. Johnsbury." She is businesslike, maybe even strict, but she has an easy sense of humor. She smiles as she says, "We use to have a lot of volunteers, but now most of them are sick, old or dead. I guess I shouldn't say that," she laughs, "because two years ago I had a heart attack, and in January I turned 80. They surprised me with a birthday party. It was so nice. I'm glad I'm still alive.

"The library is a wonderful gathering place, and people have

meetings here. It's quiet, and it's not a place to goof around. I hope to keep it going. Reading is so important to all of us. I'd be lost without this." Szymanik opens the library on Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons from 2-4 and on Wednesdays from 6-8 p.m., as well.

Recent gifts to the North Danville Brainerd Memorial Library include a book collection from Alice Crays and a generous contribution of \$15,000 from the estate of William Stanton.

"People really care about this

Library," she says, "and I think Charles Brainerd would be very pleased. ★

**Charles Brainerd was apparently a quiet man living a simple life, but the legacy he left is astounding.**

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# Follow the Money

by Rachel Siegel

## “Keeping Up with the Joneses Returns”

Heading into a recession, or perhaps already there, we look to the federal government’s monetary and fiscal policies, the conventional remedies for the conventional economic ills of inflation and unemployment. Now the federal government is also sending “tax rebates” for an extra dose of economic adrenaline through spending.

The capital markets breathe a collective sigh of relief when the Fed lowers interest rates. Lower interest rates make investments in expansion cheaper for businesses, which is supposed to create jobs, but unemployment isn’t really our problem; unemployment rates are historically low.

Lower interest rates for consumers are supposed to encourage spending, and undoubtedly

will - as will those rebates - but consumption isn’t our problem. We spend plenty. More fundamentally, consumption will not cure our economy, because this is capitalism: the way to succeed is to amass capital, which happens not by spending money but by saving it, and that is what we don’t do.

As our economy has matured, just as Adam Smith (and Karl Marx) predicted, improvements in productivity, from innovation and competition, have driven down the costs of production, and thus prices. Labor is a cost of production, too, so the price of labor, wages, also goes down, and incomes stagnate, at best (not for the highest earners, but for the vast majority... but that is another story). The globalization of labor markets has made them even

more competitive, driving real wages down even further.

Smith thought that falling wages would be offset by falling prices, which would allow workers to maintain their standard of living, and by the ability to create capital, which would allow them to create investment income to supplement wages. Prices of many consumer goods, over the long term, have indeed fallen, but now, for many, global reasons, the prices of necessities like food and fuel are rising, and may stay high. Wage earners are also increasingly burdened by the costs of education and health care, which have risen much faster than other prices.

As for creating capital - and income - by investing, it turns out that in our increasingly complex financial markets, wage earners can’t really invest in many ways. They can’t afford to take on higher risk - and higher return - investments; they can’t afford to gain access to the private equity deals or the hedge funds or the engineered assets that earn the substantial returns

that make the rich so much richer. They can’t even afford to save, because that requires wage growth to keep pace with rising household costs. This is our real problem.

**We have fallen in love with borrowing probably because we have little choice: those same low interest rates that make borrowing so easy make saving so difficult.**

If we look at how wealth has been created, we can see that the way to succeed is by saving, using that capital to own assets (like shares or real estate), and then either using the income created by those assets or trading up their value. We love the idea of ownership - just look at our recent bubbles in the stock and real estate markets - but we borrow, rather than save, to do it. In fact, we have fallen in love with borrowing probably because we have little choice: those same low interest rates that make borrowing so easy make saving so difficult.

Low interest rates are fine

when they are the product of a healthy supply of funds to the capital markets that is the result of saving, a sign of incomes greater than needs or earners with surplus capital. Low interest rates fabricated by monetary or fiscal stimulus just hide the fact that we have an economy that doesn’t allow for saving.

The latest fiscal stimulus, the tax rebates, will certainly boost spending - if we put money into the hands of folks who need it, they’ll most surely spend it. But that, like the cheaper money offered by the Fed, will just allow us to continue ignore the real reasons for the problems in our economy, the lessons of capitalism itself.

Markets, in all their glorious anarchy, work most efficiently when participation is broadest; the bigger the crowds, the wiser the “wisdom of crowds” is likely to be. Our market-based economy can’t afford to shut people out of any market, including the capital market. “Keeping up with the Joneses” should not mean spending the way the wealthy can, but saving and investing the way they can, being the capitalists that they can be.

*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.*

## Celebrating the Early Arrival of Twins

VAN PARKER

Our twin grandsons arrived early, entering this world just before midnight on February 4. The doctor who delivered them assured our daughter and son-in-law that the twins would have the same birthday, and she was true to her word. Luke arrived on the scene at 11:57 and James at 11:58. That struck us as kind of amazing.

Beth Israel Hospital in Boston has a very good newborn intensive care unit, where the twins are presently residing. When they were born, Luke weighed in at a little over 3 pounds. James, who Beth and George are calling Jamie, was slightly under 3 pounds.

Nurses monitor them constantly, and they seem to be doing well on their mother’s milk, fed through some device, which I don’t even begin to understand, let alone describe.

What I will try to describe is the experience of being with the parents and, for very brief periods, the twins. Lexington, Massachusetts is full of history. The Lexington sports teams are

called Minutemen, a clear historical reference. Lexington also contains many caring people. On the Thursday after the twins were born we went to a concert where their sister, Grace, was playing the viola. Father George could hardly go ten feet before someone stopped him and congratulated him and asked how the boys were doing.

On Sunday my wife, Lucy, and I went to church while Beth got some needed rest at home. Members of the congregation asked how the boys were doing and said they were keeping them in their prayers. Friends sent or brought flowers and food. Cell phones and the regular phone rang with people giving words of congratulation and support.

Before we left for home on Monday, we went for one more brief visit to see the twins. After taking the usual precautions of hand washing, we walked into their room. There they were in their incubators looking cared for and cared about - two little boys beginning to adjust and get acquainted with the world.

Grandmother Lucy asked the

nurse how many babies she was taking care of on the shift. She answered that there were three and that “our” twin grandsons, alone, kept her busy. A pediatric doctor, dressed in her blue hospital outfit, came by and assured us the boys were doing very well. In the midst of this big city hospital we felt like we were standing on holy ground.

Further down the hall, on the way out of the NICU, I noticed a series of pictures. They were pictures of “alumni” or graduates of the unit. There were six, seven, eight or more. They had names like Sarah or Mary, Andrew or Colin. One was playing the piano. Another was playing soccer. A third had a big smile on his face. Two girls, apparently twins, appeared to be sitting on a park bench talking to each other. (Incidentally, as I walked through the halls in early February I counted seven pairs of twins in the NICU) As we said goodbye to Luke and Jamie and a little later to Beth and George, I wondered what the pictures, the alumni portraits, of Jamie and Luke would look like in a few years.

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# Veterinary Medicine Has Changed but It's Still a Great Way of Life

TERRY HOFFER

In May 1999, Lisa Whitney had just sewn on her stripes as a doctor of veterinary medicine. She had completed four years of sciences at Trinity College in Connecticut and four more at Tufts University's highly selective school of veterinary medicine in central Massachusetts.

With a smile on her face and a big load of enthusiasm, Whitney set off for the Northeast Kingdom and her first job. It was at the Derby Pond Animal Hospital in Derby. She had been trained as a generalist but imagined herself in the specialty of critical care for

small animals. At the time, dairy still reigned as queen of the agricultural community in Orleans County, and Whitney says, "I went head over heels in love with large animals and dairy."

It was a busy experience, and Whitney learned a great deal, but two years later she accepted a chance to return to Massachusetts. She moved to a clinic in Belchertown near the great Quabbin Reservoir.

But as it has been for many before her, the pull of Vermont was strong. Whitney polished up her resume, and with rekindled enthusiasm she sent copies all over northern Vermont. That was in



Photo By: North Star Monthly

Lisa Whitney has been an associate with Stan Pekala at the Danville Animal Hospital since 2003. After four-and-a-half years Pekala has decided to step aside and concentrate on the path of life some call retirement. For now he is skiing at Burke Mountain and probably turning more frequently to his camera. But when deer season rolls around next fall, you can bet he won't be shooting with his camera.

July 2003.

Meanwhile, Stan Pekala, the veterinarian and owner of the Danville Animal Hospital had

been in practice since 1973. Pekala was a graduate of the University of Vermont and the New York State College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell. His career had evolved over 30 years from a concentration on large animals, primarily dairy cattle, to one in which small animals were the predominant patients.

"When I started," Pekala says, "I went to 40 dairy farms. The oil embargo in the late 70's made a difference; then there was the dairy herd buyout, and farmers saw their land soaring in value. Before long there was only a handful of dairy farms in the area,

and it just wasn't possible for someone like me to keep up with it around the clock, seven days a week, and have a small animal practice, too." In 1987 Pekala stepped back from the large animal practice and focused his concentration on small animals.

On an afternoon in July of 2003 he walked to the end of his driveway and there in his mailbox was an envelope from Belchertown. It was a letter and a resume from Dr. Whitney.

Pekala's vision, when he had time to think about it, was at some point to step back even further from the day to day responsibili-

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ties of his practice and “attract someone like Lisa to take over and provide the kind of service and make the kind of friends that we have. I hoped to find someone to enjoy the community, raise their kids here and appreciate how this part of the world really works.”

**“Today cats and dogs are seen as part of the family.”**  
**Lisa Whitney, D.V.M.**

It’s funny the way the things work out, and by late summer Whitney, her husband and young daughter had moved to St. Johnsbury. Stan Pekala and the Danville Animal Hospital had a new associate.

Whitney remembers those first weeks in Danville and saying, “I hope I can be the one.” She says, “It was so refreshing to be in a place like this where people (even strangers) speak to you. My friends in southern New England think I am nuts, but it’s a great place to raise a family. It’s a completely different way of being [from that in southern New England].”

For four and half years Pekala and Whitney shared the practice, alternating in the care of small animals, mostly cats and dogs. Whitney says, “From little puppies with routine vaccinations to those needing basic surgery, we have always imagined ourselves providing family doctor sort of care.”

In January, Stan Pekala passed his keys over to Lisa Whitney, and with his wife he moved, at least for

the time being, to a condominium beside the ski trails on Burke Mountain.

Whitney says, “I have seen some people nearly in tears to find that he is gone, but they get over it, and I consider myself lucky to have inherited it.” She says, “Stan created a haven here for his clients. They trusted him, and they had faith in his abilities to provide what they needed. After 34 years [from 1973] that’s a pretty high pedestal, but I’ve been here four years, and I think I have figured it out.

“I like to think I’ve found my groove. I understand the line between state-of-the-art veterinary medicine and what works for the pet, what works for the owner and what works for us. I know I can do a great job without breaking the bank by doing the best that I can for the situation. People and their pets have different needs, and I know that we can provide them.

“I have a rapport with our clients and their pets in a way that you probably wouldn’t see at a highly specialized or a very high tech clinic. It worked for Stan, and it still works today.

“Thirty-four years ago dairy was the thing, and that’s where people like Stan began their careers. Today cats and dogs are seen as part of the family. People want information about nutrition and behavior, and they want CT scans and the same kind of care they expect for members of their own family. Thirty-four years ago I think veterinary medicine was part voodoo, but today pharmaceuticals have come in like the tide. We are treating diseases we didn’t even know existed thirty-four years ago.”

Whitney is 35. She and her

family (now there are two daughters) still live in St. Johnsbury. She plans no changes at the clinic for the immediate future, but the part of the Danville Animal Hospital building formerly occupied by Pekala and his family will eventually be integrated as part of the clinic.

She says, “The practice has outgrown the end of the house where it has been.” She has no shortage of ideas. For now the goal is to keep an eye on the business plan and figure out just how close she is to needing another doctor in the practice. “It’s not quite to the point where we need two full time vets, but we’ve grown, and we’ll see.”

The Danville Animal Hospital has regular office hours and responds to emergencies through an answering service, which pages the veterinarian on duty at the North Country Veterinary Clinic in Lyndon; Dr. Steen’s Animal Hospital, the St. Johnsbury Animal Hospital or Companion Animal Care in St. Johnsbury; Companion Animal Care in Littleton; the Ryegate Small Animal Hospital or this Animal Hospital in Danville.

Like Stan Pekala before her, Lisa Whitney has a quick laugh and a dry sense of humor. She understands animals and she understands the people who own

them as well. And that’s a good thing. “It’s not often,” she says, “that a dog walks in here without a person close behind.”

Still with the same big load of enthusiasm, today she sits on the

floor beside a 3-year old golden retriever recovering from surgery. “If I had to throw everything away,” she laughs, “I’d be a farmer, but I’m pretty happy right here as a veterinarian.” ★

## Noted Herbalist Will Speak in North Danville

Rosemary Gladstar is a pioneer in the herbal movement. She has been called the “Godmother of American Herbalism.” On Thursday, March 13 at 7 p.m. she will give a presentation at the North Danville Brainerd Memorial Library.

The library has many of Rosemary’s books in its herbal collection, which focuses on local authors and illustrators (including Danville’s own Robin Rothman).

Over 30 years ago, Gladstar began developing herbal formulas in her California herb shop and co-founded Traditional Medicinals Tea Co., the largest medicinal tea line in the U.S.

She is founder of the California School of Herbal Studies, author of *The Science and Art of Herbalism Home Study Course*, and is the organizer of the International Herb Symposium and the New England Women’s Herbal Conference. Today she lives and works from her home, Sage Mountain Herbal Retreat Center, a 500-acre botanical preserve in central Vermont.


Her workshop in North Danville is entitled “Herbs made simple: an introduction to medicinal herbalism.” Gladstar will discuss creating an herbal apothecary for your home, popular herbs and their uses, popular remedies for health and well being, safety issues concerning herbs, herb and drug interaction and various books and references as guides for herbal studies.

She will discuss kitchen medicine and local back yard remedies and how to prepare herbs. She will describe the importance of ecological herbalism.

This event is free and open to the public. For further information please call (802) 748-2655 or 748-8464.



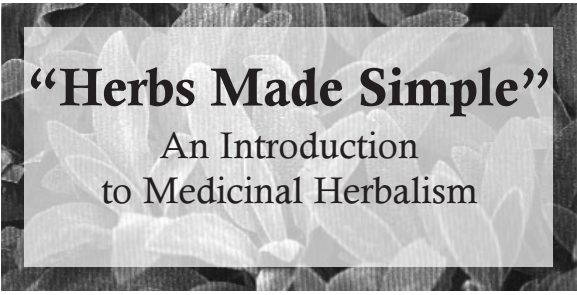
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# Tom Ashley Wants Caledonia - Washington 1 House Seat To Represent Cabot, Danville And Peacham

THOMAS ASHLEY

Last month I attended discussion of the Vermont Energy Efficiency and Affordability Act by the House Committee on Natural Resources and Energy. I was struck by the dynamic of the discussion. Members of the committee looked to members of the audience for advice on various issues – to the point where the audience members spoke more than all but three of the committee. It should be understood that the audience consisted not only of observers and reporters, but also staff of the Legislative Council and Public Service Department, yet, regardless of how many of these mark-up sessions I attend, I never seem to be able to make peace with the knowledge that many of our decision-makers lack a reasonable understanding of

many of the issues upon which they decide.

