

THE North Star MONTHLY

Every Small Town's Newspaper

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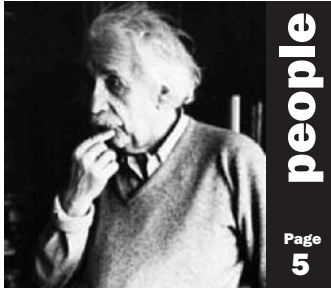
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MARCH 2009

Volume 21, Number 11

*The rugged timbermen of the East Burke Lumber Company
relied on innovation and hard work*

Cutting through the Kingdom



people

Page 5



maple

Page 9



art

Page 16



Barn again

by NATHANIEL TRIPP

I've always felt better inside a barn than almost any place else, although the barns of my youth were all too often deserted and silent, smelling musty and filled with the ghosts of chickens and cows long gone. Even then, they were still the great cathedrals of agriculture from a time gone by, and like any cathedral, they were an inspiration.

My own barn has hardly had a silent moment, so far as I know, since it was built in the 1830s, and now, as winter loosens its grip, it is filled with a symphony of both sound and aromas. The redolence of manure, which a month ago froze almost the instant it hit the ground, infuses the air from below while two floors above, the fresh hay from last year smells as sweet as the meadow it came from. We're getting more eggs; the roosters crow incessantly, and quietness of the sheep is punctuated by the high, reedy cries of the year's first lambs.

This is the time when I perform barn repairs and improvements. There isn't much else to do on the farm in early spring since I don't sugar any more. There are red wing blackbirds in the maple tree outside, I can work comfortably without wearing gloves, and it stays

Continued on Page 12

Above, members of the East Burke Lumber Company, including founding owner John Young, third from left, have a lot of work ahead of them. The photo was taken in the area of Paul Stream, just north of Maidstone Lake. The process was made easier by the new truck loader behind them. Jack Davis, right, carried on in the footsteps of his father, Crawford Davis, and grandfather, John Young, both important loggers in the Northeast Kingdom.



by JUSTIN LAVELY

Vermonters turned to logging as a commercial industry as far back as 1794, when Stephen Mallet (of Mallet's Bay fame) sent the first load of oak north to Quebec. The growing industry helped make Burlington the third largest lumber port in the nation and virtually eliminated marketable trees from the Champlain Valley by 1840. Later, as the railroad spread to rural regions of the state, small logging operations sprang up in tiny communities like East Burke.

John Young started the East Burke Logging Company in 1935 when he purchased a sawmill in the village from Elmer Darling, whose family made a fortune running the Fifth Avenue Hotel in New York City. The Darling family lived in Lyndon on what would become Darling Hill. Later, his son-in-law, Crawford Davis, would take over the business with the help of his son, Jack. Even then, the Davis family was no stranger to logging and sawmills. Young owned several sawmills in the area, and within a short period of time, the family business became the largest employer in town.

"There were eight or ten sawmills in the area," according to Jack, whose home overlooks the rugged landscape of East Burke, Victory, and East Haven. "The logs came from here and there. They cut them off those mountains right there."

Continued on Page 10

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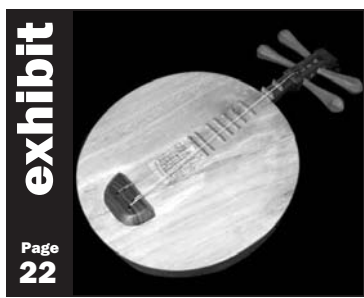
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Table of Contents

PAGE 4	Questions, questions by Isobel P. Swartz
PAGE 5	People & Places Einstein & Me by Dick Boera
PAGE 6	Up on the Farm Early by Lorna Quimby
PAGE 8	Outdoor Adventures The Art of Backyard Sugaring by Tony Smith
PAGE 12	Gardening & Growing by Marsha Garrison
PAGE 14	A Centenarian Reflects on his Happy Life by Virginia Downs
PAGE 16	To See the Universe in a Ruffle by Sharon Lakey
PAGE 18	Getting Creative by Carla Occaso
PAGE 20	No Small Potatoes by Vanna Guldenschuh



From the Editor

Can we unplug?

One very cold morning, I walked with a friend of mine to a nearby cell phone store to trade phones. As we were waiting behind what seemed like 30 people, I told him I had made up my mind. I was picking up a phone that, in addition to making and dropping calls (this is the Northeast Kingdom after all), sends and receives emails, navigates roads, checks stock prices, delivers breaking news and probably a dozen other things I haven't stumbled upon yet. In fact, I think I could change a satellite's orbit if I took the time to read the instruction manual.

I walked in with a phone and walked out with a computer.

At first, my friend seemed indifferent to the idea. Then, in the midst of my excitement over being able to receive e-mails everywhere I go, he said something I found interesting.

"Why would I want that?"

Interestingly, he works in an office with e-mail and at some point; he has undoubtedly been victimized by missing an important message because he was on the road. What makes his anti-superphone position ever more curious is his job, which to a large extent, deals with computers, networks and other technology. This is not someone who is not used to working with technology. And yet, here he is shying away from it, even distancing himself from it.

Knowing him the way I do, I assume he was not only worried about the technology, but also his tendency for addiction to it. It was as if by allowing himself to be that easily accessible, he would never be able to escape his professional responsibilities and be doomed to a life of indentured technological servitude. Mobile

email, in his mind, seemed to be nothing more than a thinly veiled set of cyber handcuffs for the soul. I wondered, as I drove home and waited for my little key to the universe to charge (everything has its limitations), whether or not he had a point. Does being constantly connected to our work eventually leave us unable to unplug? Few would argue the positive results of a healthy life away from work, just as many small business owners would scratch their heads at the idea.

I remember in college resisting the temptation to buy even a cell phone because I chafed at the idea of being reachable. Now that a family and a business have enter the picture, I chafe at the opposite idea. How things change.

A logical question is, "are we ever able to completely stop thinking about our jobs, anyway." After all, an Internet connection is never very far away, and even when we are "off the clock," how many of us can stop thinking about work entirely? Cell phones, e-mails and spy satellites are certainly making the world a smaller place. Can we afford to be left behind?

I think blaming the phone is too easy. After all, phones can be disconnected, ignored. My friend was on to something, though. We all need to spend more time distancing ourselves from our work. This sort of break is good for keeping our souls uncuffed and our minds fresh. As the world around us continues to shrink, let's not forget to enjoy the simpler pleasures in life.

I don't plan to run away from the human race's advancements, though I certainly see the benefit to occasionally making myself invulnerable to electronic disruption.

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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 be signed.

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

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

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DEADLINE: 15th of the month prior to publication.

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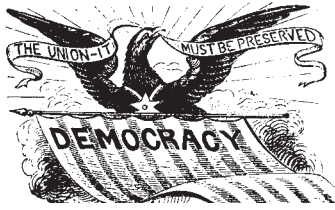
The origins of Mother Goose at Old South Church; maple sugarmakers hope for a fruitful season

The North Star

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THE NORTH STAR

March 23, 1877

Mother Goose - Rev. J.M. Mausing, the pastor of the Old South Church in Boston, at the recent Christmas festival, gave the following interesting biography of an author who has become famous throughout the world. He said there are many things in the history of the Old South Church, Boston, that tend to make its name famous. But there is one thing in the history of this famous church that has not had the recognition it deserves. In the list of admissions for the year 1698 occurs the immortal name of Elizabeth Goose. I almost beg pardon of her memory for saying "Elizabeth," since by the unanimous verdict of the world, in whose heart her name is enshrined, she is known as Mother Goose. So then, Mother Goose is no myth, as many believed, but once lived in Boston, in veritable flesh and

blood, as the records of the Old South Church clearly show. It is also a pleasure to find that, in making a goose of herself, she married into a wealthy family, where in due time she, likewise, by putting her melodies to press, not merely laid one golden egg, but has been laying a steady succession of them from that day to this. For, unlike the goose in the fable, she could not be killed, and still lives, and yields mines of wealth to the booksellers as often as Christmas tide returns. Her nest will not be empty as long as there are children and nurseries in the world. It is almost a pity, if one may say so without straining the metaphor, that her eulogy cannot be written with a quill taken from her own dear wing. What child in Christendom has not often nestled under the wing, been brooded by it, and forgotten every trouble in listening to her immortal lays?

Indian Duel - A citizen of Sioux City, who has spent much time among the agencies of the up-river Indians, says it is amusing as well as touching to hear an Indian sing his death song. Our informant was at Standing Rock a few months since, and one day he observed an unusual stir among the Indians. Soon, two bucks came forth from different lodges, each with a gun in his hand. They walked out some distance from the rest of the Indians and took up a post, dis-

tant from each other about 50 yards. At a given signal, they turned and raised their rifles to their given faces and fired. Both fell wounded, one fatefully. They were surrounded by friends who made no particular effort to bind their wounds. They simply stood around amongst themselves talking and gesticulating, while the wounded Indians, as soon as they fell, began the death song.

Bigamy - On Saturday night, Sheriff John L. Tuttle arrested at Cabot one Simeon F. Corry, who had been carrying on the poor farm at that place for the past year, on the charge of bigamy. It appears that Corry was married in Richford about two years ago, he stating to his wife No. 2 that wife No. 1 was dead, and producing a letter confirming the statement. The first intimation she had that this story was untrue was when confronted by the first wife (who resides in St. Johnsbury) a few days ago at Cabot. The second wife produced her marriage certificate and was released. Corry refused counsel and was arraigned before Justice J.M. Fisher, when he pleaded guilty. He was bound up in the sum of \$1,000, in default of which he was committed to the jail in this village.

Newark - Haynes W. Belden died in this town suddenly this Saturday night. For some months past he had softening of the brain and at the time of his

death, had nearly lost his mind. He was taken care of by his son, who did not notice but what he was in his usual health Saturday. Saturday evening, he went away leaving the old gentlemen in his room. When he returned he found him dead in his bed. He was about 75 years old. Belden has for 35 years or more been quite prominent in the north part of the county as a pettifogger, and many of the old lawyers in the county could tell instances, where Belden's shrewdness and ready wit, has proved before a jury, more than a match for the law.

Back Pension - Mrs. Carrie Wakefield of Hardwick has received a notice that a pension has been granted to her two children, of \$12 a month, with back pay since her husband's death, the whole amounting to about \$600. Everyone is glad for she deserves it.

Sugar Making - The sugar crop is one of considerable importance to this state, and nearly every farmer having an orchard of great or less extent, calculates to secure its annual contribution to the products of the farm. This year, owing to the scarcity of the article, every owner of a sugar orchard will be looking to secure as large a yield as possible in order to obtain a home supply and help meet the demands of the trade. Those having large orchards and pro-

ducing a superior article will be apt to find a ready market at remunerative prices. These should endeavor to manufacture the first runs into such a shape or form as will best suit the taste and needs of consumers, be this as cake, box or syrup, and when this is neatly done, a good price will be obtained. Campbell's boxes, made for the purpose, make a very desirable package for family customers, and will meet a special want in this direction. Manufacturers should bear in mind that there is a difference in the quality of sugar as of butter, and a corresponding difference in prices. Farmers should make a good article for their own use, as this is commendable, but be mindful that only a superior article will pay a premium for manufacturing when sold. There is a large quantity of bad sugar made even now when such improved methods are in use for manufacturing, which shows there is either a prejudice against adopting these methods or great carelessness and negligence in the process of manufacturing. Perhaps all cannot have improved evaporators or tin buckets, yet if the best of care is exercised with ordinary utensils a very fair and good quality of sugar may be produced.

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Letters to the Editor

Dear North Star,

Lorna Quimby's January article sent me to my dictionary to look up "flivver," because the word has such a wonderful sound. My dictionary defines it as "a small inexpensive automobile; hence anything small and cheap." So why has such a great word gone into disuse? Flivver sounds so dashing, so much more attractive than fuel-efficient. I intend to add it to my lexicon.
Thanks, Lorna.

Charlotte Hanna
East Calais





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Questions, questions

by ISOBEL P. SWARTZ

Asking questions has been a major interest of my life. As a small child, I embarrassed my parents on many occasions by asking questions of just about anyone I knew. No one, from tradespeople to the cleaning lady, my parents' friends, or the neighbors, was immune. "How does that work?" "Why are you doing that?" "Where did that baby come from?"

There was one question I asked most adults because I knew that some day, someone would give me an answer, "Is the inside of a kangaroo's pouch hairy or smooth?" Now where did that come from? I have no idea, but it was not until I was old enough to write to the head Animal Keeper at the London Zoo that I got my answer! ("fine, soft hairs!")

I still have many questions to ask and, though none of them are as esoteric as that of the kangaroo's pouch, they are seemingly as difficult to answer. Since Change is in the air, and a reasonable desire on the part of Congress and our Administration to think more rationally about the lives of U.S. citizens, here are some of the questions that I feel are more urgent.

Why is it so difficult for this country to provide for all its citizens good, government-sponsored health care and pharmaceuticals? Why is the United States the only industrialized nation that doesn't do this? Why do we resist this change when we can plainly read from international statistics that, of most other developed countries, we have one of the lowest levels of maternal health care; one of the highest infant mortality rates; higher incidence of heart disease; lower average male life span, and higher levels of obesity?

Why is our public educational system so inadequate? Why do many of our public schools allow the dumbing-down of the curriculum so that kids who are not prepared, or unable to study, can pass their exams? What good does this do for them or this country? What is so socially unacceptable about being smart? Why don't we do more to encourage our smart kids, when we spend a great percentage of our school taxes on remediation for the other end of the educational spectrum, with little apparent result?

We have some of the best colleges and universities in the world. Students from all over the world want to come and study here. A large percentage of the graduate students in the sciences and mathematics are from other countries — why? If we can't encourage American students to enter graduate school, why don't we welcome the foreign graduates to stay here and provide visas for them to work for us?

Why is there so much resistance to providing federally funded, early childhood education for all families? Researchers in this field have demonstrated many times the social and academic bene-

fits of early education to the children, to the educational system and to society. Why is this so controversial? There are those who say that little children should be at home with Mom. That is a great idea, but in too many cases Mom is not at home. She is out working to help the family make ends meet! Early education that includes a variety of activities in an appropriate setting with trained educators is surely preferable to sitting indoors watching TV all day long. Why isn't this educational opportunity made affordable for all families, instead of just the

"There are many answers to these questions, but too many are really excuses for inaction, or for the protection of one segment of society to the detriment of others.," Isobel P. Swartz

wealthy or the underprivileged?

Why don't we treat women as the intelligent, thoughtful beings they are, who are able to make their own decisions about their bodies and families? Women's bodies are designed to undergo the physical stress of child bearing, but no one should be able to tell a woman that she must bear a child if she and her doctor know that it will endanger her life. Women and men of all ages should have access to reliable education in health and family planning.

Why don't we demand that (1) our government provides all its citizens with clean air and water? (2) that our food be inspected so that it is free from harmful chemicals and, (3) that our meat and poultry are produced in clean, sanitary environments and not doped up with antibiotics that, through us, get into our children, our water and soil? Why can't we demand safe products such as toys and medical devices? Isn't protecting people more important than protecting shady business practices?

There are many answers to these questions, but too many are really excuses for inaction, or for the protection of one segment of society to the detriment of others. I know that some readers will say we can't afford to do these things. My answer is that we can't afford not to do them. It will be difficult, but I believe that if more citizens are vocal and educated about issues they consider important to themselves and their families, change is possible.

We have all seen that money can be made available, with few restraints, to support the powerful; it's time that the voices and demands of the less powerful are heard. We cannot have a healthy economy without a healthy, smart, educated citizenry. That is what my questions are about and now I want some real answers. Who will provide them?

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People & Places

Einstein and Me

by Dick Boera

In 1942 I entered Princeton University, one of the few who came directly from a public high school – not a private school preppie. Annual tuition was \$450 at the time, but that was still a financial stretch for my dad so I worked as a waiter in the dining halls for my board.

The Institute for Advanced Study, located in the town of Princeton, New Jersey, is a center for theoretical research best known as the academic home of Albert Einstein and John Van Neumann as well of other distinguished scholars who have worked there since its founding in 1930, such as J. Robert Oppenheimer and George F. Kennan. As noted in Wikipedia, the Institute has no formal links to Princeton University; however, since its founding, it has enjoyed close collaborative ties with the university.

Albert Einstein lived at 112 Mercer Street. He did not have to walk across campus to get to work since the Institute was within a mile of downtown Princeton and on the same side of town as his home. However, he was often seen walking on campus, either to visit friends among the faculty or perhaps to visit the library. At the end of my first year, I enlisted in the service – along with about two-thirds of my class – and was ordered to the Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken, NJ, for further studies under the Navy's V-12 officer training program. During that entire first year, I never had the opportunity of an encounter or glimpse of the Nobel Prize physicist.

During a liberty break from studies and drills at Stevens one Sunday in the summer of 1944 (June 25th), I borrowed my father's car and drove down to Princeton from my folks' home on Staten Island to visit civilian friends still on campus. It was shortly after fire destroyed the Jadwin Gymnasium judging from the photos in my old album. It had frustrated me that I'd never seen Dr. Einstein while a student. So, with camera in hand, I ventured down Mercer Street that afternoon to at least take a picture of his home. It was no problem locating #112.

On a whim – a dare to myself – I crossed the street and knocked on the door. I was in uniform. His housekeeper opened the door.

"Excuse me, I understand that Dr. Einstein lives somewhere along this street. Could you tell me which house it is?"

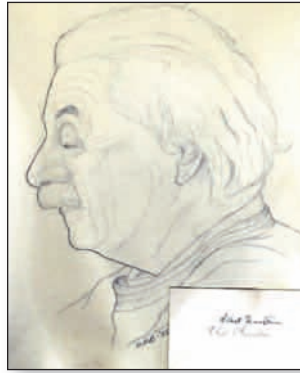
"Ya, he lifts heer, vud you like to meet mit him?"

"Oh, yes!"

"Coom en sie in."

With that, I was led into his study and introduced to Professor Einstein. He looked exactly like his photos...gray-white unkempt hair, Teddy Roosevelt mustache, wrinkled sweatshirt, sad but twinkling eyes, baggy pants, sandals, curled pipe in hand. Papers and books were piled on shelves, tables, and chairs everywhere. He cleared a space and motioned for me to sit down, asking if I would like to join him for some tea and crumpets that he was about to be served. I said that would be great. (I might have said "neat" because "cool" wasn't known as anything but a temperature observation 65 years ago.)

For some reason, I don't recall being a bit awed or nervous in his presence. It was like having a natural conversation with my beloved German grandfather. Though he had a heavy accent, he was not hard to understand. He put me completely at ease at the outset. He asked about the math courses that I was taking at the time. I told him about my experience at Princeton in that area of study when, during that first year after America entered WWII, with most of the best faculty drafted into the service or engaged in war production, we had many young foreign instructors who had difficulty with the language to begin with and who had limited teaching experience. I told him how different it had been at Stevens where they had the good sense to encourage some of the retired faculty to return to teaching "for the duration" and still had many of the old-timers around. For math, we had Professor Charles Otto Gunther. He had been on the faculty for over 40 years except for a stint as a colonel in World War I, an expert on the subject of ballistic trajectories. Our class had been drawn from over thirty different colleges in the East; all but two were now in the Navy; all had one year of college under our belts and few among us had really understood differential calculus. Charlie Gunther had been known as a tough, cranky, taskmaster over the years at Stevens. For



While attending Princeton in 1942-43, Dick Boera never caught a glimpse of the genius. A year later, he was invited into the great man's study, left, for tea and crumpets. Above is a sketch of Einstein and the scorched liberty card he autographed.

some reason he "took to" our group as a unique challenge...and we soon "took to" him. He told us he would assume we knew nothing about calculus (quite true); he would start from scratch and patiently explain until everyone was up to speed. It was a revelation to watch the eyes light up with understanding and a new-found respect for the subject matter. He guided us similarly through integral calculus and differential equations in the long months ahead, all good preparation for graduate work and on through LaPlace transforms.

