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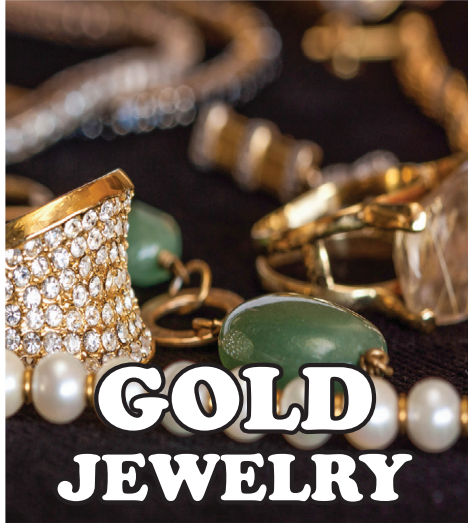
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# Time of renewal

**S**pring in Vermont is a special time. Once the snow recedes and the frost comes out of the back roads, the wildflowers start to emerge and the drab browns and greys of early spring give way to a host of fresh greens, with dazzling splashes of colors between flowers and birds.

We think of it as renewal, which, of course, it is in the natural world. But the warmth of the season brings a sense of freshness and pleasure in the prelude to summer. Like autumn, with its dramatic foliage colors, spring brings its own spectacular magic to the landscape. It is a glorious time to explore Vermont.

In this edition of *Explore*, we take you across Vermont on growing east-west trails, as well as into the back woods for some careful hiking, because things may not be dried out quite yet. (We'll also tell you how to volunteer for upcoming trail maintenance around the state.)

We'll walk you through the delights of the maple sugaring season, as well inside the studios of some of Vermont's best-known artists and craftspeople.

It has been a long winter. But now it is time to throw open the windows, let some fresh air inside for spring cleaning, and then head out and see all that Vermont has to offer.

After a couple of years of challenging times, let us be your guide to exploring this amazing state as it comes back to life, figuratively and literally.

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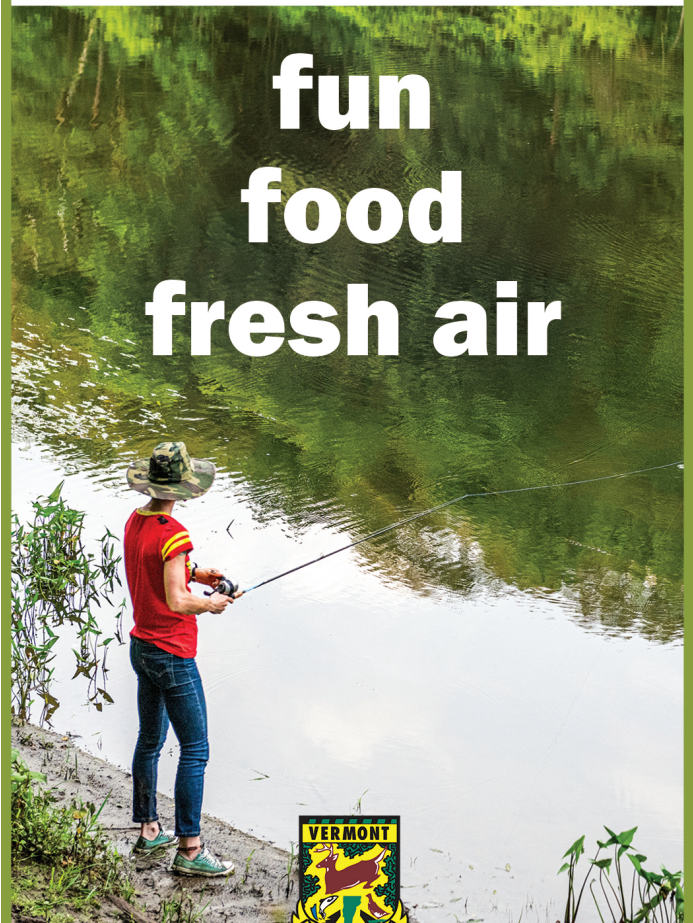


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# Moving across Vermont, east to west

**By Peter Cobb**

**F**or bikers who prefer rail trails to mountain biking, 2022 is stacking up to be a very good year.

Construction on the unfinished sections of the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail, from St. Johnsbury to Swanton, should be finished by the end of this year.

The construction will be completed through four separate contracts, including three contracts for trail construction of the missing segments, West Danville to Hardwick, Hardwick to Morrisville, and Cambridge to Sheldon, according to Joel Perrigo, municipal

assistance program manager for the Vermont Agency of Transportation.

The fourth contract is a “bridge-only” contract, that will replace six bridges along the corridor that have either been removed or are past the point of rehabilitation. The bridge contract is scheduled to be completed in late summer and the trail construction projects are scheduled to be completed by early winter 2022.

The Lamoille Valley Rail Trail is a four-season, multi-purpose recreation and transportation corridor across northern Vermont following the former 93-mile Lamoille Valley Railroad rail line from St. Johnsbury to Swanton.

The trail extends across five counties connecting 18 towns.

Once completed, LVRT will provide a link between several significant recreational trails in Vermont and Canada, including connections to the VAST snowmobile trail network, the Long Trail, the Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail, the Three Rivers Path, and the Cambridge Greenway.

The trail is open year-round to non-motorized uses. In the warmer months, the trail can be utilized for walking, jogging, hiking, cycling, and horseback riding.

Local snowmobile clubs maintain and groom the trail through winter,



allowing for snowshoeing, Nordic skiing, snowmobiling, and dog sledding. Additional recreational opportunities can be found along the trail at designated fish and wildlife waysides.