Such is the condition of a citizen legislature - a legislature made up of teachers, attorneys, farmers, contractors, librarians, loggers and hairdressers. The citizen legislature is rapidly disappearing, and to many purists – believing that a true citizen legislature is measured by its members spending approximately one-third of their time on legislative matters – the citizen legislature is already extinct.

On average, Vermont legislators spend 50-60% of their time on legislative work. The National Conference of State Legislatures ranks Vermont's as one of only 13 state legislatures whose members spend less than 60% of their time on legislative work. Only legislators in the western states of Utah, Wyoming, Montana and the

Dakotas spend less than 50% of their time on their legislative responsibilities.

Although many critics believe the citizen legislature of Vermont to have outlived its effectiveness, many more proponents of the citizen legislature – including this writer – believe that Vermont's is a viable model and indeed, should be celebrated.

Vermonters should be proud of the members of their citizen legislature for successfully dealing with diverse and complex issues, especially with the increased role of state governments over the past 25-30 years. Twenty years ago an article in *The New York Times* described the shift of Vermont's legislature from the slow lane to the passing lane; from a relatively informal collaborative atmosphere to a one that is sometimes divisive, and is often dealing with highly technical issues.

The article also made the apt observation that legislators in Vermont are at a disadvantage compared with legislators in other states and lobbyists in Vermont who work full-time on particular issues. Legislators are expected to address Vermont's most pressing issues each year in sessions that



Photo By: North Star Monthly

Tom Ashley is hoping to take his education and experience to the Montpelier State House as a district representative from Cabot, Danville and Peacham.

generally last less than 90 days. What then occurs is that legislators – their time spread among myriad issues, their families and often their other jobs – often defer to the relative expertise of lobbyists.

Much is made of the power of Washington lobbyists, but I believe Montpelier lobbyists wield relatively greater power. Finally, the article quoted then chairman of the Senate Committee on Appropriations and brother of Governor Madeleine Kunin, Edgar May, questioning whether Vermont's citizen legislature was sustainable in the face of increasingly complex issues, lobbyists (currently numbering 450), and a barebones staff. May said, "I'm not optimistic that two decades from now, you're going to find a citizen Legislature in Vermont."

Although some things have changed in the two decades since

that article was published and Senator May questioned the continuing viability of Vermont's system – namely the increased use of out of session study committees – the Vermont citizen legislature remains largely intact and largely effective. However, I am not alone in thinking that we are approaching a crossroads – facing the question of how our citizen legislature can continue to meet the needs of Vermonters as the issues become increasingly complex, technical and interconnected.

I believe the best way to meet the needs of the people of Vermont, without sacrificing the very nature of our legislature, is to seek out Vermonters with experience that the legislature can mine.

A clear example of finding experience and leadership for our modern citizen legislature is Danville's Jane Kitchel, a state senator for the Caledonian



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District. Kitchel retired in 2002 from her position as Vermont's Secretary of Human Services, following a linear career in state government in which she served as a social worker and worked her way up to the position of Commissioner of what was Vermont's Social Welfare Department, before taking on responsibility for managing some 40% of Vermont's budget and state employees as Secretary of Human Services.

**The citizen legislature is rapidly disappearing, and to many purists, the citizen legislature is already extinct.**

Kitchel's leadership and experience was recognized by her immediate assignment as vice-chair of the Senate Committee on Appropriations and to the Senate Committee on Transportation. She is now using her management and budgetary experience to ensure that the state budget is sound, and that we are maximizing our transportation dollars to best address the fairly dire condition of Vermont's transportation system.

It is this basic premise – that Vermont's legislature needs experience to remain effective and

meet the needs of Vermont's citizens – that led me to decide late last year to seek election to the Vermont House of Representatives for the towns of Danville, Cabot and Peacham. I believe that to face the very real specter of climate change, to reduce the energy costs of Vermonters, to plan for a Vermont without cheap power from Vermont Yankee and Hydro-Québec, and to develop the idea of a green Vermont economy, the Legislature needs people like me – with advanced training and experience in energy and climate law and policy – to find and craft the solutions.

Last fall I was working at the California Public Utilities Commission – very likely the most innovative energy policy body in the country – as part of Vermont Law School's Semester in Practice program when I made my decision. Faced with the prospect of working in the frustrating arena of Capitol Hill or the already innovative California, it occurred to me that taking a leadership role on climate in Vermont would best allow me to effect positive change that would benefit a large population, and return Vermont to the pinnacle of environmental leadership.

So, upon graduating from Vermont Law School this May, after studying energy and climate law and policy under Professor Michael Dworkin, director of Vermont Law School's Institute on Energy and Environment and

former chair of the Public Service Board; after working at the California Public Utilities Commission on renewable energy development and energy efficiency; at the Clean Energy Group on clean energy finance and small wind development; at the Office of Energy and Environmental Industries of the U.S. Department of Commerce's International Trade Administration on international climate policy and clean energy development; at the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the U.S. Senate under Senator Jim Jeffords on transportation, energy and air; at the Environmental and Energy Study Institute on reducing transportation sector emissions; at the Energy Efficiency Division of Vermont's Public Service Department under former Senator Rob Ide on electricity generation via farm methane, I will come home to Danville.

To find the solutions Vermonters need to lower their fuel costs, to deal with a shift in global climate that threatens the very base of Vermont and the Vermont economy: our maple groves, skiing and tourism; to work to retain our young people and to ensure Vermonters have the best healthcare and education available without threatening our homes. And above all, to ensure that we are proud of the Vermont that we leave to our children. Please talk with me or visit [www.thomasashley.com](http://www.thomasashley.com) if you wish to help achieve this goal. ★



## Pope Notes

Dee Palmer,  
Library Director

We hope everyone from Danville will get out to town meeting and support the Pope Library. Please join us for our annual library-sponsored luncheon in the cafeteria during the noon break. Wendi Larrabee and her helpers will cook and serve a delicious ham dinner complete with baked beans, coleslaw, home baked rolls, cottage cheese, beverages and delicious desserts made by volunteer bakers.

Tickets can be purchased at Town Meeting, \$8 for adults and \$4 for children. Our 2008 raffle item – a beautiful quilt made by Diane Webster, one of our library trustees will be on display at the meeting. Tickets are \$1/each or 6/\$5.

Our hosts and hostesses for the 2008 Novel Dinner are busy planning their table themes. The dinner is on Sunday, April 6 at the Creamery Restaurant. Marion and Woody will cook up a delightful meal featuring mixed greens with dried cranberries, fresh pineapple and vinaigrette dressing, orange glazed Statler chicken breast, mashed sweet potatoes, green beans and lemon bars and coffee to follow. Tickets for this annual event are \$30 per person. If you are not already invited to sit at a table and would like to attend, contact the Library at (802) 684-2256 or The Creamery at 684-3616.

Our Southern Writers Reading and Discussion series continues with *The Second Coming* by Walker Percy on Wednesday, March 26 at 7 p.m. Scholar John Turner leads the discussion. All are welcome – books and schedules are available at the library. Please note that the April discussion of *Oral History* by Lee Smith with Suzi Wizowaty has been changed to April 23.

Our newest book acquisitions are: *Bangkok Haunts* by Burdett, *Duma Key* by King, *The Darkest Evening of the Year* by Koontz, *A Peculiar Grace* by Lent, *The Girls Who went Away* by Fessler and *The Tenth Muse: My Life in Food* by Jones. We have several new DVD's including *Blood Diamond*, *Notes on a Scandal*, *Thank You for Smoking*, *The Good Shepherd* and *Proof*. Come in and check them out.

## Pope Library Hours

**Monday & Friday**  
10 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
**Wednesday** 9 a.m. - 7 p.m.  
**Saturday** 9:00 a.m. - noon.

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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.



## Public Art - Private Art from Frida Kahlo And The Three Mexican Muralists

Bob Manning, artist, art historian and retired professor of fine arts will present a free slide lecture: "Frida Kahlo and the Three Mexican Muralists" will be presented at Catamount Arts on Saturday, March 8, 2008 at 3 p.m.

For the past 15 years, films and books celebrating the life and art of Frida Kahlo have produced a wave of "Fridamania." Frida died in 1954 at the age of 47. For the next 20 years she was remembered only as the wife of the illustrious painter, Diego Rivera.

The feminist movement of the

1970's resurrected and championed her cause. The art world and the general public took a second look. The process of establishing her reputation culminated in 1990 when the Metropolitan Museum in New York City put together a block buster exhibit of her self-portraits.

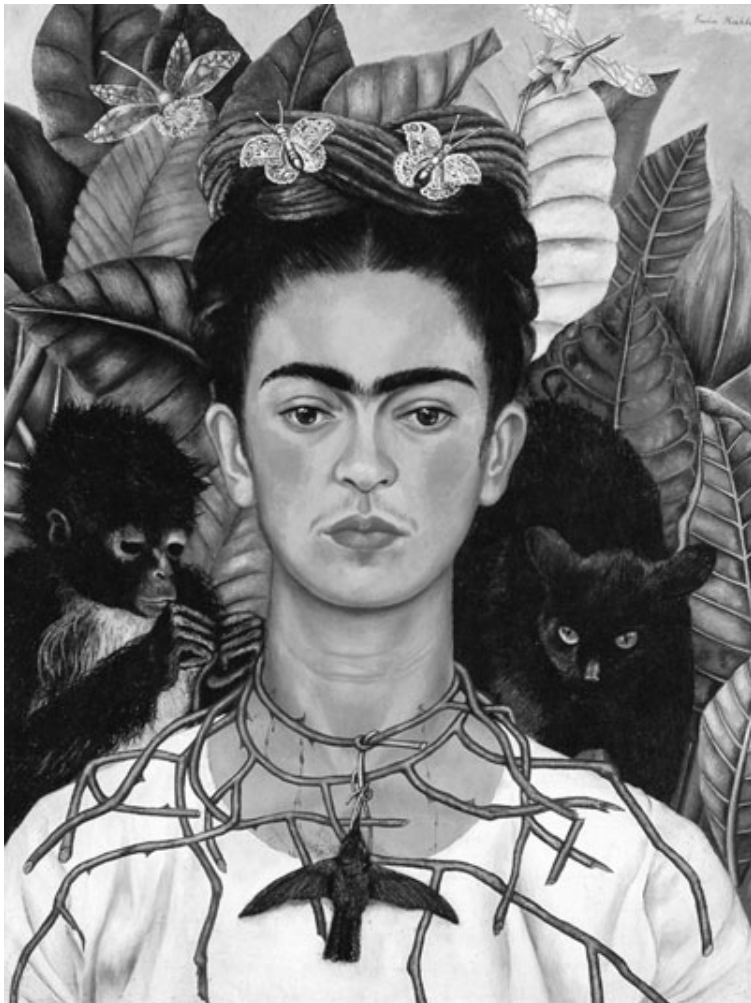
Polio at age 6 and a horrible traffic accident at 18 left Frida with a pain-wracked life filled with body braces and operations. Her marriage to Diego Rivera produced some joy and large amounts of heartache. Many of

these intensely personal self-portraits are filled with images of pain. Pain was her constant companion.

The three great Mexican muralists, Jose Clemente Orozco, Diego Rivera and David Alfaro Siqueiros produced powerful public murals that focused on native Mexican traditions and celebrated the triumph of the Mexican Revolution of 1910-21.

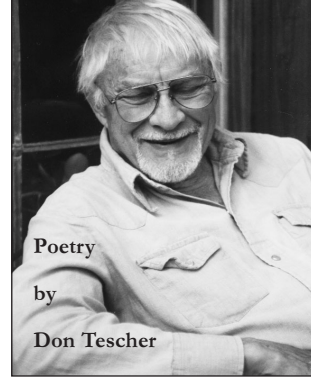
Manning will show and discuss examples of the works of Frida Kahlo and the Mexican muralists.

Catamount Arts is located on Eastern Avenue in St. Johnsbury. For further information, call (802) 748-2600.



Self portrait with thorn necklace and hummingbird by Frida Kahlo. On March 8 at Catamount Arts, Bob Manning will show slides and discuss examples of the works by Frida Kahlo and the Mexican muralists Jose Clemente Orozco, Diego Rivera and David Alfaro Siqueiros.

Without Further Ado



Poetry  
by  
Don Tescher

Don Tescher's popular collection of poetry will warm your heart and tickle your funny bone. Don writes with a passion for villages and small towns. In his tenth decade his work continues to put bright light where before there was patchy fog.

Reprinted and available again, *Without Further Ado* is available at the Pope Library in Danville, the Brainerd Library in North Danville, the Cobleigh Library in Lyndonville and the Athenaeum in St. Johnsbury.



## the ARTS around

### March

- 1 Chick Corea and Bella Fleck, Hopkins Center, Hanover, NH.
- 4 Sir James Galway and Lady Jeanne Galway, flutes, Hopkins Center, Hanover, NH.
- 5 Bill Frisell & Company, "The Disfarmer Project: Musical Portraits from Heber Springs," Flynn Center, Burlington.
- 6 Theaterworks USA and Junie B. Jones, Hopkins Center, Hanover, NH.
- 7 -13 *There Will Be Blood* (2007 US) [R] Director: Paul Thomas Anderson. On the incendiary frontier of California's turn-of-the-century petroleum boom Daniel Plainview transforms himself from a down-and-out silver miner raising a son on his own into a self-made oil tycoon. Catamount Arts, St. Johnsbury. (802) 748-2600.
- 7 An Evening with James Hunter, Opera House, Lebanon, NH.
- 7 Lamsbread, Middle Earth Music, Bradford.
- 8 Lovell Sisters, Lyndon State College.
- 8 Session Americana, Middle Earth Music, Bradford.
- 8 Big Spike and Gopher Broke, Opera House, Barre.
- 9 Mermaid Theater of Nova Scotia, "The Very Hungry

- Caterpillar & Other Eric Carle Favorites," Flynn Center, Burlington.
- 14 Richard Shindell and Lucy Kaplansky, Opera House, Barre.
- 14-20 *Atonement* (2007 England) [R] Director: Joe Wright. In 1935, 13-year-old fledgling writer Briony Tallis and her family live a life of wealth and privilege. When Briony's sister falls in love with the son of the housekeeper, Briony is determined to stop the romance accusing the fellow of a crime he did not commit. Catamount Arts.
- 15 Boys of the Lough, Opera House, Lebanon, NH.
- 15 Ellis Paul. Middle Earth Music, Bradford.
- 15 Crazy 'Bout Patsy, - The Patsy Cline Show, Opera House, Barre.
- 17 A St. Patrick's Day Celebration with Leahy, Flynn Center, Burlington.
- 21 The Celia Brothers, Middle Earth Music, Bradford.
- 22 Rocking Chairs, Middle Earth Music, Bradford.
- 21-27 *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly* (2007, France / US) [PG-13] Director: Julian Schnabel. Physically paralyzed by a stroke, the stylish, high-living editor of French *ELLE Magazine* dictates his memoirs by blinking them out, letter by letter. An inspiring exploration of con-

- sciousness and "a soaring ode to liberation." Catamount Arts.
- 25 An Evening with Joan Baez, Opera House, Lebanon, NH.
- 26 St. Petersburg Ballet Theater with Russian Seasons: "Chopiniana," "Scheherazade," and "Bolero," Flynn Center, Burlington.
- 27 The Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio, Hopkins Center, Hanover, NH.
- 28 Bridgman/Packer Dance with "Seductive Reasoning," "Under the Skin" and "Memory Bank," Flynn Center, Burlington.
- 28 *The Full Monty*, Opera House, Barre.
- 28 Toots and the Maytalls, Opera House, Lebanon, NH.
- 28 - April 3 *The Savages* (2007 US) [R] Director: Tamara Jenkins. A pair of unhappy, never-married, middle-aged siblings, long estranged from their emotionally abusive father, work together to settle that unpleasant parent, now old and unraveling from vascular dementia, in a Buffalo nursing home. Catamount Arts.
- 29 Ruthie Foster and Eric Bibb, Opera House, Lebanon, NH.
- 29 William Young, Shadows, Hopkins Center, Hanover, NH.
- 31 Jackson Browne in Concert, Opera House, Barre.