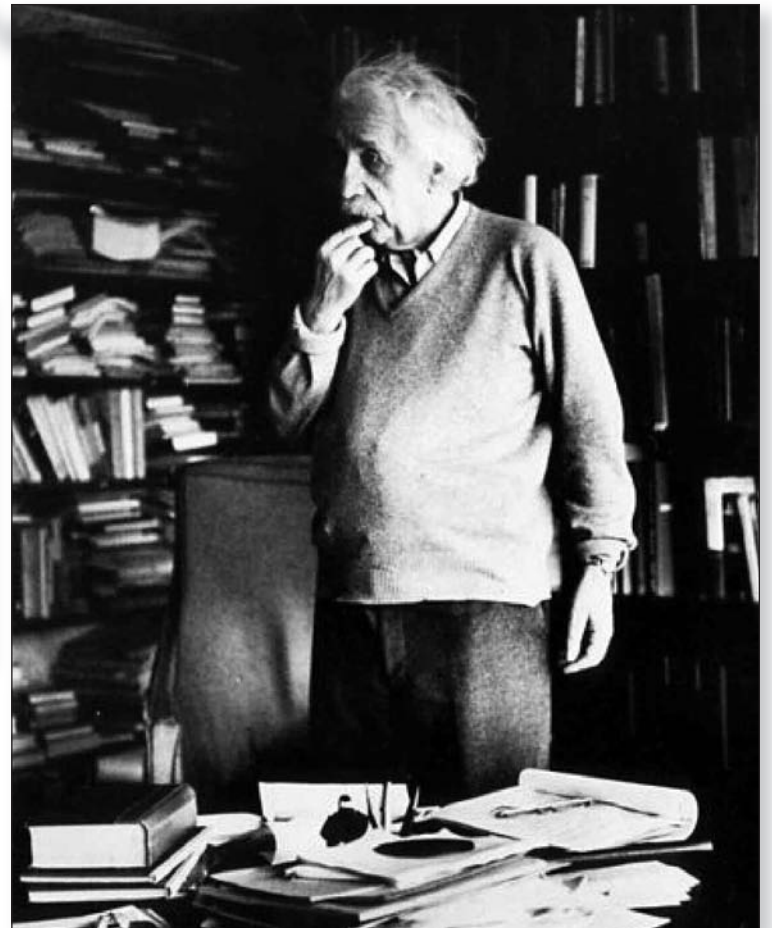
Just before we went on to Midshipmen's School, nearing the end of several semesters of math with Charlie, we threw a memorable party for our favorite teacher; at the end of our testimonials, he cried. One member of our class later married his granddaughter. One of my good friends in the class was a jovial Jewish lad by the name of Feinstein. He would always try to be the first to raise his hand whether he had the right answer or not. Charlie more often would simply shake his head and comment good-naturedly, "Feinstein, you're no Einstein."

Einstein chuckled heartily over that story, and even seemed genuinely interested in all my responses to his searching but simple questions about my family, my studies, and the Navy. Here's the man who had written to President Roosevelt just five years earlier (not known to me – or the world – until many years later):

"...that it may become possible to set up a nuclear chain reaction in a large mass of uranium, by which vast amounts of power and large quantities of new radium-like elements would be generated."

He was taking time out to chit-chat with an apprentice seaman for a half hour while the world would soon be changed forever by the mind that was his only laboratory. He left it to others to eventually prove that his theories of how our universe behaves were indeed factual and actual.

I asked for his autograph and he gladly obliged on the reverse of my liberty card. (See likeness that I drew many years later with the card attached.) I did not ask him to play the violin that was resting on the couch. He asked if I'd like to have my picture taken (with my camera) by his housekeeper. Would I!!! Unfortunately, that good soul was not very familiar with cameras; it turned out to be the only double exposure on my film that day and totally unrecognizable, merged with the previous shot of the charred remains of the University's gymnasium. Still, I wish I'd kept it. (Oh, for a digital camera back then!) I thanked them both, we shook hands, and a happy sailor walked back up Mercer Street toward the campus.



An amusing sequel to this tale deserves a few lines. When I returned to the Stevens campus, I immediately went to the Navy office to request the issuance of a new liberty card for the balance of the weekend since Einstein had signed the one I was carrying and I wanted to preserve it. The officer approved, and ordered the quartermaster to prepare a new one...but neglected to tell him the reason. When I saw that the quartermaster in the adjoining office was on the verge of ripping up the old one, I literally threw myself across the desk to stop his arm from reaching across to carry out this intention. It was good for laughs later, but the bruised hip wasn't too funny at the time. Because of my great respect for Professor Gunther – and probably to impress him with my story – I asked him to sign his name beneath that of Albert Einstein. I now wish he hadn't signed so close to it; it has probably diminished any eBay value it might have acquired over the years.

In retrospect, I can't help but feel shaken by the knowledge that I had the colossal nerve to knock on the door of the figure who was to be acknowledged as TIME's – and Everyman's – Person of the Century, the only individual in history immediately associated with and identifiable by a simple equation that has shaken – and still shakes – the world; to have had the rare privilege of meeting this relatively reclusive man (during his two decades in Princeton, he participated in only one public event); to have felt comfortable conversing (not on his level but mine, of course) with the Leonardo da Vinci, the Galileo Galilei, the Isaac Newton of our time. Over the years that followed, I've read about his life, his accomplishments, his humility, his quotable philosophy, and his humorous anecdotes. His place in history is unchallenged. His shining place in my memory will never dim.

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When you are courting a pretty girl, an hour seems like a second. When you sit on a red-hot cinder, a second seems like an hour. That's relativity.

- Albert Einstein

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Up on the Farm Early

Lorna Quimby



Some time ago I mentioned that Dad read “pulp Westerns.” Dad liked stories set in the far West, with cowboys and Indians (as they were called in those decidedly non-politically correct days), cattlemen and sheep herders, Rocky Mountains, deserts and plains. Besides the novels written by Zane Grey, Oliver Curwood and others that were given him at Christmas, there were books Deedee and I brought back from the Whitehill library in North Ryegate. He also had the “pulp Westerns” Uncle Charlie brought over from Barre.

When Uncle Charlie and Aunt Bertha came visiting, they filled the back seat with Good Housekeepings, Cosmopolitans and Red Books for Maw, Sunday papers for us girls, and Western magazines for Dad. Dad would read the Westerns. Then they’d go on the stairs, for he might want to read them again. When the pile of Westerns got too high or during one of our infrequent clearings of the “mess on the stairs,” someone would place them on the sort of

shelf that ran above the stairway. There was about a twelve-inch space that was floored between the top of the stair well and the wall of the Big Girls’ room. The pulp Westerns just fit.

The magazines were called “pulp” for good reason. Along with detective and some of the True Love Story magazines, Westerns were printed on a cheap, highly acidic paper. Their covers were shiny and carried pictures of men in ten gallon hats, bucking horses, and long-horned steers. They usually included a novella and several short stories. Not many women appeared in these stories—maybe a rancher’s daughter, a school teacher from the East or, infrequently, a dance hall girl. Romance in Westerns, unlike True Love Story, was strictly of minor interest. One theme was conflict, usually between the hero and a number of other men whose motives were not the purest. After many a hair-raising adventure, the hero eventually won the day—and the fair lady, if

there were one.

Another plot was that of the tenderfoot versus the cowboys. These stories featured the effete, spoiled Easterner who, for various reasons, went out west. Through his adventures, he became tough, brave and gained an appreciation of the real values represented by the Westerners.

You could take any story from Beowulf, to the Greek myths or those of the Arthurian legends, dress your hero in chaps, spurs and ten-gallon hat, move him to a ranch and have a Western. At the time I devoured them, I didn’t see the parallels.

Although those times were not of the best, what with the continuing effects of the Depression and a looming world war, there were markets for writers. Magazines needed fiction for their readers and no matter what your genre. There was a ready market for your writing. As well as their novels, Zane Grey and others wrote for the pulp Western magazine publishers. I did not look for a particular author at the time I plowed through the lot of those Westerns piled above the stairway.

One hot summer Deedee and I carried what had been the seat of the porch swing across the road

and placed it across a couple of limbs in a maple tree. I have no idea just when the swing was taken down, torn apart and the metal seat stored over the garage. I was younger when Deedee and I sat on the canvas-covered seat that swung from chains hooked to the porch ceiling, shelling peas while we watched some of Lady Astor’s kittens playing in the wild cucumber vine that shaded that section of the porch. Now we made ourselves a comfortable—or nearly comfortable—place to sit or recline in the shade.

An old blanket, folded, protected us from the metal springs, and we used some old cushions to shield our elbows. Experience proved that our tree seat was much more comfortable for one than for two. While Dad was mowing or during lazy Sundays, I curled up in our nest and read until I got a headache from eye strain. I perused each magazine from cover to cover.

In those quaint times, most of the advertisements were confined to the back portion. You were not interrupted constantly because the story you were reading was “continued on page twenty,” say. The ads for patent medicines or miracle cures for whatever ailed you did not take up two or three pages, as the “Ask your doctor about such

and such miracle drug that you cannot do without because we’ve got to pay for our research” ads in our present magazines.

According to the ads, you could cure all sorts of ills—most of which you didn’t know you had. You could buy corn plasters for your toes, sure-fire ways to grow hair (Baldness Cured Overnight), and get rid of irregularity—again “overnight but safe enough for a babe.” As well, there were correspondence courses for all subjects and those that promised you could “earn while you learn.” These ads were in small print, outlined in black with before-and-after sketches.

The illustrations for Charles Atlas and his body building routine made an impression as I skimmed through the ads, but not necessarily the one desired. (Truth in advertising didn’t exist then, either.) The idea that, if you were the ninety-pound weakling, you could pump up all those muscles and impress your girl by kicking sand in the other guy’s eyes probably appealed more to teenage boys than to a girl.

When cooler weather came and school started, we no longer used our retreat. The metal frame disappeared. And I had my fill of pulp Westerns.



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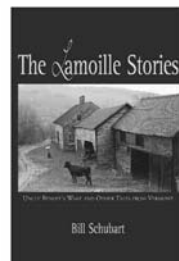
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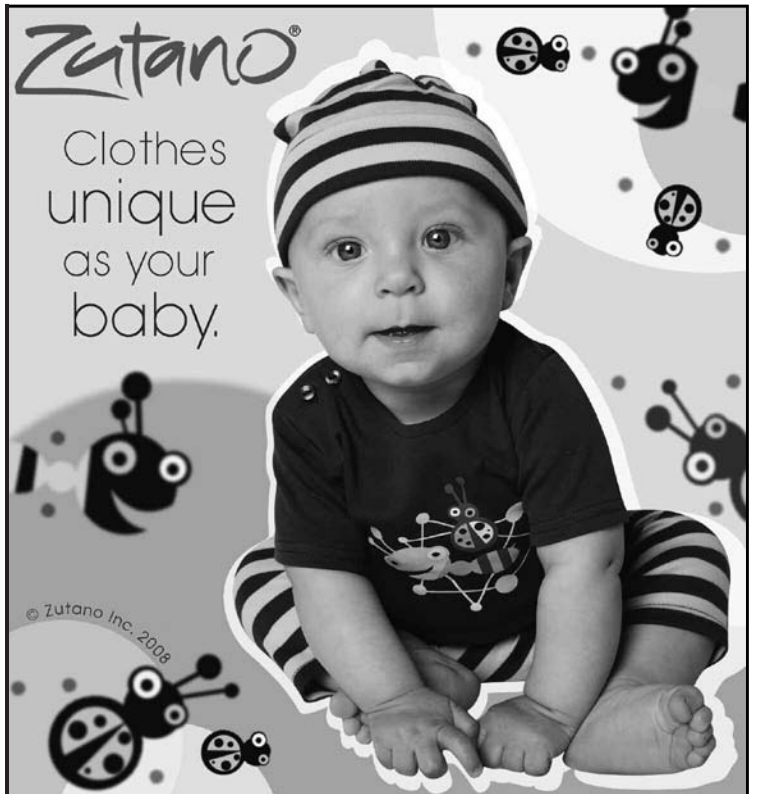
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\$ Follow the Money by Rachel Siegel

Full of faith and credit

"... there must be an end to a conduct in banking and in business which too often has given to a sacred trust the likeness of callous and selfish wrongdoing. Small wonder that confidence languishes, for it thrives only on honesty, on honor, on the sacredness of obligations, on faithful protection, on unselfish performance; without them it cannot live... we require two safeguards against a return of the evils of the old order; there must be a strict supervision of all banking and credits and investments; there must be an end to speculation with other people's money..."

-- Franklin D. Roosevelt, first inaugural address, March 4, 1933.

The original Ponzi scheme was a currency arbitrage. In 1920, Charles Ponzi promised a 50% return in 45 days by trading against exchange rate discrepancies using international postal coupons. The Ponzi scheme has come to mean a fraudulent investment plan where returns are generated from the capital of new investors, rather than from investment earnings.

The number of alleged Ponzi schemes now coming to light is unusually high. The Madoff scandal has made headlines, notable for its size and longevity, but dozens of others are now being investigated by the beleaguered SEC.

A Ponzi scheme works through trust. An investor is persuaded to invest through a trusted agent with reputed expertise. Investment is made based on the promise of return, but the plan for return is not sustainable except through the continuous recruitment of new investors.

The Ponzi scheme works as long as new investors join and old investors do not withdraw. The schemer relies on the probability that all of the investors will not want to withdraw funds at the same time. That way, cash flow from new investors can be used for investment returns. As long as investors trust in their "returns," they will not divest suddenly and simultaneously. It is a confidence game: investors have confidence in their seducer, who has confidence in their continued willingness to be seduced. In fact, if not for the current recession and investors' need to withdraw capital, the Madoff scheme may never have come to light.

Actually, banks operate the same way, investing in longer term projects while betting that

all depositors won't withdraw at once. So do insurers, betting that all policyholders won't file claims at once. Corporations, who take shareholders' capital and invest it in assets or projects that may not generate returns for some time, are betting that all shareholders won't divest at once. Hedge funds, mutual funds – all are based on the premise of attracting new capital faster than the old is withdrawn. As long as the bank or insurer or corporation or hedge fund is succeeding – and as long as the economy can create investable capital – its success attracts new investors, which creates more success.

In a market, as an asset like stock or real estate is believed to be more valuable, more people try to buy it or to buy into it, bidding up the price, and it becomes more valuable. Buyers are confident that investors will not suddenly and simultaneously divest from the market itself.

For if they do, there is no value. In any market, the entire premise of value is based on finding the next buyer, or in the case of the capital markets, the next investor. Value is not a belief in inherent worth, but a belief in the next person's belief in value. It's a very slippery slope from there to the Ponzi scheme.


When there is no next investor or buyer, or when original investors withdraw, "confidence languishes" where a confidence game had thrived. Investors are indignant, jilted, demanding at least moral if not financial satisfaction. They speak of a betrayal of "faithful protection," but the very faith that makes markets vulnerable also makes them possible.

Our word "credit" comes from the Latin credere, to believe. Extending credit or allowing delayed payment is an act of faith, after all, as is depositing in a bank or paying insurance premiums, or in fact, any investment or even any trade at all.

It is a genuine faith in others that allows for the exchange of possessions that is trade. It is a faith in the next buyer that allows the promise of value that creates value. It is the faith that there is always another investor that allows investment. Without faith, we couldn't trade and we certainly couldn't invest. But it seems to be a very slippery slope from faith to fear itself.

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 North Star since 2001.

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Outdoor Adventures

The art of back yard sugaring

by TONY SMITH

Incourage all of my readers this month to learn from the mistakes I have made and have a much better sugaring experience because of it.

A few years ago I decided to take up "back yard sugaring." Unlucky for my parents, they just so happened to have 12 or so large sugar maple trees in their back yard. I went and bought all the items I needed, like buckets, hose, taps, etc. I also had a turkey fryer and pot to boil the sap in. I found out quickly that it was taking too long and too much propane to turn my 40 or so gallons of sap into a gallon of syrup so I started to look for ways to make it more efficient to boil it down. I first made a siphon drip system so I had constant sap dripping into the boiling pot, never

losing the boil. I just had to make sure that the bucket of sap that was dripping never ran out. Another thing I did was throw the ice out of the sap bucket every morning. The reason for this is the sugars in the sap freeze at a lower temperature than the water. Therefore the liquid in your bucket has a higher concentration of sugar than the ice. For the skeptics on this, I tested it with an instrument that measures the percentage of sugar in the liquid. It was ~0.05% in the ice and ~4-6% in the sap in the bottom. Throwing the ice out each time could save you hours of boiling over the course of the season. Another thing I learned when boiling is basic physics, surface area is everything. Boiling in a turkey fryer pot just isn't good enough. You need a long wide

pan with more surface area to boil the water off quicker. Even with the drip system I had going, it still cost me about \$20 a gallon in propane using a turkey frying pot, not including my time. A perfect size pan would be about two feet by three feet and four to six inches deep. Finally, the two most important things I learned are to finish your syrup on the kitchen stove and not in the turkey fryer. Just make sure you pay attention to it when it gets close because it is very easy to get it too hot and boil over. And always can your syrup (after you filter it of course) at a high temperature otherwise it will look like the unpleasant substance running out of your nose when you open it a few weeks later. Hopefully these tips will make your sugaring season more

enjoyable than mine have been in the past.



My story this week is more of a rundown of events that happened my first few days of boiling sap. Things didn't exactly go as planned. I started by collecting the previous evenings run of sap and pouring it into my turkey frying pot on my parents porch. I lit up the burner and let it rip for awhile. I came back and noticed that not much sap had boiled down. I contributed this to the gusty winds that day and the openness of the porch. The porch had a roof, but no walls, so the wind whipped through and was constantly disturbing the flame and didn't seem to get the pot hot enough. So I did what any other intelligent person would have, I got some plastic (like you put around your windows in the winter) to block the wind. The only problem was that I had nothing to hold it up with but my plastic buckets, which all contained the sap from that day. I thought, no big deal, I would just surround the turkey fryer with my buckets and plastic to make a wind proof "wall" to keep the wind from hitting the flame. It actually worked out well. The sap started to boil faster and I thought I was well on my way. Now if you have ever watched sap boil, its like watching paint dry, so my father and I decided to let it boil and go get some breakfast. I was a little worried about leaving the fryer on, but thought if I put lots of sap in the pot, it would take awhile to boil down and there would be nothing to worry about in the hour we were gone. Anyway, we arrived back from breakfast about an hour and fifteen minutes later to find the porch on fire. Yeah, that's

right, I started the porch on fire. Apparently, it got so windy that the plastic had blown onto the flame of the fryer and acted as a wick back to the plastic buckets, which I didn't realize are extremely flammable. There were eight five-gallon buckets of sap melted down to within one inch of the concrete slab. I had completely lost all my sap from that day and about \$40 worth of plastic buckets, not to mention the melted plastic is still there and a constant reminder to my father of the flames coming off the porch that day.

To make things even better, two days later I almost set the kitchen on fire as well. I left the almost ready to pour off syrup on the stove at too high of a temperature and it boiled over. I was outside at the time gathering more sap and heard the fire alarm go off only to look back at the kitchen door and see smoke pouring out of the house. It ruined the elements of the burners and every time you baked in the oven after that, large black bubbles of syrup would show up. I think the fire alarm went off in that house every day for the next two weeks.


Taking a step back and looking at what had transpired over the last three days, I concluded that I had 30 hours into boiling, almost set the house on fire twice and didn't have a cup of maple syrup yet. Maybe I should have spent the \$40 and just bought a gallon.



