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DANVILLE, VERMONT

GOOD FOR THE WHOLE MONTH

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First snow

BY NATHANIAL TRIPP

ou can feel it coming, no sunrise, just a gradual lightening of the overcast above the farm.

"Snow," says Mark Breen on his "Eye on the Sky" report, a four letter word that send shivers of joy through some, and just shivers through others. It is cold outside, teens. The smoke rises straight and high above the chimney in the still air. The pond is frozen over, bare earth is getting hard too. The horses have frost on their whiskers and the sound of feed buckets and bins ring like bells, carrying far across the farm along with various "whinny"s and "baa"s. By the time everyone heads off to work or school the talk is mostly about how hard it might be getting home again in the

> In town, there is a hush of >> Page 25

'It's in your blood'

»Despite hard times, a new generation of dairy farmer has emerged

BY JUSTIN LAVELY

arly Vermont settlers had to cut the state's dense, hilly forests and rid their fields of swamp grass to build farms. Centuries later, Vermont's dairy farmers are still facing

real estate developers, and large factory farms are now the obstacles.

Farmers from different generations, far apart in age, agree that dairy farming is much like maple syrup, an intrinsic part of the Vermont landscape. Aside from the

an uphill battle, but low milk prices, practical value of milk production, barns and fields are prominent on the state's horizon, giving Vermont its character and paying homage to a proud heritage.

Two hundred years ago, Vermont's agriculture economy focused first on

>> Page 18







Photos by Justin Lavely

Dairy Farmer Shawn Gingue works on a tractor on his Fairfax farm, right. Shawn, 28, and his brother Danny, 30, are originally from St. Johnsbury and are part of a new farming generation. Left, Lyndon's Leland Simpson represents the bygone era of dairy farming.

THE North Star MONTHLY

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Table of Contents



4 opinions

- The giving season by Isobel P. Swartz
- The agony of first love by John Downs



6 features

- Legacy through the lens by Sharon Lakey
- 22 First Night 2010
- by Jay Sprout



2 memories

- 12 Then and Now, John Downs at 90 by Donna Garfield
- 14 Christmas memories in Vermont by Tammi Rogers D'Leon

From the Editor

The giving season

never ceases to amaze me how generous a small community can be when asked to help a member who has fallen on hard times. And these are very hard times for Pas-

sumpsic's Rich Harpin, a single father

No that's a holiday story worth telling.

raising two children while battling cancer. He recently lost his leg after doctors discovered a tumor. According to many, despite these horrible circumstances, Rich always wears a smile on his face and cherishes everyday with his children. Even so, mounting medical and household bills have put Rich's family on thin ice going into the holiday season.

On Oct. 24, Gilmour Ford paid for a live radio broadcast from their showroom and offered to donate \$50 for every new car test drive. According to Doug Gilmour, the event raised over \$500.

On Nov. 7, local attorney Bill Cobb and Tim Casa (fellow parents from Barnet School) coordinated a walk and picnic at the Rotary Pavilion in Leonard Park. With support from New Beginnings Church, the walk raised over \$4,500 from donations.

On Nov. 14, Jackie Gilmour coordi-

nated a benefit party at the St. Johnsbury Elks Club. The lodge donated the space; Gilmour Ford and Wells River Chevrolet paid for food and music and local merchants and New Beginnings Church provided gifts for the silent auction. By the end of the night, over \$7,000 was raised.

Altogether, more than \$12,000 has been raised to help Rich during the holiday season. This generosity is even more impressive in light of the struggles of ordinary people and small businesses during tough economic times.

We have always been lucky in this community to have people and businesses that are socially responsible and legitimately care about the communities they live and do business in. We are also lucky to have individuals who are willing to donate their time to organize these types of

At one of the events, Rich told everyone that he never realized how many friends he had. He also told them he would do anything for them once he got back on his feet.

We would would also like to thank all those who helped organize the benefits and, of course, those who supported the cause. Their efforts helped a local family during the holiday season and that's what makes our community special. It's a collection of average people willing to to do extraordinary things for perfect strangers.

Now that's a holiday story worth telling.

THE NORTH STAF MONTHLY

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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

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

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

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All materials will be considered on a space available

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President Lincoln shows off his strength, Barnet residents rally in support W.H. Story and St. Johnsbury's grand list reaches \$24,000

The North Star

1807-1889 Est. by Ebenezer Eaton Danville, Vermont



THE NORTH STAR

December 13, 1878 Remarkable Brains - A Confederate soldier, during one of the late battles of the Civil War, was struck in the head by a Minnie ball which passed through the skull. The surgeons were afraid to probe the wound in search of it and left the man to die. Over time, the man recovered, but he had lost his reason and was sent to an insane asylum in Stanton, Va., where he remained for 11 years. At length Dr. Fauntleroy was given permission by the asylum and friends of the man to make a surgical examination of the head with the hope of finding the ball. He was successful and found the ball imbedded on the inside of the skull and pushing against the brain. Unable to extract it with any tool on hand, he took a chisel and mortised it out. As soon as the ball was removed, reason resumed its control, and the deranged man was in his right mind. He told the doctor he was not aware of anything that happened over the past 11 years. In fact, he could remember nothing that happened between when he was shot on the battlefield and when the ball was removed.

Fire in Hardwick – We learn that last Saturday, J.W. Bailey's woolen factory was completely destroyed by fire. We have no particulars.

School tuition - At a recent meeting of the trustees of Phillips Academy and the prudential committee of Danville Graded School, it was voted that all scholars attending the winter term of said school who are not residents of the district be required to pay tuition as follows: for higher departments, \$2.50; for the primary, \$1.50.

Good porkers – Jacob Varnum, of this village, has killed two pigs that were seven months old, which dressed respectively at 403 and 374 pounds, William Eaton of this village also had a seventhmonth-old that dressed at 372 pounds.

December 20, 1878

President's muscle – Few were aware of the physical strength possessed by Mr. Lincoln. In muscular power, he was one in a thousand. One morning, while he was sitting on deck, he saw an axe in a socket on the bulwarks. Taking it up, he held it at arm's length between his middle and forefinger for several minutes. Many sailors on board tried to imitate him but they could not. Mr. Lincoln said he could do this when he was eight years old and since then, he had never seen

a day when he could not. It occurred to me, when reading the details of the plot which terminated in the death of the President, that his abduction, which was at one time proposed by the conspirators, would have resulted very disastrously for those who should have the temerity to undertake it.

Slave's devotion - There were two sides to even the story of slavery. The Northern people knew little of the strong, warm relations existing between a kind faithful master (and there were many in that class) and the slaves who had been part of his family for generations. On the part of the slaves, too, the sense of loyalty led often to acts of self-sacrifice, finely human and noble. Old Elsie belonged to a family who lived on the southern bank of the Ohio. She was told many times that she needed only to cross the river and she would be free. She responded that no member of her family had ever disgraced themselves by running away. When emancipation was declared, she refused to be declared free and died shortly after. At her request, she was buried at the feet of her master.

A great storm – The great rain storm last week was very extensive and very destructive to property, also causing some loss of life. It was almost unprecedented for the season this time of year. It prevailed all over New England. The mail was so interrupted and telegraphic communication so delayed that details of the storm were not available until a few days ago. The Bradford

Opinion reports, The reports from Maine and New Hampshire indicate that the rains have produced the most disastrous freshets that have occurred for many years. In the fall the rise of the mountain streams, which are tributaries to the Connecticut, Merrimack, Piscataqua, Saco, Androscoggin and Kennebec Rivers, resulted in great loss of property. There hasn't been an event like this since the storm of 1869.

Divorce – Those of our readers who don't have the statutes of Vermont present in their hand will be glad to know in what respects the new divorce law differs from the old one. In the old law, it was enough for the one party seeking divorce to have lived in the state for two years and in the country for one year before petition. In the new law, both parties must live in the state for one full year before petition.

Christmas – The ladies of this town are making arrangements for a Christmas entertainment at the Town Hall in this village. The program will consist of singing, plays, Christmas trees and an oyster supper. The Danville cornet band will also be performing. In West Danville, there will be a Christmas tree at Farrington Hall on Christmas Eve. The young people will play the temperance play of "The Little Brown Jug." All are invited.

Barnet Fire - The case of the recent destruction of W.H. Story's peg mill still remains a mystery. The mill has just been fitted up and ready to begin work as soon as

wood could be drawn on snow. It was to employ 24 hands when at full force, and several poor families have been thrown out of work for the winter. The building and machinery was insured for \$3,600, but little was saved. Mr. Story has made many friends since he came to Barnet, and several hundred dollars has already been pledged to try and convince him to rebuild.

The Latest - The latest and probably correct report about the mysterious disappearance of Abner Holmes, Jr., formerly of Concord, is that he has eloped with a prepossessing widow, taking along \$250 of his employer's money. For six weeks in August and September, Mrs. Gilchrist, age 41, who makes her home in Townsend with her children, was engaged as housekeeper in Holmes' family, his wife being in ill health and absent, and the elopement was then planned. The parties have met clandestinely since then and are supposed to have gone to Califor-

Grand List - St. Johnsbury reports that this year's grand list totals \$24,525.

December 27, 1878

North Danville – George Sias has bought of Joseph Tusant the sugar place known as the I.P. Pope sugar place, containing 11 acres. The price paid was \$600. This saves 500 trees from the woodman's axe and Mr. Sias' building from the North West winds.

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The giving season

By Isobel P. Swartz

y mother was a great gift giver. She reserved two special bureau drawers for gift giving. One was named the "Present Drawer," - it smelled of scented soaps. The other was a drawer that contained wrapping paper of all kinds.

When I was a small child in England in World War II, Christmas preparations began in autumn. Sugar, spices and dried fruits were saved, a little at a time during the year, using small portions of the monthly ration coupons for sugar and sweet items. These were combined into the famous English Christmas puddings, and mincemeat for spicy, sweet pies. I didn't like Christmas pudding very much so this preparation was lost on me, but what I really enjoyed was watching my mother wrap Christmas presents.

The Present Drawer was pulled out and placed on the kitchen table. The contents had been accumulated over a whole year of saving

burn fingers. The sealing wax dripped like blood onto the knots of string, hardening immediately, preventing them from slipping.

These preparations, impressed on my mind so long ago, have had a profound impact on how I feel about gift giving. Some of those feelings make me very uncomfortable at Christmas time.

Gift-giving often seems so abundant, yet diminished and impersonal, because children especially are overwhelmed by receiving so many gifts. I sound like Scrooge, but sometimes I do feel like less is more.

I like to give gifts that are specially selected for a particular person, gifts that mean something to the recipient, a kind of bond between us. That is the kind of giving where one can truly say "it is greater to give than to receive." I am sure this is how my mother felt.

I wish I had the self-discipline to do what my mother used to do, and buy items throughout the year when I see the perfect gift for a particular person. I know people who do this and ad-

I wish I had the self-discipline to do what my mother used to do, and buy items throughout the year when I see the perfect gift for a particular person. I know people who do this and admire them.

and purchasing. Each gift was chosen carefully and personally with a particular recipient in mind. Nothing large or expensive, but things that that were useful, pretty and very special — scented soaps, boxed sets of handkerchiefs, hand-knitted gloves with angora backs and plain fronts, embroidered tablecloths and notepaper — were some examples. A small Christmas pudding and jar of jam or canned fruit would be included for those special neighbors and relatives whose needs were great.

What I enjoyed the most was watching the packing process. The wrapping paper drawer replaced the Present Drawer, on the kitchen table. Luxuries like Christmas lights, tree decorations and fancy paper were not available during wartime. The gift paper was not new but had been recycled several times already. Its creases were smoothed with an iron and then it was carefully stored. Plastic packing tape had not yet been invented so everything was tied with twine or ribbon.

The final wrapping for the gifts that were to be mailed was brown paper saved from the weekly laundry delivery. This was the best wrapping paper I have ever used, strong and smooth. The final part was the string, artfully tied with several turns around larger packages, knots wherever string crossed string, and sealing wax for larger parcels. This was really exciting! The wax was usually red, in hard sticks, and had to be melted using a lighted wax taper so as not to

mire them It may work fine for adults, but children's interests and abilities change so much through the year that it is almost impossible to plan ahead.

The marketers of children's toys have made a fine art of trend-setting, so now we cater to that market. Television and mass marketing fascinate children even though the actual toys, after the initial moment of enthusiastic ownership, may have little to offer in long term enjoyment. But bucking marketing trends can render a carefully chosen alternate gift meaningless In many ways this has made gift giving impersonal and I regret that. I think that it adds to the let down that so many people experience after Christmas. Shouldn't everyone in the family be happier after they have received so many gifts?

I have noticed that there is much discussion in the media about gift giving because of the current economic situation. Many people are bemoaning the fact that they are not able to buy everything in sight.

Some are advocating a return to simpler things, homemade items and fewer gifts, or things that people really need. For me this sounds great, but I am not a small child who has grown accustomed to quantity being essential to successful Holiday gift receiving! I think that if we really thought about the recipients of our gifts, their interests and needs, and for children, their ages and abilities, we might all have a delightful, stress-free time, and a lot less trash to dispose of after the Big Day.



The agony of first love

By John Downs

the heart of a nine-year-old boy can be broken as completely and permanently as the heart of a ma-

My first ride on a horse, while vacationing in Maine, was unsettling, and I decided to get off without consulting the animal. When the lumbering giant started a slow trot, I slipped off his rump, expecting a soft landing. Unfortunately my left elbow landed on a rough rock as I tried to cushion my fall. The elbow was broken in several places.

My life was drastically changed for months to come. After a lengthy operation, my arm was placed in a cast that held the elbow at a 90-degree angle. In 1928 the doctors didn't trust me to cope satisfactorily if given my freedom, so I was kept bedridden in the hospital for about five weeks.

The hospital staff was considerate, and my mother drove a 40-mile round trip every day to visit me for an hour. But I still cried myself to sleep each night for about two weeks, feeling despondent and abused by the enforced idleness.

And then one day everything changed. A tall, attractive brunette nurse, with a warm smile and cajoling sense of humor, came into my life. The first time this glamorous eighteen-year-old vision kissed me goodnight, I went to sleep quickly and blissfully.

It was love at first sight. I didn't care whether my mother came to see me again or not. As long as my love poked her head in my room a few times a day - and kissed me goodnight when tucking me in bed - my days were complete and happy. I enjoyed the hospital routine and became a model patient. More importantly, I decided to become a doctor, and the urge stayed with me until my freshman year in college.

But towards the end of my hospital stay, I was devastated. One morning my love came in - apologetic and subdued - and told me that she wouldn't be seeing me anymore. She was getting married and was going off on her honeymoon.

I was old enough and wise enough to understand the significance of her words. There would be no more handholding, no more good night kisses, and most importantly, no marriage for us in a few years.

Again I became a rambunctious, irritable patient and clamored to go home. My mother was once more a welcome necessity in my life. When I went home a few days later, I never wanted to see the hospital again.

But the memories of my first love would not go away. The next summer I asked to stay in the hospital again.

A holiday worth having

By the time you get this issue of the North Star, another Thanksgiving will have come and gone. Thanksgiving is an unadorned sort of holiday, focused largely on food and entirely on giving thanks. Whether served at a home, a restaurant, a shelter or some other setting, Thanksgiving dinner is always a time to count blessings. A friend of mine recently cited a poll that named Thanksgiving as the "happiest holiday." Why is this? Here are a few thoughts. Perhaps you can add yours.

Thanksgiving comes without a dollar sign. It is probably the least commercialized of any of the holidays. It costs something to put a big meal together, but even that expense is often shared. Someone buys (or shoots) a turkey; someone else brings mashed potatoes. I'm not trying to dismiss the sending of cards. We send quite a few ourselves, but even the Hallmark people haven't made significant inroads into our Thanksgiving celebrations. When we sit down to eat on Thanksgiving we are reminded that "the best things in life are free."

Thanksgiving includes everyone. I really love Christmas, even though I dislike the commercialism that hovers around it. Christmas has a great deal of meaning in my religious tradition. It's a wonderful holiday. But it makes me sad that Christmas is a difficult time for many people. They feel out of it and vaguely depressed when they are supposed to be happy. Nor does it include those of other faiths. Some of our Jewish friends take advantage of the holiday season to get away from all the Christmas hype. Others volunteer to work on Christmas day so their Christian friends can be at home with their families. Thanksgiving, however, embraces people of all religious traditions and of none, including those who "thank their lucky stars" or good karma or whatever.

Thanksgiving reminds us of things we easily forget. Our day-by-day interactions are not always trouble free. People get irritated with those closest to them, whether family members, work associates or even old friends. A telemarketer who won't take no for an answer tests my patience. The national political atmosphere has been pretty toxic lately. Civility has taken a hit. People in public life absorb more than a little flack. Then, whether we're ready for it or not, another Thanksgiving arrives. This holiday (by the way, holiday derives from holy day) comes in all its down home simplicity. If we're lucky it helps us to separate the forest from the trees, at least for a little while. Probably that telemarketer is grateful just to have a job. It's possible our irritation with a friend or family member is at least half our fault.

Let's hope, at least for now, that Thanksgiving stays as it is, the sort of day when we can eat (perhaps overeat), not worry about how much we're spending and, in the midst of everything, become more aware of just how much we've been given.

I wish all North Star readers belated good wishes on this "happiest of all holidays."

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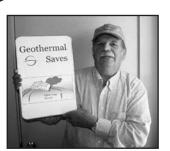
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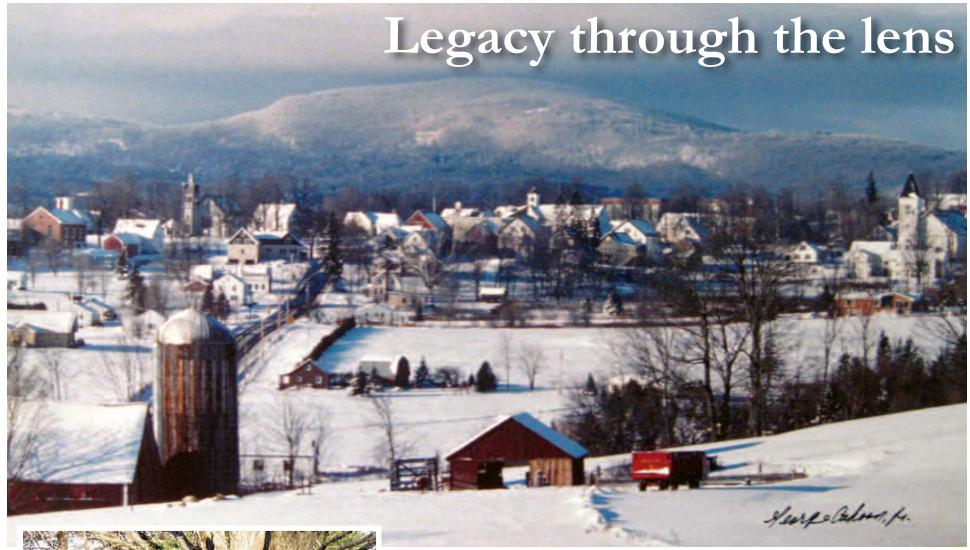
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ABOVE: Danville, behind Beattie's farm with Cow Hill in the background. This is one of George's iconic pictures that appeared in Vermont Life. LEFT: George stands in his backyard, strapped with his three favorite cameras: his workhorse, Canon Rebel with a 100-300 lens loaded with slide film, his Olympus is50 with a 28-200 lens loaded with negative film, and his new digital Canon Rebel XS.