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# May the Circle Be Unbroken

NATHANIEL TRIPP

The other day I found myself cooking a delicious lamb stew, while at my very feet there were three, newly born, live lambs beside the cook stove recovering from a spell of unusually cold March weather. While this may seem alarming to some, I spent little time dwelling upon it myself beyond the observation that lambs don't smell all that great, alive or otherwise. That's why we add rosemary and garlic.

**It is a ritual that takes place in the cathedral that is this farm.**

Instead of remorse I felt a heightened sense of serenity, and while adding a little maple syrup, I realized that this lamb stew was the perfect way to complete the circle of days on our farm. While the last carrots and onions from the root cellar go in the stew, this year's onions, which I started in early February, are now reaching towards the sun by the windows. The first runs of sap are being boiled, too, although not by me since the children grew up and my pan rusted through. Still, all the major ingredients in the stew were born and raised on the farm, soon to be assimilated by us just as our spirits are nourished by the hills, the fields and gurgling brooks.

I was engaged in a delightful experiment some years back with Noel Perrin and a number of others wherein we decided to spend a month eating nothing that originated from more than 100 miles away. Of course we cheated some. There is no local source of salt, for example, or pepper but we rationalized that there never was, either, and the trade of salt and spices is as old as civilization itself. We didn't want to shut down the economy. We just wanted to see the degree to which local agriculture really could be supported.

Bread was a problem. It is disappointing how little wheat is raised by what used to be called the "Breadbasket of New England." So was beer. With a climate perfect for raising both hops and barley, and with some of the finest micro breweries in the world, the ingredients come mostly from Oregon.

Meats, fruits, vegetables and dairy products, especially the cheeses, however, were a joy. My favorite personal achievement was eggplant Parmigiana. We had a memorable evening with it, although I forgot to mention the bread crumbs and I cheated on the port which went in the marinara, for while New York State is within 100 miles, Canandaigua is decidedly not.

There is something else we ignored. While what we ate may have been local, what produced it came from far away, and I'm

talking about oil. Not cooking oil, that was a problem, too. We used a lot of butter instead during the experiment, and several of us actually gained a few pounds. I'm talking about petroleum and its many products, the diesel fuel and herbicides and chemical fertilizers that so many growers depend upon today. Yes, there are small scale growers and organic producers whose energy input is largely their own. And yes, we were supporting local soils and local labor. But for the most part, for all our good intentions, we were hardly less tied to "the system" than before.

Yet for me, at least, preparing a lamb stew in the company of lambs transcends both economics and politics. It is a ritual that takes place in the cathedral that is this farm. It comes as close to communion as I want to get. And while I realize I'm not going to get the seal of approval from "Good Housekeeping," it's more of a spiritual thing anyway. It doesn't give me any answers, but it does get me closer to some of the big questions, like "what is life," and "why is it important to add balsamic vinegar along with the maple syrup?"

Lamb, even more than pork, benefits greatly from the yin and yang of sweet and sour. I use maple syrup and balsamic vinegar in my barbecue sauce, and I baste a roast leg of lamb with it,

too. For a stew, I add those ingredients after the meat has been dredged in flour and browned. Instead of salt, I use soy sauce even though we are straying ever farther from the fields of Vermont. Then there is the fore-mentioned garlic and rosemary, the onions and carrots and a bottle of local beer with Oregon origins. I like to let it cook for about three hours, plenty of time to bottle-feed the lambs in the kitchen, and go out to the barn to see if any more have been born. If the stew needs thickening and more flavor, I may add some tomato paste which I could have made here but didn't. A little red wine or port from Canandaigua helps thin it, and adds flavor too.

That March wind can be mighty chilly; it's a difficult month to be born into, and I never know much ahead of time if my frequent trips to the barn will be through a mud wallow or snow drifts. Our hours may be irregular, too, there may be vigils well after midnight, with the stars glittering, and the Big Dipper swinging higher into the northeast sky. A good lamb stew waiting on the back burner will take the chill off and serve as a hearty reminder of our connections. ★

## Winter Dusk

Absolute silence.  
Animal tracks, more visible in fading light,  
criss-cross the snowy woods to goals unseen.

Against a sky of palest blue,  
traceries of branches are moved imperceptibly  
by wind too thin to feel.

Burnished clouds of pink and gold,  
decorate a mountain peak  
purple in the afterglow.

Isobel P. Swartz

# Cobleigh Public Library

Lyndonville

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Wednesday: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.;  
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# Danville School Wood Furnace Goes On Line

In November 2006 voters in Danville agreed to the recommendation of their school board to install a new heating system.

At the time, the school was heated by a bank of nine oil-fired boilers. The historical pattern of heating the building indicated that the annual average rate of consumption was 27,000 gallons of heating oil, depending on the number of degree days - that's the measure of cold temperature over time.

The proposal was not a new idea in northern New England, but it was debated at three public hearings. Finally, the November vote endorsed the board proposal to install a biomass system and thereby use not fossil fuel but a renewable and relatively local resource - wood chips.

This year on January 24, after construction, installation of the system and final adjustments, a nearly invisible cloud of water vapor appeared from the stack above the new furnace building attached to the school. Like other schools in Lyndon, Wells River and Hardwick,

Danville is now heating its building with wood.

Marvin Withers is the director of buildings and grounds at the school. Once a school board member and currently a selectman in Danville, Withers describes the new system as an enormous step forward - financially and functionally as well. He says the old boilers were at least 26 years old. Even when they were working, they were far from the state of the art in efficiency. "Today three of the boilers are not working, and in the best of circumstances we were heating water [to be circulated through the schools network of radiators] up to 155-160°. The new system supplies water at 185°. It's warmer," Withers says, "and it's easy."

Danville gets a 31-32 ton load of chipped wood about every 10 days. The chips are delivered by a supplier in Monroe, NH with log yards in northern New Hampshire and Vermont.

Withers says, "The goal is to provide all of the heating needs for the school (except for

domestic hot water) with the new system. Hot water for the kitchen and other washing needs will be heated by oil."

At the time of the 2006 feasibility study, projections were based upon a cost of heating oil at \$2.52 per gallon. Currently the school is paying \$2.70 per gallon. Withers is projecting from his current numbers the annual operating cost will be less than half of the comparable cost of heating with oil. "We were spending about \$400 a day to heat the building with oil," he says. "On nine days in February I figure our cost was \$155 a day."

According to Fred Kitchel, chair of the Danville school board, this may be the first U.S. installation of this particular system made in Canada. The Blue Flame stocker is mounted over a Boilersmith boiler. It runs surprisingly quietly as fine chips from green trees are dragged up and dropped into the fire box where they burn with almost no smoke or residual ash. Withers says the vapor from the smoke stack is almost invisible, and the volume of ash from some 20 tons of burned wood amounts to less than 30 gallons a week.

If there is a question about the system operations it's this. How well will it work on the



Photo By: North Star Monthly

Danville School's Director of Buildings and Grounds Marvin Withers (left) and School Board Chair Fred Kitchel are pleased that the new wood-chip fired furnace is operating smoothly and heating the school.

shoulders of the heating season when the call for heat is small and the period of time is short, on a day, for instance, when the

thermostat calls for heat in the morning and then bright sun pours over the school by mid day. Withers is convinced it will work well as the system is designed to run effectively even at five percent of its maximum capacity. Like a low fire in the fireplace, he is convinced the system will perform even when the demand for heat is brief. It seems like a system that makes sense in its use of a renewable resource and more than a few cents in its cost of operations.

Fred Kitchel promises an open house and tours of the system in March. If you'd like a chance to see it yourself, contact the school.



## The times, they are a-changing.

### Important Dates for Our Customers



All CNB and former LyndonBank offices closed for computer conversion.



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### Our office hours are a-changing, too.

Beginning Monday, March 24, we'll also have new office hours. For more info, please visit our Web site at [www.communitynationalbank.com](http://www.communitynationalbank.com), or pick up a "New Office Hours" flyer at any of our convenient locations.



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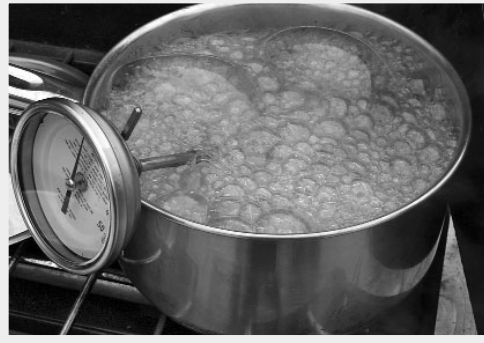
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Sap Bucket Photo: Courtesy of Ruth Goodrich. All others by Jeff Gold.

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**Sugar on Snow:** "Sugar on Snow" parties have been a traditional spring-time favorite in Vermont for hundreds of years. Sugar on Snow is made by pouring hot maple syrup onto packed snow to form a taffy-like candy and is traditionally served with raised doughnuts, dill pickles and coffee. The pickles and coffee serve to counter the sweetness of the maple candy. To make your own Sugar on Snow heat pure Vermont maple syrup without stirring to 233°. Pour or drizzle (again without stirring) the syrup immediately over the packed snow to form a thin coating. The taffy is soft, so the easiest way to eat it is to wind it up with a fork and enjoy.



# Snelling Center Offers Best Leadership Development Program in VT

TERRY HOFFER

The Richard A. and Barbara W. Snelling Center for Government sits quietly in an unassuming two and half story, brick building near the campus of the University of Vermont. Established in 1992 in memory of Vermont's Governor Richard Snelling, the Center is devoted to fostering responsible and ethical leadership, encouraging public service and promoting informed citizen participation in shaping public policy in Vermont.

Quiet from the outside, the nonpartisan and nonprofit Center has ambitious goals for

its small staff with a full schedule. It's a very busy place on the inside.

Charlie Smith is president of the Snelling Center. With a term in the State Legislature and a distinguished career in banking and senior-level positions in state government he is familiar with government in Vermont.

Smith says, "We are best known for our programs in civic leadership. The Vermont Leadership Institute is the pre-eminent leadership program in the state."

In 1995, the Snelling Center launched its leadership development program, the now highly-respected VLI. Every year



Photo By: North Star Monthly

Among the staff of The Richard A. and Barbara W. Snelling Center for Government are (L-R) Sue McCormack, Colleen Oettinger and Charlie Smith. The Center is near the UVM campus in Burlington.

since, the program has graduated approximately 25 associates, inspired and committed Vermonters with an interest in

leadership.

The VLI schedule is intensive with eight "weekend" sessions totaling 18 days of semi-

nars. With outstanding faculty and presenters representing state- and national-expertise, the VLI program offers leadership training and provocative discussions, which continue each year to increase the network of motivated and informed citizens, a pool of Vermonters prepared to make greater contributions to their organizations, their communities and the state.

In addition, The Snelling Center conducts the Vermont School Leadership Project, a similar program but with a focus on professional development for principals, superintendents, teachers and others in positions of educational leadership. In 18 seminar days, over the course of two summers and parts of two school years, VSLP associates take part in theoretical discussions, experiential learning and personal reflection to consider leadership methods in the context of business, government, the arts and education.

Smith describes the programs as evolving as they shift toward issues that are current but following a consistent format of leadership development and training.

He says, "We are also increasingly well known for our role in developing public policy. What we are good at is important to good governance - that is getting more people more enfranchised when overall, it seems, they don't always feel that they are. We have been able to dig into projects in such a way that the public can be engaged in complicated issues (maybe they have been complicated by politics) and find the means to get the process unstuck.

"I'd like to think that two or three times a year we can concentrate our attention on specific ideas and issues that can be studied and debated in a way that softens the partisanship that exists in other places."

Active projects for The Snelling Center include public



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*Yvette Parker, Multi-modality Technologist*



*Jim McGregor, Multi-modality Technologist*





Jerry Johnson surrounded by his NVRH family

### "It's like coming home."

JERRY JOHNSON, ST. JOHNSBURY, VERMONT

Jerry Johnson is an energetic and positive guy. However, he has had some health challenges that require regular visits to the diagnostic imaging department at NVRH. But, states Jerry, "it's not a chore - it's like coming home."

Jerry appreciates the friendly and personal touch from "X-ray Sue" at the front desk. "She always gives me a huge welcoming smile." Sue Wells has been greeting clients at the front desk for 20 years.

"I've had them all: x-ray, ultrasound, CT scan, cardiovascular imaging... you name it!" Jerry's doctors monitor his health carefully and the regular tests he receives help Jerry take care of himself in the best way possible.

He gets out of his house every day - walks, takes pictures, and visits friends and neighbors. "I live in a neighborhood where people watch out for each other... it feels good to know that. People at NVRH watch out for me too."

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discussions about a possible constitutional amendment to extend the term length for elected state officials, methods for funding improvements to transportation infrastructure and the future of economic development strategies in the state.

The Snelling Center staff has also worked as consultants with AARP-Vermont and the Vermont Department of Public Service. It has worked in the planning process with Resource Systems Group of White River Jct. in the revision of the long range transportation plan for the State's Agency of Transportation. They provided time and expertise to the Vermont Community Foundation and to the Vermont Legislature in developing an orientation for newly elected members of the General Assembly.

But Smith says, "The vision for the Snelling Center is that it will always be known for its role in nonpartisan leadership development."

The Snelling Center is accepting applications for its Vermont Leadership Class of 2009. Applicants may be from the public, private or nonprofit sectors of the state. The application process considers professional achievement, demonstrated interest in the community and potential for leadership.

**"The vision for the Snelling Center is that it will always be known for its role in nonpartisan leadership development."**

**Charlie Smith  
President**

Sue McCormack is the Center's Director of Leadership Development. She says, "We look for diversity. The current VLI class of 27 includes an undergraduate from the University of Vermont, people in mid career and a very active member of her community, retired from IBM.