Next month we will look at and talk about some underappreciated animals. These guys are small and slimy and mostly come out in the spring time on wet nights. I will also tell one of the funniest stories that I know. If there is one that you have to read, that's the one!

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

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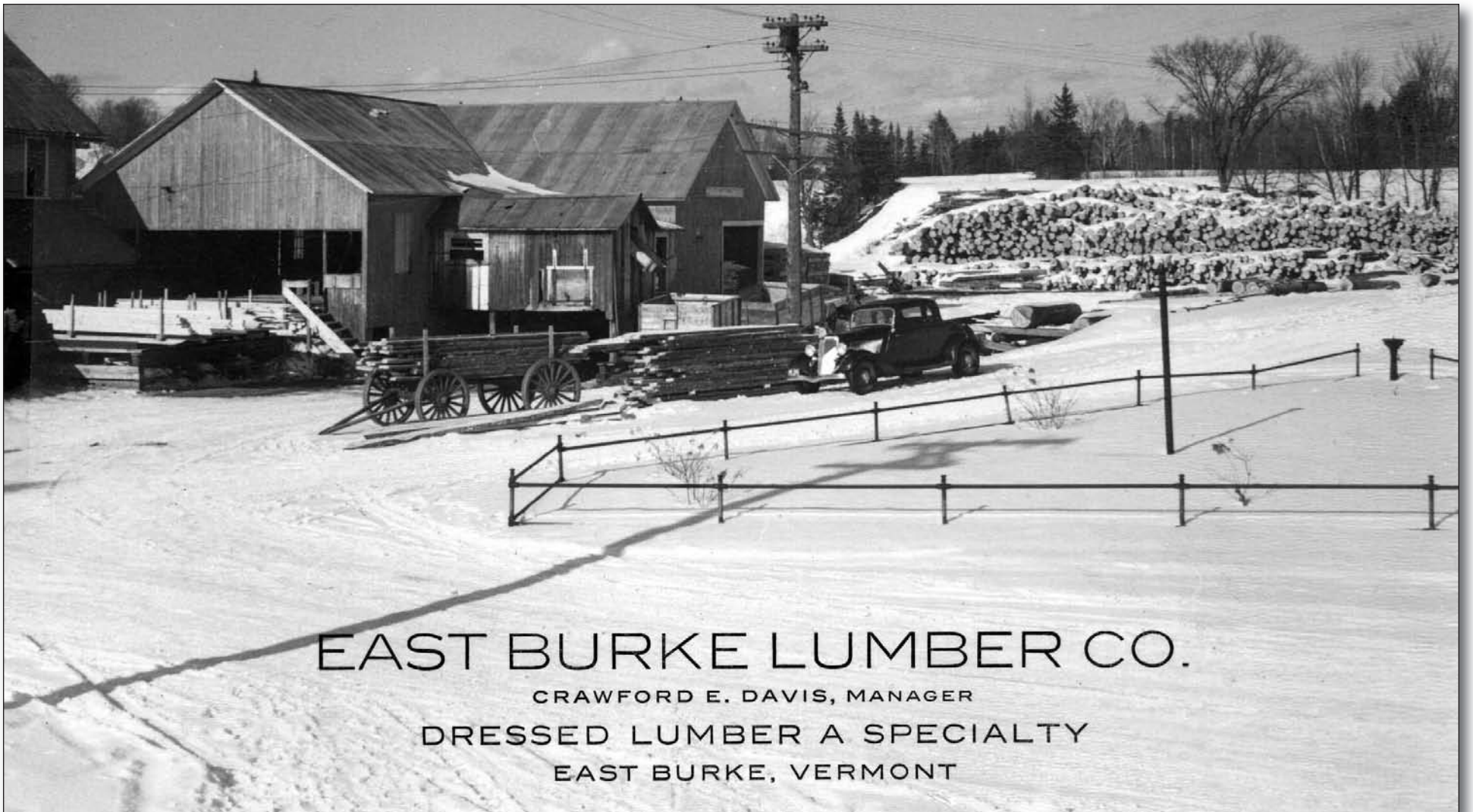


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Sugar on Snow: "Sugar on Snow" parties have been a traditional spring-time favorite in Vermont for hundreds of years. Sugar on Snow is made by pouring hot maple syrup onto packed snow to form a taffy-like candy and is traditionally served with raised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



EAST BURKE LUMBER CO.
 CRAWFORD E. DAVIS, MANAGER
 DRESSED LUMBER A SPECIALTY
 EAST BURKE, VERMONT



The booming industry was likely the product of conscientious forestry management in the mid 1920s. In 1927 alone, 17 Vermont towns planted 267,000 trees to try and better manage the state's forests. In Sheffield in 1926, not far from East Burke, 126 men planted 25,000 trees. Some accounts of the period indicate that these second and third growths of trees were not as notable as the first Vermont timber harvests.



In Jan Albers Hands on the Land: A History of the Vermont Landscape, the author notes:

Where [George Perkins] Marsh found that, 'The woods of North America are strikingly distinguished than those of Europe by the vastly greater variety of species they contain,' this diversity was not to be found in the replanting, so that by Buck [Heath's] day, Vermont was no longer a major exporter of lumber. By the time of the second World War, the trees were back, but the majesty and diversity of the wilderness would not come again.



Like his father and grandfather, Jack knows logging. He also knows East Burke, his home for the better part of 79 years, save for brief spells working for the Atlantic Lumber Company and the Kimberly Clark Corporation, which at that time, were two of the largest hardwood lumber companies in the world. As head of purchasing, Jack's employment led him to the company's Boston headquarters, where he almost immediately started to miss the familiar village he grew up in.

"It was a privilege growing up in East Burke," he says. "All these people, all around you, all those old farmers and all that, they'd come up to you and they'd talk to you. They'd ask you what you were doing and where you were going, every single one of them. There was Perley Lavelly, old John Lavelly, Elmer Burrington, George Burbank and Clayton Ball. When you went to school, you knew who made gingersnaps on what day and who made cookies on Thursday. The sense of community was beautiful, and maybe other people have those memories of where they grew up, but I know we had it here."

In Boston, Jack's office overlooked heavy traffic on a relatively new Interstate-93.

"This old hick went to Boston," he jokes. "And I was lost down there."

Jack did, partly thanks to his supervisor's insistence, last long enough in Boston to be transferred to Sawyerville, Quebec, to run one of the company's sawmills. He was so anxious to get back north, his contract for the new position is perfectly preserved in an extensive photo album.

The sense of community Jack missed when he was gone carried over to the East Burke sawmill throughout its more than 30-year history. The mill was located in the center of town where Dish Mill Brook met the east branch of the Passumpsic River. The village's population, which has remained relatively unchanged over the years, boasted a few hundred resi-



Above left, sawmill workers, including Henry Mathers, second from right, and owner Crawford Davis, third from left, work to cut logs into lumber for the local economy. Above, this was a familiar site behind the East Burke Lumber Company sawmill. Below, In the East Burke Village, massive piles of lumber, the final stage after logging, trucking and sawing, were stacked by hand.





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dents, and the lumber company's sawmill employed as many as 25 people at a time. Not even a devastating fire in 1958 could derail the business. The family simply rebuilt the mill down the road. For many years, the business serviced the local economy.

There was no long distance trucking back then, according to Jack, so logs and lumber stayed within 15 miles. When the family leased a large tract of land near Paul Stream in 1946, they trucked 50 miles one way. It was timed perfectly, since the end of World War II meant the end of gasoline rationing. Paul Stream is located just north of Maidestone Lake, in the heart of the Kingdom's still undeveloped northeast, and at that time, no connecting route or passable logging road existed to make the trip shorter than continuing north to Island Pond and then driving down to East Burke on Route 114. Sometimes they would haul wood from East Burke to Stratford to load into railroad cars, along with lumber from Paul Stream. The railroad cars took the lumber all over the region.

It can be argued to this day that the area around Paul Stream, including Brighton and Victory State Forests, is home to more moose than people. The land is one of the most heavily forested regions in Vermont, with an abundance of spruce, fir, birch, and maple trees.

As trucking improved, so did other technology, including the introduction of the chainsaw. Jack vividly remembers the first chainsaws, which took one man to operate and two to keep running. They were so inefficient, men experienced in the lost art of cutting with a cross-cut saw could fell a tree faster. From the 1930s to the 1960s, trucks got a little bigger, and chainsaws started to improve. People began to learn how to use them, and logging companies started to do more with less people.

"Every step has shut more people off," says Jack, but he acknowledges the hard reality. "Who the heck wants to go out there dragging a cross-cut saw now?"

A cross-cut saw is a long iron saw with handles on both ends to use the sawing strength of two loggers.

Growing up, Jack started out with modest responsibilities. His first job was taking care of his pony and cow when his family lived in the village. He handled that responsibility well enough to earn six more cows in the coming years, which were bought by his grandfather at auction. After chores and school, he went to work in the mill doing whatever they needed. He remembers running the slab saw a lot since it was one of the most undesirable jobs. His real passion was driving, and he started young, maybe even before he was 12.

Jack's memory of The Great Depression in the Northeast Kingdom was, according to Albers, shared by many in the rural pockets of the state and summarized as, "Looks about the same to me." Jack is quick to point out that his family lived well and made a good living, but fellow Vermonters, especially at that time, were used to making do with little. In the end, the fall from prosperity in Vermont was milder than the rest of the country's.

During World War II, children his age were often expected to pitch in because older help was hard to find. He was once pulled over by a state trooper when he was just 14 years old. The trooper, upon seeing Jack behind the wheel, grabbed his "furry hat" and spun it around in a circle on his head before saying, "You have gone about far enough, and you find someone else to drive this thing."

Jack went on to graduate from the New York State Ranger School, where his edu-

cation in forestry became formalized. He eventually returned to take over the sawmill in East Burke until 1963, when he was forced to close the doors when the bank wouldn't approve a \$5,000 line of credit so he could make payroll. Others came after and tried to continue the business, but they were unsuccessful. The bank even asked Jack to try again (with their financial assistance this time), but he wasn't interested.



While the business was in operation, Jack and others had the opportunity to watch some amazing developments nearby, including the slow growth of Burke Mountain into a ski area and the peculiar construction of a ghostly radar base on East Mountain.

At one point, the Davis family owned more than 1,500 acres, but it was eventually sold off in pieces because of the taxes.

In the late 1930s, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal created the Civilian Conservation Corps, and men from all over the country traveled to East Burke to cut and pave the original "Bear Den" trail up Burke Mountain. They built camps on the mountain to live in while they blazed trails and future roads all over the region. Later, logging crews would use their trails and gradually widen them into roads. Ski Burke, Inc., was the first owner and developer of Burke Mountain and Jack's wife still has her original \$10 stock. That was a large investment for someone who only made \$37 a week. It was a time of wooden skis with "bear-trap" bindings, and lots of wool and leather. The means for getting up the mountain were equally low-tech, many hardy enthusiasts trudged up the trail. By 1955, a new Poma Lift gave skiers a better, more reliable way to the top.

While support for Ski Burke was indirect, Jack had a distinct hand in building the iconic radar base atop East Mountain for the U.S. Military. The ground-based radar facility that looked out over northern New England for miles was built in 1955 during the height of the Cold War, and it was officially closed in 1963. During the construction process, government officials decided they weren't going to use the facility but completed the project anyway. For many years, the abandoned buildings provided a spooky reminder of the Cold War hysteria of that time.

Jack and other sawmill employees used forklifts to help soldiers get equipment up the mountain because their trucks weren't equipped.

"They didn't have chains or nothing; they were lucky to get there," he says. "They treated us fairly good. We'd work till 9 or 10 at night and they'd feed us, then they never paid me for six months, though they said it would only take 10 days."

"The government didn't know how to break the contract, so they finished the last building even though they weren't going to use it."

Even though it was never used, Jack said the Colonels in charge were very thankful to have found enough able-bodied loggers to complete the project. The soldiers may not have known what to make of these backcountry workers, but they certainly appreciated their skill and experience.

"That was our life," he said.

Does it Feel Like a Toothache in Your Leg or Thigh?

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How 5 Lies About BACK PAIN May Keep You Hurting, Frustrated & Exhausted... Forever!

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Dr. Ste. Marie

Hi, I'm Dr. Jeremy Ste. Marie, and if you've got any kind of back, hip or leg pain, your worries may be over in just a few minutes. Why? Because I'm the Director of HealthSource Chiropractic™ of Danville and I've discovered what may be the best healing secrets for "bad backs"—EVER!

I'd be stupid to make such a claim if I couldn't back it up. But I'm so confident we can help your back, I insist on giving you a 100% TRIPLE SATISFACTION PLEDGE at our HealthSource Chiropractic™ clinic. I hate empty promises, and I also hate the lies most folks have been told about their backs. That's why it's important I expose these MYTHS about back pain:

MYTH #1: Sciatica (pain down your leg) is always caused by a herniated disc!

No way...even though most doctors will sell you a \$3,000 MRI at the first sign of leg pain. But they don't tell you about a 5-inch muscle in the hip that can squeeze the sciatic nerve. And it feels EXACTLY like you've got the worst slipped disc on earth. It's a major discovery and...

The good news is that it can be easy and inexpensive to correct! How? Just keep reading! But first, here's a picture to show you where the pain comes from:



MYTH #2: Stiffness from Arthritis means you're getting old...and it must be the reason for all your pain and stiffness!

Not true, because thousands of folks with arthritis in their backs have absolutely NO PAIN! Then why do YOU feel like your back will snap if you bend forward or twist too fast? Because the truth is:

Your stiffness may be caused by a hidden, even more dangerous problem than arthritis, and it can lead to a hip replacement!

You see, most folks believe that something mysterious (like maybe an "arthritis fairy"?) waved a wand over them, and they're cursed...doomed to suffer forever.

But did you know that many arthritis problems are CAUSED by a combination of unseen imbalances in the spine and surrounding muscles. It's the most common cause of hip replacements but not that hard to correct if we catch it in time. It's like the tires on your car...

If the alignment is off just a teeny-weeny bit, at first you don't notice, but over a few thousand miles you start to see signs of wear...that is, if you're lucky enough to catch it before a flat on the freeway ruins your day. In your spine, you're lucky if you catch untreated imbalances before they ruin your spine! How to fix them? Just look at Myth #3.

MYTH #3: Your Back is "Out"!

Sure, that's exactly how it feels. But guess what, we found that's usually not the case. It sounds good, but we know better.

You see, there are 7 different reasons for that painful, locked-up and stuck feeling that causes so much misery:

- low-grade spasm
- pelvis torque and tension
- imbalance of hips
- fallen or dropped arches
- stiff vertebra joint
- adhesions in leg muscle
- pinched nerve

It's NOT just your spine, and it's NOT just your muscles. As a matter of fact, if one of the major muscles that

stabilize the spine is partly spasmed, a "2nd stringer" will have to carry the load. But this is a serious problem...

It's like having your plumber doing all the dangerous electrical work!

Sure, he may get it done, and it may work at first, but how long until there's a fire? Or your back locks up? Which leads me to our next myth:

MYTH #4: "It's Only a Muscle!"

Boy, it's scary how many people think muscle problems are no big deal. Unfortunately, tight, bound-up, and spasmed or tight muscles can wear out joints faster than you can say, "Charley Horse"!

That's why it's important to examine the spine AT THE SAME TIME as the muscles that control it. It's also why we've had such outrageous success with even the worst backs at HealthSource Chiropractic™. Because we deal with BOTH the spine and muscles at the same time. We have spine doctors (chiropractors) and muscle professionals (therapists) and together they deliver the absolute best way to help "bad backs". This ties in to Myth #5:

MYTH #5: "Muscle Relaxants" will help your muscles heal! Good grief, NO!

Your muscles tighten up for a reason, and muscle relaxants are like turning back the clock on a time-bomb...you know it's still going to blow up! Sure, you may feel better now, but you'll pay later...and pay "in spades"!

So don't fall for these lies about your low back. They'll keep you hurting, frustrated and exhausted—forever!

Wouldn't you rather:

- Turn over in bed without pain waking you up?
- Get up in the morning without being as stiff as a board?
- Be able to stand for as long as you want without sitting down for relief?

Lean forward over the sink without that "stabbing" in your back or leg?

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"My major complaint/symptom was mid-lower back pain. I tried ice, heat and stretching on my own to get rid of my symptoms. HealthSource adjusted my back and did physical therapy to help me. I feel GREAT now and this is the first time in approximately 2 months. HealthSource improved my health by relieving my nagging back pain. I would recommend HealthSource to my family and friends because they provide good personal care. What I liked most about HealthSource was all of the employees/associates were friendly and had professional attitudes."

—Robert E. Kinser

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- Bent—crooked off to one side and can't stand up straight if your life depended on it

- Trigger Point...zinging pain to butt-cheek
- Stiff as a board...creak and groan when you first get out of bed in the morning
- Traitor...can't trust your back and what it's going to do—or when!
- Vice-like...constantly locked down tight!
- Shooting...vicious but short-lived
- Lumbago...hard to pin it down—just seems to hurt all the time, but it's hard to say where
- One-sided...right at that "bone" on one side
- Jack hammer...pounding off and on like a heartbeat or a toothache in your back
- Aching from 1-5 years
- Chronic pain for over 5 years

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P.S. Why You MUST Not Wait! Because of appointment availability, we can only honor this FREE offer through March 23. So don't say, "Well, maybe I'll be better tomorrow." Don't put your life on hold. Don't call in sick again. Live your life pain free! Tie your own shoes for a change.

FREE Gift: There's one more thing to encourage you to quit waiting for the tomorrow that never comes. You receive FREE, a \$49 leather tote bag, so call before March 23!

(This offer does not apply to federal insurance beneficiaries and ACN participants)

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Barn again

by NATHANIAL TRIPP

Continued from Page 1

and it stays light until supper time. I've personalized the barn in quirky ways, doing this over the years; adding trap doors and chutes and ladders along with cribs and stalls. This year I'm rebuilding the main door, going back up to the original height to accommodate loaded hay wagons. The last time it was rebuilt was about 1900, when an overhead hay grapple was installed. It's still in here, too, a sinister looking device, but we bale our hay and use an elevator now. Other artifacts of earlier times gather dust, too, some milk cans and a horse collar along with our children's plastic sleds. The high drive of our neighbor's barn is paved with ancient soda bottle caps, and each one speaks of a day's hard work done.

Like most places in this neighborhood ours was a twelve-cow farm, and the twenty-four stanchions in the stables were hardly ever more than half full. Now the stanchions are gone, and dusty cobwebs droop over the flaking calcite paint. Same goes for the square built silo; there were

no signs of silage filling it more than half way up when I tore it down. It is too easy to romanticize the past and forget just how hard it was, and yet people endured here. Sometimes I go up into the loft and feel the hewn timbers, timbers forty feet long and smoothed by the gentle brushing of almost two hundred seasons of hay, and there is an intimacy as though I am feeling the arms of men I shall never meet.

When this barn was first mine, farms like this were failing fast. We came here with dreams of our own, more like fantasies, really. There's a faded, hand-lettered poster on one wall that says: "Nathaniel Tripp and Sons, Registered Percherons." That was in 1979, when we were showing at the fairs. The sons were just one and four years old, and the sign was a gesture towards male supremacy, which soon proved unbearable. The wife that made it went west just two years later and took the horses with her. I had just finished rebuilding the floors four inches thick for them.

Those floors are still dim-

pled by the cleats on those huge Percheron's feet where we shall shear the sheep in a month. Times change, people change, and farming, or what was supposed to be farming, changes too. It's better for us now, another marriage, another son just turning twenty-two this March. Twice a day, I poke hay down a chute with a fine old fork I took from my beloved brother-in-law after he died. He would have had me take it. For the first time in two centuries, there are more farms in Vermont than there were when counted ten years ago. He would have liked to know that, too.