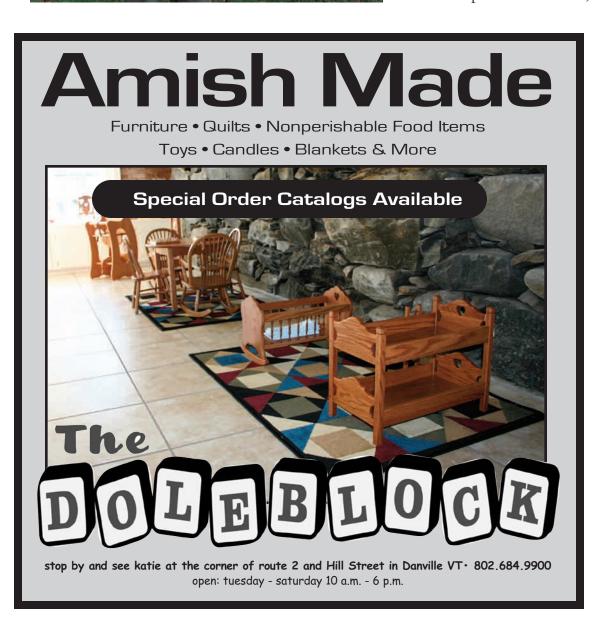
The work of Danville photographer George Cahoon to be celebrated

By SHARON LAKEY

Ost people who are connected to Danville in one way or another will have run into George Cahoon's work. His photographs have appeared in Vermont Life, on a variety of local calendars and exhibited at many nearby craft shows. His iconic photo of Danville, shot from Di-

amond Hill, also graces the cover of Village in the hills, a history of Danville, Vermont. Subjects for him have run the gamut, but he says "for the most part, they are scenic."

On January 17, an exhibition of his life's work behind the camera will be held at the Danville Historical House. "The opening of the exhibit will be held from 11:00-2:00," said Mary Prior, President of the Danville









LEFT: Catherine and Harold Beattie, Danville Citizens of the Year. RIGHT: A photo of antique farm machinery.

Historical Society, "and will be up through Valentine's Day." In the planning stages are a reception, multimedia presentation and photos lining the walls for close-up viewing. "Pieces will also be available for purchase," said Mary, knowing that many of the photos will connect the viewer to precious and personal images from their

George's photography career began humbly with a need to record his surroundings. "My family was always artistic," he says. And that got him into a little Kodak in the mid-fifties. From there he graduated to his first SLR (single lens reflex 35mm) where he much more impressed with the resulting images. "I traded that one in on my first Rebel Canon and started selling a few of those shots." Fifty years later, he has accumulated 25,000+ images that are stored in two rooms, neatly stacked and labeled. Most of the images were recorded around Danville.

Wanting to get a sense of the work that will be on exhibit, Mary and I looked through some of the proposed images stacked on a table at the Danville Historical House. As we leafed through them (many of them of well-known local farms), we wondered at George's perspective. "Look here," said Mary, holding up one of the old George Swett farm. "Where was he standing to get that shot?" And it was difficult to determine, because it was not pictured from the usual angle one would have experienced from the road. As we continued through the stack, we noticed that all of the shots were like this. George had captured the farms as they lay in the landscape from an unusual perspective. "He always took a ladder with him," mused Mary.

Earlier, George and I had spoken of perception when we looked at his most famous picture of

Danville.

In the photo, Cow Hill sits squarely behind the village. From our daily experience, driving to and through Danville, the mountain is more to the south. But George changed our perspective in that photo, too. One can imagine him trudging through a field with his

cameras and ladder on that clear blue day.

There he found the perfect spot on Diamond Hill to fill the frame and tweak our understanding of how the town fits into the landscape. It is subtle but full of inten-

Therin lies the artist's gift to us.



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»Tetro/TBA (12/18 - 12/13)

»No Screening/Happy Holidays (12/24 - 12/25) »Soul Power/TBA (12/26 - 12/31)

<<Live Performances>>

»SAT.5: Cabaret Music Series - Jennings & Ponder, 8 p.m.

»SUN.6: Jazz on Sunday Afternoon, 4 p.m.

»SAT.19: JMet Live - Tales of Hoffman, 1 p.m. »Sun.20: Met Encore - Tales of Hoffman, 1 p.m.

»SAT.26: Cabaret Music Series - Erika Dreisbach, 8 p.m. "THURS.31: First Night Celebration.

<<Special Events>>

»SAT.5: Bob Manning Lecture, "Van Gogh & Gaugin: The Odd Couple," 3 p.m.

»SUN.20: Scott Beck Lecture, "The Art of Bok Buying," 3 p.m.

<<In the Gallery>>

»Thea Storz and the Kirby Quilters

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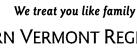
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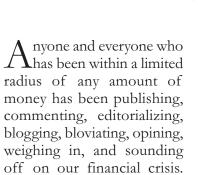


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Follow the Money

THE PIE IN THE SKY ECONOMIC FORECAST

BY RACHEL SIEGEL



In the spirit of the thanks just given and a new year just ahead, let us pause to admire a few silver linings.

There are all sorts of theories

as to why it happened, what

should be done, and what will

Household debt has been reduced. That happened the hard way, that is, by people losing mortgages—and the homes they financed—but credit card balances are genuinely down. Unsolicited credit card offers are definitely down; the marketing of debt as dish soap—cheap and

necessary for proper household management—is over, for now.

Executive pay has been questioned—although largely unaffected—and executives shamed and humiliated—although largely unaffected—by the embarrassing risks that they took unnecessarily and by the trouble they caused people who have had to leave or return to the workforce, or delay retirement, graduate school, health care, or families because their investments were lost.

We are seriously discussing reregulation and consumer protection in the financial markets, in recognition of their unique place in personal security. We are speaking of financial markets in terms of moral imperatives for perhaps the first time since Adam Smith uttered both in the same sentence. This will either protect investors or drive financiers to innovate in order to find new, more legal ways to earn their pay.

Housing prices are lower, which only really benefits first-time homebuyers who don't have to sell a home to buy a new one. They now have to work to get a mortgage, but when they do they'll be able to afford it. Amateur speculators have been driven out of the market—they can flip burgers instead of houses.

Unemployment is up, but lots more people are staying in or returning to school, and when the economy does turn around, they will be more productive workers as a result. We can always use more productive workers.

Our national budget deficit has increased so much that higher taxes are a certainty at some point in the future, but then, our bettereducated and more productive workers will be better able to afford them

Our debt has grown, making

us more reliant on unfamiliar alliances with relatively new allies like China, but it also makes us too big to fail. Mutual dependence has kept many a relationship together, after all.

But sarcasm is cheaper than even the dollar. There are a few real silver linings, and if the national conversation continues long enough, we may get around to some serious discussions.

As a nation, we have gone back and forth for centuries on regulation and the "freedom" of markets—and of personal choices—within our social context. We have argued about the extent to which individuals should be held responsible, and the extent to which material comfort and security is an inalienable right. We're not likely to figure it out now, but at least we are talking about it again. At least we are acknowledging that there is a moral aspect to our financial behavior, although we certainly don't agree on what that is or how it should play out in our markets or our behavior, or that our individual choices do happen in a social con-

We have gained some perspective, perhaps, on what it means to be financially secure or sated, on what success means. Perhaps it's just temporary, but maybe we will carry our financial

scars with us in a good way, fostering less faith in debt and more in savings, and focusing on less materialistic but more material

While faith in the ownership society is too essential to our market economy and perhaps to our natures to disappear, maybe the bubble society—where quick asset turnover replaces real effort as a means of gaining wealth—will be discredited. Perhaps there will be renewed respect for working, for labor, and for transparent wages or salaries instead of opaque bonuses based on manipulated gains.

Maybe all those better educated, more productive workers will come to believe that there are better ways to innovate than to focus on the next evolution of derivative securities or to come up with the next big bubble. Maybe some of those brains, talents, and energies will focus on reinvigorating markets or lives with real value.

Rachel S. Siegel, CFA, consults on investment portfolio performance and strategy, and on accounting dilemmas. She is a professor in the business administration department at Lyndon State College. "Follow the Money" has been a regular feature in the Northstar since 2001.



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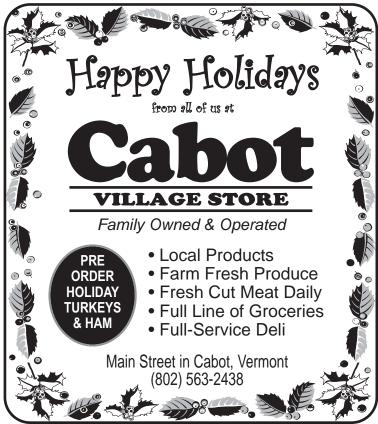
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DECK THE HALLS BY LORNA QUIMBY

As I have written before, we girls didn't play the radio much when I was little, nor did Maw. Dad was in charge. He decided when we listened and what station we heard - when reception was good. Batteries were expensive. Hence we played the radio only for the news or on Saturday night. The sound of Christmas music did not pour out of the black box in our living room.

We had the carols in our school music books. We sang lustily in whatever key we found. The organ at the South Part School wheezed as the teacher's feet pumped up and down. As someone said about the hymns at church, we dragged the carols down the aisle and murdered them.

We sang "Deck the halls with boughs of holly," and I wondered what holly looked like. Something like balsam, I imagined. "Good King Wenseless" (that's the pronunciation I heard) was another favorite. I remember, "We Three Kings of Orient Are" clearly, for Deedee and James Brock were the wise men. You're not seeing things. There were only four of us the last year at South Part. Malcolm Johnson and I were the audience, and that left only two people to dramatize the three kings. Enlarging our imaginations was not part of the curriculum, but circumstances encouraged such development - not that I needed much encouragement.

So we were not inundated with Christmas music at home. I don't remember hearing music while we shopped in St. Johnsbury either. And, although my eyesight was poor, my hearing was not. You sang carols in church and in school.

"The Night before Christmas" had no part of our home festivities. Deedee and I wrote letters to Santa Claus back in November and gave them to Maw to mail for us. They were long, begging letters that listed every item we could find in the Sears Roebuck or Montgomery Ward catalogs. We didn't worry about the pawing and prancing of each little hoof, for we didn't expect Santa Claus to slide down the stove pipe

into our furnace in the cellar. Santa Claus decorated the tree during Christmas Eve, but most of the presents came from rela-

One Christmas, Patty got a booklet called "Rudolph the Rednosed Reindeer." At that time, I didn't realize the parallels with "The Night Before Christmas." I read it to Patty over and over.

"T'was the day before Christmas and all through the hills,

The reindeer were playing enjoying the spills,

While every so often they paused to call names

At one little reindeer not allowed in their games..."

There was no music and singing involved.

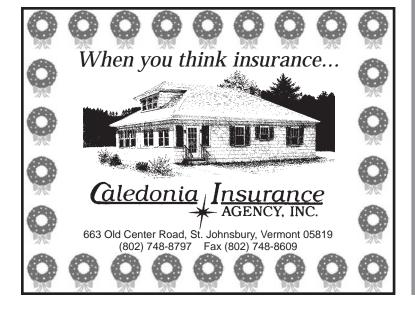
When Deedee and I became teenagers, things were easier as far as money went. We listened to the radio more, although Maw's taste in music and ours were far apart. While we were in Lyndonville, Bing Crosby introduced "White Christmas." We, of course, were wallowing in snow and suffering below-zero temperatures. How we pitied anyone who was stuck with palm trees and warm weather! We had real Christmases!

We never sang "Jingle Bells" as a Christmas song. How much the school children now miss, the ones who have to sing secular songs for what is, for all its commercialism, a religious holiday season. What the schools really need is an old fashioned rousing atheistic carol that everyone can sing! I admire the few schools that choose, wisely I think, to be inclusive by singing songs from every possible religion, denomination, and sect. We rob the children of a rich musical heritage when we do otherwise.

Christmas music has come a long ways from its beginnings: the folk songs that all enjoyed and sang by rote - whether in merry old England or the southern horn of Africa - and cantatas written for cathedrals in Latin, French, and German.

Now, stores relentlessly play carols throughout an ever-lengthening period to part their customers from their money, and school children can't sing them at all!

And to all a good night!



Victorian Holiday: December 12

»Downtown merchants dressed in Victorian attire.

»Horse drawn wagon rides on Railroad Street from 11 a.m. -1 p.m.

»Santa will be at the Welcome Center to make all children believe from 10-2 p.m.

»Stevens School will be sponsoring an activity at the Welcome Center for children to make gifts for their parents, 10-2 p.m.

»A Victorian Tea will also be at the Welcome Center from 10-2 p.m.

»Christmas trees will be for sale outside the Welcome Center.

»The Good Shepherd School will be hosting a Christmas Bazaar with crafts, vendors and a raffle from 9-2 p.m., will have a continental breakfast 9-11 a.m., and soup, etc for lunch.

»The Good Shepherd students will be caroling all over town with many stops.

»Uniquity will host Bill Tobin, Harpist from 11-1 p.m., and have a book signing with local author, Reeve Lindburgh from 2-2:30 p.m. »Uniquity will also be accepting donations for the Santa Fund. »The Athenaeum will be hosting an open house with a storyteller to thrill the children from 3-4:30 p.m.

»Fairbanks Museum and Planetarium will have a Victorian Open House from 1-4 p.m. Wreathing the Lions at 1:30 p.m., a Special Planetarium Show. The Museum's elegant main hall is decked for the season, and you can make crafts for giving and for decorating ... and for feeding birds outside!

»Weather permitting, there will be ice skating at the Main Street Park.

»SD Ireland will be on Main Street showcasing their famous lighted concrete truck.

»The Good Living Center at the St Johnsbury House will be hosting a white elephant sale and cookie walk from 1-3 p.m.. »The first annual Light up the Night 5k will start and end at Arnold Park. Start time will be 5:15 pm.

»The Arnold Park tree will be lit at 6:30 p.m. There will be caroling and then mulled cider and cookies on the porch of Estabrook House on Main Street.

»There will be a contest for the merchant that shows the most holiday spirit.

»There will also be the 4th annual holiday lights celebration award for the best residence, best business and maybe best street. The judging will be on Dec. 12, with the annuancement on Dec. 18.

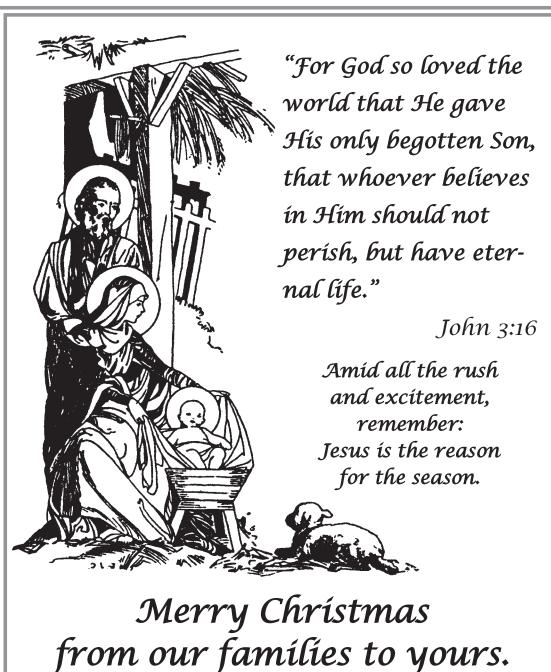
»Street vendors will be scattered all around town.



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The deep woods revisited

BY BETS PARKER ALBRIGHT

couple of years ago, I \bigcap wrote an account of a wonderful ride provided by our tree-farmer son Steve through the woods he has been working for over thirtyfive years now up in North Danville.

One day recently he stopped in for a cup of coffee and a little chat. He does this fairly frequently as he goes by on his way to the woods. As we sat at the dining table, Steve said, "You folks have an anniversary coming

All of us here wish you holiday cheer and to all a safe, happy and

prosperous new year!

take you on another tour in my truck through the woods so that you can see what the guys and I have been doing out there. I think you'll be surprised at some of what you'll see." We snapped the offer right up, threw on our jackets and off we went. I love to talk about our beloved farm, which we turned over to Steve a number of years ago, and here's another chance to do it!

Some people think that a tree farm is just about selling Christmas trees, but that is only a small part of Steve's work. He has a vision for the farm that has grown

sense of what it is meant to be and do. Of course, he knows every bit of the farm, the majority of which is forested. He has created or restored a number of roads through the woods, which are necessary for forest management to be possible. All but the roughest tracks are passable in his aged pickup, which looks like a refugee from a scrap yard, but boasts a serviceable engine. It has a broad but roughly-upholstered front seat where you need to dodge loops of wire coil poking through from its innards.

It was a lovely autumn day with a lot of color still in the trees, despite the golden carpet of leaves on the ground. bounced happily along - Steve always drives slowly anyway, so the bounces weren't too wrenching.

Some of the woods we knew, having walked it when we were younger. But in some places his newer roads led us into territory we had not seen - not farther from home than we had ever been, just deeper into the woods where earlier there had not even been a path to walk, let alone a

There was one road that we did know, fairly high up, that suddenly turned unfamiliar, then broke out into a clearing, revealing a breathtaking vista that we had never encountered, looking across to the Kittredge Hills, our local mountain ridge. We marveled at what Steve had achieved there, knowing just where the road should go and then putting it there. We drove by other spots where little collections of water

reflected the brilliant sky.

Presently we came to an unexpected sight. We entered a good-sized clearing where one of his "guys" was operating a giant vehicle that was loading neatlytrimmed logs onto a truck that would carry them out of the woods. Nearby sat a huge mound of brush that Steve explained would be reduced to chips and carried away in a large van. The result would be a well-managed section of woods, left clean and tidy. We thought, all this is invisible to the outside world, but is so essential to the art and science of woodlot management.