"It's a highly capable group, and the associate profiles describe all kinds of people. Each year we seek to attract applicants who are committed to Vermont, curious about state issues, committed to learning and, perhaps most importantly, those who value self awareness, knowledge and networks of relationships to be effective leaders in the state."

Those interested in learning more about VLI or The Snelling Center should see [www.snellingcenter.org](http://www.snellingcenter.org) or contact Sue McCormack at (802) 859-3090.

Applications to the VLI Class of 2009 must be post-marked by March 28, 2008. ★

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### Digital Wizardry: High-Tech Forces Shaping Our World and Oh Canada, Our Neighbor to the North

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#### ▼ Digital Wizardry: High-Tech Forces Shaping Our World with a panel of Lyndon State College faculty and staff

- ▶ Thursday, March 13 at 1:30 p.m. LSC, Rita Bole Community Center  
*The Basics of Technology: Technology's nomenclature and its gains over the last 25 years.*
- ▶ Thursday, March 20 at 1:30 p.m. LSC, Rita Bole Community Center  
*Current Uses of Technology: Wireless and cellular communications plus entertainment and music technologies.*
- ▶ Thursday, March 27 at 1:30 p.m. LSC, Rita Bole Community Center  
*How Technology Affects Daily Life: Focusing on medical and financial aspects as well as automotive computers and OnStar in GM cars.*
- ▶ Thursday, April 3 at 1:30 p.m. LSC, Rita Bole Community Center  
*Identity theft, copyright laws, environmental and sustainability concerns and other ethical issues.*
- ▶ Thursday, April 10 at 1:30 p.m. LSC, Rita Bole Community Center  
*Effects on privacy, security and gaming. Also a cost / benefit analysis of technology.*
- ▶ Thursday, April 17 at 1:30 p.m. LSC, Rita Bole Community Center  
*Digital Wizardry Wrap Up Review with panel and audience discussion of the future of technology.*

#### ▼ Oh Canada, Our Neighbor to the North

- ▶ Thursday, April 24 at 1:30 p.m. St. Johnsbury House, Main Street  
*A Brief History of Canada* with LSC Canadian Studies Professor Paul Plazek
- ▶ Thursday, May 1 at 1:30 p.m. St. Johnsbury House, Main Street  
*The Group of Seven: Canadian artists who believed that Canadians would recognize themselves in images of their landscapes beauty and diversity* with William Tortolano of St. Michael's College.
- ▶ Thursday, May 8 at 1:30 p.m. St. Johnsbury House, Main Street  
*Like Sleeping with an Elephant: The Canadian American relationship and several of its current issues* with UVM Canadian Studies Professor Thomas P. McGrath.
- ▶ Thursday, May 15 at 1:30 p.m. St. Johnsbury House, Main Street  
*French Canadian Storytellers and Living in the border town of Derby Line during the first half of the 20th century* with Laurretta Morin Verret.

Individuals pay \$40 membership fee, which covers cost of all 10 sessions and entrance to the other seven Vermont Osher Institute Programs as well as EEE programs in Burlington. Non-members may attend individual lectures for a donation of \$5.

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# This Independent Promises To Be "The People's Governor"

VIRGINIA DOWNS

Tony O'Connor is from Derby. He is well known for his humor and compassion. A former border guard, he took early retirement last year at age 56 from the U. S. Immigration Service. Now he wants to be Vermont's governor. He says, he would keep his office open every morning from 6 until 8 o'clock to listen to people's concerns.

Last fall O'Connor decided to run as an Independent for Governor with no plans of any kind to schedule campaign fundraisers. At that point he was the lone contender against Vermont's incumbent Republican Governor Jim Douglas. Recently, Anthony Pollina announced that he, too, will run again as a Progressive.

A triple amputee, missing both legs and his right arm, O'Connor has suffered personally, subjected

to airport body searches because of his prosthetic limbs.

Robert Gosselin is O'Connor's father-in-law. O'Connor describes Gosselin as his best friend. They share the same sense of humor, and it was Gosselin who produced the campaign slogan: "I don't have a leg to stand on, but I'm a-running."

O'Connor says, "I loved my job until 9/11. Then the word from Immigration was that we could no longer be friendly to the public. Today we need to return to granting a level of judgment, a sense of discretion, to the officer on the job." He says, "The morale of these people [the border guards] is very low after being put down by management."

O'Connor came to Vermont from New York in 1973 as an Americorps VISTA volunteer working for OCCSA, the Orleans County Council of Social Agencies. He met his wife-to-be,



Photo By: North Star Monthly

Independent candidate Tony O'Connor, and his daughter, Tabatha, on part of his campaign for the seat of Vermont Governor were in Danville between February snowstorms. Unfazed by long odds or cold weather they are an engaging pair as they seek audiences to hear their message.

Gloria Gosselin, a volunteer at the Newport Health Care Center.

O'Connor received a bachelor's degree in behavioral sciences at Lyndon State College, and for 20 years he represented the Immigration and Naturalization Service, traveling the country, he says, "giving pep talks to cripples like me. It was a great job with many opportunities to get something done and change people's lives."

O'Connor describes the accident that resulted in the amputation of his legs and arm as the "second best thing that ever happened to

me. The best was marrying Gigi. She has been the mellowing influence in my life." In 1976 they were married and now have four children and three grandchildren.

Eight years ago, I visited O'Connor for an article I was writing about his role as co-founder of the Northeast Kingdom Civil War Round Table, a lively group with 550 members. He was to talk to our Lyndon Historical Society. O'Connor is a popular speaker for the Vermont Council on the Humanities, and now, like then, he often speaks on the "Assassination of President Lincoln."

His passion for history led to his discovery that the youngest soldier to ever receive a Medal of Honor was Willie Johnston, a 12-year-old drummer boy from Derby. Young Johnston was honored as the only drummer to cling to his drum through a fierce battle. That observation endeared this New Yorker to Vermonters from Derby.

As we started up the stairs to his office I noticed a plaque on the wall testifying that in less than an hour he had done 700 sit-ups as part of the training program for the Immigration Service. Noticing my amazement, he grinned. He explained that he canoes, he water skis and he has skydived. Among Orleans County golfers he is known as a formidable opponent.

O'Connor told me that he was well on his way down the road of juvenile delinquency, behaving wildly with his boyhood friends from Brooklyn. That was prior to his accident at the tender age of 16.

"My mother prayed every day," he says, "that something

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would happen to turn my life around." One afternoon her prayers were answered. "We used to play in the freight yards, and I was on top of a boxcar reaching for some snow to throw down at my brother, when I touched a high power cable." He likes to joke, "It was a shocking experience; it's where I got my electric personality.

"Ever since," O'Connor says, "people have said, 'You can't do this and you can't do that.'" But he gives credit for his recovery to an example set by his father, who emerged from a childhood of deep

poverty in the slums of New York. "Nobody handed him a thing, but that man lived the American Dream. He was self-taught, and he rose to the position of vice president of the First National Bank in New York City."

During O'Connor's four and a half months of hospitalization and multiple painful operations, he adopted a remarkable and new view of life that is a mixture of perseverance and self-mockery. He refuses to give in to self-pity. "Get on with it" and "Never Say Never" are two of his favorite mottoes.

As I look back on that visit in Derby eight years ago, I think of his vision about getting into politics. O'Connor told me that he had been telling people that he was prepared to run for the position of Vermont's governor in 2006.

"On what ticket," I asked, remembering that he had been a lifelong Republican.

"Republicat," he answered. "I'll spend just \$100 on my campaign. It can be done."

Now, despite the long odds, O'Connor is making his run for governor. His vision is that

Vermont must work toward being the first energy-independent state. He says there are 1,200 power dams on Vermont rivers, many of them idle when valuable power could be generated. He has spoken broadly in favor of wind, solar, geothermal and methane power, and he is eager to see the state move forward with all of these options.

And how about the economic development strategy of Vermont taking the national lead in the manufacture of electric cars? That, too, is part of his platform. Perhaps it is doable in such a small state. It reminds me of Noel Perrin's book written in 1992: "Solo: Life with an Electric Car" about driving his converted car from California to his farm in Vermont.

Could that be a natural development to explore. Could Vermont put its river power back to work in such a way that somehow it would be the power for all of our cars? Surely there would be no more grumbling at the gas station for fill-ups.

The practical side of this man, drawing upon his experience of 28-years in Immigration work, has convinced him that the use of mar-

ijuana should be decriminalized. "I believe in a fine for the use of a little pot makes more sense than throwing the user in jail with a criminal record. We know how crowded our jails are and at what enormous cost to the taxpayer."

**His vision is that Vermont must work toward being the first energy-independent state.**

O'Connor's thoughts on better relations between Vermonters and Quebec residents make a lot of sense. He knows his close neighbors to the north well, and he reminds me, "There are 8 million of them with dollars to spend on par with our dollars."

He is ready for the political temperature to climb in Vermont in March as town meetings convene. Candidate Tony O'Connor is on the campaign trail with a slogan he plans to put to work: "Make Sense - Not Politics."

Maybe? ★

## Ask the Shrinks

Alice S. Kitchel and Burton Zahler

Dear Shrinks,

Here is my situation. I am 27-years old. My baby is almost one year old, and we are living with my mother. I was born out of wedlock and my mother gave me up (I was 5 years old) when she started rehabilitation for her heroin addiction. I was a wild and rebellious teenager, and I too became addicted to heroin, I stopped when I discovered I was pregnant. I swore I would never abandon my daughter.

When I left the hospital the only place I could take my child was to the home of my mother. The three of us live together, but it is very, very difficult. My mother and I argue every day. My wish is to move into a place of my own where I can raise my child in peace. I have had three jobs in the last three months and lost all of them because of arguments with the boss. My work was good, but they said I was "disruptive."

My question is; how can I learn how to keep a job so I can have the life I want?

At my wit's end

Dear Wit's End,

We'll try. We're impressed

with your determination and the efforts you have already made in your life.

First, we want to sell you on an idea. We think it is probable that your fights with your bosses are reflections of your fights with your mother. If you can accept this premise (if it feels right to you) we think the quickest path to the social skills you need in order to hold a job is to decide that you will learn to live with your mother with only an occasional argument. We all learn patterns of behavior, especially when we are growing up, and we are often not aware of them. It is understandable, considering the history of your relationship with your mother and the

losses, hurt and anger that you have inevitably experienced, that you and your mother have a contentious relationship.

While learning these skills may prove awkward, you'll find it only the strangeness of learning new habits. Leaving your mother's home will be easier and less heartrending if you could separate as companions - or even as friends. (And this would break another old pattern: abandonment.)

If you choose to try this idea, we think that you might consider having a counselor or psychotherapist to witness and to help with the changes in your life. The ongoing support that a counselor can give you could be invaluable. We wish you well.



*Alice S. Kitchel & Burton Zahler each have a psychotherapy practice in St. Johnsbury.*



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# What's Happening at the Town Hall?

## Barnet

Town Clerk: William Hoar  
Selectboard: Ted Faris, Stanley Robinson and Jeremy Roberts

January 28, 2007

**Highway Access Permit** – Board approved access permit for Verizon New England on Comerford Dam Road.

**Town Meeting** – Board approved warning for March town meeting.

**VT Education Reform** – Board reviewed proposed resolution from VT Coalition of Municipalities and after discussion voted to sign resolution calling for a statewide discussion of breaking from Act 68 either by means of a public education system that is governed, managed and primarily financed locally, or a system that is governed, managed and financed by the State.

**Fire Department** – Following presentation by Fire Chief Ron Morse Board approved new by-laws for Barnet Fire and Rescue. Further, Board approved department's nomination of Ron Morse as chief. Board approved Morse's recommendation to seek other proposals for testing alarm systems at fire station and approved department's request to seek bids for installation of a skid tank on utility vehicle to be available for such uses as fighting brush fires and pay the cost from fire department reserve funds.

**Town Garage** – Town Attorney Steve Adler will do title search on land to be purchased for new town garage. Estimated cost of title search will not exceed \$500 unless there are unanticipated difficulties. In that case he will advise Board before continuing. Jeremy Roberts will do soil tests to ensure site will be suitable for septic permits.

**Library** – Board noted letter from Barnet taxpayers Rae & George McBride supporting increase in hourly wages for library staff.

February 11, 2008

**Town Garage Site** – Board reviewed report of tests at proposed site of new town garage from Ruggles Engineering. Conditions of topsoil over fine sand over clay loam indicate that a septic system on the site would have to be a mound system. There is space for a system (420 gallons/day) similar to that designed for a three bedroom house.

**Certificate of Highway Mileage** – Board signed Certificate of Highway Mileage noting total mileage is 103.160 including 21.19 of state highways and 10.95 of Class 4 roads. Class 3 road mileage changed from 58.68 to 58.46 due to discontinuance of a portion of Town Forest Road.

**Overweight Vehicle** – Board approved overweight vehicle permits for Allen

Lumber and S.T. Griswold.

**Road Name Hearing** – Shirley Warden reported the need to name a small section of the extension of Comerford Dam Road which crosses into Waterford, where it has another name, and then loops briefly back into Barnet. For E-911 purposes the road needs to have its name clarified. Board will have a hearing on the road name.

**Transportation Fund Money** – Board discussed letter from NVDA asking Board support of its request that the Vermont legislature discontinue diverting money from state's transportation fund as it has done for many years. Board agreed to prepare a letter of support.

**Utility Easement** – Board approved permit for installation of poles, guys and wires along McLaren Hill Road by Green Mountain Power Corp.

**Dump Truck** – Road Foreman Maurice Gingue discussed prices for a new dump truck. Board instructed Gingue to seek quotes from Charlebois.

**Personnel** – After executive session to discuss a personnel matter, no action taken.

February 25, 2008

**Education Funding** – Board signed letter to NVDA expressing support of NVDA's efforts to dissuade state legislature from diverting money from state transportation fund for other uses.

**Palmer Cemetery Trust** – Board signed annual report on Palmer Cemetery Trust.

**Town Service Officer** – Board recommended reappointment of Stan Robinson as town service officer.

**Overweight Permits** – Board approved overweight vehicle permits for A. Withers Trucking, Blue Seal Feeds and Pouliot & Corriveau.

**Passumpsic Village Store** – Board reviewed November 7 semi-annual report on Passumpsic Village Store site. Three wells are contaminated above state standards. Others are below the standards. Continued semi-annual testing is recommended.

**Barnet Library** – Board signed zoning permit for sign at Barnet Public Library and waived the customary fee.

## Cabot

Town Clerk: Doug Harvey  
Selectboard: Larry Gochey, Caleb Pitkin and Ted Domey

January 30, 2008

**Personnel** – Following executive session to discuss a personnel matter, no action taken.

**Budget Review** – After discussion and review of various documents Board approved highway and general fund budgets for 2008.

**Town Meeting** – Board approved warning for March town meeting including the question of a bond for the purpose of buying a fire department rescue vehicle.