Now a late winter storm is brewing, and I go out in the dark to make sure my new door is secure. I hear the soothing music of hay being munched while the wind sighs of a thousand storms past. I stand here surrounded by my crops and animals in wonderment. This is the gathering place, the place of broad shoulders, the Ark that carries us. It was just ten thousand years ago, a scant four hundred generations, that this enlightenment came to us and we were transformed.



Gardening & Growing

Marsha Garrison

All right, folks, the sun is warming, the days are lengthening, and it will be no time at all before axle-burying potholes and disgustingly filthy snow banks greet us everywhere. It's time to discard those scribbled lists and scratched-over catalog orders.

Begin the gardening season by considering your garden. To do this, sit down, empty your mind, and let your inner eye rove the garden's length and breadth. Walk slowly, and then turn back to a spot where you want to linger. Stop there, put out a comfortable chair, and sit down. Breathe deeply, and let the delights of this special place wash over you. You may want to put your feet up and take a cat nap. You may want to get out of that chair and pick a tomato or bury your nose in an irresistibly fragrant blossom. Let yourself do whatever you wish in this place, and make sure that you savor each and every activity. Then, pull yourself away and return to a location where you would rather not stop. Do it anyway, and ask yourself: "What would it take to turn this dash-through-it part of the garden into a place where I'd want to idle?" Let your imagination run riot, and picture a transformed landscape that provides just as much pleasure as the delightful spot in which you previously lingered. You may not, at first, see all the details of the transformation, but if you let yourself squirm over it for awhile, you should get a general sense of what your displeasing spot needs. With that general sense in mind, walk twenty yards away and consider again. The long view may give you a new idea or two; it may lead you to discard some part of your original vision. Then go back and imagine yourself enjoying the transformation that you've achieved. You may see details now. Or maybe you won't. But you'll have something to get you started. And now is the time to begin.

In my own garden, I find myself lingering in two very different locations. I'm not surprised that I want to spend some time next to the shady nook that's just outside my home office. This is the one place in a pretty large garden where I really don't want to change anything. It is sheltered

from the wind. It gets all the rain from a long roof. And when I made this piece of garden, I did it right: I have no idea how many wheelbarrows full of old leaves and manure I tilled in here, but it was lots, and it has paid off. The crown jewel of this garden patch – a plant I had tried to grow in two previous locations where it sulked, refusing to grow a single inch – is a pair of *astiloides tabularis*. If you don't know this plant, you should. It is bone hardy, and it produces extraordinarily beautiful, almost perfectly round leaves with a lovely scalloped edge. Let me add that, on a well-grown specimen, each such leaf is about thirty inches in diameter; a couple of these plants will convince you that Vermont has just been moved to the tropics. If you can find the right spot – calm, shady, damp, and containing your very richest dirt – you will want an *astiloides*, or maybe even two or three of them. It is hard to have too many.

The other place where I want to linger is on the stone path that parallels the garage. There's nothing fancy planted here, just daylilies in a narrow strip bordered by the path. The garage is painted barn red, and the daylilies – an old, unnamed variety that predates me on this property and a modern hybrid called August Flame – are pretty close to barn red, too; each offers a golden throat for good measure. One variety follows the other, and they provide pleasure, for no work whatsoever, all summer. It is such a simple scheme I'm surprised I want to spend some time there, but the lesson here is that simple is always good and often best.

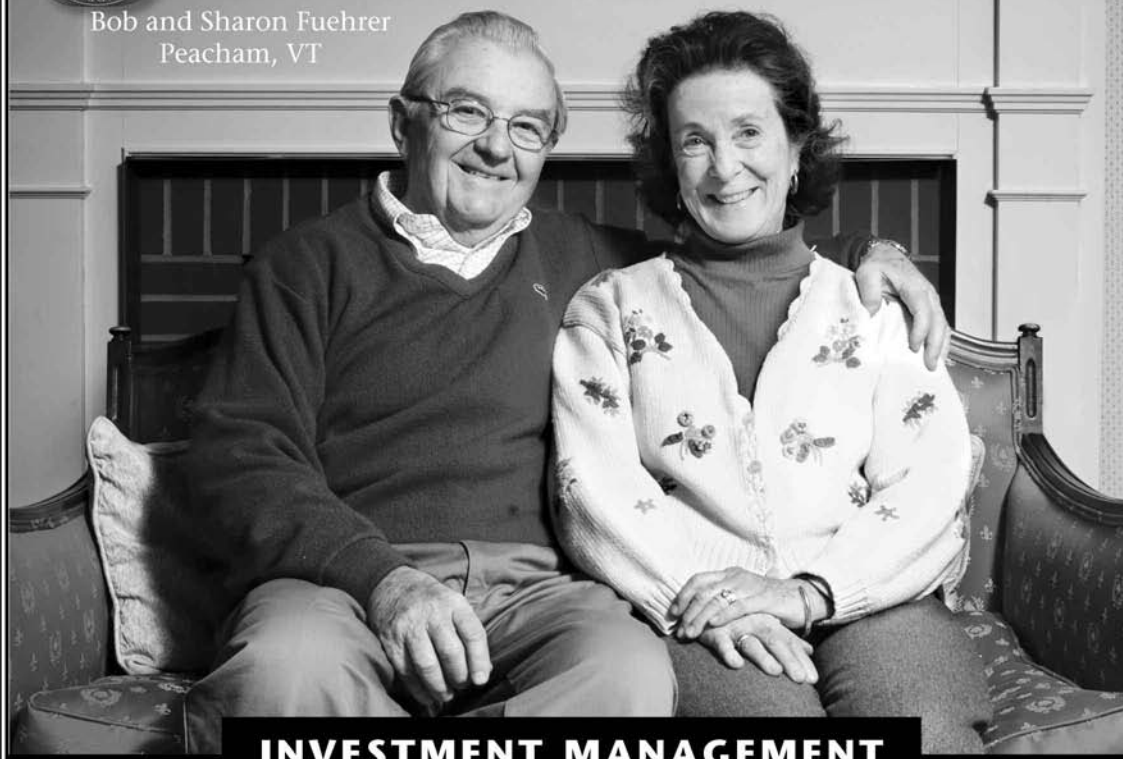
The place I force myself to stop is on the north side of the barn. There's a planting strip here containing a few ferns and a lot of weeds. The soil is poor, but there's plenty of water that runs off that barn roof. I'm seeing daylilies here, probably just old-fashioned tawny daylilies en masse. They'd look great against that barn wall, up close and from the distance at which one usually considers this spot. And, you know, a big clump of *astiloides* at the center of this scene would be pretty nice.

So, before real gardening chores take over, close your eyes and consider your garden. In a year or two, you could have a new place in which to linger.



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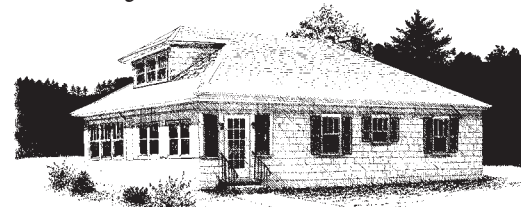
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Letters from the Past

When writing was a necessity and an art

Lynn A Bonfield



The Cowles family, well-known hatters at mid-19th century, had shops in both Coventry and Peacham. The father, Timothy Cowles (1777-1859), and the mother, Susan Fairchild Cowles (1781-1861), settled in Peacham around 1810. By 1814 Timothy opened a hat shop and set the course of a family business. The following letter attests to the fact that eventually four of Timothy and Susan's sons joined in this business. Seth (born 1805) was located in Coventry and his younger brothers, Timothy Jr. (born 1814) and John (born 1816), were in Peacham. Another brother, Charles (born 1817), moved to Massachusetts and in 1847 seemed to be available to offer help in buying supplies for new hats. Each spring Timothy from the Peacham branch traveled to Boston buying materials and checking out the latest fashions and then shared them with the Coventry branch. In 1847 the news from Boston continued to be the popularity of hats made from fur, including muskrat, rabbit, otter, and nutria.

Peacham men relied on the Cowles for their hand-crafted hats. When John S. Way married Sarah Walbridge at the Watts farm on East Hill in October 1848, the guests arrived at six o'clock, the appointed time, but the ceremony was delayed until Sarah's brother arrived from the Corner with a "hat from Cows shop for the man."

Eventually, John expanded the Peacham shop. In the 1850s John went into watch making

and then dentistry, and even brought the town library into his store and served as librarian until his death in 1885. His brother, Timothy, married a local girl, Cynthia Shaw, and went to California in the fall of 1851. He liked the golden state so much, he returned to Vermont to collect his family and transported them all back to California. According to his 1910 obituary, he spent fifty-nine years in Watsonville, California as "a miner, farmer, dairyman, stockraiser, and fruit grower," but not as a hatter.

The youngest Cowles daughter, Martha (born 1819), married the Peacham Academy principal, Charles C. Chase, and in 1845 the couple moved to Lowell with their young son, Charlie. When John wrote this letter, he had no news of the Chases, but later he added a postscript to announce the birth of a second son, with Susan, their mother in attendance.

What makes this family letter such a rare find is the information on hat making in Vermont and especially the line drawing of a hat design. The following letter has some mysteries: What is a rupic? What does it mean to list among the attributes of a newborn baby "not a boot on his foot"?

Peacham
March 29, 1847

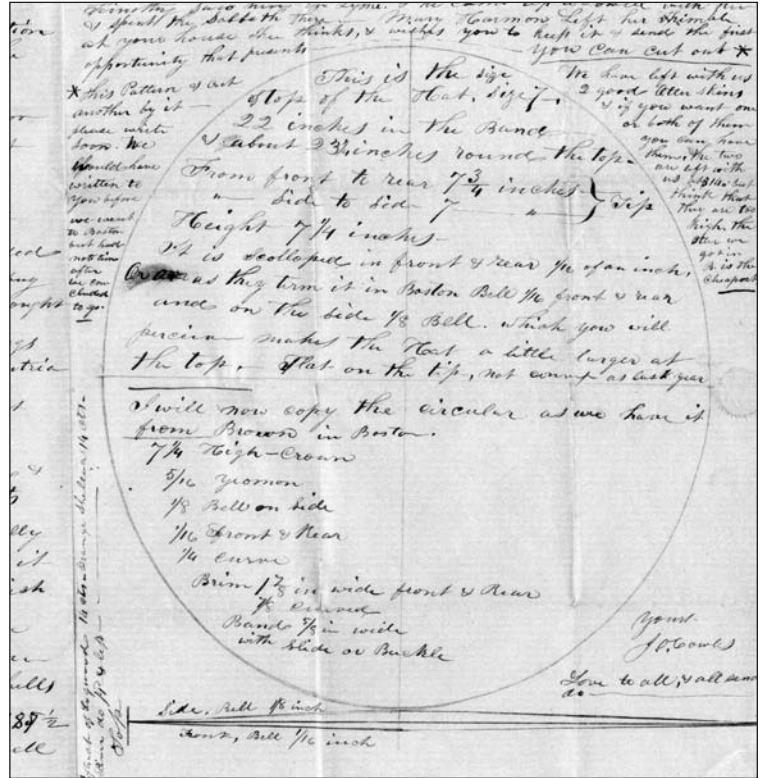
Dear Brother Seth,

We thought that we would take a different course this spring than what has been our usual way & accordingly Sent Timothy off to Boston about the 10th of this month & has bot our Stock for this Spring & got the fashion correct. We have made our blocks & last week finnished off a few hats to try

them & find them right- I can give you the dimensions of one & if you cannot make your blocks from it we will Send you a hat if you will direct what you would like (a mole skin or napt) we got a hat to make ours from-& on the 3d page [of this letter] you will find it described as well as I could-the word yeoman is used which means a hat perfectly straight from the band up, as large at the top as in the band, & 5/16 means so much larger than yeoman (or perpendicular from the band) on all sides, & Bell means the variation from a Straight line from the Band, to the top (Hallowed out like a bell). The variation was so small that I did not make a pattern for the side & front as I have done before but shaved it out by guess with a rule.

We have gone into the business some what larger than usual this Spring & expended in Boston \$150.00 for stock &c. We did not buy on Credit-but paid down. I have Bought things cheaper & a great deal nicer & trimings of the Latest Stamp- Good Side & belly nutria such as we paid cash [last] year \$8 we have bought now for \$6, & good prime muskrat Timothy could have bought for 5.00 pr. Hundred & full skins they did not call worth 2 cents a piece. We bought a Box of Prime Otter 3.00. Belly Stuff Cleared & Blown & if you want some of it you can have some as low as \$12.00. Spannish Bodies 22 cents-and is cheaper than you can make native Bodies & Stock given you. Laces are a little higher. [Rupic?] for shells 75 cents & good raw Coney 1.37½, etc. [Back Rupic?] 1.87½ unblown, &c &c

Timothy Saw Mother in Lowell & [Charles] Chases folks all in usual health-nothing in particular from them-as yet-Brother Charles health is good. Timothy saw him in Lyme & he came up to Lowell with him & spent the Sabbath there- Mary



Here is Page 3 of the letter with the drawing of the new hat style in 1847.

Harmon left her thimble at your house she thinks, & wishes you to keep it & send the first opportunity that presents-

[Drawing of hat; see illustration]

Love to all, & all send same.

Yours,
J. O. Cowles

[written at the top of first page] Since writing this Letter we have had a letter from Mother Stating that Martha has a fine Boy in addition to Charlie & doing well & all in fine spir-

its weighing 9 lbs fat, rugged, & Saucy, & not a boot on his foot.

JOC

The original of this letter is preserved at Special Collections, Bailey-Howe Library, University of Vermont; the editor thanks archivist Sylvia Bugbee for her help. Letters in this series are transcribed as written with no changes to spelling, punctuation, or capitalization. Brackets enclose editor's additions and brackets with a question mark indicate the editor's guess at the word

The Danville Chamber of Commerce Adds A New Role

The Danville Chamber of Commerce (Chamber) has, since the establishment of its Articles of Association in 1977, basically been a civic and social organization. Its primary focus has been to provide financial support to the civic, non-profit organizations in the community. The Chamber has performed admirably in that role as it has contributed in excess of \$62,000 to area organizations over the past 10 years and will continue to support these activities in the future.

However, the Chamber has provided only very limited support to the Danville business community over the past years. This support has primarily been in the form of the distribution of plaques to commercial members and a printed business listing. In effect, the commercial membership fees were commingled with other revenue sources and used to support the primary goal of supporting local civic organizations.

As permitted by its Articles of Association, the Chamber will now take on an additional role of "advancing the commercial, ..., interests of the Town of Danville and vicinity." This new role was approved at the Annual Meeting of the Chamber on February 8th of this year. The Chamber has committed itself to taking an active role in support of the local business community. To facilitate this activity, the Chamber will establish a new web site. The following information will be listed on the Chamber website:

- a. Basic product/service offered, (see listing below, multiple listings are permitted)
- b. Physical location
- c. Mailing address
- d. Phone number
- e. Fax number
- f. Email address
- g. Website address
- h. Hours of operation
- 2) A listing of service/social agencies in Danville (libraries, churches, etc.)
- 3) A calendar of events
- 4) A listing or area attractions
- 5) Linkages to other websites as appropriate (State of Vermont, NEKTTA, etc.)
- 6) Other items as appropriate and as recommended by the membership

Additionally, it is our intent to promote these businesses and area attractions collectively via direct advertising or other appropriate means. We will also place a printed version of the business listing in appropriate area locations for use by residents, newcomers and tourists to Danville and the Danville area.

We are asking that businesses wishing to support this activity contribute \$25 for an annual membership. This membership fee will be used solely to promote the interests of our commercial members.

If you have any questions or desire more information, please contact Ken Linsley @ 684-2528, by email at danvillechamber@charter.net or by US Mail at PO Box 253, Danville, VT 05828

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Photos Courtesy of David Russell and Dick Boera

Over the course of his 100 years, Raymond Russell has had many happy memories, including the creation of the Lyndon Outing Club in 1937. Shown above in 1943 after being drafted into the Army Corps of Engineers during World War II and recently at his new home in Wheelock.

Lyndonville's Raymond Russell

A Centenarian reflects on his happy life

by VIRGINIA DOWNS

Looking over snowy landscapes this winter, Raymond Russell thinks back to the days when he and two other Lyndonville men had the dream of starting an outing club in town. The dream became a reality in 1937 for Russell, Milton Kerr, and Kermit Grant, the founders of the Lyndon Outing Club. Now it is one of only four outing clubs left in Vermont.

The three were chatting about the project on Main Street next to a boarding house and the idea took off within days as they passed it on to fellow skiers. Their friends organized a meeting, elected Kerr president, Grant vice president and Russell secretary-treasurer. Russell's wife Evelyn, an enthusiastic skier since childhood, joined her husband as a regular volunteer, opening and closing the cabin, cooking hot dogs, and cleaning. When the question of lighting the slopes at night came, local merchants were right there with a temporary solution before raising money to construct a system. One of those contacted was this writer's father, who joined others, driving their cars up to the slope and turning on their headlights for the evening.

Russell moved recently to Wheelock to the sunny, welcoming home of Alton and Shirley Britch. He has a private room and personal care provided by the friendly couple. His wife, Evelyn, died a few months after their 75th wedding anniversary three years ago, and living alone was not to his liking. He celebrated his 100th birthday last year. It



Photo Courtesy David Russell

Raymond and Evelyn Russell were among the earliest volunteers running the Lyndon Outing Club, which opened over 70 years ago.

help of his sons when they were in their teens. Sisters Dorothy, Jeannette and Marion did the household chores.

The two émigrés from St. Johnsbury found they much preferred the smaller size of Lyndonville.

"People from different walks of life work very well together here," Russell says. He discovered that very soon, after he had married a local girl, Evelyn Forsythe, in 1930. "I was asked to teach Sunday school in the Congregational

Church where Evelyn was on the membership committee." Today he is a lifetime deacon. Russell's praise of Lyndonville warms the hearts of natives. Many are used to people from "away" contrasting the size of Lyndonville with St Johnsbury, leaving the impression that residents are "hicks from the sticks."

The Music Hall on Broad Street was a bustling center of activity when he came to Lyndonville. He recalls attending 10-cent movies in the large community building. "Evelyn and I smooched in the balcony," he says with a grin. His wife-to-be had taken a job with the John Norris Bag Balm company right after graduation from Lyndon Institute and did secretarial work there for fifty years.

After graduating from St. Johnsbury Trade School, Russell's first job had been at Luther Jewett's men's clothing store in town, where he worked for seven years. It was one of five men's clothing stores in St. Johnsbury at the time, the perfect background for taking ownership of the Moore and Tripp store in 1942, after the death of Mr. Tripp.

With World War II underway, Russell joined Lyndon volunteers to do airplane spotting.

"The town had built a shack near the Catholic Church with a good view of the whole sky. I took the night shift," Russell says, "midnight until eight in the morning, when the next relief started. There were volunteers on duty for twenty-four hours. I had no dependents so I was drafted into the army at the end of 1943. I was assigned to the 333rd Battalion attached to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. It was perfect for me with my experience in

Church where Evelyn was on the membership committee."

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building, especially the addition to the Outing Club cabin. Our outfit was sent to England for a month or two, then during the Battle of the Bulge we were sent across the channel into Germany where I was assigned to bridge building. We built a floating bridge a half mile long across the Rhine River under fire from German planes and our own. We were right out in the open, but never lost a man."

After he was discharged, and the day he returned home at the end of the war, he and his wife contacted the Children's Aid Society. They had started the adoption process before he was drafted and now were more than ready to have a child. They adopted five-month-old David in 1946. Two years later, David learned to ski at the Outing Club, his feet planted on his father's skis as they cruised up by the rope tow. "He became a very good skier," his dad says.