After awhile, Steve moved us along, as the light was beginning to fade. We felt as though we had traveled back in time to when farmers and woodsmen of the 1810s worked much of the same terrain, notwithstanding the manifestations of modern technology we had seen in operation.

Steve enjoys every hour he spends on the land. This comes from inside him, whether the day is gorgeous or miserable. To him, every season has a purpose, even the winter, a time for planning and dreaming. And every part of the land has a purpose, which he has devoted his life to discovering. We dare to hope that many other folks will enjoy these roads and wooded vistas, whether living out some dream of Steve's or developing ones of their own.



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<u>Woody on Words</u>

New words arriving on Track 29

anguage is constantly Ldeveloping with the addition of new words and terms. Mostly these new words reflect new ideas and innovations.

These days I find my comfortable retirement fading slowly in the west as I take on the teaching of two online university courses. Once into the new jobs, I encountered the opposite of "online." A course that is not online is labeled "F2F," a kind of portmanteau acronym-plus-textese for "face to face."

Millions of new words in thousands of fields of study have followed the massive takeover of our culture by computers. But texting is a little different. Not by any means a field of study, texting is a largely youthful phenomenon, full of energetic inventiveness and whimsy. And, it has produced a small revolution in spelling. Many people have tried, and failed, to simplify modernize English spelling. The texters may be succeeding. They've already come up with "C U L8ter" and "IMHO" (in my humble opinion). "Text" as a verb itself is a new word, and it has given birth to "texter." I guess the past tense is "texted," and the adjective probably "texty." I haven't ever seen these words, being an old codger, but I won't be surprised if they find their way into the larger language. In a few years, we could be reading newspaper articles that begin with the words "2da th Eur Unn Ldrs Nownsd Lekshns..."

Facebook is another contributor to the newer language forms, called "neologisms" from the Greek for "new words." Facebook has provided a new definition for the common word "friend," and by now I'll bet most of us have discovered the peculiar feeling that accompanies the acceptance of one's child or grandchild as a "friend" on this social network. My guess is will develop, if it hasn't al- oh yes, a wee hammer.

ready, and its past tense will not be "befriended," which would reflect the original meaning of "friend" but probably just "friended," as in "He friended me, the other day so now I get to read all his bloggy (insignificant, said of emailed reports on daily activities)

And of course everyone is "googling" everything in sight. And when you google something, up comes Wikipedia. The first two syllables of this portmanteau word, "wiki," are Hawaiian for "fast," although some have argued that it is an acronym for "What I Know Is...." Incidentally, I discovered this by googling "wiki." Now, "wiki" is a general computer term meaning an open "website" to which anyone can contribute. Web site is a new word, and the "web" was named because of its capacity to allow users to join a network of interconnected points, like a spider web. For a while the people who wrote websites were "weavers," but I haven't seen this lately. It may not last. The world of neologisms is highly

Every field of endeavor has new computer terminology. Think of music - "pod-"mp3," controller," "midi." If you don't know what these words mean, you're probably still playing vinyl on mono and listening to Bing and Dean. And your grandchildren won't understand that sentence. No wonder there's a generation gap. If the language changes any faster, we'll need a translator for Thanksgiving Dinner.

A lot of neologisms have a "hip" feel about them, and I guess that makes sense. New is always hip. But, as any number of my retired friends will tell you, hips are not always new. Or if they are, they're made of some kind of material that has a name you've never heard of - like arthropolydidium, or genucarbonium - and the surgery is done with that the verb form "friended" the aid of laseroptic tools, and,

CHRISTMAS TREES High Reach Farm SPECTACULAR TREES AT A BARGAIN PRICE! in North Danville \$25 - tabletops \$10-\$15 Saturdays and Sundays Plus FREE Brush between Thanksgiving Follow the signs and December 20 from either North Danville 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

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Home for the holidays

The Pumpkin Hill Singers ▲ will join again with Danville's "Christmas on the Green" to create special holiday festivities for the area. This year's concert "Home for the Holidays" will bring a delightful mix of traditional, world, and unique songs to the event. The 16-member group will be joined again this year by instrumentalists Jeff & Ellen Gold and Dave Hare. These three musicians have performed with the Singers for over 10 years.

A special treat in this year's concert will be the addition of the talents of Bill Tobin, a well known area harpist. Toby Balivet, a bass with the group says, "We're really fortunate to have Bill joining us for this concert. It's going to add a lot to have the harp performing with us on some of the songs along with our other musicians."

Included in the repertoire is the beautiful traditional song "Lo How a Rose." Also included are the more contemporary, "I'll Be Home for Christmas," "The Most Wonderful Time of The Year," "Let It Snow." Adding rhyme and spice to the evening is a new favorite of the singers called, "Jamaican Noel" by jazz composer Kirby Shaw. Following the Calypso theme also is "The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy."

This year's program is special in that the Singers are in the process of selecting the compositions that they wish to have included in a pending Christmas album.

Susan Terry, the director of the group says, "People have been asking us for so long to do an album so we are really excited now to be pulling one together. We want to have the right mix of songs so there's a little something for every-

The Singers hope to have the album available next fall.

The first concert is at the Danville Congregational Church on Thursday Dec. 17. On Friday Dec 18, the same concert will be presented at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in St. Johnsbury. Both concerts begin at 7:30 pm. Donations are at the door.

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Then and now

John Downs at 90

By Donna M. Garfield

John and Virginia Downs live in Lyndon with a glorious view of Burke Mountain and the White Mountains. On the rainy October morning I visited them, the view was not as clear as usual, but inside their home it was warm and inviting. Their 17-year old cat, Lily, greeted me with enthusiasm and then curled up in the extra chair at the table. She dozed off and on as we discussed the life of John Henry Downs.

At 90 years of age on Nov. 12, John Downs is still full of energy and plans for the future. He is a husband, father, and grandfather; writer; lecturer; and one of the founding partners of Downs Rachlin Martin PLLC (DRM). He was State's Attorney from 1951-1955, past president of the Vermont Bar Association, past State Chairman of the March of Dimes, past state representative for four years serving on the Appropriations Committee and the Ways and Means Committee; and past member of many state-wide and local groups. Most people would be content with that.

Not John.

John was born in Arlington, Massachusetts, the youngest of four boys. He graduated from Yale in 1941. While at Yale, he earned money by selling men's toilet articles and typing papers for people. John also attempted boxing.

He remembers, "When it came time for the first fight, the opponent had cut his eye and couldn't box so I made it to the semi-finals. The next boxer got sick so I got into the finals without lifting a glove. My opponent was a good boxer and started hitting me from the beginning. I couldn't do a thing, and finally the referee stopped the fight in the middle of the third round. I was so mad and there were 2,500 people in the audience, so I turned and the only decent blow I landed that night was on the referee's

The referee was Gerry Ford, the future president of the United States

John's parents had a summer home in Maine. He spent every summer there, and they were "in many ways the happiest and most fulfilling years of my life. There were 14 families living around the lake. The men were in the city during the week." John started a mail route to the 14 families.

"It took me from about eight in the morning until noontime. I did that right up to the time I was done college."

During World War II, John served in the Army and was stationed 35 miles from home at



Camp Devens. After John developed serious kidney problems, he was discharged from the Army in early 1944.

John attempted to go to Harvard Business School but they were not accepting civilians. He was told, "Come back when the war is over. Why don't you go across the street and check with the law school?" John commented, "I never thought of becoming a lawyer. My father was a lawyer and not a very happy one, so I was never encouraged to look into law." However, John had to do something with his life so he applied to Harvard Law School.

After graduation, it was time to find a job. John's fourth cousin, Fran, was married to Sterry Waterman, an attorney in St. Johnsbury. While John was at Harvard, Sterry said "I might have a job for you." In the middle of John's third year, he wrote to Sterry to inquire about the job. Sterry took the letter home to Fran and said "What's going on? I never offered him a job." Fran said, "I was there, Sterry. You said you could give him a job." So after graduation, John moved to St. Johnsbury. He and Sterry formed Waterman & Downs in 1950. Their office was at 33 Main Street. Over time, it became evident there was not enough work for both of them. However, when Sterry was appointed a federal judge, John took over the law practice.

Virginia Campbell entered John's life. In 1950, she was visiting her parents in Lyndonville when a friend brought John to meet her. John reminisces, "She was sitting there with a nice red dress on and blonde hair and was quite an attractive girl." They saw each other occasionally after that. In April 1953, Virginia was writing for an in-house magazine in New York City when she noticed that John Downs had won \$500 from the National Biscuit Company by coming up with an idea to test the freshness of bread. Virginia was intrigued and wrote to John. He wrote back and asked when she was coming home. She came home Memorial Day and John says, "things took off from there." John and Virginia married on December 12, 1953. They bought a house on Boynton Avenue in 1961.

John moved to Eastern Avenue and had an office on the second floor over Sullivan's Furniture for a couple of years.





Dr. David Toll and John bought a building at 95 Main Street in 1959. Dr. Toll used the first floor for his medical practice, and John used the second floor for his law practice.

From 1955-1960 John practiced alone. He hired Robert Rachlin in 1960 and Allen Martin in 1968, thus forming DRM in 1969. Jim Gallagher was hired in 1970. There were four attorneys and four secretaries using the second floor at 95 Main Street. John said, "Jim was in with the fax machine, with the library, and everything in the same room." It would soon be time to make a change.

In 1961, John decided to run for the legislature. He noted with a sense of humor that, "No one else wanted the job so I got elected." He said, "There were 10 other young, active people at that time and we became known as the Young Turks." The group consisted of Franklin Billings, Philip Hoff, Sanborn Partridge, Richard Mallary, William J. Smith, Anthony Farrell, Brian Hathorn, Ernest Gibson, Dalton Mann, Stan Lazarus, and John Downs. "Young Turks" is a term used to describe a group that wants to upset the establishment by trying to make changes. The group still meets once a year to discuss the world's problems and reminisce about the old days. John commented he "would have liked to have held higher offices, but it didn't work out."

DRM bought the former St. Johnsbury Hospital building on Prospect Street in 1972. The third floor was sold to Dr. Fred Silloway for his dental practice. John remembers thinking, "How in the world would we ever pay for it?" Little did he know that one day the little office he started would become the largest law firm in the state of Vermont.

In 1976, DRM opened an office in Burlington. Bob Rachlin moved to the Burlington office followed in 1980 by Allen Martin.

John and Virginia moved to Burlington and for six years John worked out of the Burlington office. They bought a home overlooking Lake Champlain. "We had a big sprawling view of the lake," Virginia said. At that time they owned a yellow Buick sedan. John added, "The lake froze and people would drive out onto the ice. So I drove over in front of the house and twirled the car around on the ice." He did not tell Virginia about it until afterward.

John retired in 1985. He and Virginia returned to the Northeast Kingdom and built their retirement home in Lyndon.

John and Virginia have four children. Barbara, the oldest, attended Tufts and then lived in New York City. They were very excited when she directed a play at the age of 18. John feels "she would have become a fine director of plays." Barbara died in 2000. Margaret attended Harvard College and Harvard Business School. She is an independent business consultant in New York City with clients around the coun-Peter graduated from Amherst. He owns a flooring business in New York City. He is married to Debra and they have two children, Evan and Ava. Tom graduated from Brown University and is now an attorney at Patton Boggs in Washington, D.C. He is married to Jennifer and they have two children, Rob and Joe.

In the 1980s John was one of eight American lawyers sponsored by the Lawyers' Alliance for Nuclear Arms Control ("LANAC"). They traveled to Moscow and met with Russian attorneys to talk about arms control. The next year the Russian attorneys traveled to Washington, D.C. The two groups met from 1983-1990 and negotiated a document that was distributed to the U.S. Defense Department. John feels his work with LANAC was one of the most important things he did in his career. He recently donated all of his materials to Lyndon State College.

Both John and Virginia are writers. John has written two books, "Negotiating with the Russians on Nuclear Arms" and a murder mystery called "Project: Murder". He sent the mystery to publishers but it was never accepted. Recently, John self-published "Negotiating with the Soviets on Nuclear Arms", an abbreviated version of his first book. John has also written for The Caledonian-Record, The North Star Monthly, and other Vermont newspapers. Virginia wrote for Vermont Life after they got married and did free-lance work for the Burlington Free Press. She has written five books. They renovated the garage at the end of their house into an office for John. Both have computers at opposite ends of the house where they can write and e-mail. John says "Virginia is an excellent writer and a very critical and demanding editor. I do the same for her. Nothing leaves the house unless both of us look it over."

When asked what they do to maintain good health, John replies that he always enjoyed walking. He remembers skating at the ice rink across from his office at 95 Main Street during noon hours. He and Virginia skied. John feels a 30-minute nap everyday would make people feel better. He says, "Virginia does a much better job of exercising than I do. She does Tai Chi and

takes an exercise class." John says he "has good intentions to exercise. I know that I feel better when I do." He went to the Old Mill for several years. Every year on their anniversary, they try on their wedding outfits and they still

John believes that his mother influenced him the most growing up and said, "She was nine when her father died. She had no brothers or sisters." Not many women went to college in that era, but she was admitted to Radcliffe and graduated in 1909. She married John's father in 1910. His mother was a school board member and very active in arts and crafts such as painting dishes and hooking rugs. John still has some of the plates that she painted.

One of John's recent trips was in 2005 when he traveled by train across Siberia with Dick Boera, Bob Swartz, and Dr. Tyke Miller. They were the only Americans on the trip. There were 60 passengers from 13 countries. The train moved at night and during the day it would stop so they could visit cities, museums, and cathedrals.

John currently spends a few

hours each week working in his office at DRM. Although he no longer practices law, he is currently working on his memoirs and another book. His advice to new lawyers is to "develop a legal specialty, but make time for interesting pro bono work, and politics if so inclined. Your retirement years will be better for it." John also believes that "keeping the brain active is a big part of staying healthy in old age."

What is their greatest joy in living in Lyndon? Virginia said, "I can drive past the house where I grew up. It feels good to be here." John added, "We like nothing better than sitting in our back yard looking at Burke Mountain and the White Mountains. Just think of our poor kids in New York and Washington and here we have 'heaven in our hands'."

John and Virginia are not planning any more trips at the present time. As John says, "It's awfully nice right here. Retirement is wonderful."

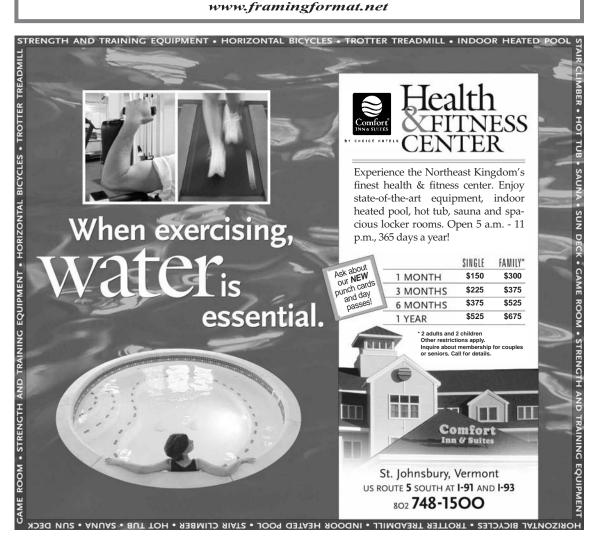




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Christmas memories in Vermont

By Tammi Rogers-D'Leon

It is getting that time of year when I start thinking about the holidays and remembering all the many Christmas days I celebrated with my family. I have been born, raised and raised my own in this state and so did my parents and their parents back at least five, six, or seven generations.

For each of us, our Christmas memories blend into common threads within our own generation and become part of the lore that crosses the generational boundaries as we ourselves grow older.

When I was a kid, we always went to my mother's parents' house for Christmas morning. We had spent Christmas Eve at my Dad's parents' house, and, as we lived on a farm, were up ready and raring to go despite the late night. My dad drove a huge boat of a car—Ford or Mercury—and he drove it fast although the car didn't fly so much as it pulled. He smelled crisply of Aqua-Velva

and smoke and he wore his fancy zip-up leather boots.

My mom was fluffed and powdered and plump and cozy. Her cat's-eye glasses had been spit-polished. We children were in our new, crinkly, stiff Christmas clothes, my baby brother squashed between my folks and us three girls in the back.

The quiet thrum of the big car and the vibration as I leaned my head against the window lulled me into daydreams. I gazed in a stupor out the window at bare tree limbs and snow-laden firs whizzing by. My dad was a back-road connoisseur and knew each short-cut to get us there faster

"Steven!" admonished my mother, "You're going to take us right off the road!" Her isotoner-clad fingers clasped tightly the door handle.

"Gwawd. You worry too much. Sand truck's been out already!" He edged the speedometer a tad as he pushed in the cigarette lighter. He cracked the window slightly and lit the Salem 100's he always kept in his undershirt pocket.

"There's the red door!" I squealed. I knew we were almost there when the white and black farmhouse with the red cellar door appeared. Oh! What anticipation! And this was perfect Christmas weather. A couple of inches coated the evergreens and enough lay on the ground to slide the tiny hill behind my grandparent's house. The car trunk was full of gifts for my gram and grampa and for Auntie, my funny, citysavvy aunt up all the way from

Concord, New Hampshire!

Shortly after my announcement we pulled up to the dandy pink and white house. My grandmother waited, apron-clad, in the doorway, the storm window steamed from whatever she was preparing inside. "Well!" She smiled, "I was wonderin' when you'd make it."

We tumbled out of the car and squeezed past my gram in the doorway. "Well, hello, you crazy people!" My aunt crowed from behind a cloud of smoke. She glowed in her mauve polyester pantsuit with the white ruffled blouse. We all shuffled about in the doorway, shucking boots, hats, gloves and coats. Trip after trip, the menfolk tramped from the trunk of the car to the tree with gifts. We kids sneaked pickles and fudge, chips, dip, cheeses, cookies, breads and all the enticing appetizers we could when we thought no one was looking.

The parade was on TV. Legs extended on footstools or recliners, my dad and Gramp spoke little. They occasionally sipped amber liquid cooled with crystal cubes from tumblers carefully set on coasters. "Gwawd, the roads're terrible," my gramp harrumphed.

"Ahyut. Town's been out, tho'."

"Ahyut. They do a pretty good job."

"Comm' over the North Road's not too bad."

"That right?"

"Ahyut." Sips a around. So it went. My gramp smoked a pipe. He was a big, big man with great big hands he'd wrap around you as you walked by and pat your head. He was infinitely patient as we'd dance or sing some childish ditty over and over. He'd laugh a lovely rumbling chuckle and you'd feel ever so grand.