## Danville

Town Clerk: Virginia Morse  
Town Administrator - Merton Leonard  
Selectboard: Marion Sevigny, Denise Briggs, Doug Pastula, Marvin Withers and Michael Walsh

February 7, 2008

**US Route 2 Reconstruction** – Board met with state engineers and discussed US Route 2 reconstruction. With rising costs and limited money for the long planned project, state officials are planning to reduce \$10.5 million project by \$2.5 million. Board and town planning committee expressed disappointment but will seek areas of acceptable reduction in project plans.

**Historical Association House** – Mary Prior reported on town historical house and associated trust fund which will be set up after town approves its appropriation.

**Road Crew** – Kevin Gadapee reported snow and ice removal has been hampered by a shortage in salt for use on town roads. The shortage is widespread but only well known when deliveries stopped.

**Emergency Management** – Merton Leonard reported a regional effort to coordinate emergency management efforts.

**Town Hall** – Leonard reported a \$250 donation from the chamber of commerce toward the restoration work on the recently acquired painted theater curtain.

**Certificate of Mileage** – Board approved annual certificate of mileage.

**Town Green** – Board approved use of the Green for Danville School winter carnival.

## Lyndon

Town Clerk - Lisa Barrett  
Administrative Assistant - Art Sanborn  
Selectmen: Martha Feltus, Kevin Calkins and Kermit Fisher

January 7, 2008

**Lyndon Rescue** – Board reappointed James Gallagher and Bruce James to Lyndon Rescue board.

**2008 Budget Review** – Board continued discussion on general fund, highway fund and sanitation fund budgets. Board will apply \$5,000 cash on hand that Cobleigh Public Library has to its request, bringing Library 2008 appropriation to \$193,000.

**Police Agreement** – Board favors a 65/35 split of police department funding while Village Trustees prefer a 60/40 split. Original agreement divided costs on basis

of actual hours of service provided in each municipality and until another mechanism is determined, original contract must be followed.

**Highway Report** – Board reviewed highway report as of week ending December 18. At 100% through the year, payroll is 95% expended and total budget is 90% expended.

January 14, 2008

**Education Funding** – Board tabled action on resolution on state funding of education proposed by VT Coalition of Municipalities.

**VT Trails & Greenways** – Board denied request for funding from VT Trails & Greenways Association.

**2008 Budget** – Board discussed 2008 budgets.

**Police Agreement** – Board discussed police with Village Trustees. Board prefers a Village 65% and Town 35% split and suggests looking at another mechanism for funding police department other than current split based on hours. Board would like to discuss new funding mechanism at town meeting. Request for a third officer will be on town meeting warning. Trustees and Town Selectboard agreed to share cost of police department using a 65/35 split for 2008 and discuss new funding mechanism for future years.

January 21, 2008

**Inter-Local Agreement on Police Department** – Board met with Village Trustees to discuss joint agreement on police department. Two boards have agreed to share police department cost with Village paying 65% and Town paying 35% for 2008. Town Board voted to approve agreement as discussed. Village Trustees voted to approve agreement as discussed. Both boards discussed alternative proposal for future funding considering distinction between fixed costs (facility, vehicle purchase and reserve, dispatch services and equipment) and variable costs (those associated with payroll and benefits).

January 21, 2008

**Access Permit** – Board approved access permit for Mt. Pleasant Associations onto Mohawk Drive.

**Utility Easement** – Board approved right-of-way for Verizon at 1919 Old Coach Road.

**2008 Budgets** – Board voted to set 2008 general fund budget at \$2,073,016.46, highway budget at \$1,471,708, wastewater budget at \$1,041,274 and sanitation budget of \$326,765.

**Town Meeting** – Board approved warning for March town meeting.

**Perpetual Care Agreement** – Board approved perpetual care agreement for Greg and Stacey Hopkins.

**Road Name Addition** – On request of property owner, Board approved naming a private road off of Gramp's Lane and Perley's Lane, Derek's Way.

**Riverside School** – Board approved letter of support for Riverside School's roof renovation grant.

**Real Estate Gift to Town** – Kathy McGowan has asked if town would consider accepting the First Community Church of Lyndon on York Street as a gift. Board will consider the offer.

February 4, 2008

**Trefren Fund** – Board approved annual accounting report for the Trefren Fund to the Probate Court.

**Catering Permit** – Board approved catering permit from Black Bear Tavern & Grille for an event at Lyndon Institute on February 16.

**Industrial Parkway** – Board voted to accept Industrial Parkway as a Class 3 Town road. This adds .67-mile section of Industrial Parkway, previously owned by NVDA, to town highway system. NVDA will continue to pay for road upkeep.

**Highway Mileage Certificate** – Board approved annual certification of highway mileage as of February 10.

**Justice Center** – Board approved letter in support of Justice Center.

**Skateboard Park** – Board discussed alternative uses of grant funds intended for skateboard park, which would benefit the most people. Board authorized Art Sanborn to request extension of the grant schedule to allow for consideration of a scaled-back version of skateboard park and possible use of excess funds for other improvements at Powers Park.

**Contracts** – After executive session to discuss two contracts, no action taken.

**Access Permit** – Board approved access permit for Jack & Kelly Harris on Sugar Maple Road.

**Insurance Claim** – Board approved insurance claim and incident report provided by VT League of Cities and Towns.

**Memorial Contributions** – Board approved \$100 memorial contribution in memory of Cola Hudson and one for \$75 in memory of employee Norm Lacross' partner.

February 18, 2008

**Highway Report** – Board reviewed the highway budget report as of week ending February 8. At 12% through year entire budget is 14% expended with extra demands due to winter storm plowing.

**Transportation Initiative** – Board authorized Arthur Sanborn to write a letter in support NVDA Transportation Initiative.

**Crosswalk Request** – Board voted to install a crosswalk on Lily Pond Road from Lyndon Outing Club parking lot to Fisher Field as well as one on Hill Street.

**Request to use Town Roads** – Board approved request from Good Shepherd School to use town roads for fund raising marathon on day of St. Johnsbury Academy vs. L.I. football game.

**Resource Conservation District** – Board approved request from Northern Vermont Resource Conservation and Development Council for a dues appropriation of \$75.

**Sale of Police Cruiser** – Arthur Sanborn reported no bids received for sale of old police cruiser. Board authorized police chief and municipal administrator to sell the vehicle by negotiation.

## Peacham

Town Clerk: Bruce Lafferty  
Selectmen: Richard Browne, Tim McKay and Gary Swenson.

January 12, 2008

**VT Trails and Greenways** – Board

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**Excerpts from Selectboard Minutes from Area Towns**  
*See your Town Clerk for complete minutes of the meetings*

approved grant application for VT Trails and Greenways program.

January 16, 2008

**Veterans' Memorial** – Board agreed to add article to town meeting warning for \$6,000 for Veterans' Memorial as previously requested by Allen Thresher Sr.

**Road Report** – Administrative Assistant Jejer reviewed winter road projects and new federal random drug testing policy, which goes into effect on February 1. Jejer suggested improved walkway for town hall entrance.

**Retirement Policy** – Board discussed town employee retirement policy.

**Dump Truck** – Board approved lease purchase agreement for new dump truck.

**Financial Reports** – Town treasurer reported on status of town accounts. An exact balance for this year and prior years is not available. On advice of state auditor's department, a thorough review of 2003 professional audit and new audit scheduled for 2008-09 should provide accurate information as to deficit or surplus of the accounts.

**Reappraisal** – Board reviewed options for reappraisal and decided that listers should be authorized to conduct town reappraisal. Listers and Board agreed to quarterly report of expenses and accomplishments. Board voted to submit appraisal proposal as discussed to department of taxes.

**Board of Listers** – Board appointed Kirsten Szendrey to board of listers until March 2008 town meeting.

**Town Clerk and Treasurer** – Board discussed position of assistant town clerk and treasurer.

**Budget Review** – Board reviewed 2008 budget.

February 6, 2008

**Veterans' Memorial** – Board discussed committee for Veterans Memorial and reviewed design proposal and costs.

**Danville Rescue Squad** – Board appointed Chip Deasy to board of Danville Rescue Squad.

**Town Gym** – Board discussed draft policy for use of town gymnasium.

**Road Matters** – Board discussed road policy concerning snow removal during weekends.

**Retirement Accounts** – Board discussed municipal employee retirement accounts.

**Town Forest Contract** – Board discussed timber contract for town forest and agreed to addendum to contract.

**Conservation Recreation Committee** – Board discussed possibility of conglomeration of committees consisting of the present Trails, Recreation, and Conservation Commission. A public meeting was scheduled to discuss the proposal on April 5.

**Certificate of Highway Mileage** – Board completed certificate of highway mileage.

**Pre-town Meeting** – Board announced there will be no pre-town meeting this year.

**St. Johnsbury**

Town Manager: Michael Welch  
 Town Clerk: Sandy Grenier  
 Selectboard: Jerry Rowe, Daniel Kimbell, Bryon Quatrini, Gary Reis and

Dale Urie.

January 21, 2008

**Budget Review** – Town manager reviewed revised 2008 budget proposals. After review of various documents and considerable discussion Board voted to \$21,925 to property tax reduction in general fund for 2008, maintaining an undedicated fund balance of \$110,000; apply \$28,068 from undedicated fund balance in special services fund to property tax reduction; and accept and recommend the proposed general fund, highway fund and special services fund budgets as presented.

**Personnel** – After executive session to discuss contracts and labor relations with employees no action was taken.

**Cola Hudson** – Board noted with sadness Cola Hudson's recent death and his long service to the Northeast Kingdom.

**Community Center** – Board met with Joe Fox and discussed improvements to community center. After discussion Fox recommended applying for up to \$20,000 as a planning grant.

**Weidmann Industries** – Board discussed a community development grant funded project to develop a high voltage substation to be leased to Weidmann Electrical Technologies. Board discussed merits of project and \$460,000 grant application. St. Johnsbury development Fund will invest \$100,000 and Weidmann will invest \$750,000 for construction of a 34,000 volt line to the substation allowing for recovery of the investment in three years and the ability to stay competitive in the global industry. If project is approved for funding construction will likely take place in 2009. Board voted to apply for the grant as proposed.

**Education Funding** – Board discussed resolution proposed by VT Coalition of Municipalities asking legislature consider advantages and disadvantages of Act 60/68 and move in the direction of a public education system that is financed locally, or a public education system that is financed by the State. Following discussion and noting the absence of a concrete proposal for a replacement, Board voted to table any action on the proposal.

**Municipal Building and Fire Station** – Board agreed to review all options considered to date on new construction and reconfiguration of space used for municipal offices and town fire department.

January 28, 2008

**Municipal Building and Fire Station** – Jay Ancel of Black River Design met with Board to review options for municipal building and fire station. Board discussed needs of the town, various sites considered to date, size requirements and costs. Board also mentioned professional and volunteer fire departments. David Brown referred to an in depth study on a volunteer vs. a professional department completed in 1993 and recommended not spending more time on studying the question. After discussion Board appointed a building committee including the fire chief, town manager, contractor, architect, a town resident and Board members Gary Reis and Dale Kimbell.

**Town Meeting** – Board approved warn-

ing for March town meeting.

**Welcome Center** – Nat Tripp, chair of Welcome Center Advisory Board reported that RCT and NEK Chamber of Commerce are very interested leasing the second floor of the Pomerleau Building and paying for the fit-up costs of second floor and contribute \$30,000 toward the annual operating cost of the building in return for a favorable lease. After considerable discussion Board voted to pursue an agreement with RCT and the Chamber with further consideration on February 11.

**Community Justice Center** – Dinah Yessne and Denyse Daly provided update on activities of St. Johnsbury Community Justice Center.

**Canterbury Housing** – Mike Welch presented request from Housing Vermont that the town accept assignment of a mortgage from NCIC in the amount of \$55,000 for investment in Canterbury Housing. After discussion Board voted to authorize town manager to sign documentation accepting assignment of a \$55,000 note for Canterbury Housing Project.

**Water System Improvements** – Town manager reported Dufresne Associates has been working with the town and USDA on funding for water system improvements identified in water system master plan. USDA has recommended that the \$16.9 million in water projects be broken up into smaller projects. It appears that 60% grant funding will be available. On recommendation of town manager and following discussion Board agreed to a first phase of the project, totaling \$5.6 million, including replacement of water storage tanks at Overcliff and the Industrial Park, increasing size of clearwell at filtration plant and slip-lining unused water line leading into town in order to treat alum sludge at wastewater treatment plant. Board voted to hold vote on the project and necessary borrowing on March 4.

**Industrial Parkway** – After presentation by town manager Board authorized acceptance of approximately .87 miles of Industrial Parkway in Industrial Park.

**Transitional Housing Application** – Board voted to submit grant application for Railroad Street Gilman Housing/Umbrella Shelter and Transitional Housing Project.

**Personnel** – After executive session to discuss contracts, no action was taken.

February 11, 2008

**Highway Department Equipment** – Larry Gadapee and Randy Clark from Clark's Truck Center met with Board and reviewed a proposal for highway equipment replacement with a lease purchase of five new vehicles to replace the five oldest vehicles used by the highway department

with an annual cost of \$155,477. After considerable discussion Board agreed to discuss this further at its next meeting.

**Umbrella Supervised Visitation Grant** – Michelle Fay from Umbrella met with Board to propose town's application for a grant for additional funding for project development including policies, procedures, advisory board, training and capacity building associated with Umbrella's supervised visitation program. After discussion Board voted to approve grant application for Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Grant, Office of Violence Against Women.

**Kingdom Challenge** – Board discussed information on proposed Kingdom Challenge Half-Marathon and 5K foot race to be an annual activity on the day of the St. Johnsbury/LI football game. The event is being planned to begin in the community where the game is not scheduled and end near the site of the game.

**Recreation Department** – On recommendation of Recreation Board, Board voted to increase membership of Recreation Board from 6 to 9 members.

**Town Meeting** – Board discussed various presentations to be made at town meeting.

**Water System Improvements** – On recommendation of town manager Board agreed to have Dufresne & Associates complete final design for first phase of water system improvements.

**Fire Study** – Town Manager provided Board with a copy of 1993 study referenced by David Brown at previous Board meeting considering career vs. volunteer staffing for fire department.

**Labor Relations** – Following executive session to discuss labor relations, no action was taken.

**Walden**

Town Clerk: Lina Smith  
 Selectboard: David Brown, Perley Greaves and Douglas Luther

January 22, 2008

**Constable** – Following request from Constable Bill Huntoon that Board consider establishing fees for some of his services Board agreed to do some research on the subject. Huntoon also noted complaints of speeding in front of the school.

**Budget** – Board reviewed 2008 town budget.

**Gravel Purchase** – After discussion Board decided to purchase gravel from Calvin Maskell.

**Wages of Elected Officials** – Based upon comparisons with other towns with similar populations Board raised official wages for auditors (from \$8r to \$10/hr);

listers (from \$9 to \$10/hr and \$11/hr for chair); emergency management coordinator and E911 coordinator will be paid a stipend of \$250/yr for each job plus mileage. Constable's yearly stipend (from \$350 to \$700/yr plus mileage and he will be paid \$10/hr for court and training time). Health Officer \$10/hr plus mileage. Annual stipend for Board members will go from \$450 to \$750. Election workers and JP's will remain at minimum wage. Board also discussed the disparity in wages of road crew. No action taken on road crew salary.