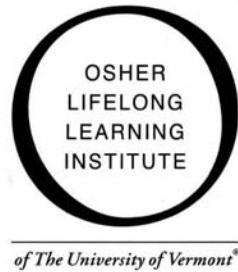
Back in Lyndonville, Russell lost no time returning to his community interests. He and his brother learned that Paul Aubin, who owned a jewelry store near them on Depot Street, had designed a crèche, which he dreamed could become a Christmas scene in front of the Darling Inn. That was fifty-five years ago. The dream became reality when the two Russell brothers built the crèche with pieces of local weathered boards. When it became too unwieldy to move, they rebuilt it into a solid piece, too heavy to transport to storage. "We knew we could count on some business in town to store it for us, and Mike Wheeler was glad to give it a home in his building supply store," Russell says. Russell served many years on the board of directors of the Lyndonville Bank. "They gave me a gold watch when I retired," he recalled with a smile.

One of the most ambitious fund-raising projects undertaken by the Rotary Club took place during his term as club president in 1958. Members built and raffled off a hunting camp on Center Pond. It was one of Russell's favorite projects in Lyndonville, given his fondness for building dating back to his high school years.

Russell's son David, a graduate of Lyndon Institute, spent four years in the Navy during the Vietnam War from 1965 through 1968. Under the GI Bill, he attended Cerritos College in California and graduated with high honors. He lives with his wife Irene in Lakewood, California.

Now retired, David Russell's current pursuit is doing research on "Supercentarians" to learn about "the oldest of the oldest." He sent an e-mail, reporting, "You probably already know it, but Dad is a second generation centenarian. His dad, Perley, lived to be 103 and 3 months. That's a rarity!" Russell agreed to fill out the papers for the Boston University School of Medicine for the study, happy to be part of his son's research.

Intellectual pursuits without tests, papers or grades!



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Osher Lifelong Learning Institute in St. Johnsbury Offers...

Spring 2009 Series

Featuring: Small Town Treasures

► Thursday, April 2 at 1:30 p.m.

Catamount Arts, Eastern Avenue

Arts Building Community— Catamount's Revival!

Robert Swartz presents an illustrated talk about history, architecture and rehabilitation of the Masonic Temple and new Community Arts Center's contributions and features. Bob Swartz is a local social historian and current President of Catamount's Board of Directors.

► Thursday, April 9 at 1:30 p.m.

Catamount Arts, Eastern Avenue

The Masons in St. Johnsbury

Larry Sharer speaks about the history of the Masons, of their coming to Vermont, and the decision of the local chapter to give their building to Catamount Arts. Larry Sharer is a 36 year Mason and past District Deputy Grand Master, and currently Assistant Town Clerk for St. Johnsbury.

► Thursday, April 16 at 1:30 p.m.

Catamount Arts, Eastern Avenue

Reparative Justice-Giving Back: The Caledonia Community Work Camp

Greg MacDonald and Associates discuss the Work Camp, unique in its concept, history and programs. Indeed, its form of reparative justice is a national model, and its contributions to our community, including renovations at Catamount Arts, are varied and significant. Greg MacDonald is Field Director for the Vermont Agency of Human Services.

► Thursday, April 23 at 1:30 p.m.

St. Johnsbury Athenaeum, Main Street

The Making of a Membership Library

Irwin Gelber and Lisa von Kann discuss the movement to membership libraries nationwide, and the beginnings of the Athenaeum. Also featured is the landmark building itself, and the 2003 renovation project. Irwin Gelber is the Athenaeum's Executive Director, and Lisa von Kann is the Library Director.

► Thursday, April 30 at 1:30 p.m.

St. Johnsbury Welcome Center, Railroad Street

This Historic Site

Nathaniel Tripp, founder of the St. Johnsbury Railroad Heritage Society, examines railroading history of this area and the renovation of the St. J. Welcome Center, which he oversaw. Nat Tripp, a former film producer and author of several books, including *Father Soldier Son* and *Confluence*, chairs the Connecticut River Scenic Byway Council and is a member of the Connecticut River Joint Commission and the Vermont Preservation Trust.

► Thursday, May 7 at 1:30 p.m.

Catamount Arts, Eastern Avenue

Architecture of Lambert Packard (1832-1906)

Peggy Pearl discusses Packard's work that survives in many public and private buildings in both New Hampshire and Vermont. Employed as an architect for the E. & T. Fairbanks Company from 1866-1891, he left many fine examples of his Victorian architecture in St. Johnsbury and Lyndonville— one being the Fairbanks Museum, on which this talk will focus. Peggy Pearl is Education Director and History Curator at the Fairbanks Museum.

► Thursday, May 14 at 1:30 p.m.

Catamount Arts, Eastern Avenue

Old Barns and the Vermont Barn Census

Nancy E. Boone explains how farm buildings evolved to serve various agricultural practices in Vermont, and talks about the Vermont Barn Census, that she coordinates. Nancy Boone is the State Architectural Historian and Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, and for 30 years has worked to preserve historic buildings and landscapes in Vermont.

► Thursday, May 21 at 1:30 p.m.

Catamount Arts, Eastern Avenue

The Paddock House in St. Johnsbury

James Herold describes the architecture of this elegant private residence built for Judge Ephrim Paddock in 1820, and its context in the New England Architecture of its time. Jim Herold is a retired Cambridge, MA, architect.

► Thursday, May 28 at 1:30 p.m.

Catamount Arts, Eastern Avenue

String Theory!

Jason Bergman and Colin McCaffrey entertain with a program of "swingin', drivin' and movin' music" on violin, guitar, mandolin and voice. They both teach and record locally and perform internationally.

NOTE: This program, which concludes the Spring 2009 series, is presented in a celebratory setting of casual seating, with wine and non-alcoholic drinks provided at no charge, in Catamount Arts' Cabaret.

For EARLY MEMBERS ONLY: Send in the Membership Application NOW to be included in a FREE Member Appreciation Luncheon at noon, before the first lecture. Delicious food, prepared by the St. Johnsbury Academy Culinary Arts students and served at Catamount's Cabaret.

Individuals pay \$40 membership fee, which covers cost of all 10 sessions. Non-members may attend individual lectures for a donation of \$5. For membership information or additional information about the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute in St. Johnsbury call (802) 626-5135.

Discussion will follow each program.

Funding is provided by the University of Vermont, the Osher Foundation and local sponsors.

To join, mail \$40 membership fee to: Mike Welch, 1187 Main St., Suite #2 St. Johnsbury VT 05819



Clockwise from top: Newcomb and Nancy stand before the crocheted hyperbolic planes that he uses to show the math principles to his workshop students. When Nancy first made these fanciful hats in Maine, she had no idea she was crocheting hyperbolic planes. A coral reef sprouts on Nancy's table. A child models one of Nancy's undersea-like creations.



Mathematicians and artists team up to recreate the coral reef

To see the universe in a ruffle

by SHARON LAKEY

Nancy Lewis dreams of a coral reef—right here in the Northeast Kingdom. In the dead of winter, when our color scheme consists of variations on gray, this sounds intriguing but farfetched. Not so. All it takes is a crochet hook, yarn dyed in the bright colors of the sea, and a little math instruction. “Math?” you ask. Hyperbolic geometry, to be precise, but don’t run to the exits just yet.

On a camping trip in 1997, Daina Taimina, a Latvian mathematician who was working at Cornell, discovered she could crochet a hyperbolic plane, something that had never been seen or felt in 3-D. This simple act shook the math world as it gave tactile expression to a geometry that challenges Euclidian concepts. In fact, hyperbolic geometry challenges former views of our universe. Under Euclidian concepts, our universe is flat and infinite; under hyperbolic concepts, it is round and finite. (See note at bottom of article.)

It turns out that hyperbolic planes, the basic structure of the coral reef, have been crocheted for centuries. To an untrained math mind, though, they are seen as ruffles. Nancy, who grew up in Lewiston, Maine, was instructed in crochet by her grandmother, who was avid about it. In Danville, she points to a lovely potholder hanging on her refrigerator, a circular piece with plump red strawberries nestled in the center. “I made this from one of my grandmother’s patterns,” she said, thumbing through some paper patterns she has inherited.

The patterns didn’t hold her interest for long, though. “I was curious about shapes,” she said. “I became fascinated in filling space with structure.” This curiosity made its way into fanciful creations that became strange crocheted shapes on top of hats, reminiscent of an undersea adventure. She was unknowingly creating hyperbolic planes.

When Nancy moved into our area, she put a few of these hats on consignment at Uniquity in St. Johnsbury. The Wool Away shop is located at the back of the store and when owner Mariam Briggs saw them, she immediately connected them with a new fiber arts movement that was storming the country. She encouraged Nancy to submit some of her creations to the project, which she did through photos.

The project originated with ecology minded twin sisters in Los Angeles, Christine and Margaret Wertheim. They founded and are co-directors of The Institute For Figuring, which educates the public about figuring techniques using the underlying principals of physics. The plight of coral reefs was of particular concern for them and when they connected with Daina Taimina and her hyperbolic crochet models, they went into action.

Inviting crochet artists to submit from all over the world, they created the Hyperbolic Crochet Reef in figures. This exhibition has toured museums and raised the consciousness of the reef in cities from west to east, including Los Angeles, Chicago and New York. Nancy’s pieces are included. “I don’t know where they are now, but I keep getting these postcards and brochures in the mail letting me

know of new openings.” Her name is listed prominently among the contributors with a simple “Nancy Lewis (VT).”

That’s all fine and good, to have her pieces out there traveling in style, but her dream is to bring this into the Northeast Kingdom.

“I would like for a group of us to work together to form our own collaborative coral reef. Right here. Do you think we could do it?” Nancy Lewis

Enter Newcomb Greenleaf of St. Johnsbury, a math professor at Goddard College. “I retired once,” says Newcomb (from places like Columbia and Harvard), “but I’m back to it.” Besides teaching math, Newcomb also teaches Buddhist meditation, and that is how Nancy showed up in his life as a student. Chatting together one day, he found out about her hyperbolic crocheting and before long they had designed a workshop course at Goddard.

Under his direction, Nancy created hyperbolic planes like Daina Taimina’s so he could explain to students the underlying math principles, then the group moves on to crocheting under Nancy’s direction. Nancy is pleased to say, “Everyone but Newcomb has been successful at it. It’s very freeing, because there is no set pattern.”

Newcomb sighs, “My fingers won’t work like that; I think I’m too old.” But it is easy to see that he enjoys this teaming experience. “The work is so tactile,” he says, lifting a wormy looking figure that is lying on the Nancy’s kitchen counter. And indeed, it is so enchanting I had to scrunch it, too, and wondered aloud how difficult it was to create.

“Not hard at all,” says Nancy, smiling. These are simple crochet models, and anyone can do them. She’s going to get her chance to prove it. Catamount Arts is offering a four-hour local workshop on March 28 to all comers who would like to learn the basics. The cost is \$35. “People should come with a hat body,” says Nancy, showing an example of a simple ribbed tube. If you haven’t done your homework, you can purchase one from me for \$5 at the workshop.”

Maybe a few people will get hooked. That is what she is hoping. “I would like for a group of us to work together to form our own collaborative coral reef. Right here. Do you think we could do it?”



Notes: A simple and excellent description of hyperbolic geometry can be accessed at this address <http://theiff.org/oexhibits/oe1f.html> Nancy’s website address is www.medusahats.com. For more pictures and this article, go to: <http://sharonlakey.blogspot.com>.

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Economic conditions take a bite out of film-making

Getting creative

By CARLA OCCASO

Husband and wife team Jay Craven and Bess O'Brien of Peacham say getting the dough to ply their trade is tougher these days so they diversified in some interesting ways.

"In film, the regional voice is not valued. We live in a homogenized, urbanized society," Craven said at a recent meeting of the League of Vermont Writers in Burlington. Craven lamented his inability to attract funding for movie making projects – despite having produced three feature-length films - because, he says, "regional filmmaking" is not popular among studio heads who dole out moviemaking dollars. "The rural regional film does not have caché at Sundance (an independent movie festival) anymore," he said. The economic downturn may have something to do with financial struggles, but getting backing for this kind of film has never been easy, O'Brien and Craven agreed. O'Brien noted most Hollywood movies are set in urban America rather than out in the sticks. Although Craven wrote and directed four

full-length screenplays, which made their way onto the big screen, he has written six others that have yet to attract adequate financial support, he said.

Craven and O'Brien formed Kingdom County Productions in 1991 upon winning a prestigious National Endowment for the Arts grant to make the feature-length "Where The Rivers Flow North" based on a novel by the same name written by Irasburg author Howard Frank Mosher. It starred Rip Torn and Tantoo Cardinal with cameos by Michael J. Fox and then-governor Howard Dean. The duo produced two other movies based on Mosher's novels titled "A Stranger in the Kingdom" starring Martin Sheen and "Disappearances" starring Kris Kristofferson. The films were financed by a combination of investments, donations and government grants, but did not create enough mainstream movie industry interest to insure financing for future projects.

Craven said he made his first film at the age of 17 as a freshman in college inspired by the French new wave. He founded

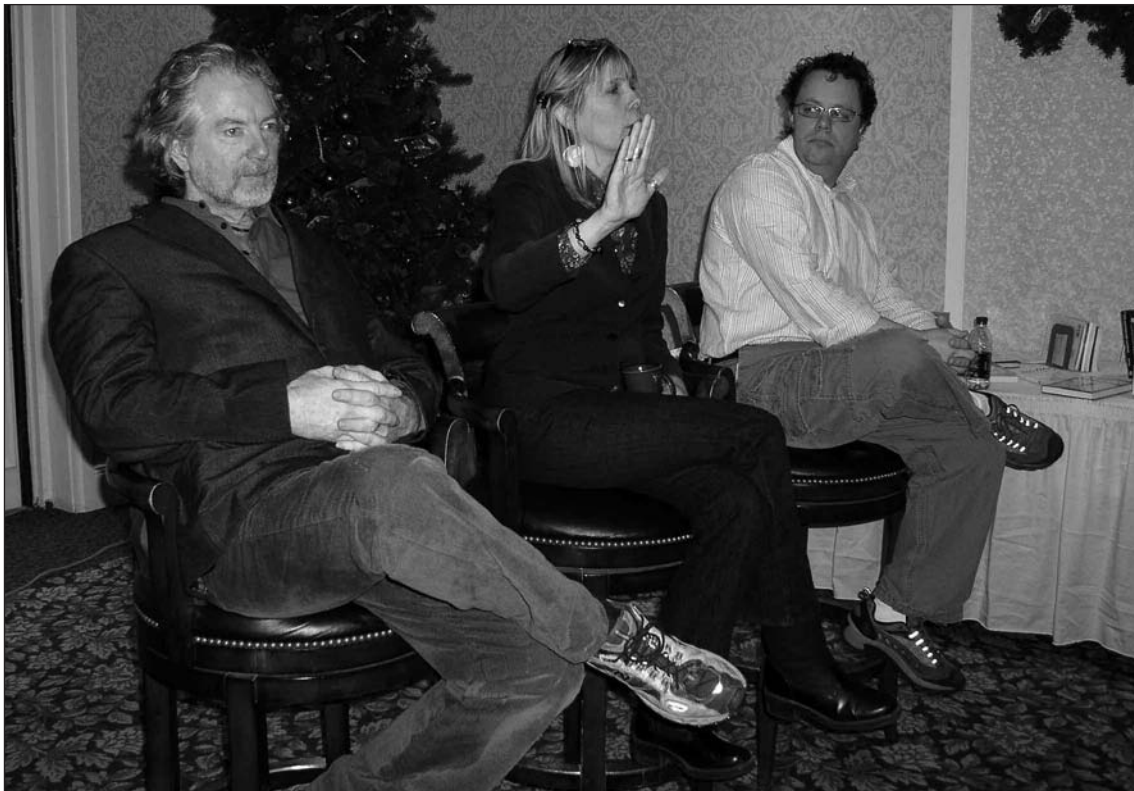


Photo by Carla Occaso

From left, Peacham filmmakers Jay Craven, Bess O'Brien and Rutland filmmaker David Giancola discuss making movies in Vermont at a recent League of Vermont Writers meeting in Burlington.

Catamount Arts in St. Johnsbury in 1975 as a "touring impresario" showing films in small towns before founding Kingdom County Productions to make his own flicks. After years of making movies in Vermont he has learned, he said, "the finances of making films are hard."

Still, Craven and O'Brien have managed to keep money flowing into their coffers by diversifying. Craven writes commentary for Vermont Public Radio, pens a regular column for

the Caledonian-Record and teaches film at Marlboro College. O'Brien has made several documentaries for local and state organizations. Craven was also tapped in July 2008 to produce the 400th anniversary of the arrival of Samuel De Champlain to Vermont called Vermont Celebrates Champlain, according to the Web site celebratechamplain.org.

A press release issued last summer on the same Web site states:

"The City of Burlington is

planning a grand celebration that will attract tens of thousands of visitors and invigorate the entire Champlain Valley through a vivid and dynamic commemoration of our distinctive history, diverse culture, and spectacular natural environment," said Burlington Mayor Bob Kiss. "We're pleased to bring Jay Craven on board to work with local organizations and Burlington officials including City Arts Director Doreen Kraft and Special Projects Manager, Nick Warner. "The Champlain Quadracentennial provides a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to unite the region of Vermont, Quebec, and upstate New York," said Craven. "It gives us a unique chance to showcase Vermont, attract visitors, and affirm far-reaching values and goals that, properly articulated, can provide substantial long-term benefits."

Over the years Craven and O'Brien demonstrated a special flair for capturing cultural arts dollars in Vermont.

Kingdom County Productions produced documentary films "Journey into Courage" in association with The Vermont Network Against Domestic Violence and

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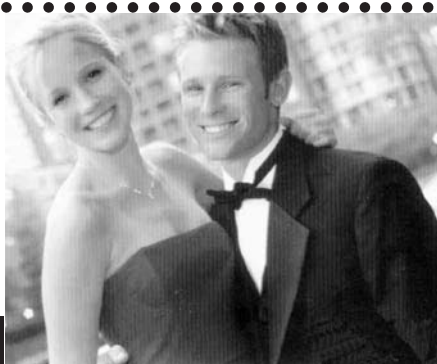
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- Have syrup of ipecac on hand and only administer when your physician or poison control center has instructed you to do so.
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From left: Cindy White, Donna Percy, John Blackmore, Joan Field, George Coppentrath, Betsy McKay, Sam Kempton, Darlene Pilbin, Sue Coppentrath and Cindy Hastings.

Sexual Assault about domestic violence in the Northeast Kingdom. The video version was based on a play O'Brien produced and directed by the same name in the early 1990s. O'Brien also made "Here Today" about heroin use in the Northeast Kingdom. A St. Johnsbury community organization aimed at thwarting drug abuse paid for "Here Today." The Vermont Agency of Transportation paid for Kingdom County Productions to digitally document the Route 2 highway project through Danville in the early 2000s. O'Brien also attracted funding for a movie version of her staged musical "The Voices Project" from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Vermont.

"The Voices Project" is Vermont's answer to the popular Disney movie "High School Musical" only more authentic, O'Brien said, because her film was based on writings by 1,000 Vermont teenagers dealing with issues ranging from suicide, domestic violence and teen pregnancy. The Disney movie contains more shallow themes, she said.

In 2005, O'Brien and her production team spent time interviewing youth from all backgrounds, including in a juvenile

lockdown facility and impoverished rural kids, she said. She used their material to write songs and craft a shooting script. O'Brien said her next project will be funded by the Vermont Department of Children and Families to make a film about foster kids.