Christmas morning. "So, what'd you ask Santa for?" He'd ask.

"A train!"
"Barbies!"

"A paint set!" We all answered at once as he huffed out of his

"Well," chuckle, chuckle, "I guess it's time to find out what you got. What d'you say, Mum?" The women would turn as the sacred space of kitchen reserved for women's business was invaded by this Goliath and his booming bass.

"Already? Well, alright. Just let me turn down the potatoes and get a bag for the bows.

"Tammi and Chris, you can pass gifts." Since we were newly ordained readers, we were given the task of playing Santa.

Gifts got passed out. We were stopped at each passing so everyone could see what everyone else received. Each bow was carefully saved and placed in a bag near my gram. Paper was bagged and playfully tossed at each other until it became obnoxious and parents scolded us to stop. Oo's and ah's were shared liberally and "Really, you spent too much!" occasionally peppered the talk.

"Oh! Don't open it now! It has all kinds of small pieces!" My mom squeaked to no avail as my brother opened his new box of Lincoln logs. My gram insisted she'd save any pieces she found.

It didn't take long until the underside of the tree was empty. The men grunted satisfactorily and lumbered back to the living room. The women began scurrying around to "take up" the meal. The turkey and ham were brought steaming to the shelf where the argument that persists to this day ensued over who would carve them - no one wanting the job! The skin was tasted to make sure it was done and we children stood like birds on the periphery hoping for pieces to fall into our mouths like manna from heaven.

Now, the table was cleared of appetizers and the leaves were added in the middle. Now the tablecloth with Santa and elves dancing around the edge. Now

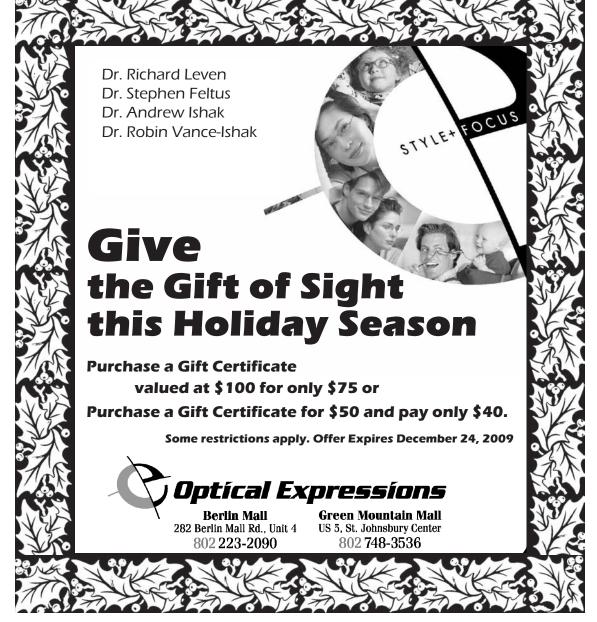


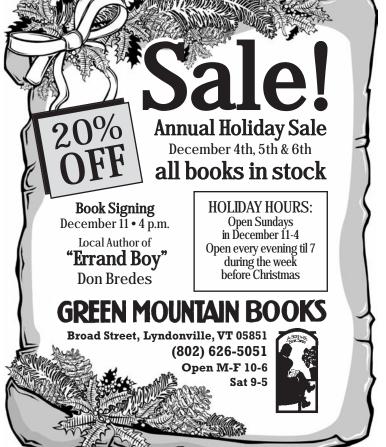
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the plates and silver and cups. Now the napkins with holly leaves and red berries. Now the cranberry-ginger ale drink in the crystal pitcher. Now the meats carved and streaming, and the rolls wrapped in a towel smelling of Downy, and onions swimming in cream sauce and potatoes, white and sweet colorfully displayed, and on and on until every square inch of table was occupied by something to eat and smelling wonderful and steaming and oh! To swoon at such a moment would not be unexpected! Even the adults were flabbergasted every year, year after year. It was and is one of the wonders of every family meal in our family.

And so we sat down to eat. My gram and I would get edges because we were left handed. The two men would get the ends. We all seemed to have prescribed seats always and I don't ever remember them being assigned. We just knew. Clatter and chatter ensued until we were all full to the bursting point. The chairs slid back from the table.

"Anyone for dessert?" my grandmother would ask as all of the adults exclaimed they couldn't eat anymore at the current time even if they wanted to. So the men refreshed their drinks and ambled off to the comfort of the living room and a football game my father would swear at vehemently and my grandfather wouldn't watch. They both soon fell asleep anyway, the drinks warming, unconsumed, on coast-

In the kitchen, the women bustled around putting food in containers and filling the hot, soapy water in the sink with dirty dishes. Conversation went on regarding who would take what home and how everything was going to fit in the car. Sometimes we girls were called upon to dry the dishes, but more often we were shooed out of the small kitchen-dining room and told to "Go and play, now! You're right underfoot." We were grateful, we bundled into our snow pants and skidoo boots and our snorkel jackets and mittens and hoped Gramp was still awake so he could get out the flying saucers.

Outside, one of us would go first to make a trail that would curve down the slope and not run us into the neighbor's house. This lasted until we were chilly and trudged back in. The kitchen was usually clean by this time and Gram would shoo us to the doorstep so she could brush us off with a broom before we went in. Then we went through the dressing process in reverse. The desserts were arranged on the table. The men were gently awakened and asked their preferences. Then we kids could choose. The great thing about Christmas was we could choose again and again until we had tried all we wanted.

It wasn't long after dessert, as the light was leaving the day, when we were told to get ready. My dad took trip after trip of gifts in boxes and bags to the trunk for us to take home. The

> The Log Home Care & Maintenance Authority"

food, packaged for later eating, was placed on the floor of the car at our feet. We all resumed our placed in the behemoth of a car and settled in for the ride home. Kisses from everyone on the forehead, a little wiggling in place to get just right, and the car was off for the farm.

"Well, that was fun!" my mother chirped. Her face was glowing and she was turned sideways a bit to look at my father.

"Well, I'm glad you had a good time, ol' girl." My dad replied. He glanced over at her and smiled. They were done talking now and it was an okay kind of silence, where they were happy and warm and headed home. I leaned my head against the window and looked out. There was a snow shower and the car going through the snow in the dark made the snowflakes seem like the quills of some huge porcupine that we were chasing. I imagined a chase through the frozen wasteland, never quite being able to catch up. As my mind wandered, I drifted off to a half-sleep and was thankful.

I still am.

Tammi Rogers-D'Leon is a seventh generation Vermont farm girl originally from West Newbury. She grew up in a small, family owned dairy farm. She attended college in Lyndon and has lived in St. Johnsbury since graduating.









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Bug dogs

Before hunting season, a beagle brought bedbugs to bay in St. Johnsbury. The hound alerted its handler that the Depot Square apartment complex teemed with tiny bloodsuckers. Central Vermont Public Service meter readers stayed out of the building until exterminators gave it a clean bill of health.

Bedbugs are almost flat, no bigger than apple seeds, with a similar oval shape. They feast on blood. Their bites leave welts like mosquitoes, but do not spread disease. Fifty years ago, the U.S. almost wiped out these tiny vampires with DDT. Some of the poison leached into streams and ponds. To protect endangered fish and birds, the federal government banned this potent and widely used insecticide at the end of 1972. Then in

the late 1990s, the Environmental Protection Agency halted the use of other toxic pesticides inside residences.

To save the environment, exterminators switched to a multipronged approach—pinpoint application of weaker poisons, vacuuming up bugs, freezing them with a dry-ice chemical snow and heating rooms to 135 degrees Fahrenheit for thirty minutes, instead of fumigating entire buildings. It was better for the people, but less deadly to the persistent bedbugs. They came back in droves.

Bedbugs can live more than a year without feeding. Undocumented immigrant bugs stowed away in clothes and luggage of international travelers. That helped swell the U.S. bug census. Now these pests swarm in hotels, motels, inns, shelters, hostels, cruise ships, hospitals, dormitories, barracks and

camps—anywhere travelers sleep. From there, the critters can hitch a ride to infest homes and offices.

The magical ability of dogs to nose out and distinguish odors lets them find lost persons, investigate arson, detect narcotics, mold, and explosives and even uncover cancer. Termite inspectors were the first to train dogs to sniff out bedbugs. Some of them had used canines to smell out termites and carpenter ants for years. Each dog specializes in the body odor of one or two species of bugs. That way their handlers, whose olfactory abilities are limited, can figure out what the dog already knows and is trying to tell them. "What's that Lassie? Where's Timmy? Do you want me to follow you?" The idea is by treating only those areas with live bugs, building owners reduce their costs and environmental dan-

As bedbugs grew from pest to plague, some exterminators retrained their dogs to seek out the new menace. Often insects lurk in hidden crannies, unseen by human eyes. The dogs can sniff out bugs behind walls and in floorboard cracks. Trainers even teach dogs to distinguish live insects and their eggs from the scent of dead bugs and their droppings, a task many of us might find daunting.

Trained dogs sit down or point with their noses when they smell live bedbugs or their eggs. Sitting protects fancy furniture, unlike scratching or pawing. Barking, howling and whining are also no-nos. That would annoy prestigious guests in ritzy resorts. Rich and famous globe hoppers are just upscale buffets for bloodsucking insects.

The total cost of each dog and its handler-including travel to clients, special grooming to prevent spreading bugs and veterinary care—may be \$100,000 yearly. The best bug dogs are fast. A well-trained dog can inspect an average hotel room in two minutes, with 98 percent accuracy. The dog will find bugs lurking inside mattresses, light fixtures, radios and even behind walls. To stay sharp, dogs train daily. Trainers use colonies of live bedbugs in vials—and some trainers feed them with their own blood. Boudoir bedbugs turn up their noses at anything but human blood.

Bedbug dog schools started in Florida. The University of Florida's Department of Entomology helped develop a training regimen. Somewhat unbelievably, there is even a professional association for the bug dog industry, the National Entomology Scent Detection Canine Association. It started in the Everglade State in 2006. Bedbug hounds and handlers soon sprang up in other places, including Australia, Canada, Colorado, Connecticut, Hawaii, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, and Tennessee.

Vermont has its coonhound, bear dog, sled dog and many other dog trainers, but bug dog training has not kept pace, even though there is good money in it. To buy a certified bedbug dog and train its handler for five days can cost \$10,000. Inspections by certified dogs may cost \$325 per hour.

Surely, more Yankee entrepreneurs will want to cash in on this new business opportunity, maybe with a special Vermont twist. Almost extinct moose and wild turkeys bounced back and created sporting prospects. Couldn't bug dogs become recreational attractions for hunters? The Green Mountains might ring with shouts of "Yoicks!" as nimrods urge bloodhounds to bound through bedrooms in fevered pursuit of trophy bugs. Huntsmen will swap tall tales of the one that crawled away. The Northeast Kingdom economy might bounce back, fueled by sales of fly swatters, dog licenses and bug bombs. Kennel operators are itching to stop bedbugs biting, so we can sleep tight.



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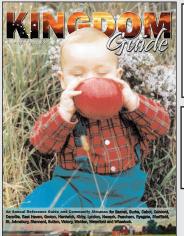


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he Kingdom Guide is the region's most comprehensive reference guide and community almanac, published annually. A one-of-a-kind, one-stop resource for 23 communities in the Northeast Kingdom. The guide includes complete historical information and statistical data for towns, local and state government, the arts, schools and education, employment and industry, state forests, museums and historical sites, clubs and organizations, human services, hospitals, places of worship and much



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Two cows wait there turn in the milk parlor, left, while Danny keeps an eye on farm finances in his Fairfax office.

>> Page I

wheat and then on wool, but by the 20th century milk production had taken over. Ninety-fivevear-old Leland Simpson can trace his heritage back to the earliest settlers of Lyndon, back when Mable Wilder married James Simpson and established the farmstead in East Lyndon at the feet of Kirby Mountain. The Wilders attended the first town meeting. Six generations later, Leland still sits with his daughter by the woodstove in his kitchen and remembers a bygone era of farming.

"We had 20 head of cattle when I was a kid and 100 when I was running the farm," he says. The Simpsons raised short-horn cattle, both for their milk and their beef. Even back then, according to Leland, it was hard to get rich farming.

"It was hand to mouth."

Leland ran the 200-acre farm until 1983, when he was 69 years old. The property is now leased

to another Simpson farming family, no relation, out of Sutton. Leland's barn is empty but his tenant brings his herd to pasture in the fields. The arrangement keeps Leland and his daughter on the farm and nature from reclaiming the fields.

Lease arrangements are becoming popular throughout the state. Across the state in Franklin County, two local farm boys are working hard under a similar arrangement.

Shawn and Danny Gingue come from a family farming tradition. Their parents, Paul and Rosemary, operate a Waterford farm on Higgins Hill Road and milk more than 200 cows. From an early age, the two brothers helped their father with the two milking shifts and learned other useful farm trades. When they were school age, they milked at the evening shift and then woke up early to do their home work.

The experience made an im-

"It's in your blood," Shawn says. "It's in your family. The best part about it is you are always doing something different around the farm. You have to know how to do a lot of different things."

Shawn's father took over the farm from Shawn's grandfather, who still lives across the street, though his lifestyle has changed a bit, according to his grandson.

"Yeah, he goes to Florida now in the winter."

Farm land has always been valuable to those who work it, but over time it has become a common target for those in another industry.

A couple of years ago, the Gingue family was approached by a real estate developer looking to pay for the rights to the family land. Right off the Interstate and full of good soil, the brothers saw for the first, but not the last time, that farmland was perfect for real estate development.

"After that, we decided that we would start looking to go out on our own," Shawn says. "Plus, our two younger brothers were showing an interest in helping Dad."

About a year and a half ago, while lending a hand at a farm in the Northwestern part of the state, Shawn caught wind of an opportunity in Fairfax. The brothers soon met with Rene Boissonalt, a farmer ready for retirement who had no sons interested in taking over the family business. Boissonalt proposed a five-year lease agreement with a purchase option, and the brothers accepted. A loan from Yankee Farm Credit and some collateral help from their parents and they were in the farming business. Yankee Farm Credit is an agricultural credit cooperative owned and governed by its farmer customers. The organization has loaned more than \$430 million to 1,250 farm, farm-related business, and country home customers in Vermont, the Connecticut Valley of New Hampshire, and New York's Clinton and Essex counties.

Gingue Brothers Dairy was born, and the brothers went to work on the Boissonalt farm, a 200-acre tract with a breathtaking view of Mt. Mansfield and 400 cows. Shawn and Danny are 28 and 30 years old, respectively, and not many young men their age are rushing into the farmer business. Readers may recall an article in the June issue of the North Star chronicling Casey Carson, a 25-year-old son of Danville who decided to start an organic dairy farm. Like the Gingue brothers, he hales from a family of farmers.

In the fall of their first year, things were looking great. Milk prices climbed as high as \$24 per hundred weight (\$24 for every 100 pounds). However, for months the price has been hovering around \$14 per hundred weight.

Taking time away from what is surely a busy day, Shawn and Danny sit at their desks and try to shed light on their recent struggles.

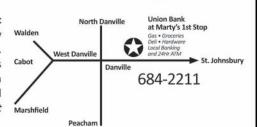
"Like a lot of farms, our breakeven point is \$18 per hundred weight," says Danny. "We haven't seen those numbers in quite a while."

The two brothers rely heavily on Danny's extensive agricul-



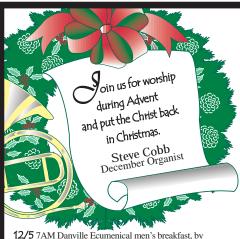
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12/8 & 22 5PM Guitar Class; 6:00 Choir Rehearsal 12/13 9:30AM 3rd Sunday Advent Service 12/15 6PM Choir Caroling at St. Jay Health & Rehab 12/20 9:30AM, 4th Sunday Advent Service 12/24 7PM Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols

12/27 9:30AM Church Service, First Sunday



DEDICATION To dedicate a wreath or

poinsettia to a loved one, contact Cheryl Linsley will be published in the Christmas Eve service.

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ture education. Much of his day is spent in front of his computer, much like a stock broker, watching and projecting the future price of milk. He also has extensive knowledge of herd health and animal biology.

The computer isn't the only technological advancement for the brothers. Their operation employs a "parlor" milking system. The herd is divided into four groups of 100. One by one, the four groups are moved into a holding area where 28 at a time are positioned on milking machines. The farm uses three, eight-hour milking shifts at 2 a.m., 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. With the help of five immigrant workers, the farm runs 24 hours a day.

An operation like this is a far cry from their father's pipeline system, which uses a permanent milk-return pipe and a second vacuum pipe that encircles the barn above the rows of cows, with entry ports above each cow. The milking machine is ported from cow to cow and the milk is pulled up into the milk-return pipe by the vacuum system, and then flows by gravity to the milk house vacuum-breaker that puts the milk in the storage tank. Shawn and Danny say it's rare to milk 200 cows in a pipeline system, but their father never saw a need to do an expensive upgrade.

In order to get through these prolonged stretches of low milk prices, according to the brothers, a farmer has to maintain a good relationship with their lenders. Their advantage is their youth, which gives them more time to repay.

"We keep pretty close contact with them," Shawn says. "We tell them everything we're



Leland Simpson's father, W. Arthur Simpson, above, works with a short horn cow on the family farm in East Lyndon. The new Gingue Brothers Farm, right, has all the latest milking equipment.

doing, and they tell us we're landowners in the area because, doing everything right."

Danny explains that milk prices are much like heating fuel prices. Farmers can lock in their price and avoid the volatility of the market, but many are apprehensive about such a move because they have such large debt service and need maximum profit margins.

"No one is locking in now because you can't lock in a price under your operating costs," Danny says.

The farm location is perfect for Shawn and Danny. Aside from the proud farming tradition in Fairfax, Franklin County is one of the top 50 milk producing counties in the country. Their proximity to Burlington, about 30 minutes, was also a factor for the brothers, whose wives both commute there for work.

Although the Gingue brothers lease a 200-acre tract from Boissonalt, most of their grazing land is leased from other

according to Danny, a dairy farm needs 1.5 acres for every cow in the barn. Some of their leased land is littered with "For Sale" signs, perhaps doomed to become a condominium development or retail space. Yet again, Shawn and Danny are constantly reminded that farmland is worth far more as a different use. According to author Jan Albers in her book "Hands on the Land, A History of the Vermont Landscape," the traditional pattern of clearly defined village centers surrounded by open farm land is under attack from sprawl. It's not unusual to see once usable farm land turned into fast-food restaurants, suburban housing, and car dealerships.

"It's hard when someone's willing to pay over a million dollars for a small piece of farm land," Danny says, "Who can blame [people for selling]?"