**Board Meetings** – Roger Fox suggested Board might want to be more formal in its motions and more specific with agendas.

February 12, 2008

**School Alarm** – Dave Brown reported that after his discussion with school principal regarding alarm system and false alarms, situation improved.

**Constable** – Bill Huntoon asked to clarify that if so approved by Board, his fees would be for serving papers, picking up stray dogs and responding to alarms after a number of false alarms. Town clerk will look into process for assessing and collecting constable fees.

**Gravel** – Calvin Maskell agreed to sell gravel to town at \$2.85 per yard until 2011.

**Road Salt** – When asked about salt shortage, Perley Greaves reported that because Walden has a contract it is not facing a shortage.

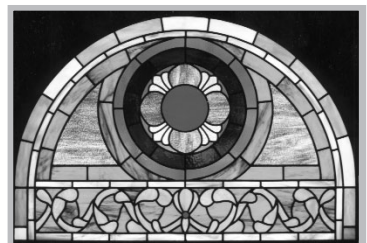
**Harrington Hill Road Bridge** – On request of Jim Cochran for an overweight permit and permission to cross bridge on Harrington Hill Road, Board noted bridge is posted at 6,000 lbs. Board thought it was posted for 16,000 lbs. but agreed they would have to wait for spring state inspection. Board issued overweight permit but did not agree to use of bridge.

**Ambulance Calls** – Board noted confusion as to which ambulance responds to which calls and the Fast Squad is changing dispatchers. Board asked to be kept posted on this situation.

**Tax Appeal** – Lina Smith reported a hearing to consider evidence in a tax appeal brought to the state by Catherine Van Shagen and John Scibetta. No decision reported.

**Summer Paving** – Board discussed bid from Pike Industries for repaving Walden sections of Lower Cabot Road and Route 215. Board will follow up seeking additional bids.

**New Construction Appraisals** – On recommendation of town clerk Board agreed to have New England Municipal Consultants do appraisals on new construction for 2008 grand list.



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**Barbara Hutchins Fontaine**  
 for  
**Danville Selectboard**

My name is Barbara Fontaine. I've lived in Danville my whole life. I am community minded, and I am committed to representing the interests of the people of Danville. I've been regularly attending the town Selectboard meetings for the past year to gain a greater understanding of town politics. I've worked in area businesses for the past 39 years and am currently employed by the Passumpsic Savings Bank. I'm interested in a more efficient approach to town expenditures, and I am eager to stand for the welfare and benefit of our community.



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# No Small Potatoes

Vanna Guldenschuh

On St. Patrick's Day this year, let's pay homage to those humble tubers we know as potatoes. They have long been a staple of the Irish diet, and, when the Irish came to America as immigrants during the famine, they brought with them many ways to prepare their beloved potatoes. The recipes tend to be simple and straightforward, unchanged for many years. I think this shows a reverence the Irish have for the food their ancestors fed to generations past.

Many in the Northeast Kingdom, with its strong Irish heritage, can relate to this devotion to potatoes. We consume an extraordinary amount of potatoes in every shape and form, and they continue to be a favorite accompaniment to any meal.



The following recipes are so Irish they have freckles and an impish glint in their eye.

### Bubble and Squeak

This 600-year old recipe (there is mention of it in the *Iliad*) has a great name. It is derived from the sound that emanates from the pan when cooking – it really does bubble and squeak.

Originally, bubble and squeak was made with leftover meat and vegetables from the Sunday meal. There are recipes that call for bacon or sausage to be used even though this near-vegetarian version is most popular today. If you care to add meat, I think a little cooked ham, bacon or sausage would be a fine addition to this recipe.

- 2 cups cold mashed potatoes
- 2 cups cabbage - chopped
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 cups chicken stock

- 4 scallions – chopped
- ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley

Cook the cabbage in chicken stock with the parsley and scallions. Let the stock reduce to almost nothing in the pan. If you don't have leftover potatoes, cook about 4 peeled and cubed potatoes and mash them coarsely. Stir the potatoes into the cabbage mix, and add salt and pepper to taste. Classically you cook the entire bubble and squeak in a hot oiled skillet on top of the stove. I separate it into individual servings in the skillet. It keeps the center from burning and makes it easier to turn it over once one side has browned.

When both sides are browned it is done.

### Colcannon

If you thought it couldn't get more Irish than potatoes and cabbage – try Kale and potatoes. This traditional recipe combines them both to make a hearty side-dish. It would be delightful with an oven braised brisket.

- 1¼ lbs. kale – tough stems removed and leaves chopped
- 1½ lbs. potatoes – peeled
- 1 cup leeks – cleaned and chopped (you may substitute 1 cup of chopped scallions)
- 1 cup milk or half and half
- ¼ lb. butter
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
- Salt and pepper

Simmer the Kale in water until it is tender (about 10 to 15 minutes.) Drain and set aside. Start the potatoes cooking in boiling salted water. In the meantime, melt 3 tablespoons of but-

ter in a sauce pan, and slowly cook the sliced leeks until tender. When the leeks are cooked add the kale to the pan and keep warm. Salt and pepper this mix to taste.

When the potatoes are soft, drain and mash them. Add the kale and leek mix to the potatoes and mix well. Heat the half and half (or milk) and beat into the potato mixture with a teaspoon until it is creamy. Season with salt and pepper. Melt the remaining butter and mound the Colcannon into a bowl. Make a small depression in the center, and pour in the butter before service.

### Boxty

The Irish potato cake called boxty is a time honored tradition. Wherever I looked for a boxty recipe, I found this rhyme to celebrate the dish – "Boxty on the griddle, boxty on the pan, if you can't make boxty, you'll never find a man." I have to share it with you.

Boxty can take on many forms from a simple pancake to a large crepe used for holding different stuffings. I tried all of them and was most enamored with medium sized pancake shape that I found to be perfect with maple syrup. A perfect St. Patrick's Day breakfast – Boxty with thick sliced grilled ham or thick bacon, eggs and maple syrup.

- 1 cup grated raw potato
- 1 cup mashed potato
- 2 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 eggs slightly beaten
- 1 cup milk (more if you want to make a crepe like pancake)
- ¼ cup melted butter

Grease for the skillet (anything from butter to bacon fat)

If you don't have any leftover mashed potatoes, cook 3-4 peeled and cubed potatoes in boiling salted water now. When they are soft mash them with a ¼ cup of milk and salt. Set aside and let them cool.


Grate about 2 raw potatoes to measure one cup. Let the liquid strain out through a cloth or a filter. I use a coffee filter, which I hold over a container while I gently squeeze the liquid out of the grated potatoes.

Mix the grated potato, flour, baking powder and salt into the cooled mashed potatoes. Lightly beat the eggs with ¼ cup milk and add to the potato mix. Add the rest of the milk, a small amount at a time, until you reach the consistency you desire. I like to make a pancake with a fairly thick batter, but if you want to make a bigger crepe-like pancake for stuffing add more milk. The combination of mashed and grated potato give this pancake its unique texture.

Brush a heavy skillet with oil and heat to medium-high. Drop the batter by heaping tablespoons onto the skillet. Push down on the pancakes with the back of a spoon to form rounds and cook on medium-low heat until golden brown on the bottom. Flip over and cook until the under-side is browned and the tops are puffed. Repeat, using more oil if needed, until all the batter is used. You can keep the finished boxty in the oven until you are finished.

They are fabulous with maple syrup poured over the top. They can stand alone as pancakes or become part of a hearty Irish breakfast with eggs and a rasher of bacon or bangers on the side.

(Concluded on Next Page)



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**Irish Beer and Potato Soup**

Irish red ale gains its slightly reddish color from the use of a small amount of roasted barley. It has a slightly sweet and well rounded flavor. Smithwick's, made by Guinness is a popular red ale. It goes well in this soup. Save some to serve with dinner.

- 2 quarts chicken stock (boxed is fine, but add two tablespoons bouillon paste)
- ½ teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- ¼ cup parsley - chopped
- 4 cups thinly sliced onions
- 4 cup potatoes - peeled and cubed
- 2 bottles (16 oz.) light colored Irish ale
- 1 bunch scallions - chopped
- 3-4 tablespoons butter
- 1 cup heavy cream
- Salt and pepper to taste

In a soup pot, cook the onions with butter until they are soft. A medium heat is best so they do not brown. Add the chicken stock, thyme, sugar, parsley and potatoes. Simmer until the potatoes are very soft.

With a ricer or comparable tool, coarsely mash some of the potatoes in the soup to thicken it. There should be some whole pieces of potato left to make a slightly chunky soup.

Add the beer and scallions and heat the soup on low heat for a few minutes. Take care not to burn the soup after it has been thickened.

Add the cream. Check for seasoning. This soup needs a good amount of salt and benefits from fresh, coarsely ground pepper.

You can serve this as a soup, on its own, or provide each of your guests with a small individual bowl to use as a potato side dish with a pork or ham dinner. Chives are a nice garnish for the top of this soup. ★

# A Brush with the Dalai Lama

*BETS AND PETER ALBRIGHT*

From time to time we hear news about the Dalai Lama, citing something he said, often accompanied by an image of his smiling face. On those occasions we are reminded of a day we will never forget.

A few years ago we were visiting in the part of Scotland known as The Borders. The region includes the border with England. We were staying with our friend Alma and her family in a little cottage where they live and make wonderful pottery. Alma had learned that the Dalai Lama would soon be visiting Samai Ling, a Tibetan Buddhist monastery no more than 25 miles away. Buddhism was something we were interested in, and Alma had visited Samai Ling a number of times before.

Her friends there told her that if she would arrive at a certain time she might gain favorable seating for herself and her family at an event where His Holiness was to speak, and luncheon would follow. Alma invited us to join her family for this day at Samai Ling. What a privilege and opportunity.

It was early March, and much to everyone's surprise, it snowed the night before, an unusual happening in that part of the country.

There were perhaps three inches of snow on the ground that morning, most of which melted during the day.

By the time we arrived at Samai Ling, the parking area in a large field was muddy and sloppy. The monastery was located in the countryside, well away from any village. It had a typical Buddhist appearance, trimmed in red and gold. As we drove onto the grounds we discovered an immense white tent beyond the monastery, where the day's events were to take place. The parking field was already beginning to fill up with what would be hundreds of cars. As we walked into the tent, we were stunned to see that seats were placed for probably a thousand people, and by the time the event began, every seat was occupied. Because we had been advised to arrive early, we were able to sit in about the tenth row from the speakers' platform.

At the appointed hour it was announced that the great man had arrived, and everyone rose to their feet. He passed down the aisle next to us with a small entourage, and Peter was able to reach out and touch his maroon robe as he moved to the front. His head was shorn as one would expect of a monk. He had a lovely smile and appeared happy to

be with us. He announced that he would give his talk in English and then answer questions in his native tongue through an interpreter. His voice was deep and resonant. His English, though accented, was not hard to understand. His message was not complicated, strongly advocating love and peace and kindness. One always marvels at the resilience and generosity of the man, whose people have endured such trials and tribulations over decades of time.

As he walked to the back of the hall, Peter could not resist lapsing into tourist mode and snapped a quick picture at close range, which, though blurry, is a wonderful memento of the day.

Afterwards we all shared a simple buffet lunch, at round tables, and had an opportunity to greet the man briefly. He could not stay long because he was expected further south and had to leave with his entourage promptly. We agreed that his presence was a blessing. He spoke of the great opportunity it was for him to leave Tibet and go out into the world spreading his message.

For us it was an extraordinary experience to be there in the lovely Scottish hills and to hear a rare message from a remarkable man who wanted so badly to share himself and his words far and wide. He pointed out that this freedom for him was not possible until fairly recently.

We had contact with other ambassadors from Tibet on the Isle of Iona off the rugged west coast of Scotland a few years earlier. We joined a group of 30 or so who gathered for a fortnight to share the insights of two Tibetans, one a monk and the other a physician, who were touring and lecturing in Britain with the personal blessing of the Dalai Lama. Both were highly intelligent and spiritually directed men. They also planned to come to the United States. We assured them that they would be welcome in Vermont, but it's doubtful that they ever made it this far north.

It would be wonderful if more of us could have the opportunity to be exposed to the warmth and enlightenment of such people.



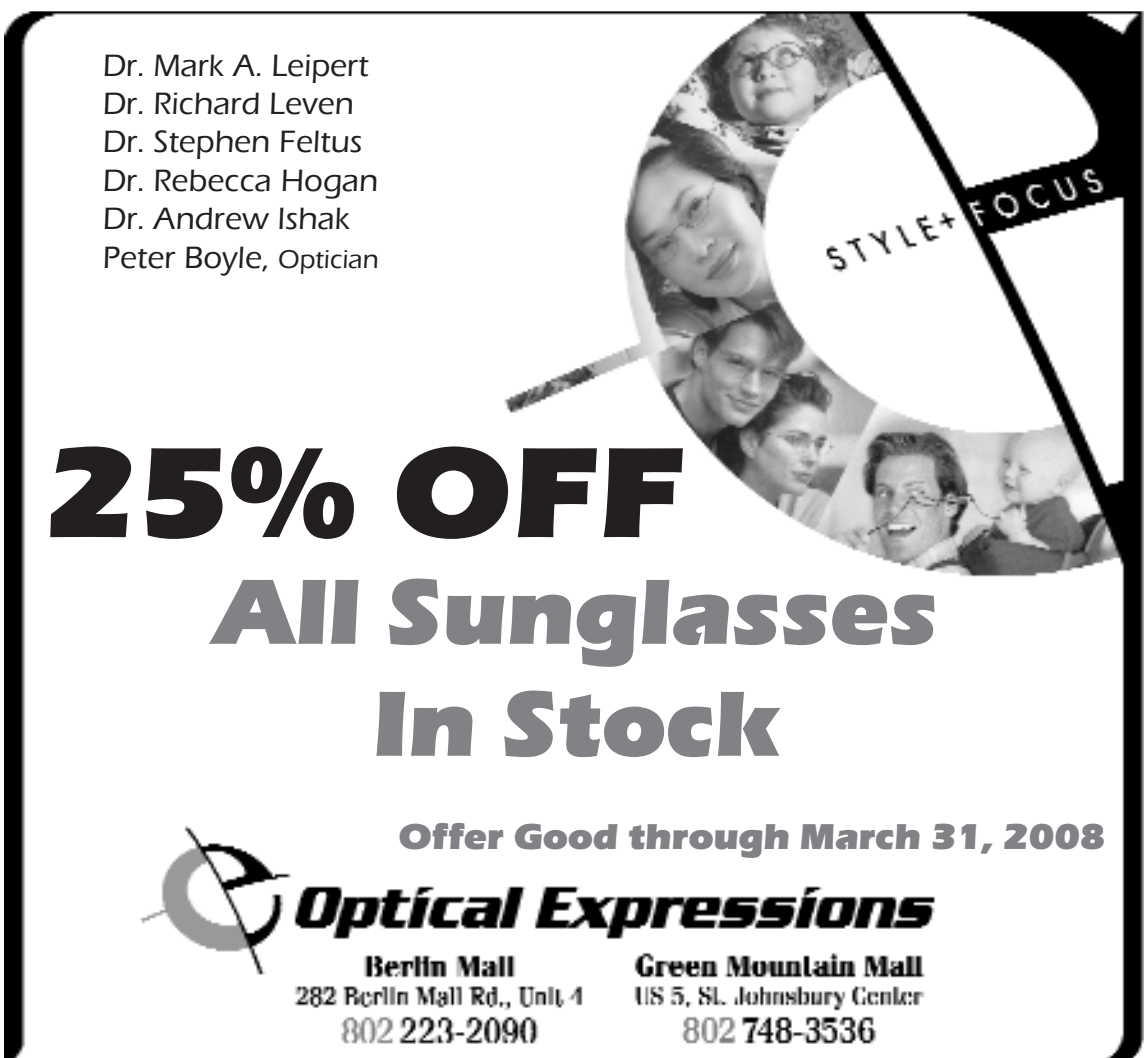
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# Walden Hill Journal

ELLEN GOLD

**March 1, 2007:** March made a gentle entrance, but the roar of the lion is soon to be heard. A winter advisory with sleet, freezing rain and another foot of snow is in effect from midnight tonight until 9 p.m. tomorrow.