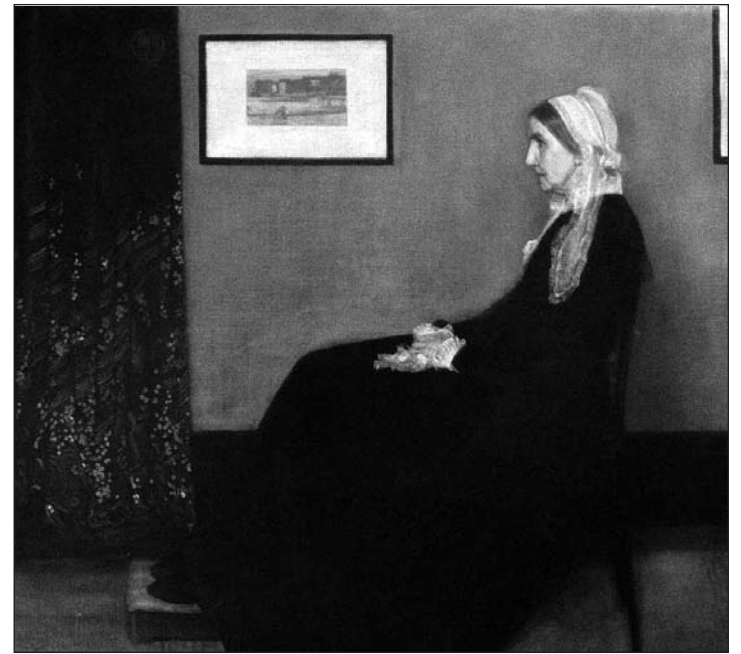
Craven indicated he has multiple irons in the fire, saying, "I am constantly looking for ways to expand the bases of what I do. I have two screenplays...I am quite interested in this radio thing right now." He aims to launch a radio comedy show, he said.

Craven said he continues to be committed to preserving local culture via the arts. "We have been mission-driven in the work we've done... (It is a) human right to be able to have your own story told," Craven said. "It connects who we are; otherwise we become receptacles for homogenized mass media...we have a responsibility to look to the next generations to find their voice."

It might take a major economic turnaround before Craven and O'Brien can get back to making feature films, but for now, they seem to be doing just fine.



Fotos.org



'From Whistler to Warhol'

Catamount Arts will present a free lecture, "From Whistler to Warhol" on Saturday, March 21, 2009 at 3 pm in its Art Center on Eastern Ave. in St. Johnsbury, VT.

From Whistler's Mother to Campbell Soup Cans – what happened? From the 1870's to the 1970's the art world was turned on its head by a series


of seemingly endless revolutions that radically changed our concept of art.

The lecturer will be Bob Manning, artist and retired Professor of Fine Arts. Using two screens and two projectors, he will trace and discuss the influence of one visual philosophy to the next in the context of shifting aesthetics

and world events.

Manning is also an art historian with degrees from Pratt Institute and the University of Hartford. Since 2001 he has been a member of the Speaker's Bureau of the Vermont Humanities Council.


For further information, call Catamount Arts at (803) 748-2600.




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No Small Potatoes

Vanna Guldenschuh

The Irish were a real presence in Vermont in the 1850's, being the largest foreign born group living in Vermont at that time. They originally immigrated to the western side of the state, but were drawn to the St. Johnsbury area by the E&T Fairbanks Company that was starting to manufacture its newly patented platform scale. They created a strong Irish heritage in the Kingdom that included food traditions.

They brought with them not only their beloved potatoes and the many ways of cooking them, but one pot dishes such as bacon and cabbage (now known as corned beef and cabbage) and Shepherd's Pie. The ingredients they were accustomed to using in Ireland translated well to northern New England's growing season.

Many Irish recipes are mimicked in the cookery of New England with certain changes. Beef was the meat with the most availability in the North Country and was used as a substitute for the lamb and pork used in many Irish dishes.

I like to salute the Irish on St. Patrick's Day with a fine meal. One of my favorites is Shepherd's Pie. The traditional Irish Shepherd's Pie was made

with lamb, but you can certainly use beef with the same delicious result.

I suggest starting with a smoked salmon course and ending the meal with an Irish coffee. Black and Tans are always a great beverage to serve throughout the dinner.

Irish Smoked Salmon

- 1 package smoked salmon (precut)
- 2 teaspoons capers
- 3 sprigs fresh dill (optional)
- 1 lemon
- 1 lime
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 2 teaspoons mustard (your favorite kind)
- 1 teaspoon wasabi powder or regular horseradish



Irish Smoked Salmon

Smoked wild salmon from Ireland is considered some of the World's best. It is traditionally smoked over oak giving it a deep orange color and subtle flavor. I have to tell you that it will be hard to find this culinary treasure in the Northeast Kingdom. I suggest you buy the smoked salmon from Duck Trap Farm in Maine that is readily

available in local markets and is a very good product. Always buy a good smoked salmon. It should be the Atlantic variety and come pre-sliced. The accompanying sauce makes this a spectacular dish.

Make the sauce: Squeeze ½ lemon and ½ lime in a non-reactive bowl. Add the mayonnaise, wasabi and mustard and whisk until very smooth. If it seems really watery add a little more mayonnaise and whisk in well. Put it in a capped mason jar and store in the refrigerator until ready to use. You can make this a couple of days ahead of time. It keeps well.

Plate the Salmon: After I open the salmon, I cut it in half, horizontally, to make the pieces smaller before setting on the platter. Sprinkle the capers over the salmon and arrange the dill and lemon and lime slices around it. Put the bowl of sauce on the side.



Irish Shepherd's Pie

On St. Patrick's Day take a little more time with this recipe and make a truly spectacular dish by putting the mashed potatoes over a true Irish lamb stew. Once you have tried this you will never make one with ground beef again.

Sauté the chopped garlic in about a quarter cup of olive oil in a large fry pan over medium high heat until just browned. Add the onions and sauté until they are browned and soft. Take them out of the pan and set aside. You can use this frying pan to brown the meat – no need to wash it.

Mix the flour with one teaspoon thyme and add salt and pepper to flavor. Put the cubes of meat in a large bowl and pour the flour over it. Toss it a few times to cover the meat, then put the floured meat in a large mesh strainer and shake all the

Irish Shepherd's Pie

- 1 small boned leg of lamb – defatted and cut into cubes (can use beef)
- 1 cup flour
- 2 teaspoons dried thyme
- 1 cup olive oil
- 2 cups beef stock
- 1 bottle Guinness stout or other dark beer
- 1 leek – chopped (optional)
- 1-2 cloves garlic - chopped
- 2 onions – chopped
- 4 carrots – cut into diagonal pieces (fairly thin)
- 4 scallions – chopped
- 2 cups frozen pearl onions
- 2 cups frozen peas
- ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley
- 6-8 potatoes – peeled and cubed
- 1 cup of milk
- Salt and pepper
- Sugar

add some water or broth. The liquid should be fairly thick at the end of cooking. It should be more like gravy for the meat.

While the meat is stewing put the carrots and pearl onions into a bowl with 2 tablespoons of olive oil. Sprinkle salt, pepper and 2 tablespoons of sugar over them and toss until well mixed. Put them on a flat tray in one layer and roast in a 400 degree oven for about 30 minutes. Put them in a bowl with the frozen peas and set aside.

Peel the potatoes and cut them into cubes. Boil them until they are very soft. Strain them and using an electric mixer, whip them with the milk and butter until smooth. Stir in 2 teaspoons of salt and mix well. Set aside.

When the meat is tender, add the vegetables to it and give a stir. Pour the meat into a big casserole dish and top with a thick layer of the whipped potatoes. Dot with butter and put in a 400 degree oven for about 15 to 20 minutes or until bubbling hot and browned on top.

Let it sit for about 15 minutes after it comes out of the oven and scoop out generous helpings for everyone. Serve with a green salad and Irish soda bread if you have it.

Black & Tan
Guinness Stout
Lager Beer




Black & Tan

My one piece of advice on St. Patrick's Day – DON'T DRINK GREEN BEER! Instead make a Black and Tan. I personally have not had much luck getting the stout to stay on the top – but it is always fun trying and you get to drink your mistakes.

Fill a pint glass half way with a lager beer. Then, using a spoon (turned backside up) and a slow and very controlled pour, layer the Stout on top of the lager beer. Enjoy!

Add the scallions, leek, parsley and remaining thyme and simmer for about 1-2 hours or until the meat is tender, checking to make sure there is enough liquid in the pot to keep it from sticking. If it reduces too much,

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Examples of change

The Northeast Kingdom's cycle can teach us about the patterns of society

by SUSAN BOWEN

After an unusually long period of steady cold winter weather, with ice forming deeper and deeper on the brook, with snowfall after snowfall on house and field, we have had a thaw.

Snow pack has fallen from the roofs, melted into the ground from field and yard, and the brook presents an entirely new prospect to the eye. It has risen, of course, as the snow has melted, and the curving expanse of white has become an uneven pattern of white remaining snow, and a whole range of greys where moisture has filtered into the snow in varying amounts. The water itself retains the deepest of

black as it flows over the greys of sunken slabs of ice. The smoothest flowing reaches of the stream are now open water, while the stretches broken by rocks and old branches are still unevenly covered by ice and snow.

The warm weather also affected the road, of course, and those venturing forth in the early evening encountered the proverbial muddy roads. Later on, the temperature returned to winter conditions, the mud stiffened; and evening travellers arrived home without difficulty.

This sort of event is very familiar to those who live in the Northeast Kingdom, of course, as familiar as the pattern of our days

from sunrise to sunset and back to sunrise is even to our youngest natives. But there are other patterns, too, also well-known, such as the pathway of human life from birth to death, which frames us all. One of the areas in which we see changing patterns is in our history, not only the history of any one country but of humankind as a whole. Over and over again, old beliefs have changed, new habits of life and thought have enriched our understanding of the amazing world in which we live.

As an example of change, after the Roman Empire collapsed, it was a long time before it was clear that a new period, later called the Middle Ages, had taken its place.

Trade was stagnant, social organization had disintegrated, existing mostly on the local level. Bit by bit, the new formation took shape. A new trade route formed along the coast of northern Europe to serve in the increasingly important trade in cloth. The new Christian church grew in importance, in teaching not only theology but also the old Greek subjects like logic and rhetoric. They were allied with various rulers in forming a Christian Europe. Technology and architecture were flourishing with cathedral-building, and the development of wind- and water-power.

There have been and, I suppose, always will be disagreements about when one period ended and another started. There will be change; no system lasts forever. There will naturally be a period

when the old and the new are mixed; the old ways are changing, and new possibilities become apparent. Do we see such signs today? Some people greet the new with enthusiasm and others hold on anxiously to the old. Some signs of obsolescence are wars, or loss of population due to plague (as in the fifteenth century), or a disintegrating economy. The best thing to do is to encourage the best of the new, and be wary of those with selfish motives who want to ensure their own best interests, perhaps in itself a sign of a waning society.

As we can see, changes in the way we understand the world follow a pattern just as we see smaller, more familiar patterns in our daily lives, patterns of meals, of work, of youth and old age, of the generations.

Neighborhood heroes

by VAN PARKER

One of the many balls following the inauguration of our new President was called the Neighborhood Ball. President Obama spoke briefly, reminding people that the word neighborhood meant we were all related to one another. Then he and Michelle moved on to the next of the ten balls they attended.

Every neighborhood contains many individuals. What makes it a neighborhood is how those individuals relate to one another. Our immediate neighborhood in the winter is small by any standards. It consists of 14 cottages, inhabited by 14 women and two men, all over 62 years of age, some way beyond that.

Alice and Ruth live in a cottage diagonally across from ours. They ought to be nominated for something. They are each somewhere in their 80's and are two of the most intrepid people we know. Since selling their house and moving to our little village they have had a number of health problems, including stays of various lengths in local hospitals.

But they keep coming back. Each of them owns a walker with wheels attached. On any day, where the temperature may be only a little above zero, they are circling the walkway around the cottages.

Fairly frequently, they will stop by the house to bring some rolls or doughnuts or to tell us some bit of news. One time they brought an old picture of my dad and stepmother, taken many years ago in Peacham. The church they attend is no more than 150 feet from their cottage, and they go when it's not too icy and even serve on one of the church boards.

Last summer, after a series of break-ins involving six of the cottages, Ruth questioned one man who was riding around the premises on his bicycle. He said he was an undercover policeman.

As self-reliant as they are, Alice and Ruth do need some help and have found a companion, nurse, chauffeur, and travel agent all rolled into one. This winter she is flying with them to Florida. On other occasions, she has driven Ruth and Alice to Cape Cod and

Cape May, New Jersey among other places.

On snowy days, residents of our little community are asked to leave their cars in a nearby parking area so the snow removal people can remove the snow from our usual parking spots. It's a drill we're used to. Ours was the last car to be moved. It hadn't started snowing yet, and the air seemed very still. I could see the lights in the other cottages and thought of the people in them, including Alice and Ruth. My wife was spending the night with our next door neighbor who had just come home from a cataract operation.

Our little community of Hartmeadow is never a rowdy place. But it seemed a little quieter than usual, a long way from the gala activities surrounding the inauguration of a new president. But it still felt like a neighborhood.

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Making (Sound) Waves at the Fairbanks Museum & Planetarium

by ANNA RUBIN

Close your eyes for a moment and listen for the variety of sounds that are around us all the time. From insect buzz to ambulance sirens, sounds accompany us through the woods, in the field, and on the highway. When these sounds are organized into phrases, the resulting music has the power to transport. Certain songs evoke a time and place long gone, other tunes take us to places we've never seen. Every human culture makes music, and there is evidence that we've been using instruments for over 50,000 years.

The Fairbanks Museum & Planetarium presents a new special exhibit, *Sound Waves: Many Shapes of Music*, this month. An opening reception on Friday, March 27, celebrates the variety of forms these instruments take. The reception is open to everyone.

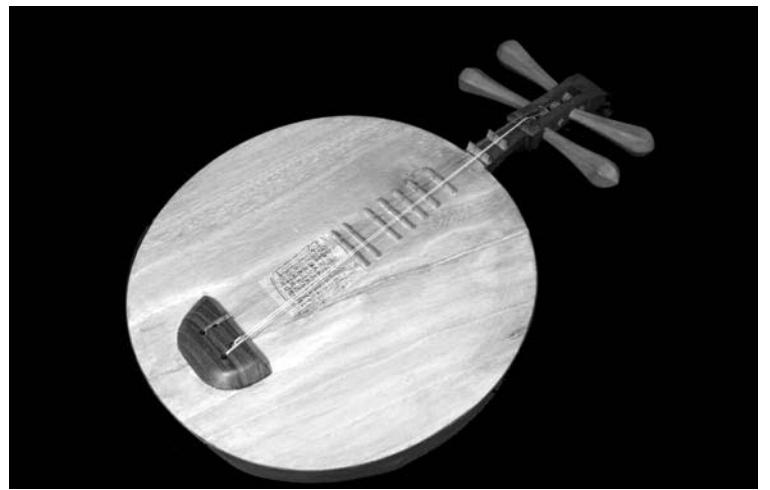
Franklin Fairbanks must have been interested in music

because he collected fascinating and unusual instruments from all over the world. Some of the instruments in the exhibit are from his original collection; some were collected by his peers and colleagues; and many of the pieces date from the Victorian era and earlier. This exhibit puts the instruments into a humanities context. These examples of 100-year old horns, drums, pipes, and guitars, along with more recent additions to the Museum's collection, inspire wonder at the variety of ways people have devised to blend sounds in harmony. Joanne Adams, the curator of *Sound Waves*, comments that the exhibit can be enjoyed on several levels, "You'll see over 60 musical instruments from around the world that are visually intriguing - crafted with great care and talent. Add to their visual appeal the ability to make music with these beautiful pieces! It's intriguing to

imagine how they would have been used in performances, to inspire dance, or as part of community or religious rituals. We are planning to have recordings of many of the instruments to give visitors access to the way these amazing objects can produce sometimes surprising sounds."

Since musical instruments need to be banged or rattled or plucked to produce their unique sound, the exhibit includes an interactive piece that invites visitors to try their hand at harmony. Museum educator Bobby Farlice-Rubio has been devising a "wave maker," which will allow guests to come up with their own sounds. He is also developing a series of classes at the Museum that make use of this exhibit as a way of teaching fundamental principles of sound - and having a really good time in the process!

When asked how she feels about the objects in this exhibit, Joanne Adams says, "I love them all - it's like naming one's favorite dessert! To me, they all have stories to tell, but they don't speak my language, so I can only imagine, and try to listen to their songs. I like some individual instruments because of their shape and color, purely an aesthetic choice. One of our lutes it has beautiful wood



inlay on the neck of the instrument. Another has a carved bird head at one end and the head of a cat at the other. Neither makes any difference to the music it produces, but they are such amazing adornments."

Taken as a whole, the instruments inspire thought about humans and music. This exhibit takes a look at differing attitudes toward musical instruments and the people who make them, Adams points out that "each culture devotes precious time and resources to creating instruments, and the instrument craftsmen in some cultures are held in high esteem or imbued with special powers. Some cultures expect that music is part of everyone, while others have the notion that music is performed by professional artists."

Charlie Browne, Executive Director of the Museum, is enthusiastic about the ways *Sound Waves* will inspire visitors and school groups throughout the year that it is on display. He says, "Drawing from the Museum's exceptional collections of musical instruments

from around the world, using contemporary audio devices, and applying several years of scholarship, this exhibition will invite visitors to explore why and how humans make music; how this universal musical imperative has expressed itself in the creation of a vast range of musical instruments; and how these instruments from around the world draw upon a very limited set of sound-making principles."

Sound Waves: Many Shapes of Music, is the result of a collaborative effort that has taken years to come together. Local talent is responsible for the exhibit, and each person involved brings different skills and mindsets. In addition to her title as curator, Joanne Adams describes her role as providing "curiosity and wonder, followed by design problem-solving." Special thanks goes to Robin Rothman, Emily Hurn and Jamie Hight for their meticulous work, and to John and Barbara Matsinger for their support. This exhibit would not be possible without their combined commitment to excellence.

Sound Waves will open on March 27 with a reception from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. Everyone is invited to enjoy the reception and to visit this special exhibit, which will be on view through 2009.



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Woody on Words

The ABC's of it

by WOODY STARKWEATHER

We have this alphabet, a remarkable invention really, making it possible to write down words according to their sounds, at least to a certain extent. Some languages, like Chinese for example, don't have an alphabet; it must be hard for Chinese children to learn to read, although most manage it. We share our alphabet with the European countries, thanks to Caesar's conquests, which superimposed Latin on the various native languages. So today, it's easier for English speakers to learn French, German, Spanish, etc., than it is Russian, Arabic, or Chinese because the European languages have the same alphabet as English.

Using names for the letters, we all learn our alphabet, in between naps, milk and cookies, and story time. Think how hard it would be to memorize ABCDEFG without being able to say or sing ay (as in hay), bee cee dee ee eff gee. Remember the melody? Of course. But it's easy to overlook the conventional names for each letter. A close look at these names shows them to be quirky, even whimsical.

We say ay, bee, cee, dee, ee, following a nice rule (the sound of the letter followed by ee produces the name for the letter – let's call it Rule 1), but then suddenly there is eff. Rule 2 – put the sound of the letter at the end of the name with the vowel eh. But why change rules? Why can't F be called fee,? And G too is a little odd. Shouldn't it be called gee as in geese?

OK, we're getting somewhere --- if we stick with Rule 1 we'd say ay, bee, cee, dee, ee, fee, gee (as in geese).

So far so good. But then we come upon aitch. Unexpected and out of place, like going for a walk in the woods and tripping over a steering wheel.

What's that doing here? It should be hee. But of course, language isn't logical. Still, aitch is just too odd. It has its own rule. We put people in jail for making up their own rules. Aitch is not really criminal, but it seems a little gauche. Hee has more decorum, better breeding. So we're making progress; we have ay, bee, cee, dee, ee, fee, gee (geese), hee.

The next consonant is jay. Just when we were remaking the letter names into a logical pattern, following one rule, jay introduces a whole new idea, iconoclastic I think, a troublemaker. Since we've changed the name for G into gee (geese), we could use jee for J. Still with me? Ay, bee, cee, dee, ee, fee, gee(geese), hee, aye, jee. We'll get back to I and the other vowels in a minute.