Vermont farmers have always struggled with changing



times. In 1953, there were 10,637 dairy farms in the state producing 1.5 billion pounds of milk a year. The average herd size was 25 cows. Ten years later, 3,510 farms had ceased production but the remaining farms were producing more milk thanks to mechanization. However, the small, marginal farmer who was unable to afford an expensive upgrade was left out in the cold.

Back in East Lyndon, Leland Simpson says the smaller farms are still struggling, but Vermont's legislature has gone all out to try and help them. Leland's father, W. Arthur Simpson, was a seven-term politician in Montpelier. Many programs helpful to farmers were passed while he was serving on the state Agriculture Committee. He is also credited with being one of the first people to refer to this region of Vermont as the Northeast Kingdom. According to Leland, his father passed the phrase on to former Gov. George Aiken, who made it commonplace.

Leland believes that farming will always have a place in Vermont, as long as farmers keep their passion for the work.

"To farm you have to love the land, it gets in your blood."

As for his role, he is always happy to supply interested parties with anecdotal information about the golden age of farming, but the heavy lifting is going to have to be done by the younger generation, like the Gingue brothers.

"I'm about all used up," Leland says with a smile.





Ice and snow make their first appearance

Walden Hill Journal with Jeff & Ellen Gold

Dec. 3, 2008

December has produced bits and pieces of all kinds of weather including bright sunshine today. Although the temperature is starting out at only 25°, it's supposed to reach a high well above freezing. Hopefully it will be warm enough to melt down the treacherous thin layer of ice that coats the ground. The snow cover unfortunately isn't substantial enough for firm footing. On the north side of the house, great slabs of roof ice overhang the eaves waiting for a bit of encouragement from the sun to finally fall. Large chunks breaking off yesterday caused quite an explosion, shaking the ground. A downy woodpecker has joined his larger hairy cousin at the suet. We had a large gray squirrel totally wrapped around the cage. He broke off chunks of suet then settled on the ground to feast on firmer footing. We see too many red

squirrels at our feeder, but gray squirrels rarely venture up this high. I'd much rather they all stay at lower

Dec. 4, 2008

A fiery sunset brings an end to this stormy day. Let's hope that "sunset at night, sailor's delight" holds true and we'll see a calmer day tomorrow. Yesterday's temps only reached a high of 38° so the ice saw minimal melt off. Fortunately we got a covering of fresh snow today for better footing atop the slicker coat underneath. It was a good indoor day, one for cranking up the wood stove and baking bread. I only ventured outdoors long enough to fill the bird feeder and collect the mail.

Dec. 8, 2008

Bright sunshine and clear blue skies is the good news for the day; minus 6° on the thermometer, the bad. An Arctic cold front has whipped down from the north, leaving us firmly sunk in the deep freeze. At least we have an insulating layer of snow to protect the shrubs and trees. We'll have to wait and see if the solar gain is sufficient to warm up our house today. The furnace kicked in briefly overnight and a few times this morning. Colorful "sunbows" arc up from the horizon, lengthening with the rising sun.

Dec. 9, 2008

High winds are putting quite a slant on the rapidly falling snow. The woodstove is cranked up with no chance of solar gain today. We've been enjoying early evening drives home, watching the planet show on the western horizon. A very bright Venus has now moved to set above a less bright Jupiter. The moon has moved out of alignment with the planets, rising in the east as the planets approach the west. It's still early enough that nighttime constellations have not yet appeared to take away from the lone planets blazing in the darkening sky.

Dec. 12, 2008

With the reflective aid of fresh snow, the muted full moon casts a strong ambient light. What started as a heavy snowfall last night turned into ice and slush by morning. We were preparing for our first major snow dump but were thwarted once again by global warming. It was a very messy and arduous job clearing the walk and drives. I had to shovel the porch before being able to open the door and still had to push from the inside since the outside latch was frozen solid. Fortunately the garage door opened without any problem. The shads lost a lot of ice-encrusted branches in the blustery wind. Interesting windblown cloud patterns added their own beauty to the storm. Rapidly falling temperature should harden up the slush and a new coating of deeper snow will hopefully arrive as well.

Dec. 13, 2008

Today marks the 12th anniversary of our furniture arriving on Walden Hill Road. It was a day much like today but with considerably more snow on the ground. It's a nippy 4° with clear blue sky to offset the sparkling icebound trees. A very puffed up blue jay is perched in the icy shad, facing the rising sun. Chickadees are flitting all around him, flying to and from the suet, but the jay seems more interested in warming up than feeding. I had to thaw the bird feeder inside for several hours before freeing its frozen lid. The chickadees were happy to see me returning the filled tube. It only reached a high of 14° today, but we managed to heat with the sun until late afternoon.

Dec. 17, 2008

A gentle but continuous snowfall has left at least 6 inches on the ground. Fortunately, it's low moisture, lighter snow. It's starting to let up a bit so we can go get some exercise clearing the drives and stairs. There's still ice underneath so we'll need to be cautious. One snowplow slid off the road earlier this morning. The driver used our phone to call for help. All of his crew are equipped with cell phones but of course, there's no signal most places, including here. "Old McDonald's Farm" seems to be raising wild turkeys. A flock of at least 50 were out in the pasture yesterday afternoon.







Dec. 20, 2008

A wintery 17° with our first big snow dump blanketing the trees in mounds of white. 6 to 8 inches of powder made for easy shoveling and snowplowing. I startled a mole as I uncovered his burrow on the stairs. He made a rapid escape back into the snow. The sun is attempting to break through as the last of the snow showers drift gently down. We're off for our annual solstice celebration in Hanover. This year's Revels is a French Medieval theme and promises to be good entertainment. Our snowbound drive along a hopefully well-plowed I-91 should set the mood for passing through the longest night and welcoming the returning sun.

Dec. 22, 2008

The solstice has come and gone, leaving us fully ensconced in winter. A major snowstorm on Friday quickly followed by another on Sunday has left a couple of feet of snow on the ground. More showers continue today. Jeff is out with the snow thrower but I'm staying in, nursing a nasty cold. Archer Mayor's newest mystery is keeping me company by the toasty woodstove. Edwin Way Teale in "Circle of the Seasons" succinctly captures the solstice transition: "Autumn, the evening of the year, is over; winter, the night of the year, has come."

Dec. 25, 2008

Warmer temps last night (high of 41°) with rain and strong winds, brought down some of the snow cover. It unfortunately brought the drive back down to where the ice is. Jeff needs to empty the ashes anyway, and will definitely have good use for them on the drive. Ashes do double duty by giving good purchase while absorbing the sun's rays to help melt down the ice. We had our first evening grosbeak at the feeder today, ground feeding with the blue jays. I always think of grosbeaks as larger birds but they were dwarfed considerably next to the



jays. We had our very own decorated holiday tree with bobbing chickadees displaying their velvet black caps and more stationary blue jays and yellow, elegantly attired evening grosbeaks. The tree was quite full of avian ornaments. All we were missing were the red-capped woodpeckers.

Dec. 29, 2008

A high of 44° yesterday brought down heavy piles of roof snow. Fortunately the drive underneath was clear so Jeff could concentrate on wedging the snowthrower through the glacier. Warmer temps created heavy fog as the melting snow vaporized. An eerie, yet beautiful sunrise turned the mist a variety of colors, bathing the air in shades of pink and red. High winds kept the clouds moving for continually changing, beautiful morning scenes. Sunset in NH offered a lingering glow with fast moving clouds as well. It was a day belonging to the mist, wind, and clouds, helped out by the book-ended glow of the sun.



Dec. 31, 2008

Final day of 2008 and the thermometer is dropping. After a high of only 16°, we're back into the single digits and will probably see the minus sign before midnight. Bitter temps and my lingering cold are keeping us home to celebrate New Year's Eve indoors. I finally managed to don my snowshoes for the first time this season and last time this year. It was more of a working trek than recreational. The bird feeder and suet needed refilling and the litter and compost emptying. I did a loop through the woods before my energy gave out. Fluffy powder above an icy base made for

good snowshoeing. The neighbors had established a path, which is always helpful too. Twilight brings a setting crescent moon with Neptune shining below. A faint orange glow spreads at the horizon. 12 a.m., minus 3°.

Happy New Year!





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First Night 2010 offers seven hours of live performances

By JAY SPROUT

New Year's Eve marks the 17th annual First Night celebration of the arts in St. Johnsbury.

Starting at 4 p.m. and continuing on through to the midnight fireworks finale, anyone sporting this year's blue First Night button can enjoy as many of the some 90 performances by 45 different artists or shows as they can in seven hours. They can hear music from many traditions, including folk, pop, rock, blues, bluegrass, Broadway, sacred, silly, contemporary and classical piano. They can see modern dancers, break dancers, magicians, a hypnotist, jugglers, a one-man band and



comedy shows. They can dance the night away to swing or hot rock, in country squares or contradance lines. The kids can also work off some energy with giant inflatables and enjoy craft activities at the Family Fun Fare. It all happens at 17 venues on and near

Main Street St. Johnsbury.

In between their favorite shows, people can satisfy their appetites and thirst with diverse selection of food and beverage at several churches and other venues. And the free late night pancake supper is always popular.

The entertainment lined up this year includes many favorites of former First Nights and a number of debut performances.

Among the new acts this year is Leonard Solomon's one-man variety show.

Among the new acts this year is Leonard Solomon's one-man variety show featuring some of the most bizarre homemade instruments ever seen or heard, including the "Majestic Bellowphone."

Conceived and constructed in his basement, the goose-honking and train-whistle cacophony of the Majestic Bellowphone soon became a classic street act in Harvard Square. With symphonic compositions arranged for dog whistles and bicycle horn, Solomon's classical music training is obvious, as







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Thank You

The Family of Marion E. Sevigny wishes to express deep appreciation and sincere thanks to all who sent a memorial contribution to the Danville Rescue Squad. Unfortunately, we were unable to access many donor names due to circumstances beyond our control. Therefore, we sincerely hope to reach you through this newspaper announcement. We want to acknowledge how grateful we are to all of you who sent a contribution.It is a great comfort to us to know that Marion's legacy will continue to give to others in time of need.

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rounds out the show with a polished ball-juggling routine.

Equally unusual is the music of Kevin Colosa who plays the theremin. Invented in 1920 and named after its Russian inventor Léon Theremin, the theremin is the world's oldest electronic musical instrument. Colosa skillfully moves his hands near its two antennas to control oscillators for pitch with one hand and volume with the other. Best known for producing eerie sounds for the soundtracks of scary movies, many people have heard the theremin's unique music without knowing what they were hearing.

St. Johnsbury Academy grads are among the musicians in the two bands debuting at First Night. Nate Amos and Ryan Murphy have joined with Josh Huntsberry and Bovice Brown at UVM to become the alternative rock band Sidrak & Bokkus. The Rêves is a five-man alternative rock band based locally with Jake Machell on lead vocals, accompanied by Zach Ummer, Iain Brown, Sonny Edwards, and Freddie Losambe.

You Already Know is a group of young men who grew up with each other and became the selfproclaimed "world's greatest

is his eccentric genius as he street dance crew." They perform on the streets of Boston, showing off their "styles" such as breakdance, hip-hop, house, krump, rave, popping and locking. With skills forged in the heat of one-on-one "cypher" competitions, the YAK street dancers are continuously challenged to elevate their acrobatic techniques to a higher level to amaze and

> Tenor saxophonist Benny Sharoni comes up north from the Boston jazz scene with three of his many musical collaborators to play an energetic blend of straight ahead bop with Latin infusions. The repertoire includes standards from the "American Songbook" as well as melodic original tunes.

> With a strong emphasis on close harmonies backed with fiddle, guitar, bouzouki, button accordion, and sundry percussions, Fifth Business produces songs with roots in American, British, and Celtic music, plus some original contemporary compositions.

> Linda Warnaar's new group is the Tessellations. Linda sings all original songs that blend Latin, jazz, and funk rhythms, with Micah Carbonneau on bass and Alex Wolften on trumpet.

> > Derby Line is a local barber-

shop quartet that specializes in Tin Pan Alley and Victorian-era classics. The foursome-Ross Fields, Dave Johnson, Chuck Fergus, and John Cogan-may also break out in doo-wop, show tunes, and ballads when the spirit moves them.

The complete schedule for First Night St. Johnsbury is posted on the web at firstnightstj.com.

First Night buttons are on sale in Danville at Marty's 1st Stop. Most area bank branches throughout the Northeast Kingdom and a number of St. Johnsbury businesses also sell them. Given the current economic turndown, organizers are pleased to hold the pre-New Year's Eve price to \$10. The price for adults does jump to \$15 on December 31, but the student price remains at \$10. And pre-schoolers never need a button.

Individuals can help support these low prices by voluntarily paying a higher price. Special sponsor buttons with a blinking light are available for \$28. First Night volunteers who offer to work a shift checking buttons, etc. on New Year's Eve can get free buttons. To become a sponsor and/or a volunteer go to the First Night Web site.



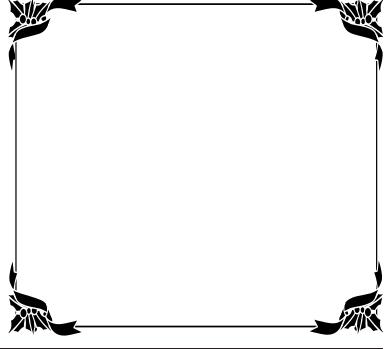
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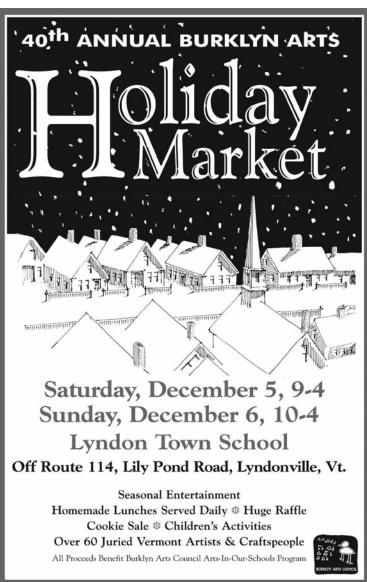
Dec. 31 is, of course, the last night of the year, but in over 100 cities across the country, New Year's Eve is officially called "First Night." Because New Year's Eve is a time for renewal and new beginnings, it is an opportunity for the community to look ahead with

hope and optimism and appreciate their common bonds. Thus the name "First Night" was coined in Boston over 30 years ago to symbolize looking forward, rather than any technically correct words, like "Last Night." This alcohol-free, public festival marks the passage from the old year to the new.











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Letters from the Past

When writing was a necessity and an art

By Lynn A. Bonfield



newsy informal letter from Mary Ann Brackett (1828-68), a student in the newly opened St. Johnsbury Academy, described to a friend, who had moved from the area, the school building and her living quarters. Her friend, identified only as Mrs. Daniel L. Jackson, had lived in Barnet where she and Mary Ann had been classmates in the district school. Mrs. Jackson now lived in Danvers, Massachusetts, with her husband and baby, Lorenzo.

A member of the first class at the Academy, Mary Ann was pleased with the teachers and her boarding rooms at Mr. Curtis's, where she shared rooms with three other scholars. She could not help bragging about having a piano and taking music lessons.

By her second year at the Academy, Mary Ann's family had left Barnet and moved to St. Johnsbury, maybe because her mother, Amanda Fairbanks Brackett, wanted to be close to her family. After graduating from the Academy, Mary Ann was hired to teach drawing and painting at the Academy. On February 17, 1853 she married Dr. Fayette Jewett (1824-62), also a member of the first Academy class, and a graduate of the medical school at Dartmouth. A month after their wedding, the young couple sailed from Boston to Snyrna as missionaries of the American Board in Tokat, Asia Minor. Their two sons, Henry and Milo, born in Turkey, each eventually served with the U.S. Consul there.

All of this is in the future as she wrote of missing her Barnet

friend who had married in September 1840 and moved away. Mary Ann reported that the Jackson homestead had been sold at auction and her friend's bonnet had brought two cents. She teased her about Daniel's quick trips to Barnet where he spent little time socializing with the Bracketts, but Mary Ann assured her friend of her family's love and concern for her. In those days it was popular to exchange newspapers as they went through the mail at a lower rate than letters and allowed the recipient to get a glimpse of life in the sender's town.

Mary Ann's deep thoughts on what she called "spiritual matters" are seen in this letter, written ten years before her missionary service.

[Barnet, Vt.] Dec 18th 1843

Dear friend

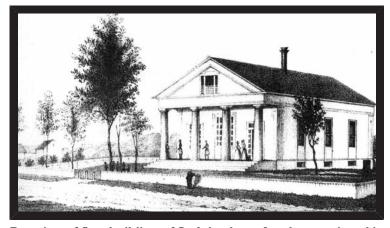
Time passes and I find it to have been a long time since you left us yet often have my thoughts reverted to our short but very agreeable residence with you and wished again and again that you still occupied that same old kitchen that I might run in forty-eleven times during the day to kiss little Lorenzo or plague you a little But I sigh to think that my wish cannot be granted and that I must live on the hope of living [in the future] either with or near you. After you were gone lonely enough it was to think that Mrs. Jackson was far away and it was not a good lonesome I can assure you as you sometime said you guessed it would be How do you like your residance? Are you plesantly situated? Oh! How I should like to see you in your new habitation. Have you become much acquainted with the

people about you[?] I suppose that you find the society to be much better than it is here. For my part I do not see as the society here is improving any. Things move on at the same old

I have been to school at the [St. Johnsbury] Plain for about three months Boarded at Mr Curtis's and roomed with E. [Emily] J. and T. [Tirzah] M. Parks and also a Miss [Mary H.] Gaskill . . . We enjoyed ourselves very much We had a room down stairs with two beds in it and also a stove, carpet, piano, &c. I had only two studies: Arithmatic and Latin as Mr [James K.] Colby the teacher [and principal] thinks it is not best to have but three and I had Music to make up the third and [on] Saturday's we had compositions, and a Bible lesson.