**March 3, 2007:** The March lion roared in a day late but left his wintry mark with a foot of wet snow. Feathery trees are outlined with a coating of icy white, undisturbed by the morning calm. Intermittent sun highlights the sparkling frosting against patches of blue sky. Puffed up blue jays, chickadees, juncoes and a colorful purple finch have been visiting the feeder, which now hangs close to the ground.

**March 7, 2007:** Town Meeting Day. It's a sunny 13° this morning after record breaking lows last night. St. J had 24° below with parts of the state reading in the minus 30's.

**March 9, 2007:** It's a balmy 27° after another night of record-breaking lows. The Arctic front moved on, and hopefully now we can begin the slow journey towards spring. My back has succumbed to too much shoveling, so it was a slow shuffle to the mailbox today. The effort was rewarded

with an extended view of an industrious pileated woodpecker across the road. It was amazing to see how far back he tilted his entire body before striking his steady, hammering blows. Huge wood chips flew around as the woodpecker penetrated the old maple.

**March 11, 2007:** We've "sprung" ahead or more appropriately "plowed" ahead to the new Daylight Savings Time. Turning the clocks forward nearly a month earlier than usual is an attempt somehow, to save electricity. It's a bit confusing to have this event, which is usually associated with spring during wintry March.

**March 15, 2007:** Several days of unseasonable warm weather and rain dramatically reduced the snow pack. Bare ground is visible closer to town. Roads are rutted and viscous as Vermont's infamous mud season begins. Buds are showing a definite tinge of red, especially on a gray day. Montpelier has a flood watch because of ice dams about to break on the rising waters.

**March 18, 2007:** Mother Nature is working overtime to be sure and replenish her snow before the calendar turns officially to spring. It's a good thing we had a thorough melting to make room for the foot of heavy

snow that fell on Friday night. More snow showers over the weekend have added another couple of fluffy inches. I unearthed a very startled mouse while shoveling. He finally disappeared under the stairs and hopefully found a way back to burrow into the warmth of the snow.

**March 21, 2007:** The equinox occurred at 8:07 p.m. yesterday with the thermometer showing 11° and 1½ feet of snow on the ground, most of it recently fallen. We celebrated spring's arrival by enjoying the one true measure of the season's progress in Vermont, longer daylight. The big dipper was in its question mark phase, wondering why we were suddenly back in the deep freeze of winter. The good news is that the sun is out, bringing us full strength solar gain.

**March 24, 2007:** 20° nights and 50° days should start the sap flowing and sugarmakers boiling. The thaw continues. Stone walls are reappearing and vibrant green moss carpets rock ledges. The beautiful sound of flowing water brought on that end of winter joyous feeling. We were curious about the apparent full gray moon surrounding its bright crescent. Jeff thought it might have been an illusion so we emailed the experts at the Fairbanks Museum and Planetarium and got the following explanation from Mark Breen. "That was no illusion. It is called Earthshine. The light reflecting off the Earth is hitting



Photo By: Jeff Gold

Feathery trees are outlined with a coating of icy white, undisturbed by the morning calm.

the moon. If you were on that dark portion of the Moon, a nearly 'full Earth' would be in the skies. It also inspired the phrase, 'the old Moon in the new Moon's arms'."

**March 26, 2007:** It was a special Vermont March weekend, with all the beauty of an early spring snowfall and outdoor exuberance of a family sugaring party. We barely survived the very rutted and muddy ride to Square Deal Farm's sugaring celebration in their newly finished sugarhouse. Sap was running and the evaporator boiling away. Dipping donuts in warm, fresh drawn maple syrup was almost as good as doing the same with grilled hot-dogs. There's something about the joy of sugaring and the understanding that winter is losing its grip

and yielding to spring. The biggest pleasure for me was watching the kids playing in the snow and mud, stopping occasionally for a sour pickle or sweet sugar on snow. The ruts are not too bad now but the millions of pot holes, large and small, offer quite a navigational challenge.

**March 31, 2007:** Signs of spring are appearing as March comes to a close. Honking geese flying north greet the morning sun as the cawing of raucous crows replace the squawking blue jays of winter. Robins have appeared in our yard, seeking open ground and thawing worms. Mourning doves have joined the flocks of not-so-gold finches at the feeder. The melodic "okalee" of the redwing blackbirds singing in our wetlands, heralds the budding of tiny pussy willows. The early-rising and late-setting sun, bookend our longer days. But there are still reminders that winter has not relinquished her hold. There remains measurable snow on the ground, held in place by 20° nights. Windy March days keep the snow-cooled air nippy indeed. The wind-chill seems to be convincing the maple buds to hold off on telling the sap to rise.

To view an extended version of this month's Journal with additional photos, go to [www.jeffgoldgraphics.com](http://www.jeffgoldgraphics.com) and click on "The View from Vermont."

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## String Worth Saving

Bill Christiansen

I recently finished reading a book, *In the Heart of the Sea* by Nathaniel Philbrick. It is the story of the whaling ship Essex. The saga of the ship formed the basis of Herman Melville's great American novel, *Moby-Dick*. While the story was interesting, the details of the whaling ship were even more intriguing.

The Essex was a typical whaling ship used in the early 19th century, sailing outward bound from Nantucket. Registered in 1799, she was described as "having two decks and three masts, and a length of eighty seven feet, seven inches. Her breadth was twenty five feet and her depth was twelve feet, six inches." She was a square rigged vessel. She is listed in 1815 as being registered in Nantucket. She set sail on July 13 of that year. The final voyage was started on August 12, 1819. This was a voyage into the Pacific Ocean, which was to last 2 or 3 years. In 1819, seventy-seven ships were employed in the whaling fishery from Nantucket.

I have never paid much attention to the size of a whaling ship until I began to fill in some of the blanks with details from the Essex. The ship carried six whale boats, which were used to actually go after the whale. Three were in use, and the other three were carried as spares. Two were hung from davits on the port side of the ship and one on the starboard side. A spare hung over the stern, and two were stored on racks above the deck. These boats were only about twenty-five feet long.

In the hold of the ship were the casks to hold the whale oil as it was gathered. These casks held 268 gallons of oil each. On the outward leg, these were filled with sea water to keep them tight and give ballast to the ship. There were other smaller casks

that were "knocked down" and could be assembled as needed. Some smaller casks were filled with fresh water and others with salt beef or hardtack. There had to be sufficient food for a two year journey. All together, there were about 1,200 casks on the ship. Included in the stores was a supply of fire wood. This was used to cook meals for the crew and to start the fire under the try works.

When a whale was processed, the blubber was first rendered in the try pots and then it could be burned for fuel to render the rest of the whale. I never considered that fire wood was part of the supplies.

The size of the crew was a great surprise. The full crew of the Essex was only twenty-one men. This is much smaller than I ever imagined. The crew consisted of three officers - captain, first mate and second mate, three boatsteerers, a steward, thirteen sailors and a cabin boy. This seems like a small group to run the ship, kill whales and return home. The crew was divided into three boat crews. There was an officer, a boatsteerer and four oarsman, for a total of six per whale boat. This left three "idlers." These were the steward, the cook and the cooper. While the boats were out after whales, the idlers took care of

the ship.

In the whale boats, the officers were in the stern with the steering oar. Three men rowed on one side and two on the other. The boatsteerer was the farthest forward oarsman and he acted as the harpooner. He was on the side with three oarsman. Next, rowing on the opposite side, was the bow oarsman. Next came the midships oarsman who handled the largest oar, up to 18 feet long and weighing some 45 pounds. Next was the tub oarsman who managed the two tubs of line that were attached to the harpoon. Finally, there was the aft oarsman.

The crew would row as silently as possible up to the side of the whale. The boatsteerer in the bow seat would pick up the harpoon and drive it into the whale. The function of the harpoon was to attach the boat to the whale. At this point the whale would take-off, dragging the boat behind. The boatsteerer would then make his way to the stern of the boat, while the officer worked his way to the bow.

This must have been a difficult task as the boat was being dragged through the water by the whale. Eventually, when the whale was exhausted, the crew would pull the boat up alongside the animal.

By that point the boat might be five or more miles from the mother ship. The officer would pick up a lance, about six or eight feet long with a spade-shaped end, and plunge it into the whale. His hope was he would hit a vital organ or sever an artery. The

whale would die. Then the work began.

The boat was attached to the head of the whale, and the crew would start rowing back to the ship. Arduous doesn't seem adequate to describe the task. There were five men rowing, trying to drag a 60-ton whale through the water. The average speed was usually about one mile per hour or less.

The pay for all of this work was a mystery. Since the owners of the ship did not know what the oil would be worth when the ship returned in a year or two, they came up with a ingenious solution. Each crew member was paid a predetermined share of the proceeds at the end of the voyage. This was known as a "lay." The total number of shares was set by the owners before the voyage. A cabin boy might receive a lay of 1/198, a "long lay." In 1821, the Essex returned with 1,200 barrels of oil, which sold for \$26,500. After deductions for expenses, the cabin boy received about \$150 for two years at sea.

Whaling was described once as a few hours of great excitement, followed by days or weeks of boredom. While the ship could find its way home after two or three years, the details about where it had been were scant. The Essex, on its last voyage, was hunting in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, not far from the Equator. This was the farthest

the crew had ever been from land.

**While the ship could find its way home after two or three years, the details about where it had been were scant.**

With the charts and maps of the day, they had little idea where they were. The tragic end of the Essex was most unexpected. While the crew was out in whale boats chasing whales, the ship was rammed by a very large sperm whale, and in a few hours, it broke up and was lost. The three "idlers" left on board could do little to save the vessel. The crew escaped into three whale boats and spent the next 96 days tossed by the waves of the Pacific Ocean. Not all of them survived.

While the life of a whaler was hard and dangerous, to some I guess it was preferable to farming among the rocks of New England.



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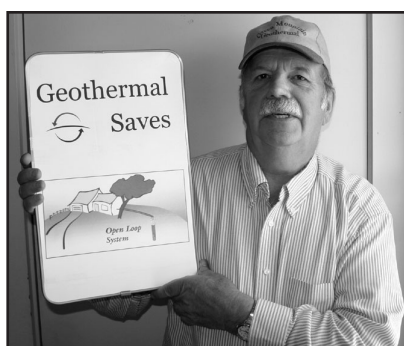
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New construction, remodeling, custom work, residential & commercial. Dennis Laferrere, 525 Wightman Rd, Danville, VT 05828. (802) 684-3606. FAX (802) 684-3628.

**Mark Greaves, Builder**  
New construction and remodeling including Custom Houses start to finish. 335 Red Barn Road, Danville, VT 05828. (802) 748-9659.

**Ross C. Page Foundations**  
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791 Broad Street, Lyndonville, VT 05851. (802) 626-9357. Fax (802) 626-6913. realestate@homeinthekingdom.com www.homeinthekingdom.com

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357 Western Avenue, St. Johnsbury, VT 05819, (802) 748-4407 ext. 16. robinj@peabodysmith.com www.peabodysmith.com

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

**Northern Equine Veterinary Services**  
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## 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.

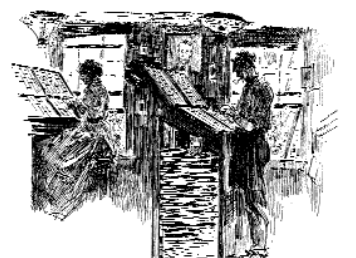
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**Bob's Welding**  
General Fabrication and Repair. Stop by and be surprised. Lyndonville, VT. (802) 626-5502.





# Fairbanks Museum Honors Inventors

Have you ever wanted to peek inside an inventor's workroom? You will have a chance to get to know how some of Vermont's most innovative minds worked by means of a new special exhibition at the Fairbanks Museum & Planetarium. Vermont Inventors celebrates creative geniuses whose ideas were sparked in Vermont and whose innovations contributed to far-reaching change.

This is a region where invention

thrived in villages, blacksmith shops and mills. Early patents were awarded to several Vermonters who went on to have national and international influence. "The Fairbanks Museum was founded on the success of an invention – the platform scale," says Education Director Peggy Pearl, who served as the curator of this exhibit. That invention of the platform scale at the dawn of the industrial revolution led the way to establishing interna-

tional weight standards.

Vermont Inventors emerged from an outreach education program inspired by the teaching of former Lyndon State College professor Graham Newell. In Newell's introduction to the exhibit, he describes the conditions in Vermont that encouraged industry and innovation: "Our primeval forests, waterfalls and rivers were sources for sawmills and gristmills. And from deposits of granite and marble and bog are developed early industries."

The Fairbanks Museum is exploring new territory to build on our rich legacy. "Fresh ideas for the 21st century strengthen our commitment to changing the ways we see the world," says Executive Director Charlie Browne. "The exhibit encourages us all to think how we might approach today's challenges with imagination."



Photo By: North Star Monthly

*With the snowiest December on record and no end to its continuing accumulation on rooftops, Mike Chamberlin found his way up over the Danville Video Store and wrestled heavy snow off the building. Even on a flat surface roof shoveling can be hazardous duty. Chamberlin recommends doing the job with care and always keeping an eye out for an emergency exit if the precarious situation deteriorates in a hurry.*

## #6444 ST. JOHNSBURY

This gorgeous 4 bdrm, gambrel style home is waiting for you to move in. This home is complete with hardwood floors, large kitchen, new seasonal sun porch and a very spacious 2 car garage, which includes a bonus room above. Plus plenty of room for a small family business. You will be within walking distance of St. Johnsbury Academy. Close to Burke Mountain ski area, with VAST snowmobile trails and Kingdom Trails all around. Very close to town and all of its amenities.