Since jay has broken the mold, so to speak, kay shows up, jay's partner in crime. Personally I'd like it to be kee. There's no reason not to.

And then we're back to Rule 2 for ell, em, en. OK. OK. I can adapt. But then we go back to Rule 1 for pee. And "cue" for Q is another weird one. It could have been quee, or even quay but nooooo; it has to be cue.

Then along comes "are" – another idea. Would ree have been so terrible?

Then, with ess, we revert yet again to Rule 2, as in eff, ell, em, and en. Of course it can't be cee because we've used that for C, and we can't change C to kee because we've used that for K. So I guess we're stuck with ess.

The alphabet names return to Rule 1 toward the end -- tee and vee, but doubleyou, or Dubya as we have heard lately, is like aitch and cue -- simply off the wall. It should be doublevee at least. Scholars think that it's called doubleyou because in the days before printing, letters had to be incised in something hard like stone, and the straight lines of V were easier to make than the curved ones of U. So V was used in writing to stand for U. So now we say doubleyou when we mean doublevee. It really doesn't make sense, but it's the way language is – organic, messy, a little wierd.

Eks seems to follow rule 2. But wye for Y is another strange one. And finally, in America at least, we end up back at Rule 1 for zee. The British, as we know, say zed. Well, they're Brits after all. They have their own sense of how things should be pronounced. So there are two rules for naming the letters, consonant-then-ee and eh-then-consonant and the four strange ones -- H, Q, Y, and W.

The vowels are only a little strange. A, E, I, and O are all named with one of the sounds we use them for, although we use them for many other sounds as well. But U is different for no apparent reason, fancied up with that extra y sound at the beginning. It really ought to be oo.

So my suggestion for alphabet names is ay, bee, cee, dee, ee, fee, gee(geese), hee, aye, jee, kee, lee, mee, nee, oh, pee, quee, ee, ess (sorry), tee, oo, vee, wee, eks, yee, zee.

The only trouble is that when it is logical (more or less) like this, it sounds as though it were invented by someone in the

Department of Education with too much time on his hands.

And while we're remaking the alphabet, let's do away with all those silly double letters we use to represent sounds that don't have their own place in the alphabet. I'm thinking of NG, SH, CH, and TH. We could call these new letters ing, shee, chee, and thee. And we'd have to figure out where to put them in the alphabet. But no matter where we put them, we'd have to stop using the alphabet to sort with, at least until people learned the new order. The ability to sort with the alphabet is as wonderful a thing as the way it represents sounds, but it depends on everyone knowing the order of the letters. My idea would mess that up.

This whole article is, of course, a completely cockeyed idea. Even if it were possible to change the forms of language with a directive, such a move would, at the least, drive millions of small children and their parents bananas.

But in the Soviet Union that's just what they did. In 1929 the Soviets imposed the Latin alphabet on the people of Central Asia, taking away the Arabic they were used to. Then, less than 20 years later, they imposed the Cyrillic alphabet and removed the Latin. Three different alphabets in the span of a lifetime. The Chinese too, recognizing their need for an alphabet, tried to impose the Latin one, but the people would simply not accept it. Attempts to dictate aspects of language rarely succeed.

So if this is such a cockeyed idea, you may well ask, why am I writing about it? Well, the winters are long here in Vermont. And you can busy yourself removing snow for only so long before you have to come inside and do something silly.

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Peacham's Raymond S. Blanchard announces new book



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Raymond S. Blanchard was raised in Peacham where his ancestors settled in 1777. He is a writer of poetry in addition to writing and producing television series on health care.

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Walden Hill Journal

A mild March

by ELLEN GOLD

Mar. 1, 2008

It's hard to say whether March came in like a lion or lamb. I'd have to characterize it as a gentle lion or rambunctious lamb. Roaring winds overnight gave way to absolute calm by afternoon. Several more inches of snow were added and the sun made a weak appearance just before setting. I made my usual snowshoe loop, slugging through the fresh powder. It was absolutely still and pristine in the woods, a very peaceful end-of-the-day journey.

Mar. 3, 2008

March has a very convincing way of stopping one from complaining about too much snow. It's called sleet and

freezing rain. We had a taste of some this morning but were treated to sunshine this afternoon. Yesterday was spent driving over to the Mount Washington Hotel for a magnificent, clear, winter view. Musers were out giving sled rides and people were cross country skiing as well. While we were out enjoying the day, our roof snow came down and blocked access to the garage. We parked for the night in the upper drive and spent the morning chopping away at the accumulated, hard packed snow. Then I had to scrape off the ice encrusted car windows before heading back down into the garage. The roof snow in the back is responding to the afternoon sun and plopping down onto the already very high mound



Photo by Jeff Gold

that's built up over the winter. It's just at the bottom of the window ledge, the highest we've ever seen it grow.

Mar. 7, 2008

The thermometer is climbing up into the 40's with 50° readings in full sun. A bit of melting is underway but we've a long way to go. Snowshoeing on our well trodden path is surprisingly firm but other areas are very slushy with unsure footing where underground water is eroding away the solid base of snow. Chickadees are beginning to warble and a few sap buckets are hung in Bethlehem. We'll "spring" ahead the clocks on Sunday and begin the long journey into Spring.

Mar. 11, 2008

A high of 45° today after an 8° start to the morning makes it finally feel like March is inching forward towards trying to find Spring. A few bare patches are becoming visible at lower elevations. Deer beginning to seek out grass are appearing near the road during the day. We drove to Queechee today for a birthday lunch for Jeff at Simon Pearce. We had unexpected sunshine for the entire day. More bare ground appeared as we traveled south with some bright green moss exposed on the rocks of the roaring falls underneath the old mill restaurant. We had a nice view of the covered bridge, covered with snow,

that is. Two groups of grazing deer, a flock of wild turkeys also feeding on open ground at the base of a tree, one soaring hawk and one majestically perched high on a limb and three ducks on the Ottaqueechee River were our wildlife sightings for the day. With the extra hour of daylight savings time, we were able to extend our enjoyment of this beautiful, mild, sunny day.

Mar. 17, 2008

Fresh dusting of snow on the fields and mountains whitens up our view. Clear blue sky, bright sunshine and hanging sap buckets give a promise of moving towards Spring. Several feet of snow plant us firmly into Winter

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Photo by Jeff Gold

but longer daylight takes away that deep winter gloom. Tracks in the snow show where deer had crossed earlier this morning. We counted 12 in 3 different groupings, grazing along I-93 at twilight a few days ago. Bare ground may be exhilarating for us, but it's a necessity for the hungry, winter-weary deer.

Mar. 20, 2008

Vernal Equinox. It may be Spring on the calendar but we still have both feet firmly planted in Winter. Sleet, freezing rain and more snow have been falling throughout the day. Our wakeup call was not the melodious song of the robin but the swish and clunk of the snowplow coming up the road. It's a good indoor day with some time outside to chisel through the ice and shovel and snowblow.

Mar. 23, 2008

Glaring ice reflects the rising sun. Several feet of snow cover the ground with drifts mounding halfway up

our windows. 11° is the best the thermometer can do this Easter Sunday. At least we're enjoying a sunny weekend, the first one this month. We've earned a reprieve after several days of Arctic-like weather, complete with gusting, blizzardy, white-out winds. We've had to snowblow and shovel the drifts to get out of the driveway and then do the same to get back in. Despite it all, it's still beautiful. Clear nights with an intensely bright full moon, steel gray skies with the setting sun back lighting glistening tree tops and the purity of the soft freshly fallen snow help to balance the scales against the hardships of Winter.

Mar. 25, 2008

Several days of glorious sunshine. We've had spectacular views of the White Mountains, especially from the NH side. We had a Mount Washington day Easter Sunday, starting with the perfectly clear view from Sugar Hill. Fresh powder capped the scene in pristine winter white. We continued along the Gale River in Franconia then headed north towards Twin Mountain where Mt. Washington dominates the sky. Twin Mountain's mascot seems to be the moose with wooden moose planted everywhere. Even the local police station has a large wooden moose clothed in jail house

stripes. You definitely need to maintain a sense of humor when March rolls around. Today was a VT view of Mounts Washington, Lafayette and Cannon from various points on the logging roads in the Fire District land. We donned the snowshoes and headed up the hill, across the beaver pond and meandered through the woods. We hooked up with two other snowshoe trails left by neighbors who were out exploring as well. The beaver lodge is locked up tight with a thick coating of snow. A small depression centered on top tells of warm air being expelled from within. Clouds are moving in with snow predicted overnight. Accumulations are supposed to be light. We'll see!

Mar. 31, 2008

We're roaring out of March with more snow, sleet and freezing rain. It seems like we're ending the month with more snow on the ground than when it began. At least we've had some beautiful sunny days to enjoy playing in the snow. My neighbors were gently pulling their children on a sled behind their snow machine over the weekend, with one of their dogs joining in on the fun. With so much snow so late in the season, it's a matter of "if you can't fight 'em, join 'em". Deer have been desperately seeking open ground and are seen throughout the day. Unfortunately one large buck met the front end of the car ahead of me on I-93 a few days ago.

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What's happening at town hall

Cabot

Town Clerk: Tara Rogerson
 Selectboard: Larry Gochey, Caleb Pitkin and Ted Domey

February 5, 2009

Historical Society - Dave Houston and Hollis Prior were present as representatives of the Greenbanks Hollow Conservatory branch of the Danville Historical Society. They explained that Cecil Lyons who owns the land around the town-owned old school property and northeast side of the covered bridge, is willing to donate 3.9 acres to the Town through the Historical Society. This would add additional land and structures from the Greenbanks area settlement to the town archives, allowing the Town direct access and ownership to the other structures at the settlement as well. This would be no cost to the town. After some further discussion, Walsh moved to gratefully accept the land from Mr. Lyons to further enhance the Greenbanks Hollow Historical Site. There was some discussion about the transfer tax of approximately \$709, Marion Sevigny suggested the townspeople donate money to cover the transfer.

January 21, 2009
Town Meeting - Petitions for the 2009 warning were received in the Town Clerk's Office as of Jan. 21. Selectman Caleb Pitkin asked that the Town attorney review the proposed petitions. In regards to the proposed budget, Pitkin asked that an informative meeting regarding the proposed increase of wastewater fees be scheduled.

Health Issue - A health complaint was received regarding Cabot property owners. Pitkin told other members he would keep in contact with Gary Gulka on this issue.

Danville

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

January 22nd, 2008

Resignation - The Board read a letter of resignation from William Crews from the Board of the Danville Rescue Service. Michael K. Walsh moved to accept Bill's resignation with regret; which was approved. The Board read a letter of resignation from Steve Cobb as Town Auditor effective Town Meeting Day. Walsh moved to accept Steve's resignation; which was approved.

Animal Control - Jo Guertin was present as the Animal Control Officer to discuss a horse that was lacking shelter, food, water and proper care. The horse was removed from the property with the keepers consent, and is receiving proper care with Veterinary supervision. After further discussion, Walsh moved to have Merton and Jo discuss this with the town attorney, and try to gain ownership of the horse in lieu of pressing cruelty to animal charges, and prevent other farm animals from being

brought onto the property. Marion Sevigny seconded the motion which was approved.

Road Agent - Kevin Gadapee in reported that winter road maintenance has continued to slow, allowing for equipment repairs, snow removal, and some time off. The break in the weather was also attributing to less usage of sand and salt. They will continue winging back roads with the grader, opening catch basins and removing ice from bridges. Looking towards spring work, he will send out bid requests to bridge contractors as soon as possible, to get an early starting schedule on the repairs to the Harvey's Hollow Bridge. Walsh moved to approve sending the bridge specifications out to bid, Sevigny seconded the motion which was approved. The board reviewed the certificate of town highway mileage that was unchanged from last year. Walsh moved to approve the highway certificate of mileage, Sevigny seconded the motion, which was approved.

Tax Reduction - Merton reported that, according to his figures as posted on the suggested budgets for 2009, the combined taxes for Municipal and Highway budgets would be reduced approximately \$3.98 cents from last year's taxes. He also reported that the grant approval for two radios for the fire department tankers has been received, a total of \$3,774. He and Gadapee will be looking into a mitigation grant for a larger culvert for Brown Brook on Kittredge Road.

Planning Board - Walsh noted that Dana Boudreau was a candidate for an alternate to the Planning Commission. He moved to appoint Dana Boudreau as an alternate to the Planning Commission, which was approved.

Lyndon

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

February 2, 2009

Building Evaluation - A report by a structural engineer was reviewed. The

municipal building is structurally sound. Further testing will be done on the gymnasium.

Highway Projects - The 2009 summer highway projects will be stream bank stabilization on Sheldon Brook Road, drainage ditching on Brown Farm Road, and a box culvert on South Wheelock Road.

Peacham

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

January 21, 2009

Road Matters - Mark Chase, road foreman, reported all road equipment is working fine with no breakdowns. Mack's Mountain Road plowing at the Cabot end is going well. Ha'Penny Road and Penny Street culvert replacements have been scheduled as summer projects. A proposal for the purchase of a new Town vehicle was presented. The vehicle would be a one-ton Chevy pickup with a plow for winter plowing. The Town's Ford Ranger would be traded in. The Board directed the Road Foreman to negotiate with the dealer to lower truck price.

Emergency Shelter - A grant application to fund the Town's Emergency Shelter generator was discussed. Jo Anne Post, representing Town emergency management coordinator Jerry Senturia, provided comments about the grant application. The deadline for the grant application is Feb. 6, 2009. Due to time constraints and the lack of available matching funds no action was taken on the proposed project.

St. Johnsbury

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

February 9, 2009

Australian Ballet - Chairperson Quatrini opened the Public Hearing and asked for comments related to the proposed Charter Amendment. Werner

Heidemann said that this proposal represents a fundamental change in the way St. Johnsbury residents participate in local government. Heidemann said that we have a responsibility as citizens, and removing the discussion and ability to make decisions at a Town Meeting will be taking away something that historically is very important. Bernie Timson asked about members of the Select Board and the School Board meeting on the same evenings, which may prevent residents from participating in the discussions in preparing the budgets. Bruce Corrette said normally the Boards meet on opposite Mondays but, during the Budget season - both boards do meet almost every Monday. Peter Crosby said he supports the traditional town meeting. Crosby said with Australian Ballot, you can only vote "yes" or "no" - there is not an opportunity for discussion, or amendment to the proposed budget. Crosby said Town Meeting is where many people get their information about the budget. Mary Smith said people have a right to vote regardless of how well informed they are, and more people would be able to cast ballots with Australian ballot. Bruce Corrette said once the Board adopts a budget, the Australian ballot provides no way to adjust that budget either up or down. Diane Beck said she is in favor of the Australian Ballot as the most democratic way to conduct business. Beck said she would like to know whether or not Town Meeting would still be held, as she felt that it is an important step in providing input. Sandy Grenier said there would probably still be a meeting but no changes could be made in budget amounts on the Australian ballot.

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March 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 \$2.50 per meal is appreciated. Phone (802) 633-4068.

March 4 - Salisbury steak, mashed potato, gravy, mixed vegetables, dark bread, vanilla pudding, mandarin oranges.

March 6 - Buffet

March 11 - Chile Con Carne, tossed salad, corn bread and sliced pears.

March 13 - Corned beef and cabbage, potato, carrots, turnip, homemade rolls, tropical fruit.

March 18 - Corn chowder, egg salad sandwich, salad, chocolate pudding, topping.

March 20 - Chicken biscuit, potatoes, peas, carrots, cole slaw, sliced peaches.

March 25 - Spaghetti & meatballs, tossed salad, Italian bread, apricots.

March 27 - Roast beef and gravy, mashed potato, freshed carrots, rolls and ice cream.

Jean Hall Wheeler asked about the deliberative Town Meeting format used in Littleton – where a deliberative meeting is held that finalizes the amounts for voting on the Australian ballot. David Brown said he is in favor of the traditional Town Meeting because when people come together at Town Meeting they are a citizen legislature – and they can deliberate, discuss, amend, and vote all at the same meeting. Brown said some of the objections to the traditional Town Meeting have been addressed to make it easier for people to participate – such as the ease of secret ballot voting using the tokens. The moderators have also had better control of meetings to discourage applause and booing. Brown suggested the rekindling of the Taxpayers Association may help accomplish what proponents of the Australian ballot want to achieve. He said that you have to balance the shortcomings of Town Meeting with the benefits of having the opportunity to debate and decide. Brown said that his review of records indicates that a very small number of people have actually gotten absentee ballots for the Tuesday Australian ballot voting. Russ Hutchins said for the last several years people have gotten away from the Town

Meeting. Hutchins said there are 4,000 registered voters, and only 300 participate in Town Meeting. Hutchins said he would like more than 300 of the 4,000 people to participate in local government and with Australian Ballot, voting people can vote up to 30 days ahead of time, or they can vote at the polls (anytime the polls are open), they can vote during the day, they can leave work for a short time and return. Steve Smith said he would prefer to see 20-30 percent of the registered voters deciding on the Town and School Budgets and not 7 percent. Select Board Member Daniel Kimbell said he has lived in different Vermont Communities with different types of systems including Milton and Brattleboro. Kimbell said the constant denial of the School Budget in Milton put many people in the community at odds with each other. He added there is no direction provided with the Australian ballot – do you cut sports, music, arts? Voters will decide the fate of the proposal at Town Meeting in March.

Welcome Center – Nat Tripp, chair of the Welcome Center Advisory Committee, was present to review the revised Welcome Center Operating Agreement with the members of the Select Board. Tripp said he and Town Manager Mike Welch had met with Town Attorney Edward Zuccaro to try to incorporate the comments made by the Select Board relative to the committee composition, and advisory role. Tripp said Zuccaro has restated the document as more of a contract clearly defining the role of each of the partners. Kimbell pointed out that Connecticut was not spelled correctly. Nat Tripp said the document should also be amended to require minimum \$1 million for insurance limits, per the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, instead of \$2 million. Following discussion, it was moved by Gary Reis, seconded by Daniel Kimbell and voted (4-1 Jim Rust opposed) to approve the Welcome Center Operating Agreement, as amended for correction in spelling and insurance minimum, and authorize the Town Manager to sign the document.

Coin Drops – Welch provided members of the Board with information about Coin Drops in Lyndonville, and a copy of the State Law regarding solicitation from a highway. Welch provided copies of comments from two police officers and a dispatcher. Jean Hall Wheeler asked about agencies who may be interested. Welch said he has not heard from many recently, as the policy of the Board has been not to allow coin drops – the Recreation Department, the Fire Department, and other local non-profits engaged in fund-raising may be interested. Jim Rust recommended that the Town get feedback from the Downtown Commission before making any decisions. Joe Fox said that he could definitely see an opportunity for the Recreation program for a coin drop – and he thought the Lyndonville system was well organized. Joe Fox said that signs would be very important. Albert Dunn said that the baseball program used to do a coin drop – but it was usually when teams were going to the regional competitions. Bruce Corrette said the Rotary Club used to do a coin drop. Chair Bryon Quatrini said he would like to try to get more information from organizations that may be

interested, and recommendations on locations. Bernie Timson asked about liability insurance. Welch said the organization holding the coin drop would need to provide evidence of liability insurance. Quatrini recommended that this item be put back on the agenda for the first meeting in March for further discussion.

Commendation – The members of the St. Johnsbury Select Board reviewed, approved, and signed letters of commendation for Police Sgt. Eric Hazard, and Patrol Officer Justin Hoyt following their immediate apprehension of the individual suspected of shooting out the rear window of a St. Johnsbury Police Cruiser with a shotgun on January 27, 2009.

Crosswalk Grant – Welch provided information relative to the Municipal Planning Grant approval for Main Street Crosswalks.