The academy is a fine building possesing almost every conveniance. There is a fine yard for the girls to play in it is very large and there is a fence around it is so and hight that no one can see through. It is a nearly 10 or 12 feet high I should think. Mr [Henry] Lord from Hanover is assistant teacher. We had a Lyceum every Friday night which was very interesting the exercises were as follows Declamation[,] discussion[,] a lecture and the reading of the Oricle consisting of compositions written by the ladies and gentlemen of the school signed some fictitious name

And now what a sorrowful story I have to tell you of Mr [Daniel L.] Jackson's conduct since he came up Oh naughty man that he is (but he is growing some better) yet I must tell you although it break your heart. When he came up I thought how glad I shall be to see him



Drawing of first building of St. Johnsbury Academy, printed in early Academy catalogues. Credit: St. Johnsbury Academy

How much I shall have to say so I waited rather impatiently for an orportunity but none came except once in a great while he would come in and stop a very few minutes once excepted when he took tea and then went away soon after until night before last he came in about nine oclock and spent the night

Many thanks for the [news]paper that you sent me and beg a thousand pardons for not returning one It was not because I did not feel grateful for it or that I did not duly apreciate it as comeing from a friend but I had no papers at the Plain and Saturdays while at home I hardly know why but I suppose it was because I use to think almost every Saturday next week I will write a letter in return and so Procrastination stole away the time untill now

And now how is it in regard to spiritual matters for these are things not to be passed over in writeing[.] How do you enjoy yourself? Are you steadily pressing on to the mark of your high calling[?] How ought we to rejoice that through the infinate mercy of God we have been brought to taste his love ere old age had called us away or death had laid his icy hand on us in tender youth. Let us constantly seek for and cherish that liveing and growing principle which should transform us into the image of God and than when our spirit shall be wafted to yonder world we shall be prepared to depart in peace. . . . It is getting late and I must close I believe I have no news to tell. We are all well. Mrs. Ide's family are all well I believe Mother sends a whole bunch of love and says she should like to have written alittle but Miss Armington is here a sewing and she is in a great hurry Father and Augustus [her brother] send love also Asayes he is sorry he did not go and see you when he was down[.] All would like to see you and little Lorenzo very much Kiss him for me[.] Mr Jackson has had his auction and your old bonnet sold for 2 cents[.] Come up next time Mr Jackson does[.] Pleas write me a letter and do not be discouraged in sending papers[.] This letter looks very bad but I know you will excuse all as I am in a hurry Good night.

> Your affectionately Mary Ann Brackett Barnet Vt

PS I do not know as you can read this but if you cannot just tell me and I will try to write bet-

The original of this letter is preserved in the St. Johnsbury Academy Archives. The editor is grateful to archivist Joanne Bertrand for pointing it out and helping in transcription. Letters in this series are transcribed as written with no corrections of spelling, punctuation, or capitalization. Editor's additions are in brackets; words missing are indicated by ellipses.



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>> Page I

anticipation. Holiday decorations await the final touch of white.

As usual, there are a few last minute calls for garage appointments to have the snow tires put on. As usual, a few extra customers show up at the hardware stores for salt or shovels, more than a few at Morrisons for feed or bird seed. The wild birds, all fluffed up against the cold, are already working the feeders hard at the farm, they feel what is coming better than we do. The stillness is almost oppressive, the milky skies gone to battleship gray towards the south. The diesel tractor engine is hard to start. Clouds of heavy blue smoke hang in the air as it stutters and stammers and finally gets going.

At the Fairbanks Museum weather center, Mark confers briefly with Steve Maleski as his shift ends. The isobars are tightening around a secondary low developing off the coast. How much snow and where? It is all a matter of timing, of "shadow effect" and tempera-

A Happy **Holidays** to one and all See us by appointment or by chance. 2 miles north of West Burke off Route 5, Sutton, VT www.highbeams.com 802.467.3943

ture but this could be a big one. It is already snowing in Springfield and Hartford, coming up the Connecticut Valley about as fast as a distracted tourist on Route 5, but there is plenty of time for a few more hitches of firewood. This is the firewood for two winters from now, mind you. The tractor rides hard on the frozen ruts on the way up to the wood lot. All the green is gone from the fields, only the tawny golds are left, with the oaks standing out among the hardwoods. Noon, hot soup on

Now it is snowing in Brattleboro, then Bellows Falls. The District Seven road crews are preparing for the long night ahead. Plows are mounted on the pick-up trucks cruising Railroad Street, too, and the cancellation notices on the radio have

already started. Back in the wood lot, the Kittredge Hills still stand out clearly to the west but that won't last much longer.

The view to the south is softening. Sound is coming up the valley riding the storm, the forlorn whine of tires on the Interstate.

The first flakes of snow are so fine it seems they too, are heard before they are seen, just a gentle rustling in the oak leaves as the choker chains are set. But on the return trip for another hitch the Kittredge Hills have faded away and the rustling of flakes in the leaves has become a steady hiss.

Now comes the sound of the daily freight heading north, calling out for the crossing in East Barnet and hammering across the bridges of the Passumpsic Valley. The locomotive

is frosted with snow as it shakes the depot in St. Johnsbury, three thousand horses headed home pulling rock salt, recycled paper and malt. Lights are coming on; street lights, Christmas lights, and there are a lot of shoppers, too. Everyone is in a good mood.

It seems like the season is finally becoming real. More folks at Marty's Quick Stop, too, picking up fuel or last minute groceries on their way home, with feathers of snow brushing across the asphalt. Within an hour the asphalt will not be visible at all. As the night deepens so does the snow, hanging heavy on the pines, dimming distant lights. No more worries about water lines freezing, at least for now.

A thick blanket is just the thing for the long winter ahead. A snowshoe hare boldly emerges in the wood lot. Now, at last, its white coat will help it hide from the owls, which ghost through the air. A plow scrapes its way along the highway, all other sounds are deadened. Inside the farmhouse, hot coals glow on the hearth, and the children are positively giddy as they head to bed, certain of school cancellations.





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American Judicial Process - N

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Assessment of Prior Learning - S Community & Work Experience - S Management of the Classroom - N

> N = class in Newport S = class in St. Johnsbury

ENGLISH

English Composition - N & S Foundations of Reading & Writing - N & S Global Issues in the Media - S Introduction to Research Methods - N Women & Literature - N

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

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Entertainment recipes & tips

No Small Potatoes with Vanna Guldenschuh

ecember creates the perfect storm for a party. The house is decked with lights and sparkle, a tree has been brought inside and adorned with ornament and there is a sense of spirit and celebration that permeates the air. We find ourselves wanting to share this spirit with others in some way.

I say have a party. While it is a bit of work, it is always worth the effort to welcome friends and neighbors into your home to celebrate the season.

Planning is key and I give you some helpful food hints for a successful party and a couple of recipes for entertaining during the holidays.

Plan your menu:

Write down everything you want to serve that evening. Buy what you can ahead - cheeses, nuts and frozen items. Don't be afraid to serve a prepared appetizer as long as you have tried it and know that it is really tasty. Some of the easier items to include on the list are a cheese tray with a variety of cheeses, a smoked salmon or shrimp platter, cocktail meatballs and a couple of dips with appropriate crackers. Plan on one or two heavier items (like the pork tenderloin below) or perhaps a ham platter. You know what you and your friends like to eat and plan ac-

Remember to put out some sliced bread and condiments for these items.

I like to use small disposable plates and heavy plastic ware cutlery for an hors d'oeuvre buffet. Guests can take a new plate and not be burdened by carrying around a china plate. Make sure that you have the proper pieces of

cutlery for them to enjoy the buffet. Both forks and knives and a pile of napkins always make eating

Have beverages available with ice and glasses in a spot where folks can help themselves. Wine, beer and soft drinks are always a winner and set up easily, but if you want to serve mixed drinks it requires a little more effort. I think it always works well to take a little extra time to set up a beverage table so you don't have to worry about it during the night. A good punch recipe can also be a real success at a party.

Plan your time:

Do what you can early in the day. Give yourself enough time to enjoy preparing this food for your friends. I find it a pleasure to cook if I have I don't have to rush to a deadline.

Make the cheese platter in the middle of the day and cover with plastic wrap so it will be at room temperature at service. It really makes a difference in the taste of the cheese to be served at the proper temperature.

Make items like meatballs or crab cakes early in the day and store in a microwavable or ovenproof container to heat before service. I also sear any meat I am serving early in the day and finish it in the oven about an hour before guests arrive.

In the afternoon clean up the kitchen from the early preps and save out an hour just for you to get ready. You will be able to do the last minute preparations without worrying about guests arriving early. Remember to wear an apron.

You will want to be checking your list and checking it twice to make certain you are serving all the items you bought for your party. Check on any frozen items you have to cook and read the directions for preparation. Don't let any cooking times surprise you.

Plan to have fun:

When the guests start to arrive the party has officially begun and you should start having a fun time. Enjoy the fact that there you are surrounded by friends and family and even though you are the host and have a certain amount of work that has to be done during the night, remember it is a celebration and you should celebrate.

Sliced Pork Tenderloin

Pieces of thinly sliced pork tenderloin make a perfect addition to any hors d'oeuvre buffet. It is easy to make this dish ahead of time and the pieces are just the

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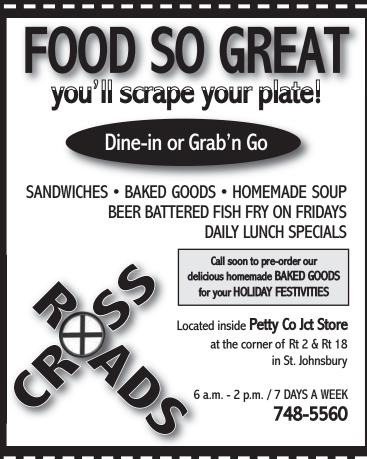
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right size to fit on your guests' appetizer plate with other goodies. I like to brine the tenderloins for a few hours before cooking (overnight is okay). You can sear them in the morning of the party and finish them in the oven right before the party, freeing up your prep time just before guests arrive. They add heartiness to the party fare and everyone will comment on how tender and tasty they are. The recipe below is for 2 pieces of tenderloin - use more rub and brine if you are doing 4 to 6 pieces.

2 pork tenderloins (not flavored) for every 10 people Enough brine to cover the pork (see recipe below) 1-2 cups spicy rub (see recipe below or buy one you like) Balsamic reduction (see recipe below) Olive oil

Make the Brine: ½ cup sugar ½ cup salt 3 to 4 cups of apple cider

Mix the salt and sugar with 2 cups of hot water. Dissolve thoroughly, let cool and put in a large non reactive bowl with the apple cider.

Make the Rub: ½ cup salt 3/4 cup sugar ½ cup paprika ½ cup ground ancho or chipotle peppers



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William William

½ cup cocoa powder 1/4 cup black pepper 1 tablespoon dried thyme

Mix all the ingredients together and put in a mason jar with lid. Shake until they are well combined. You will have extra rub but it will keep indefinitely in the jar and you will find many uses for this tasty flavoring. You can do this a few days to a week ahead. I always have some in my kitchen to flavor any meat that I cook.

Make the Balsamic Reduction: 1 cup balsamic vinegar 1 cup duck sauce or plum sauce

Put the vinegar and sauce in a sauce pan and reduce over medium heat until slightly syrupy. You can do this up to a few days ahead.

Completely submerge the pork tenderloins in the brine mix and weight with a plate so the meat remains under the liquid. Keep it in the refrigerator while it is brining. Let the pork brine for at least 3 hours – overnight is even better.

Take the pork out of the brine and pat dry.

Rub the outside thoroughly with the rub and let sit for another

You are now ready to sear the pork on all sides so it is almost charred. I do this in a cast iron skillet – but any kind of frying pan will do. Heat the pan with a little olive oil till very hot and lay the pork in the pan. It will sizzle and sputter and you can turn the heat down a little, but remember that you will want it charred on all sides. Keep turning it till you have accomplished that.

At this point you can set the pork aside until about 1 hour before you will serve it. You will need to finish the cooking in a 350 to 400 degree oven for about 30 minutes. Take the pork out of the oven and let rest for about at least ½ hour. Cut the pork into thin slices and overlap the pieces on a festive serving platter. Drizzle the balsamic reduction over the top of the slices and set out on your table.

Smoked Trout Dip

It's simple, different and gourmet. You couldn't ask for a better addition to any celebration. Serve with crudités or crackers. The festive look of the red pepper and green parsley make it perfect for the season.

1 lb. cream cheese (softened to room temperature)



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1/4 cup mayonnaise 1/4 cup chopped parsley 1/4 cup finely chopped sweet red pepper (a combination of sweet and hot peppers make it interest-

1/2 to 1 lb. smoked trout (depending on how much you want to spend)

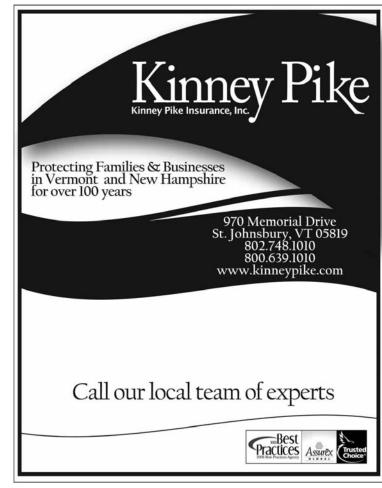
Salt and pepper to taste

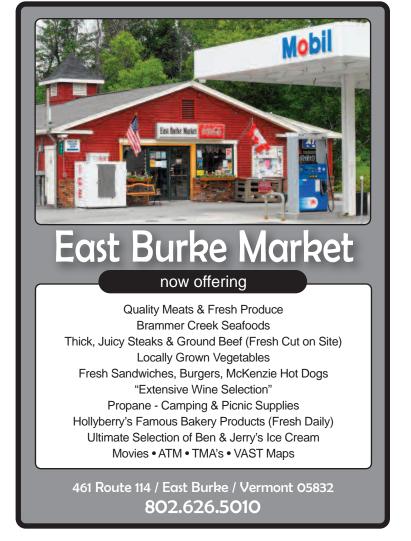
Place the cream cheese, mayonnaise in the bowl of a food processor fitted with the metal blade. Puree until smooth. Add the chopped parsley and red pepper and pulse on and off until just combined. Add salt and pepper to taste and pulse on and off again.

Remove skin from the smoked trout and chop into small pieces. Add to the cream cheese mix in the processor and pulse until combined. You don't want the trout to be pureed, just fully incorporated.

Let the dip rest for an hour or two before service. It can be stored in the refrigerator for 3 days before serving.







What's happening at town hall

Barnet

Town Clerk: Benjamin Heisholt Selectboard: Ted Faris, Gary Bunnell and Jeremy Roberts

November 9, 2009 **Snowmobile Club** – Ross Page appeared, as is his annual custom, to discuss the upcoming snowmobiling season with the Board. For the 2009-2010 season he requested the Board allow snowmobile access on Bony Woods Road and Somerhill Road to connect trails, as has been the pracin previous years. Additionally, due a temporary change in trail configuration caused by a property transfer, he requested access on Stevenson Road that will only be necessary in the 2009-2010 season. After brief discussion, the Board agreed by voice vote to grant the Bayley-Hazen Road Snowmobile Club road access.

Harveys Lake - Chair Theodore Faris noted recent correspondence with Dr. Richard N.

Downer of the Department of Environmental Engineering at the University of Vermont (UVM) regarding the Harvey's Lake Dam. This Department at UVM is seeking projects with practical design problems to assign students. One potential project is to design and build a sluice gate to fit into the current stoplog slots at the Harvev's Lake Dam. After brief discussion, Board agreed that Faris will write a letter to UVM with request for such a project.

Danville

Town Clerk: Wendy Somers Town Administrator - Merton Leonard

Selectboard: Steve Larrabee, Denise Briggs, Doug Pastula, Marvin Withers and Michael

October 15, 2009 Autumn on the Green - Cheryl Linsley thanked the Board and town employees that helped with this year's very successful Au-

tumn on the Green event. She noted that of people that signed the guest book, 43 states and 22 countries were represented. With the success, there comes the increasing problem of traffic and emergency service access in the area. Everyone agreed that prior to all of next year's large events that a traffic pattern needs to be established with enough manpower to direct it.

Road Agent - Kevin Gadapee reported that he had spent the day at his final management class. He presented his term paper which he chose to write a controlled substance and alcohol testing policy, which he hopes to have the Board approve as a town policy. He will have the town attorney review it for all legalities. With the flurry of snow that fell, a plow frame was installed on one truck and the others will get any necessary repairs, get their sanders operational, and plows installed. The snow was also a reminder that there is still winter sand to haul and stockpile. He also reminded the contractor on the water project that the roads need to be smoothed up and patched before serious snow arrives. He noted that they have finished the FEMA work on Coles Pond Road and are working to finish up the remainder of the FEMA work.

Route 2 – Town Administrator Merton Leonard reported that Ken Mason of VTrans is in town contacting landowners with offers for their property in connection with the Route 2 project. Notice was received from the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation that they have received and are reviewing the application for the Route 2 storm water collection basin below the church across from Marty's. As a member of the LVRT Committee, Steve Larrabee offered additional information that it was the Act-250 coordinators that upheld the appeal, which will now open the trail system to the Act-250 process. That could mean that all trail development of the LVRT will be required to have a land use permit.

Lyndon

Town Clerk - Lisa Barrett Administrative Assistant - Dan

Selectmen: Martha Feltus, Kevin Calkins and Kermit Fisher

October 26, 2009 Sanitation Bid Results - Three bids were received for curbside rubbish pick up in Lyndon. One bid was incomplete and the bid

from FHRR was too high. Motion made by Kermit Fisher, seconded by Kevin Calkins, to accept the bid from Myers for two years of service at \$13,100 per month plus \$56 per ton. The four municipal dumpsters will be billed at \$276 per month. The current contract expires Dec. 31. Motion carried 3-0.

VLCT Request - VLCT is asking individual towns with wastewater systems to contribute to the legal fund for the current wastewater licensing issue that has arisen in the state. Motion made by Kevin Calkins, seconded by Kermit Fisher, to contribute \$300 to the Amicus Fund with the funds coming out of the wastewater fund. Motion carried 3-0.

Peacham

Town Clerk: Bruce Lafferty Selectmen: Richard Browne, Tim McKay and Andy Cochran.

October 21, 2009 Zoning Issue - A zoning ordinance situation regarding a house under construction on Green Bay Loop was discussed. Local neighbors expressed their concerns to the Board. Landscaping of the property was thoroughly reviewed. The Board reiterated the town's agreement with the landowner. The Board will share the neighbors' concerns with the landowner but encouraged the neighbors to also communicate their concerns directly with the property owner.

Barry Lawson - Lawson discussed the Town's application for a grant with the Vermont Community Development Program Planning Grant organization. The grant is funded by the Housing and Urban Development Departments and has both state and federal guidelines. The grant will encompass planning for the Town Hall renovations and affordable and senior housing. The NVDA and the Gilman Housing Trust have agreed to support the grant application. A hearing was held in the town gym for public input and questions.

Tax appeals - Three tax appeals have been received by the Caledonia Superior Court. Further instructions from the court are pending.