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Village Farmhouse  
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**Lyndon:** Country living just out of town. This classic Vermont home has been updated with 4 bedrooms, 2 baths, kitchen with breakfast nook and a 2-car attached garage. Enjoy the gas fireplace in the family room or mountain views from the deck. One-acre, landscaped lot located on Red Village Road.

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Fax (802) 626-6913

## Danville Senior Meal Site

### March Meal Schedule

- March 4** - No Meal Town Meeting Day.
- March 6** - Margaret Ide's American Chop Suey, Mashed Sweet Potatoes, California Vegetables, Whole Wheat Rolls.
- March 11** - Shepherd's Pie, Spinach Salad with Mandarin Oranges and Homemade Croutons, Tomato Juice, Rolls.
- March 13** - Sweet and Sour Meatballs with Peppers and Pineapple, Rice, Broccoli and Carrots, Fruit Cobbler.
- March 18** - Corned Beef and Cabbage, Boiled Potatoes and Carrots, Irish Soda Bread.
- March 20** - Macaroni and Cheese, Kielbasa, Peas and Carrots, Whole Wheat Rolls, Fruit Crisp.
- March 25** - Baked Ziti, Garlic Bread, Carrots, Orange Juice, Brownies.
- March 27** - Beans and Frankfurters, Hash Brown Potatoes, Coleslaw with Pineapple, Blueberry Muffins, Tomato Juice.



Meals at Danville Methodist Church. All meals served with a 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 \$3.50 for guests 60+ (Others \$4.50) is appreciated.

## BEGIN REALTY ASSOCIATES

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BEGIN REALTY ASSOCIATES



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This home is a Sears and Roebuck mail-order house known as the Crafton Model and has been lovingly cared for through the years. It has original woodwork, oak floors, updated

wiring and plumbing and recent metal roof, furnace and exterior paint. It has 2 bedrooms, a full basement and garage. You'll love sitting out on either the front or rear porch and it is within walking distance to most conveniences. If you've been looking for a cozy home - this is it! \$119,000  
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## DANVILLE LAND

66.2 acres. Good location. Enjoy privacy and still be minutes from the village. Perfect spot for hiking, hunting and snowmobiling.

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# Winter on the Water Andric

SUE BOWEN

It is full winter along the Water Andric and, in spite of a few snowflakes in the air, a beautiful sunny day. Every post, bird feeder, tree trunk, branch and needle is outlined, its form emphasized and ornamented by the unconscious artistry of the snow. Even in the woods, full of reflected light, shadows are merely shades of gray. Light on the meadow, even without direct sunshine, is reflected from the subtly varied white shadings.

I don't do much walking these days, but there is plenty of activity to see from the windows. One of the bird-feeders is in front of the house, easily seen from the kitchen. It is cantilevered from a log post on one of those curving metal arms so useful for this sort of thing. This year we see mostly chickadees, but they are delightful to watch. They keep close attention on each other, judging carefully when it is one's own turn at the feeder. They are in constant motion, bouncing on branch or twig to look in all directions.

It does sometimes happen that two birds arrive at the same time, but that seems to be no problem, as one starts to feed while the other settles close by, clearly if wordlessly announcing to the others, "Slow down, wait your turn. I'm next!" Even when a red squirrel takes over the feeder in a move which seems quite ill-mannered to a human observer, the chickadees merely wait nearby or forage on the ground

until the squirrel has left.

The Water Andric itself is in full winter dress, with a thick covering of ice covered in turn by smoothly draped snow, hiding the rough edges of the cakes of ice beneath.

Nearby a small group of trees shelters the patch I call my Snow Garden. The snow has covered a number of rocks, stones, tree stumps large and small, rendering them anonymous but endowing them with a variety of snow-shapes attracting to both mind and eye. There are also a few woody stems or young bushes whose various sharply-defined curves add the spice of variety to the gentle undulations of snow. I think my favorite shape is a small, sharply pointed pyramid about a foot in height, surrounding a narrow young stump.

As winter starts, and the road up Winn's Jump-Off is no longer plowed, through-traffic dwindles, and winter silence, so much quieter than summer silence, pre-

vails. Having said that, I wonder if that's true, or perhaps only a misperception on my part, the unexpected result of aging.

Is it only because the new windows are so tightly closed that I hear fewer sounds? But no, when I'm outside these days, I take a moment to breathe the vibrant winter air, and listen - human voices, birdsong, the car engine - all there, audible as usual, but not the same as in summer, somehow a bit distant, almost as if the snow itself were wrapping us in a psychological "comfort blanket." A bit far-fetched, you might say, but if it helps us cope with the well-known difficulties of the season, what's the harm?

In any case, February is the shortest month, if the most wintery, and March is ready to usher in a milder season. Let's not worry about "sugar snow" before we have to.

## Wild Turkeys

A flock of turkeys slides through the billows of snow like a stream of bobbing boats. Docking beneath the bird feeder, they scratch for coarse cracked corn scattered there for them. "Dirty birds," someone complains. "Stupid," another claims. But I enjoy watching their daily trek, Up through the woods to my yard and back. "Plucky," I say, As we brave winter's weather together.

Lucy Haworth

## APARTMENT FOR RENT

**PEACHAM VILLAGE HOUSING:** 135 Church Street, Peacham: Nice 1 bedroom in quiet country setting. Available to Elderly or Disabled families with or without children. Off street parking, large yard and laundry in building. \$487/mo, H/HW/Elect incl. Call Joni or Melissa toll free at (877) 395-9049 or TTY (800) 253-0191 to apply.

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**ML#2659646** Circa 1801 five bedroom, 4 bath Colonial on spacious 1.7 +/- acre lot with mature trees, private patio, stonewalls and perennials. Many recent improvements including, but not limited to, gorgeous state-of-the-art kitchen with granite countertops, custom lighting and mahogany cabinetry. Attention to detail is evident throughout. **\$339,000**



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## West Barnet Senior Action Center

March 2008

- March 5** - Shepherd's Pie, Spinach, 3-Bean Salad, Biscuits, Apricots.
- March 7** - Buffet.
- March 12** - Waldorf Salad, Salmon Pea Wiggle on Saltines, Harvard Beets, Biscuits, S'Mores Bars.
- March 14** - Corned Beef and Cabbage, Potatoes, Turnips, Carrots, Rolls, Jell-O.
- March 19** - Lasagna, Tossed Salad, Italian Bread, Tropical Fruit.
- March 21** - Baked Ham, Sweet Potatoes, Cole Slaw with Carrots, Rolls, Vanilla Pudding with Oranges.
- March 26** - Hot Turkey Sandwich, Mashed Potatoes, Cranberry Sauce, Peas and Carrots, Gingerbread with Topping.
- March 28** - Liver with Bacon and Onions, Mashed Potatoes, Mixed Vegetables, Dark Breads, Peaches.

Meals served at West Barnet Church. All meals served with a beverage. Reservations not required. Suggested donation of \$3 per meal is appreciated. Phone (802) 633-4068.

## BEGIN REALTY ASSOCIATES



Attention Builders and Handymen: This home needs some TLC and would make a great winter project. Located in a peaceful, rural setting on nearly 9 acres of mostly wooded land, there's tremendous potential here for the right person. The home has 3 bedrooms and 1 bath. The kitchen/dining/living area is open and bright. Ask about this property today.

\$92,000 -- ML2703575

## BEGIN REALTY ASSOCIATES



Pristine Cape just 3 miles from the heart of Danville village. 4BRs & 2 baths, kitchen with lovely cherry cabinets. Very energy efficient with newer boiler & replacement windows. This home is privately sited on a 3+ acre lot with a large garage that is insulated & has heat available if you wish. There is a nice little garden shed. Room for a couple of horses or a neighborhood ball game in the backyard. Snowmobile trail nearby.

\$244,900 -- ML2700192

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Enjoy the mountain views from the edge of Danville village. This village cape-style home with 1st floor master bedroom and bath is within walking distance to park, schools and village amenities. Since 2005, improvements include new metal roof, kitchen flooring, new sills in living room, furnace, oil tank, vinyl replacement windows and siding.

\$112,500 -- ML2702565



You can show off your antiques in this 1847 brick cape home in Barnet. Three bedrooms, 2 3/4 baths, original wide softwood floors, country kitchen with pantry, formal dining room, huge living room, detached carriage house. High school choice.

\$189,000 -- ML2703026

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**AROUND THE TOWNS**



**COMMUNITY CALENDAR**

**Daily** - "Artisan in Wood," wood sculptures by John Long, Northeast Kingdom Artisans' Guild Backroom Gallery, Artisan's Guild, St. Johnsbury.

**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.

**1st Monday** - North Danville Community Club, Meeting, 6 p.m. North Danville Community Center. (802) 748-9415.

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

**1st Sunday** - Quilting Class with Lee Beattie, North Danville Community Center, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

**2nd Monday** - Cancer Support Group, NVRH Conference Room A, 4 p.m. (802) 748-8116.

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

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

**Tuesdays** - Cribbage Tournaments, 6 p.m. Lake View Grange Hall, West Barnet. (802) 684-3386.

**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.

**Wednesdays** - Ordinary Magic. Meditation for Life, St. Johnsbury Shambhala Center, 17 Eastern Avenue, 6-7 p.m.

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

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

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

**Thursdays** - Read and Weed Book Club, Cobleigh Library,

Lyndonville. 3:30 p.m. (802) 626-5475.

**Fridays** - Friday Tea Room, North Danville Baptist Church, 2-4 p.m. (802) 748-4096.

**Saturdays** - Bridge Club for all experience levels, Cobleigh Library, Lyndonville, 12:30 p.m. (802) 626-5475.

**March**

- 1 Men's Ecumenical Breakfast, Methodist Church, Danville, 7 a.m. (802) 684-3666.
- 1 Scrabble Club, St. Johnsbury Athenaeum, Noon - 4 p.m. (802) 748-8291.
- 1&2 Burke Mountain Dog Sled Dash, (802) 626-7300.
- 1 Dendroecology of the Northern Forest Trees & Shrubs, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Danville, Call (802) 748-2372 for details.
- 3 Northeast Kingdom Audubon Informational and Planning Meeting, 4:30 p.m. Fairbanks Museum, St., Johnsbury.
- 4 Clarina Howard Nichols and Women's Rights in the 1850's program by Lyn Blackwell, Black Bear Tavern, St. Johnsbury, 12:30 p.m. (802) 748-3354.
- 5 The Importance of Being Oscar, Oscar Wilde's Genius and Influence with Peter Saccio, St. Johnsbury Athenaeum, 7 p.m. (802) 748-8291.
- 5 The Great Debate: Is it Time for a Second Vermont Republic? With Frank Bryan and Paul Gillies, Goodrich Memorial Library, Newport, 7 p.m. (802) 334-7902.
- 7 Public talk: "The Path of the Dragon" with Madge Rossinoff. 7:30 p.m. Shambhala Meditation Center of St. Johnsbury. (802) 748-9338.
- 7 Contradance, Danville Town Hall, 8 p.m.
- 8 Family Fun at VT Historical Society Museum: The Early Printer's Apprentice. 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Montpelier. (802) 479-8505.
- 10 Book Discussion: Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*, Barton Public Library, 7 p.m. (802) 525-6524.
- 10 Book Discussion: Isak Dinesen's *Babette's Feast*, Haskell Free Library, Derby Line, 7 p.m. (802) 873-3022.
- 10 Brahms Magnificent Four with Bill Cotte, Burke Mountain Room, LSC, Lyndon. 7 p.m.



Allen Yale family photograph

*As great fans of public art we were delighted to receive these photos from Allen Yale, retired professor of history at Lyndon State College. In October, Yale traveled to eastern Europe with his niece Rebecca Fearon to visit his sister-in-law and her aunt, Helen Wasuck. Helen teaches in an international school in Bratislava, Slovakia. While there, they visited four capitals: Bratislava; Vienna, Austria; Budapest, Hungary; and Prague of the Czech Republic. These pictures are of the "brass people" who inhabit the streets of Bratislava.*

- (802) 626-6459.
- 11 Book Discussion: Tom Brokaw's *The Greatest Generation*, Walden Community Library, 7 p.m. (802) 503-2630.
- 13 Book Discussion: Carol Shield's *The Stone Diaries*. Cobleigh Library, Lyndonville. 7 p.m. (802) 626-5475.
- 13 Osher Lifelong Learning Lecture: The Basics of Technology, Rita Bole Center, LSC, 1:30 p.m. (802) 626-5135.
- 13 Living with Wolves, Lecture with Walter Medwid, Fairbanks Museum, St. Johnsbury, 7 p.m. (802) 748-2372.
- 13 Africa Symposium, Research Presentation with Janet Bennion and students and their experiences among Waata tribe of coastal Africa. Rita Bole Center, LSC, 3 p.m. (802) 626-6459.
- 13 Film discussion following 7 p.m. film at Catamount Arts, St. Johnsbury. (802) 748-8813.
- 15 Apple Tree Grafting and Pruning with Todd Parlo, Fairbanks Museum, St. Johnsbury, 10 a.m. - Noon, (802) 748-2372.
- 15 Counterpoint and St. Johnsbury Academy Hilltones, North Congregational Church, St. Johnsbury. 7:30 p.m. (802) 748-2603.
- 17 St. Patrick's Day Concert, Alexander Twilight Theater, Lyndon, 7 p.m. (802) 626-6459.
- 19 Lyndon Institute Chamber Music Series with Joshua Gates, St. Johnsbury Athenaeum, 7 p.m. (802) 626-6146.
- 20 Osher Lifelong Learning Lecture: Current Uses of Technology, Rita Bole Center, LSC, 1:30 p.m. (802) 626-5135.
- 21 Contradance, Danville Town Hall, 8 p.m.
- 22 Pond Skimming at Burke Mountain, 1 p.m. Free to watch. (802) 626-7395.
- 26 Book Discussion: Walker Percy's *The Second Coming*, Pope Memorial Library, Danville, 7 p.m. (802) 684-2256.
- 26 Ageless Stars, Ancient Eyes with Mark Breen, LSC Library, Lyndon, 7 p.m. (802) 626-6459.
- 26-Apr 5 Bald Eagle: Case Study in Field Ecology with Charlie Browne, 2 Wednesday evenings and 2 Saturdays, (802) 748-2372.
- 27 Osher Lifelong Learning Lecture: How Technology Affects Daily Life, Rita Bole Center, LSC, 1:30 p.m. (802) 626-5135.
- 27 The Wounaan and the Embera of the Darien Rainforest in Panama with Chuck & Pat McLure, 7 p.m. North Congregational Church, St. Johnsbury. (802) 748-3663.
- 27 Book Discussion: Peter Taylor's *A Summons to Memphis*. Cobleigh Library, Lyndonville. 7 p.m. (802) 626-5475.
- 27 U.S. Poet Laureate Ted Kooser, Reading, Lyndon State College, 7 p.m. (802) 626-6426.
- 31 Book Discussion: Laura Esquivel's *Like Water for Chocolate*, Haskell Free Library, Derby Line, 7 p.m. (802) 873-3022.

See also the Arts Around the Towns Calendar Page 14.

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