Citizen of the Year – The Northeast Kingdom Chamber of Commerce is seeking nominations for Citizen of the Year. Information was provided to members of the Board.

Community Center – The Manager reviewed the damage to the Community Center due to a leak in the membrane roof in the front of the building. The roof has been repaired. A claim has been filed with VLCT.

February 16, 2009

Jay-Lyn Revolving Loan Fund – Joel Schwartz said the Jay-Lyn Revolving Loan Fund currently has about \$63,000 in funds available to loan, and about \$220,000 in outstanding notes due. Schwartz advised the Jay-Lyn Fund Loan Committee does make some risky loans, as they serve as a lender of last resort for local businesses. Schwartz said the loan committee does try to minimize the risk, and to get collateral for loans – but they are often behind other lenders in prioritization. Schwartz said that the loan committee has agreed that they would like to submit an application to VCDP in order to recapitalize the Loan Fund in the range

of \$250,000 to \$400,000. He said, if granted, 50 percent of the principal returned to the Loan Fund would need to go back to the State of Vermont. Kimbell asked about liability for return of principal balance to the State in the event of default? Schwartz said that he would confirm, but he did not believe that the Town would be on the hook for those balances. Schwartz said he will also be meeting with the Lyndon Select Board asking that they participate in the application. The board decided to move forward with the submission of a VCDP Grant application for recapitalization of the Jay-Lyn Revolving Loan Fund.

Walden

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

January 26, 2009

Leakage – Robert Bell reported that oil was leaking from somewhere on the ton truck. It also needs exhaust work, new power steering lines and it isn't

starting well. After discussion, it was decided that it would be taken somewhere to get an estimate on the repairs. He also noted another town truck needs a new spring.

Bridges – A report on town bridges from the State was reviewed and signed. L. Harrington Hill Bridge weight limit was raised to eight tons. Rock Road was kept at eight tons. New signs will be ordered for both.

Engineering Study – Brown noted that in relation to a permit application currently being reviewed, an engineering study on upper and lower Cabot roads has been requested from a Cabot resident to evaluate the impact that Cabot creamery has on these two roads. He thought this request should have come through the Walden Select Board since it would affect the town's roads and he stated they he did not feel this study was warranted. He expressed concern that under the current permit, those roads are not being used equally by Cabot which puts more strain on Route 215.

Danville Senior Action Center

March Meal Schedule

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.

March 5 - Spaghetti & meatballs, garlic bread, steamed broccoli and carrots, juice.

March 10 - Cream of broccoli soup, with saltines, chutney chicken salad sandwich on a roll with lettuce and tomato, carrot, pineapple and raisins slaw.

March 12 - Chicken parmesan pasta with marinara, spinach salad with mandarin oranges and homemade rolls, California vegetables and grapefruit pudding.

Feb. 17 - Corned beef hash, cheese and veggie quiche, blueberry muffins and fruit cocktail.

March 19 - Red Flannel Hash, vegetable omelettes, tropical fruit salad, wild cranberry scones, bagels with cream cheese.

March 24 - Shepard's Pie, juice, homemade rolls, pumpkin bread pudding.

March 26 - Macaroni & Cheese, Kielbasa, homemade rolls, broccoli, carrots, fruit cobbler, juice.

March 30 - Meatloaf & Gravy, broccoli, onions and mushrooms, baked potatoes with sour cream, peas and carrots, homemade rolls, apple crisp.

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Lyndonville

Monday: Noon - 5 p.m.
Tuesday: Noon - 7 p.m.
Wednesday: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Thursday: Noon - 7 p.m.
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Attorneys

Law Office of Charles D. Hickey, PLC

General Practice of Law. 69 Winter St., PO Box 127, St. Johnsbury, VT 05819-0127. (802) 748-3919.

Law Offices of Jay C. Abramson

Estate Planning, Long-Term Care Planning, Wills, Trusts, Real Estate. Certified Elder Law Attorney. 1107 Main Street, Suite 101, St. Johnsbury, VT 05819. (802) 748-6200.

Law Office of Deborah T. Bucknam, PC

Full service litigation firm. 1097 Main St., PO Box 310, St. Johnsbury, VT 05819. (802) 748-5525.

Clarke D. Atwell, Esq.

Small business, Zoning, Cottage law, Residential and Commercial Real Estate, Property Law, rights of way, Estate Planning and Trusts, Probate Estate Administration, Elder Law, Guardianships, etc. 364 Railroad St., St. Johnsbury, VT. (802) 748-5338 or clarke@neklaw.net.

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Einstein's and the clock in Bern, Switzerland

by BRUCE HOYT

This is the birthday month of Albert Einstein, who was born March 14th 1879 in Ulm Germany. Other than his famous energy and mass equivalency equation, his most profound and perplexing conclusions involve his concept of time. In high school we all observed that time dragged in the period before lunch, but sped uncontrollably at the end of an essay test. However, our adult perspective leads us to believe that time flows forward at a constant rate for everyone, everywhere. This turns out to be false: the real constant is the speed of light, a whopping

186,000 miles a second and it goes by you at that speed even when the flashlight is coming toward you at 100,000 miles a second or receding at that speed. The two scientists who set up a clever device to compare the speed of light coming to earth from a distant star found it was the same whether the earth was rushing toward the star or, six months later in its journey the sun, rushing away from the star. The unexpected results led them to think the experiment had failed. Eighteen years later, Einstein took the results into his Special Theory of Relativity, arguing that at great speeds time slows, mass increases, and length con-

tracts.

While at Princeton, Einstein wrote a book about his theories for people "who are not conversant with the mathematical apparatus of theoretical physics". In it he uses ticks of clocks and riders on passing trains to get his point across. In one such explanation he uses a "thought experiment" which imagines Harold, the pilot of a very fast rocket ship sending a flash of light down to a mirror carried beneath the craft. The light returns in two clicks of time. On the other hand, a stationary observer watching all this, sees the blob of light going down at an angle as it stays under speeding craft, taking, for example, 3 ticks to reach the mirror, bouncing and taking 3 more ticks to reach the craft. The observer on the ground says "Omgosh! In 2039 when Harold returns, I will be 30 years older but he will be only be 10 years older.

Although Einstein probably constructed his theories by flashes of genius, for all of us with more pedestrian brains it is tempting to think that he made new connections with what he

saw on the way to his work in the patent office in Bern, Switzerland around 1905. From his home at 49 Krangasse his daily walk took him up an arcaded walk, under the great Bern clock, and past the train station.

We are grateful for the modern digital clock which tells us how late we are as we speed by the bank or displays big numbers at bedside for our groggy morning eyes. A clock with hands, however, displays our day - hours spent and hours remaining - reminding us that time is happening. Perhaps Special Relativity needed such a concrete example of time-in-motion for its genesis.

The great clock at Bern is an analog clock run by mechanisms quite similar to those that move the hands of the wonderful clock at the corner of Eastern Avenue and Main Street in St. Johnsbury. Repelled by the idea of electrifying the timepiece, town citizens have lovingly restored the works so it relies on fundamental physics. Such a repair has been done to the Bern clock many times

Built as a city gate in 1191, the archway was later walled up

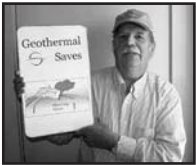
and made into a prison, and still later, in 1530, the arch was reopened and the upper story made into a non-pendulum clock of uncertain accuracy. The first pendulum clocks were based on Galileo's observation in the seventeenth century that any given pendulum takes the same time to swing large arcs or small. A cannonball over a foot in diameter provided the weight for the Bern clock's conversion into its present pendulum escapement. With such man-made machinery ably bringing hands and wheels accurately to their positions it would have been easy for Swiss born contemporaries to imagine a universe so geared and driven that its Maker could know its motions through all time.

St. J. citizens whose clocks have measured out 70 years or so will remember elaborate contrivances seen quite often in the Eastern Avenue jewelry store. The bowing, hammering, turning and cavorting gnomes, bears etc. are long gone from small towns and return only to big city stores at Christmas. Bern's clock puts on its mechanical show every hour, as it has done for centuries. First, a cock flaps its wings and crows 4 notes winded by a bellows. A bear parade follows. Soon a jester clangs the hour on dual bells above his head and a carousel of


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Pope Notes by Dee Palmer

bears parade with fife, drum and gun. The rooster crows again and the four quarter hours are struck. Then a gold knight in the topmost belfry swings a gold sledge hammer against while Father Time with an hour glass in one hand beats out a rhythm with a stick in the other. Finally the cock crows a third time, signifying Peter's denial of Christ. As an apex of Bern's infatuation with its name (German/Swiss for bears) a bear in a helmet adorns the very top of the structure.

Though the figures on the outside are entertaining, the mechanisms inside are much more impressive: Weights which are daily wound up to the top of the tower, store the potential energy for the day's sounds and motions.

A 500 pound cannonball pendulum swings through a 6 foot arc, lifting by a linkage first one knife edge and then the other to let a large escapement wheel advance cog by cog, audibly dividing time into precise segments.

The basic clockwork is about 8 foot square, exclusive of the pendulum, but drive-shafts and pulley systems carry the power to gears and mechanisms all over the tower, often to be subdivided by appropriate ratios from hours to days of the week to position of the sun in the Zodiac to moon phases. The Zodiac turns on an eccentric blue field richly decorated with zodiac signs. The moon turns as half black /half gold orb to show its phases.

Even the day of the week, which could easily have been hand-set by the attendant, has its own trip mechanism to exhibit one more cleverness of the clockmaker. The attendant also saves his energy by letting tourists wind up the weights.

Whether or not the great clock at Bern had any impact on Einstein's formulation of Special Relativity is an entertaining speculation. But the result of his thought has given a new twist to Newtonian physics. Subatomic units subjected to

extreme speeds in particle accelerators require more force to step up to the next speed because the M in the old $F=Ma$ increases. And particles which have a definite decay time at rest, decay slower at the higher speeds.

As to the famous $E=MC^2$, it says that if we could convert a small amount of mass into energy, it would yield an astounding amount of energy.

The hydrogen atoms in an ounce of water could produce about 1 million kilowatt hours of electricity if they could be converted to somewhat lighter helium atoms in a fusion process. The fission process, now well understood and working safely works on the same principle of changing mass to energy. What goes in weighs more than what remains and the exchange produces a huge amount of energy with low environmental impact.

Town Meeting is just days away and we ask that you support your library. The Pope Memorial Library supports its programs solely through donations, fund raising activities, interest on endowment gifts, and an annual appropriation from the Town of Danville. Income generated from the Vermont Community Foundation and other interest bearing accounts is sharply down, while library expenses are up. Your community non-profit library is requesting an appropriation for 2009 of \$25000. We realize that these are tough economic times for everyone but we would like to continue to provide the same level of service and programs to Danville citizens. We thank the Danville community for your steadfast support through 2008! We invite you to enjoy a delicious luncheon put on by friends of the Library during the noon break. Wendi Larrabee and crew will be cooking a baked ham feast, complete with baked beans, cole slaw, cottage cheese, pickled beets, rolls and an array of cookies and bars for dessert. Purchase lunch tickets during the meeting and at the entrance to the cafeteria. Adults are \$8.00 and children \$4.00.

Our next book discussion in the Gastronomy: Books About Food and Culture series is "Mistress of Spices" by Chitra Divakaruni. In this fine first novel,

Tilo, proprietress of the Spice Bazaar in Oakland, California, is not the elderly Indian woman she appears to be. Trained as a mistress of spices, she evokes the magical powers of the spices of her homeland to help her customers. These customers, mostly first- or second-generation immigrants, are struggling to adapt their Old World ideals to the unfamiliar and often unkind New World. Though trapped in an old woman's body and forbidden to leave the store, Tilo is unable to keep the required distance from her patrons' lives. Her yearning to join the world of mortals angers the spices, and Tilo must face the dire consequences of her disobedience. This discussion, sponsored by the Vermont Humanities Council is on Wednesday, March 25 at 7pm. Scholar Patricia Norton will lead the discussion. Books are available at the Pope.

Some of our latest book acquisitions are: Plum Spooky by Evanovich, Diary of a Bad Year by Coetzee, Testimony by Shreve, Just After Sunset by King, The Hour I First Believed by Lamb, Elegy: Poems by Bang, Build Your Own Earth Oven by Denzer and Three of Us: A Memoir by Blackburn. We also have the 2009 Green Mountain Award Book collection. These titles are recommended for young adults in grades 9-12. Come in and check them out! 2008 tax forms and instruction booklets are here.



FARMHOUSE - Sit around the kitchen wood stove in this classic Vermont roadside farmhouse. This big kitchen will fit your whole family. There's even a pantry and a prep room (the old summer kitchen). Four bedrooms, 2 1/2 baths, formal dining room. You also have a parent's, in-law's, guest's suite. Very private and includes a sittin' out porch and a hot tub. The views are gorgeous. The yard is to die for. Flowers, pergola, water feature. Make an appointment and come see this house. You'll be amazed! Then come see it again! You don't want to miss the subtle personal artistic touches. Finders Keepers! mls #2733017 **\$259,000**



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Around the Town

Community Calendar

ONGOING EVENTS

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

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

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

Wednesdays: St. John the Evangelist Church in St. Johnsbury will conduct an ongoing series called "Catholics Returning Home" on six consecutive Wednesday evenings at 7 p.m. beginning Jan. 8 and continuing through Feb. 12.

Fridays: Friday Afternoon Tea Room from 2 to 4 p.m. through the end of March at the North Danville Baptist Church.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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 1 p.m. at the Cobleigh Public Library, (802) 626-5475.

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

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

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

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

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

Thursdays: Live Music at Parker Pie in Glover. Check website, www.parkerpie.com for details or call (802) 525-3366.

2nd 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.

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.

1st Saturday: Men's Ecumenical Breakfast, Methodist Church, Danville, 7 a.m. (802) 684-3666.

1st Saturday: Scrabble Club, St. Johnsbury Athenaeum, Noon - 4 p.m. (802) 748-8291.

1st & 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

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

MARCH EVENTS

SUN.1

Then and Now - come share your memories and the history of the town from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. The Village of Greensboro Bend, at St. Michael's Parish Hall, on the Bend Road in Greensboro Bend. Presented by the Greensboro Historical Society.

TUES.3

Town Meeting Day!

Upstairs Gallery Amulets, Remedies, and Shrines - Health and Healing Traditions from Diverse Cultures. A collection of objects from a variety of healing traditions from the collection of Rachel Spector. In the Upstairs Gallery. Location: St. Johnsbury Athenaeum. Contact: Irwin Gelber Phone: (802) 748-8291

WED.4

The History of Herbal Medicine in America at the St. Johnsbury Athenaeum at 7 p.m. Just what did the early American pioneers rely on for health and healing? Herbalist Rosemary Gladstar examines the early history of herbalism in America and how herbs play a role in health care today.

THURS.5

Tim Blane performs at Lyndon State College-Soulful renditions of original tunes, 9:00 p.m. to 10 p.m. Call the Alexander Twilight or visit www.lyndonstate.edu/arts

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See page 3 for Details

SAT.7

Singer Songwriter Tom Rush, presented by Lyndon State College and Catamount Arts at 8 p.m. at Lyndon State College's Alexander Twilight Theatre.

TUES.10

The Caledonia Right to Life Group will meet at the St. John's Catholic Church Parish Hall, Main Street in St. Johnsbury, at 7 p.m.. We welcome anyone who is interested in Right to Life to our meeting. For information you may call Donna at (802) 467-8369 or Eric at (802) 633-3203 or Sally or Bill at (802) 748-3930.

FRI.13

Shakespeare in the Hills presents William Shakespeare's timeless classic comedy **'The Merry Wives of Windsor,'** to be presented at 7:30 p.m. and at the Haybarn Theatre, Goddard College, Plainfield. For more info call Tom Blachly at (802) 426-3955.

Tim Dion performs at Burke Mountain from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m., at the Tamarack Grill, part of the Singer/Songwriter series. Visit www.skiburke.com or email info@skiburke.com Burke Mountain Ski Area (802) 626-7300

VTLSP/SADD Speaker from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the St. Johnsbury Academy Gymnasium. Cara Filler visits over 200 schools a year, sharing her powerful message. She has created one of the most effective programs of its kind for young people today, which is why she is asked back by schools year after year. For more information go to www.carafiller.com

SAT.14

Birds and Beyond at Fairbanks Museum Habitat Enhancement for Bird Diversity - Making Nest boxes at the Fairbanks Museum, 9 a.m. to noon. Call (802) 748-2372 for more information.

SUN.15

Cynthia MacLeod & Jon Matthews - Prince Edward Island fiddling sensation, 7 p.m. at Lyndon State College. Call (802) 626-6254 for tickets.



The Creamery Restaurant

Dinner Tues.-Sat. 5:00-closing

Pub Opens at 4:00

(802) 684-3616

Closed Sundays & Mondays

ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARTY with Hidden Drive on March 14

MON.16

59th St. Johnsbury Kiwanis **Radio/TV Auction** from 6 to 9:30 p.m. Visit www.stjkauction.com for more information.

TUES.17

The traditional **St. Patrick's Day concert** will be held in Lyndon State College's Alexander Twilight Theatre at noon. Performers include Ralph Aldrich, harper Patricia Stebbins, fiddler Elizabeth Conklin, Stephen Herreid, and Windrose, who will offer a wide range of Celtic music, both vocal and instrumental. The concert is free and open to all.

Community of Concern Author's Night, 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. The Community of Concern has chosen local author, Beth Kanell of Waterford, Vermont, and her new book, *The Darkness Under the Water* for the Community Book Read. The public is invited to the Stuart Black Box Theater, located in the Morse Center. Please visit her web site for discussion questions www.bethkanell.com .

WED.18

Tommy Sands, Ireland's favorite Celtic son, at St. Johnsbury Academy's Morse Center for the Arts at 7:30 p.m.

Brazilian crime author Leighton Gage at Kingdom Books with his second in the Inspector Mario Silva series: *Buried Strangers*. Meet Leighton and his wife Eide at 5:30 p.m. for a "limited edition" Brazilian supper and exploration of the series. Seating is limited to 20 people.

THURS.19

'The Merry Wives of Windsor,' 7:30 pm at Fuller Hall, St. Johnsbury Academy, St. Johnsbury. For more info call Tom Blachly at (802) 426-3955.

SAT.21

The **Catamount Student Coffeehouse**, presented in Catamount's downstairs Cabaret with comfortable seating around tables and an intimate atmosphere. Call (802) 748-2600 for more information.

MON.23

Justin Chinyanta will visit from the Weatherhead Center at Harvard. He will speak on "Africa, its economic opportunities and challenges" at 7 p.m. in the Mayo Center Library.

TUES.24

Community Shrove Tuesday **Pancake Supper**, 5:30 p.m., North Danville Baptist Church.

FRI.27

NEK Renewable Energy Fair - exhibits, demonstrations, educational workshops to promote energy conservation, green building. The event will offer exhibits, demonstrations, educational workshops and keynote speakers to promote energy conservation, green building, and renewable energy options for homeowners, farmers, and business owners. Lyndon State College.

SAT.28

Linda Warnaar and Micha Carbanneau, presented in Catamount's downstairs Cabaret with comfortable seating around tables and an intimate atmosphere. Call (802) 748-2600 for more information.

"The Trio Solisti," Piano, Violin and Cello at 7:30 p.m. at the South Congregational Church in St. Johnsbury.

Cabot Maple Festival, Cabot School Gym, featuring sugar on snow, maple vendors, crafters and indoor and outdoor activities of all kinds.

SUN.29

NEK Audubon Field Trip to Victory Basin for a snowshoe hike from Damon's Crossing Trail. Meet at Damon's Crossing at 8 a.m. Call Tom at (802) 626-9017 for more details.

Additional Events are posted throughout the month at: www.northstarmonthly.com

Please submit events to: info@northstarmonthly.com

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