Lister opening - A letter of interest from Deborah Carpilio regarding the current lister vacancy was received by the Board. The Board voted to appoint Carpilio to the Lister position.

Snow Roller - A note was received from Dick Hovey regarding the proposed snow roller replica acquisition. An authentic antique snow roller has been found to purchase by Allen Thresher, Jr. at no charge to the town. Hovey requested the Board's assistance in dealing with any minor storage problems at the roller barn.

St. Johnsbury

Town Manager: Michael Welch Town Clerk: Sandy Grenier Selectboard: Bryon Quatrini, Gary Reis, Daniel Kimbell, Jim Rust, and Jean Hall Wheeler.

October 26,2009

Salaries - Russ Hutchins requested the Board consider printing the salaries and benefits of all town employees in the Town Report. Hutchins said that he believes that the School Board will do this as well. He feels this is critical information for the voters. The Board said they would consider the request.

Bike Path - Board member Jim Rust said he wanted to make it clear that the St. Johnsbury Board did not agree or vote to use eminent domain for the Bike Path. Jean Hall Wheeler said the Board agreed to set a date to try and acquire the Right-of-ways by agreement, and if that did not happen, then the Board would revisit the question of meeting with our legislative delegation to discuss the Bike Path.

Three Rivers Path- Kevin Rus-

December 2009 Menu

West Barnet **Senior Meal** Site

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

Dec. 2 - Macaroni and cheese, hot dogs, pickled beets, stewed tomatoes, biscuit and brownies.

Dec. 4 - Buffet

Dec. 9 - Chicken noodle soup, bologna and cheese sandwich, jello and fruit.

Dec. 11 - Hot roast beef sandwich with gravy, mashed potatoes, broccoli, copper penny carrots and sliced peaches.

Dec. 16 - Corn chowder, egg salad sandwich, fruit salad, cottage cheese, chocolate pudding.

Dec. 18 - Spaghetti and meatballs, tossed salad, Italian bread and apricots.

Dec. 23 - Baked ham, sweet potatoes, cole slaw, peas and carrots, homemade rolls and pumpkin rolls.

Dec. 25 - Merry Christmas.

Dec. 30 - Lasagna, tossed salad, Italian bread and cake and ice cream.

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December



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2009-2010 Schedule

Athletic Director: Merlyn Courser CAA

Boys High School Basketball

3	Thursday	Enosburg @ Danville	5:30/7:00
8	Tuesday	Danville @ Blue Mountain Union	6:00/7:30
10	Thursday	Danville @ Richford	6:00/7:30
15	Tuesday	Danville @ BFA 6:00/7:30	
17	Thursday	Richford @ Danville	5:30/7:30
22	Tuesday	Concord @ Danville	6:00/7:30
29	Saturday	Blue Mtn. @ Danville	6:00/7:30
Janu	ıary		
5	Tuesday	Danville @ Peoples	6:00/7:30
7	Thursday	Danville @ Stowe	6:00/7:30
15	Friday	Northfield @ Danville	6:00/7:30
20	Wednesday	Hazen @ Danville	6:00/7:30
22	Friday	Peoples @ Danville	5:30/7:00
27	Wednesday	Danville @ Enosburg	5:30/7:00
29	Friday	BFA @ Danville	6:00/7:30
Febr	uary		
3	Wednesday	Danville @ Northfield	6:00/7:30
5	Friday	Danville @ Winooski	5:30/7:00
10	Wednesday	Richford @ Danville	6:00/7:30
12	Friday	Lake Region @ Danville	6:00/7:30
17	Wednesday	Danville @ Lake Region	6:00/7:30
19	Friday	Stowe @ Danville	6:00/7:30

Girls High School Basketball

Dece	ember				
2	Wednesday	Blue Mtn. @ Danville	5:30/7:00		
4	Friday	Danville @ Concord	5:30/7:00		
9	Wednesday	Cabot @ Danville	6:00/7:30		
16	Wednesday	Danville @ Twinfield	5:30/7:00		
21	Monday	Richford @ Danville	5:30/7:00		
23	Wednesday	Danville @ Blue Mtn.	6:00/7:30		
28	Monday	Stowe @ Danville	6:00/7:30		
30	Wednesday	Northfield @ Danville	6:00/7:30		
Janı	ıary				
6	Wednesday	Danville @ Peoples	6:00/7:30		
8	Friday	Hazen @ Danville	6:00/7:30		
16	Saturday	Danville @ Enosburg	1:00/2:30		
22	Friday	Danville @ Northfield	6:00/7:30		
26	Tuesday	Peoples @ Danvilles	6:00/7:30		
28	Thursday	Danville @ Hazen	6:00/7:30		
30	Saturday	BFA @ Fairfax	1:00/2:30		
Febr	uary				
2	Tuesday	Enosburg @ Danville	5:30/7:00		
4	Thursday	Danville @ Stowe	6:00/7:30		
6	Saturday	Winooski @ Danville	11:00/12:30		
9	Tuesday	Danville @ Richford	5:30/7:00		
11	Thursday	Lake Region @ Danville	6:00/7:30		

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sell stated that he has received verbal indication from CVPS that they will contribute the easement for the Three Rivers ROW. The area for the parking lot will be outside of the project, and will be subject to a separate licensing agreement. Kevin Russell said he has also had recent conversations with Bruce Ralston. Laural Ruggles, NVRH, stated that she is a member of the Fit & Healthy Coalition, which was formed in 2004 as a subgroup of the St. Johnsbury Community Health Committee. She said the Fit and Healthy Coalition actually went on a walking tour of the Three Rivers Path alignment and she believes the path will be used by many people once it is constructed – and that there are many great locations along the path.

Dog Pound – Town Manager Mike Welch provided the Board with a copy of Concord's agreement with Riverside Boarding to serve as a shelter for stray dogs. Welch and Board member Bryon Quatrini met with representatives from Riverside as they would like to offer this service to the Town of St. Johnsbury. Some of the concerns associated with this are having the animal control officer transport the dogs to Lunenburg, having a place to adequately house dogs if the folks from Lunenburg come here to pick them up (as it would be the next day), collection of fees and making certain that dogs receive their

December 2009 Menu

Danville Senior Action Center

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 \$4 for guests 60+ (Others \$5) is appreciated.

Dec. 1 - Ravioli with meat sauce, broccoli, carrots and garlic bread.

Dec. 3 - Crabcakes, penne with lobster sauce, peas and carrots, rolls and oranges.

Dec. 8 - Pulled pork sandwiches, cole slaw, tropical fruit and cobbler.

Dec. 10 - Vegetable chili, baked potatoes, hot dogs, bread pudding.

Dec. 13 - Annual Christmas Dinner at the Danville Inn. Spots available be reservation.

Dec. 15 - Swedish meatballs, egg noodles, rolls, cranberry sauce and winter squash.

Dec. 17 - Chicken cacciatore, rice, rolls, broccoli and canteloupe.

Dec. 22 - Pot roast with carrots and potatoes, rolls, apple sauce and oatmeal cookies.

Dec. 24 - Stuffed shells, garlic bread, broccoli and carrots.

Dec. 29 - Chicken Picatta, rice pilaf, broccoli, carrots and rolls.

Dec. 31 - Oven BBQ chicken, past with pesto sauce, sweet potato fries and V-8 juice.

rabies shots and licenses before being released. Jo Guertin, Animal Control Officer, said that she works for the same amount she did 10 years ago - and she does not want to incur additional costs for traveling to Lunenburg to drop off dogs. Jo said that any young dogs that she houses now for St. Johnsbury are not kept outdoors. She said that 90 percent of the dogs outdoors are primarily outdoor dogs. Welch said the Town has supported efforts to get a shelter operational in St. Johnsbury but, to date that has not been accomplished.

Snow Removal - Welch informed the Board that a request for proposals had been prepared and circulated to local contractors soliciting quotes for the removal of snow from the Community Center roof. An advertisement was placed in the Caledonian-Record. No quotes were received. Welch encouraged members of the Board to provide names of any vendors who should be approached.

Walden

Town Clerk: Lina Smith Selectboard: Dave Brown, Doug Luther and Perley Greaves.

October 37, 2009 Intersection - Bud Clifford asked the Board to consider putting up barriers at the corner of Route 15 and Noyestar Road. He noted that this already dangerous intersection is now being further obstructed by cars parking along the apartment house on the corner making it hard to see oncoming traffic as you pull out. Dave Brown will talk to the state about

Dog Abuse - Constable Bill Huntoon reported that he had a dog abuse case pending. He also wanted people to keep a look out and call him if they see a white Mazda with significant frontend damage. This vehicle has caused some property damage on Peter Clark's propery off of Bayley Hazen Road.

Burglaries - Dave Brown reported that he had been contacted by the Select Board of Stannard in regard to break ins that have occurred in the surrounding towns. He expected to be notified when a meeting would be scheduled with the State Police but noted that he had since become aware that this meeting had already taken place and Walden was not notified. He will follow

Drafting Students - Perley Greaves noted that he had talked to the drafting teacher at St. Johnsbury Academy regarding plans for the new town garage. The drafting class would like to do the design plans as a project. The board agreed to this and will

up on this.

visit some of the surrounding towns to decide what the town needs.

Health Violations - Dave Brown reported that he had received a call from a tenant regarding health violations at rental property on Bayley Hazen Road. He noted that Health Officer, Jennifer Persons has filed a report and as a result many of the violations have been corrected. The tenant has now asked the Board to become involved in this issue. After discussion, the board declined. They felt this was a civil matter and not one the town should be involved in.

Union Ban

St. Johnsbury Academy Winter 2009-2010 Sports Schedule

5/6:30

5/6:30 5/6:30

5/6:30

5/6:30

Boys Basketball Varsity and Junior Varsity Varsity Game follows JV Game Brattleboro 5/6:30 5/6:30 5:30/7 North Country Rice Lyndon 5:30/7 Rutland Jai 5/6:30 5/6:30 Colcheste 4 7 12 14 22 26 Champlain Valley

uary Burlington 5/6:30 Spaulding Mt. Mansfield North Country 5/6:30 Burlington South Burlington Girls & Boys Basketball

Rice

Essex Mount Mansfield

So. Burlington

Spaulding

December					
1	Mt. Mansfield	(H)	6/7:30		
3	North Country	(A)	6/7:30		
5	CVU	(H)	12/1:30		
8	Spaulding	(H)	5/6:30		
16	Burlington	(A)	5/6:30		
23	Essex	(A)	5:30/7		
Janua	ıry				
2	Mt. Mansfield (B)	(A)	11:00		
	Oxbow (G)				
5	Hartford	(A)	4/5:30		
7	Lyndon Institute	(H)	5/6:30		
9	Rutland	(A)	12/1:30		
12	CVU	(A)	5/6:30		
16	Spaulding	(A)	10/11:30		
18	Lyndonville	(A)	5:30/7		
21	North Country	(H)	5/6:30		
23	Rutland	(H)	1/1:30		
29	Essex	(H)	5/6:30		
February					
1	Hartford	(H)	5/6:30		
6	Frosh Boys Tour.	(A)	6/7:30		
8	StJ/BFA/Essex/BHS	(A)	10/11:30		

Nordic Skiing

Dec		
12	CVU (A)	10:00
15	Peoples Academy (A)	3:00
19	Essex (A)	10:00
22	Harwood (A)	3:00
Jan	uary	
2	NCU (A)	10:30
9	South Burlington (A)	10:00
13	Colchester (A)	4:00
15	Lyndon Institute (A)	1:00
19	Harwood (A)	3:00
23	Brattleboro (A)	11:00
27	Rutland (A)	3:00
Feb	ruary	
10	Peoples Academy (A)	3:00
17	North Country (A)	4:00
20	BFAS/BHS (A)	10:30
26	State Meet (A)	10:30
Mar	ch	
1	State Meet (A)	10:30

Alpine Skiing

Dece	mber
7	St. J/LI (H)
16	NCU (A)
Janua	ary
5	Essex w/Lamoille (A)
7	Harwood (A)
9	CVU (A)
13	South Burlington (A)
15	Lyndon (A)
27	MMU (A)
28	Mt. Abraham w/South Burlington (A)
Febru	ıary
5	Essex Invitational (A)
6	Essex Invitational (A)
10	NCU (A)
16	
18	Boys NVAC (A)
Marcl	n
1	Boys State Meet (A)

Girls State Meet (A)

Girls Basketball Varsity and Junior Varsity

December			
	4	Brattleboro (H)	5/6:45
	10	Spaulding Tournament (A)	5:30
	12	Spaulding Tournament (A)	TBA
	15	Spaulding (H)	5/6:45
	18	Brattleboro (H)	5/6:45
	22	North Country (A)	5/6:45
	29	Burlington (H)	5/6:45
	Janua	ary	
	2	Rutland (H)	1/2:45
	5	Essex (A)	5/6:45
	8	Champlain Valley (H)	5/6:45
	11	BFA St. Albans (A)	5/6:45
	14	Rice (A)	5/6:45
	22	Spaulding (A)	5/6:45
	25	North Country (H)	5/6:45
	28	Burlington (A)	5/6:45
	Febru	ıary	
	1	Essex (H)	5/6:45
	4	Champlain Valley (A)	5/6:45
	8	BFA St. Albans (H)	5/6:45
	13	Rice (H)	5/6:45

Hockey

Dec	ember	
2	Brattleboro (NL) (H)	6:00
5	Mt. St. Josephs' (L)(A)	12:00
9	U-32 (NL)(H)	6:00
12	Lyndon Institute (NL)(A)	6:00
16	Northfield Tourn (NL)(A)	5:30
18	Northfield Tourn (NL) (A)	TBA
22	Stowe (NL)(A)	6:30
30	Northfield (L)(H)	6:00
Jani	uary	
2	Missisquoi (L)(H)	5:00
6	Brattleboro (L)(A)	6:30
9	Woodstock (L)(A)	8:10
16	Middlebury (L)(H)	5:00
20	North Country (NL)(H)	7:00
23	Montpelier (L)(A)	8:00
27	Milton (L)(A)	8:00
30	U-32 (L)(A)	8:00
Feb	ruary	
3	Stowe (L)(A)	5:00
6	Peoples' Academy (L)(H)	6:00
11	Mt. Mansfield (L)(A)	7:45
13	Lyndon Institute (L)(H)	6:00

Wrestling North/South Duals (A)

10 Milton & Randolph (A)

12	Early Bird Invitational (H)	10:00
16	MMU & Harwood (A)	6:00
22	Spaulding & Milton (H)	6:00
29	Hubie Wagner Invit. (A)	10:00
Janu	ary	
6	Randolph & Vergennes (A)7:0	00
9	Newfound Invitational (A)	10:00
13	Mt. Abe & Essex (H)	6:00
16	Mt. Anthony Invite	
22	Essex Classic (A)	3:30
23	Essex Classic (A)	10:30
26	Champlain Valley (H)	6:00
28	Milton & Enosburg (A)	6:00
30	Colchester Invite (A)	10:00
Febru	uary	
4	Middlebury (H)	6:00
6	Jason Lowell (A)	10:00
10	Colchester (A)	6:00
20	JV States (Spaulding) (A)	10:00
26	State Championships (A)	6:00
27	State Championships (A)	6:00
28	State Championships (A)	10:00
Marc		
5	N.E. Championships TE	
6	N.E. Championships TE	BA

Gymnastics

Dece	ember	
5	South Burlington (H)	1:00
14	Milton & U-32 (NL) (H)	6:00
19	SB Holiday Invite (NL) (A)	12:00
21	Essex (H)	6:00
29	Champlain Valley (A)	1:00
Janu	ary	
8	Harwood (A)	7:00
12	CVU w/Midd(NL) (A)	7:00
22	Randolph (A)	7:00
30	Middlebury (H)	1:00
Febr	uary	
5	U-32 (A)	7:00
13	State Meet (A)	2:00

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> 6/7:30 6/7:30

5:30

6:00

5:30

6:00

5:30

6:00

5:30

Lyndon Institute Athletic Events Winter 2009-2010

Athletic Director: Paul E. Wheeler (802) 626-9164

BOYS BA	SKETBALL (J	V/\
12/8/09	at Hazen	6

12/8/09	at Hazen	6/ 7:30	
12/10/09	at Lake Region	6/ 7:30	
12/12/09	SF Tourney	TBA	
12/15/09	SF Tourney	TBA	
12/21/09	(H) STJA	5:30/7	
1/2/10	(H) HAZEN	5:30/7	
1/6/10	at Montpelier	6/ 7:30	
1/8/10	at Lamoille	6/ 7:30	
1/12/10	(H) U-32	5:30/ 7	
1/14/10	at Randolph	5:30/7	
1/16/10	(H) THETFORD	1/ 2:30	
1/22/10	at Harwood	5:30/7	
1/27/10	(H) OXBOW	5:30/7	
1/29/10	(H) MONTPELIER	5:30/7	
2/3/10	(H) LAMOILLE	5:30/7	
2/5/10	(H) RANDOLPH	5:30/7	
2/8/10	at U-32	5:30/7	
2/10/10	at Thetford	6/ 7:30	
2/17/10	(H) HARWOOD	5:30/ 7	
2/19/10	at Oxbow	6/ 7:30	

ı	12/11/09	(H) HAZEN	5:30/7
	12/14/09	(H) LAKE REGION	5:30/7
]	12/17/09	(H) HOLIDAY TOURNEY	7:45
	12/19/09	(H) HOLIDAY TOURNEY	1:00
	12/23/09	(H) RANDOLPH	5:30/7
	12/30/09	(H) OXBOW	5:30/7
	1/5/10	at Thetford	6/7:30
	1/7/10	at Lamoille	6/7:30
1	1/9/10	(H) MONTPELIER	1/ 2:30
]	1/15/10	at Harwood	5:30/7
	1/18/10	at U-32	5:30/7
	1/21/10	at Randolph	6/7:30
	1/26/10	at Oxbow	6/7:30
	1/28/10	(H) THETFORD	5:30/7
	2/2/10	(H) LAMOILLE	5:30/7
	2/4/10	at Montpelier	6/7:30
	2/9/10	(H) HARWOOD	5:30/7
	2/11/10	(H) U-32	5:30/7

(H) U-32

at Lake Region

at Oxbow

(H) LAMOILLE

at North Country

at St. Johnsbury

(H) OXBOW

(H) ENOSBURG

(H) STJA

at Hazen

(H) NCU

2/1/2010 (H) LAKE REGION

12/22/09

12/28/09

1/11/10

1/15/10

1/18/10

1/20/10

1/25/10

GIRLS BASKETBALL (JV/V)

FROSH BASKETBALL Girls FROSH BASKETBALL Boys 12/3/09

12/3/09	(H) U-32	7:00	
12/5/09	(H) HARWOOD	11:00	
12/9/09	at Lake Region	7:00	
12/22/09	(H) LAMOILLE 7:0		
12/28/09	at North Country	7:00	
1/4/10	at Lamoille	7:30	
1/7/10	at St. Johnsbury	6:30	
1/13/10	at U-32	7:00	
1/15/10	(H) ENOSBURG	7:00	
1/18/10	(H) STJA	7:00	
1/20/10	at Hazen	7:30	
1/23/10	at Harwood	1:30	
1/25/10	(H) NCU	7:00	
1/29/10	at Enosburg	7:00	
2/1/2010	(H) LAKE REGION	7:00	
2/4/10	(H) HAZEN	7:00	

ICE HOCKEY				
12/2/09	at Peoples	6:00		
12/5/09	(H) NORTH COUNTRY	6:00		
12/9/09	at Milton	6:00		
12/12/09	(H) ST. JOHNSBURY	6:00		
12/16/09	at Northfield Tourney	5:30		
12/16/09	vs. St. Johnsbury	5:30		
12/18/09	at Northfield Tourney	TBA		
12/22/09	at MSJ	5:00		
12/30/09	at Montpelier	6:00		
1/2/10	(H) STOWE	3:00		
1/9/10	at MMU	7:00		
1/13/10	(H) MIDDLEBURY	6:00		
1/16/10	(H) PEOPLES	7:00		
1/20/10	(H) MILTON	5:00		
1/23/10	(H) MSJ	5:00		
1/27/10	(H) MISSISQUOI	6:00		
1/30/10	at Brattleboro	2:45		
2/3/10	(H) U-32	7:00		
2/6/10	at Northfield	4:00		

(H) WOODSTOCK

at St. Johnsbury

6:00

2/10/10

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Outdoor adventures

Hunting is about being thankful by Tony Smith

Tknow that we are now in Thanksgiving dinner table. Lthe month of December and out of November, but I don't not talking about thanks at

I'd like to talk about thanks that is under used but well deserved. It seems as though the October Smith family tradition

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has become not one of foliage viewing, fishing (although it used to be), or bird hunting anymore, but moose hunting. This is the second year in a row that we have been lucky enough to draw one of the limited tags and again it ended in a successful hunt.

There's no incredible story here like we put a six hour stalk on the animal or tracked it for miles over mountains through swamps and bogs. We were just walking in an open area and a young bull stepped out in front of us and the rest was over in a matter of minutes. We waited an appropriate amount of time and went and found it not far from where we saw it go into the woods. When we walk up to an animal that was nice enough (for lack of a better word) to give its life for us, we don't gawk at the antlers or look at how big it is. We give it thanks.

It doesn't matter if it's a gray squirrel or a moose. We thank that animal for giving its life up for us so that we may enjoy fresh meat without having to go to the super market to get it.

Now we are not a starving family and we don't need this animal to survive through the winter as the Native Americans might have, but that's beside the point. When an animal gives up its life so that you may continue with yours giving thanks is the appropriate thing to do. The Native Americans were very keen on this idea. They believed if you didn't give thanks to that animal that you would anger the Gods. The next time you go hunting you may not be so lucky to get an animal. Some tribes like the Cherokees thought you would even get rheumatism if you did not give thanks. So I ask you from now on during the hunting seasons, the next time you harvest any game, give it thanks. Then you can give the high fives!

A big surprise

y story this month Mhappened to some hunters the first week of moose season. I know a lot of people and hear plenty of stories, and this one was told to me by several credible sources, so I know it's

A group of hunters had a camp at the end of a dirt road on timber company land up north. To get to this camp they drove down a dirt road, and eventually turned off and crossed a bridge and continued uphill about a mile from the main road.

After harvesting a moose, one of the four trucks at the



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pull the moose out of the woods.

When he got to the bridge, it was gone.

The group got a hold of the moose puller and he arrived on site, but had no way of getting across the bridge with his truck to get the moose.

His only choice was to wade through the river. He was successful and retrieved the moose, but the only thing they could do is put the animal in the truck and try to devise a plan for crossing the river. Not knowing what to do since all the decking and planking on the bridge was gone, they called the manager of the property to see what they could do. The manager knew nothing about it and said that it was a snowmobile bridge.

The snowmobile club was replacing all the decking on the bridge without telling anyone and never bothered to drive to the end of the road to see if anyone was in the camp. Not only did they take all the decking off, but they left no new material there to rebuild it. One of the guys was on the phone with the manager of the property with the four trucks lined

camp went to call a horse to up waiting to get across the bridge.

This is how his conversation

"Chris, these guys have a moose to weigh in and want to get across this bridge."

"Mark, I would like to help them, but what can I do?"

"You don't have to do anything, but they want to know if they can drive across the stringers.

I was told the phone went silent for several seconds.

"Really? They want to drive across the stringers?"

Stringers are beams that go from one side of the crossing to the other. They can be either metal or wood. The decking and runners sit on top to form the bridge. There are essentially three layers to a bridge, but in this case two were stripped off. So one by one, very slowly they drove each truck across on the stingers carefully keeping the tires as dead center as possible as to not go off the bridge.

These hunters had more than a successful harvest to be thankful for.

Chorus to present Madrigal Dinner

The North Country Chorus **L** will present its annual Madrigal Dinner on January 15, 16, and 17 in the Monroe Town Hall.

This year's theatrical presentation, "Robin Hood Remembered" has the Merry Men returning for their 40th reunion in Sherwood Forest. Their memories will be enacted by a troupe of younger players recruited from local talent. The traditional Maypole Dance will be performed by two groups of

As always the North Country Chorus will provide vocal music under the Musical Direction of Alan Rowe before, during, and after the show. A recorder ensemble will play during seating and throughout the dinner service.

Written by Woody Starkweather and Richard Thayer and under the theatrical direction of Starkweather, this year's production is an entirely new play. Chorus members will sing original vocal pieces, written by Richard Thayer just for "Robin Hood Remembered" as well as a number of traditional madrigals.

Dinner is provided by Edith

Anne Emery, John Gordon, and their kitchen crew, maintaining the highest standards of cuisinary art to which Madrigal Dinner attendees are accustomed. You can ask for the recipes, but you won't get

Guests are urged to arrive at 6:00 for the 6:30 show, allowing time for introductions by the costumed announcers and seating by the colorful greeters. For extra fun, those who wish are encouraged to wear medieval costume, and to reinvent themselves as Lords and Ladies of the Realm.

Tickets, reservations, and information can be obtained from Marcia Bridge (802-584-4194 or email at shilohatryegate@pngusa.net).

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CHI0408

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-

Ist Monday: North Danville Community Club, Meeting, 6 p.m. North Danville Community Center. (802) 748-9415.

Ist & 3rd Mondays: "Six O'clock Prompt," Writers' Support Group, 6:30 p.m. Catamount Arts. (802) 633-2617.

2nd Monday: Cancer Support Group, NVRH Conference Room A, 4 p.m.

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

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

Tuesdays: Argentine Tango, 4:30-5:30 p.m. (beginners) 5:30-6:30 p.m. (intermediate) Teacher: Isabel Costa (603) 823-8163.

Tuesdays in December: Baby/Toddler Storytime, Cobleigh Library, Lyndonville. 10 a.m. (802) 626-5475.

2nd Tuesdays: Caledonia Right to Life will meet at St John's Catholic Church Parish Hall, 1375 Main St, St Johnsbury, VT at 7:30 pm.All are welcome.

2nd & 4th Tuesday: Bereavement Support Group, Caledonia Home Health, Sherman Drive, St. Johnsbury. 5:30 p.m. (802) 748-8116

2nd & 4th Tuesday: Drop-in quilting at I p.m. at the Cobleigh Public Library, (802) 626-5475

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

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.

Cobleigh Library, Lyndonville. 10 a.m. (802) 626-5475 Thursdays: Live Music at Parker Pie in

Glover. Check website, www.parkerpie.com

Thursdays: Introduction to Computers,

for details or call (802) 525-3366. Thursdays: Open Mic Night at Indigenous Skate Shop on Railroad Street in St. Johns2nd Thursday: Film discussion following 7 p.m. film at Catamount Arts, St. Johnsbury. (802) 748-8813.

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.

Thursdays: Tutoring for GED and Adult Learning Programs, Ip.m. to 3 p.m., Cobleigh Public Library.

1st Fridays: Contra Dance, 8 p.m. at Danville Town Hall. All levels welcome. (802) 563-3225 or samlyman@myfairpoint.net.

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

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

Saturdays: Winter Farmers Marker in Lyndonville at the Breslin Community Center on Main Street from 10 a.m. to 2

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

Ist Saturday: St. Johnsbury Winter Farmers Market at the St. Johnsbury Welcome Center from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Ist Saturday: Scrabble Club, St. Johnsbury Athenaeum, Noon - 4 p.m. (802)

Ist & 2nd Saturdays: Dance in the Kingdom at the Good Shephard School -Latin & Ballroom dance: Lessons at 7 p.m. followed by open dance, 8 to 10 p.m. (802) 748-3044

2nd Saturdays: West Barnet Grange community breakfasts from 8-10 a.m.

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



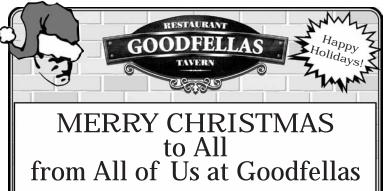
May your home be filled with warmth and happiness during the holidays.



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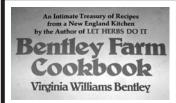
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Friday tea at the Old North Church

The Friday Afternoon Tea Room in North Danville will be opening for the sixth year on Dec. 18 and will be open from 2 to 4 p.m. each Friday through March 26. The Tea Room will be open on New Year's Day, Friday, Jan. 1, 2010, to celebrate the start of the New Year, and closed, of course, on Christmas Day.

All are welcome at the Tea Room for conversation, tea, coffee, hot chocolate, scones, cookies, breads, jams, jellies and sweets. Men, women and children all enjoy gathering during the winter months for a Friday afternoon of meeting old and new friends. Our guests come from a radius of

many miles - Groton, Greensboro, Derby, Lancaster, and Franconia as well as more local communities.

The Tea Room is located at the North Danville Baptist Church in North Danville, Vermont. Recent renovations have made the church handicapped accessible and over the summer, the church renovated the kitchen and dining areas.

The Friday Afternoon Tea Room is by donation and 100 percent of the proceeds are given to benefit the work of the Open Door, the Ecumenical Food Shelf and Thrift Shop that serves the greater Danville area.

Please plan to join us. Reservations are not required, however, it is helpful if you call Sue and Dick Strifert, 802-748-4096, for parties of four or more.



Pope Notes

with Dee Palmer, Library Director

Tappy Holidays to all our Danville friends. We hope you will join us for our annual Holiday on the Green celebration. On Thursday, December 17th from 5-7 walk about the green and enjoy food and beverages offered by The Pope Library and other businesses in town. This is always a very festive event and we hope you can stop in before going off to the Pumpkin Hill Singers concert at 7:30 at the Danville Congregational Church.

November was a very busy month at the library. We are happy to report that we have a new furnace and a newly insulated basement. We expect to be very warm and cozy here this winter.

In early November, thanks to a Gates Foundation On-line Technology Grant, three of us from the Pope attended The Turning the Page, Building Your Library Community conference in St. Louis, MO. In May of next year we will receive funds from this (matching) grant to buy a new computer. Andrea Searls, Laurel Stanley and I had a great experience in St. Louis learning new ways to promote and advocate for our library. We attended the conference with other Vermont librarians, as well as librarians from Missouri and Hawaii. We are very grateful to Bill and Melinda Gates for their continued support of libraries.

We have several new book acquisitions: I, Alex Cross by Patterson, Day After Night by Diamant, A Gate at the Stairs by Moore, Her Fearful Symmetry by Niffenegger, The Professional by Parker, Change in Altitude by Shreve, Hot House Orchard by Woods and Under the Dome by King and The New Whole Grains Cookbook by Asbell. Come in and check them out!

From the Children's Room and YA Center

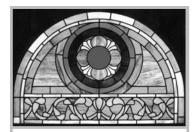
Please note that the last Story Hour of this year will be on Monday, Dec. 14. We will resume on January 11, 2009. The YA program will end on December 23 and resume on January 6, 2009.

We wish everyone a very safe and Happy Holiday! Let it snow!

Peacham Library

Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday 10 a.m. - Noon

Tuesday and Thursday 1 - 7 p.m.



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This unfinished house is growing, but so is the price. You still have time to choose most of the interior materials and the landscaping. But the builder is building as you read this. This spectacular home with absolutely killer views, is in Littleton, just a stone's throw form Littleton Regional Hospital. Come on over and take a look at this artistry. Local builder has pix of his house in Peacham

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Lots of possibilities

ML2800632 Large country property, just minutes to either Danville or St. Johnsbury and 191. Spacious, sunny rooms, a full bath on each floor, a mix of hardwood & softwood flooring, and possible income apartment are just a few of the features of this comfortable home. There is a pond and 30 (+/-) acres of beautiful open fields & pasture if a small farm operation is what you've been looking for. If not, then just enjoy the privacy and elbow room.



Panoramic views

ML2803151 43 acres and a panoramic view for only \$159,000. This land has an engineered septic design, electricity on the roadside, and southerly exposure...just waiting for you to build your dream home. There is also a second access to the property that makes it a prime candidate for a subdivision.

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Events in the **NEK**

WED.2:

- »Holiday Show and Sale at NEK Artisans Guild, 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Call 748-0158 for more information. NEK Artisans Guild, 430 Railroad St, St Johnsbury, VT. Email: nekguild@kingcon.com, www.nekartisansguild.com.
- »Becoming Americans, St. Johnsbury Athenaeum First Wednesday Series, 7 p.m., Author and Amherst College professor Ilan Stavans explores the impact that immigrants have had on American culture and language, and the role immigrant writers have played in our national consciousness.
- »Holiday Show and Sale at NEK Artisans Guild,10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., NEK Artisans Guild, 430 Railroad St #2, St Johnsbury, nekguild@kingcon.com, Web: www.nekartisansguild.com.
- »The National Marionette Theatre presents Hansel and Gretel, 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Using the beautiful music from Humperdinck's opera, the National Marionette Theatre gives Hansel and Gretel by the Brothers Grimm an absolutely beautiful story book look that appeals to audiences of all ages. Call (802) 748-2600 or visit www.catamountarts.org for more information.

THURS.3:

»Abstracts by various artists - at The Art House in Craftsbury, 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Exhibit of Abstract works by gallery Artists. Runs through December 20. Call (802) 586-2545 or visit www.vermontarthouse.com for more information.

FRI.4:

» The Class of 2014 presents Time, Talents and Tid-Bits Auction. Danville School Cafeteria, 5 p.m. Call Elizabeth Ferraro at (802) 748-5123 for more information.

SAT.5:

- »The North Pole Express The Magic of Christmas Comes Alive...The Family Tradition Continues, 12 p.m. Join us on a magical journey to the North Pole aboard The North Pole Express. Call 626-1400 or visit www.thelyndonfreighthouse.com for more information.
- »The 40th Annual Burklyn Arts
 Holiday Market arts, crafts, raffles, food and more...9 a.m. to 4
 p.m. Local arts and crafts, Vermont
 made products, raffles, lunch,
 baked goods....perfect for holiday
 shopping! The Winter Market is at
 the Lyndon Town School, 2591 Lily
 Pond Rd. Lyndonville, VT.
- » Glover Christmas Craft Fair featuring local crafters with a hearty lunch served with stews, chowders and chili, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Glover Community School, Bean Hill Rd. Glover, VT.
- » Santa Comes to Lyndon bring vour Christmas list! Children can come to the Cobleigh Library in Lyndonville from 10 a.m. to noon and make holiday crafts while their parents head out for some secret local shopping. Then, everyone heads to the Darling Inn, where Santa takes up residence on the porch and hears children's fondest wishes. He will also travel down Rt. 5 South, ending up at the White's Market Plaza. Call (802) 626-9696, E-mail info@lyndonvermont.com or visit www.lyndonvermont.com for more information.
- » Holiday Crafts at the Cobleigh, 10 a.m. to noon, sled, ski, or catch a ride with Rudolph and stop by the Cobleigh for Holiday crafts! After craft time at the library meet Santa at the Darling Inn at 12:15 p.m.

SUN.6:

»Hardwick Memorial Tree Lighting - Dedication of bulbs for the community memorial tree with light refresments, 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. Hardwick Town Memorial Building. Sponsored by Hardwick Area Rescue Squad. Memorial Park, Hardwick, VT.

MON.7:

» NEK Audubon, informational and planning meeting at the Fairbanks Museum, 4:30-6:00 p.m. All are welcome, Call Laura at (802) 751-7671 for details.

WED.9:

»Jennifer Kennedy - the local Peace Corps volunteer will discuss her recent trip to Malawi, Africa to help educate the country's youth. North Danville Baptist Church at 7 p.m.

FRI.11:

- » Visual Arts Winter Exhibition at Lyndon State College, noon to 2 p.m., join us for our semi-annual open house featuring student artwork from Fall 2009 courses in art, digital media, graphic design, illustration and photography.
- » Booksigning with local author Don Bredes at Green Mountain Books in Lyndonville, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Call (802) 626-5051 for more information. Green Mountain Books & Prints, 1055 Route 5, Lyndonville, VT.

SAT.12:

»Victorian Holiday - Come celebrate a nostalgic holiday tradition. Merchants will be dressed in victorian attire, there will he horse drawn wagon rides, Santa will be at the Welcome Center, childrens activities will be at various downtown locations, there will be several holidays bazaars and cookie walks, ice skating on Main Street, carolers abound, and a 5K Light up the Night race, culminating with lighting of the Main Street tree. » Opening Day at Burke Mountain. Mid Burke Lodge, Willoughby & Poma Lifts. Burke Mountain Ski Resort, 223 Sherburne Lodge Rd. East Burke, VT. Web: www.skiburke.com

SUN.13:

» Old North Church Advent Lamplight Service, 7 p.m., with community clergy, combined church choirs, guest soloist Mark Breen, and guest trumpeter Sally Fishburn.

FRI.25:

» MERRY CHRISTMAS

THURS.31:

- » NEW YEAR'S EVE
- » First Night 17th Annual New Year's Eve celebration takes place in St. Johnsbury starting at 4 p.m.

FRI.1:

NEK Audubon's annual Christmas Bird Count. Join us for all or part of the day as we inventory the birds of the Kingdom. Call Charlie Browne at (802) 748-2372 or email cbrowne@fairbanksmuseum.org for information and to register.





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