Trail parking is available throughout the corridor. In addition to recreation and immersion in Vermont's natural landscape, LVRT offers historically significant and impressive structures such as the Fisher Covered Bridge, the bridges in Morrystown and Swanton, historic railroad station buildings, historic stone culverts, a railway workers' memorial, and more.

The existing contracts for trail construction are 80% federally funded (Federal Highway Administration) and 20% state-funded. In 2020, the Legislature supported Gov. Phil Scott's recommendation to authorize funding to complete the trail.

Forty-four miles are open and 50 miles are left to upgrade for year-round use and all but 14 miles are already open for winter use, according to Ken Brown, trails manager for the Vermont Association of Snow Travelers (VAST), which has maintained the trails since the first two sections, St. Johnsbury to Danville and Morrisville to Cambridge, were opened in 2015.

"Vermont Association of Snow Travelers has done an excellent job of advancing the permitting and

**"Rail trails provide valuable recreation opportunities for Vermonters. There is clear evidence on the health benefits of being more active, and trails offer safe, car-free places to walk or bike."**

construction of the portions of the trail that have been completed. It became apparent to VAST and the agency that the cost and duration of the project were exceeding the resources of VAST. Through coordinated efforts, the administration and agency, working with VAST and the legislature, were able to arrive at a plan to expedite the advancement of the project through the addition of state and federal funds to complete the trail by the end of 2022, thus providing the economic and recreational benefits to trail users and communities adjacent to the trail," said Michele Boomhower, director of policy

planning and intermodal development for the Agency of Transportation.

"Rail trails provide valuable recreation opportunities for Vermonters. There is clear evidence on the health benefits of being more active, and trails offer safe, car-free places to walk or bike. Rail trails are big recreation destinations, and the communities through which the trail runs benefit economically from visits to the trail. Trails can serve as non-motorized connections that allow people to safely walk or bike to important daily destinations," said Jon Kaplan, Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator for the State.

Boomhower agrees. "The LVRT offers Vermonters and visitors to Vermont the opportunity for walking, hiking, cycling, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, and snowmobiling. There has long been a desire to create a more robust user experience that will attract more visitors to the state and the communities along the trail. This proposal will bolster economic development, increase visitation in the communities along the trail, and provide matching grants to incentivize creating attractions and user experiences along the trail," she said.

The state is working on a new management plan for LVRT and is seeking public input.

For details, go to <https://vtrans.vermont.gov/highway/local-projects/lvrt/management/input>



PETER COBB PHOTOS  
Lamoille Valley Rail Trail near Joe's Pond.





# MUD SEASON (NOT) HIKING

By Peter Cobb

**T**he urge to hike in the spring is great. Winter has ended, the days are longer and warm, snow has melted and, for many hikers, it's been several months since their last hike. Despite the urge, the Green Mountain Club implores hikers to wait until mud season is over and the trails are dry.

"The trails are vulnerable to damage from soil compaction, erosion, and widening with every footstep. The Green Mountain Club, Vermont Department of Forests Parks and Recreation, and other outdoor organizations ask for the public's help in protecting the fragile trails during this time of year and staying off muddy trails, especially those high-elevation hiking trails until they have a chance to dry out and firm up. There are plenty of low-elevation trail systems and durable surfaces, like roads and bike paths, to enjoy this time of year," said Chloe Miller, communications manager at GMC.

"With trail impact and use, it's rarely a single hiker or party who creates irreversible damage. Rather it's the cumulative impact of dozens or hundreds of footsteps on these fragile

**"When choosing a mud season hike, look for a place that is lower elevation, generally below 2,500 feet and south facing, since south-facing trails tend to dry out more quickly."**

surfaces. Excessive foot traffic causes soil compaction, which degrades the quality of the trail by reducing its ability to absorb water, causing increased flooding later and making it harder for vegetation to grow. Erosion then carries the soil away, leaving rocks and roots exposed," Miller said.

"Mud season," roughly defined as the period after snowmelt in late March or early April until Memorial Day

Weekend, is a time when many hiking trails, especially at high elevations, are oversaturated with water and become a disastrous, muddy mess.

Even in mud season, some trails are open, according to Amy Potter, the GMC Visitor Center manager.

"When choosing a mud season hike, look for a place that is lower elevation, generally below 2,500 feet and south facing, since south-facing trails tend to dry out more quickly. Closures vary by land manager, so make sure to check for any closures before heading out on the trail. Trailfinder.info is a good resource. There are also many options that have more durable surfaces like mountain roads, paved bike paths, and accessible trails," Potter said.

Some mud season suggested hikes include: Barnes Camp Boardwalk, an easy, accessible, quarter mile round trip that includes wetlands, a beaver dam, and a unique view of Smugglers' Notch; the Island Line Trail in Burlington trail that follows Lake Champlain's shoreline from Burlington through Colchester and across the Colchester Causeway; and the Toll Road up Mansfield to the ridge line a 4.4-mile trek to the ridge line, rated difficult.





More mud season hike recommendations can be found at: <https://www.greenmountainclub.org/hiking/hikevt/mud-season-hikes-vermont-alternatives-peaks/>

According to Miller, climate change is making it harder to predict when mud season conditions will begin or end, and hikers are cautioned that mud season-like conditions can remain well into June, and any time of year due to excessive rain or freeze-and-thaw cycles.

“If you encounter particularly muddy trail, please turn around and find an alternative place to hike. Conditions can be quite variable as you traverse a trail, especially as you gain elevation, it may start nice and dry at the trailhead and become increasingly muddy as you continue. And if you do encounter some muddy sections, please walk directly through the mud rather than attempting to skirt around it to avoid the trail widening and trampling issues,” Miller said.

Anyone interested in volunteering to help the Green Mountain Club, no special skills needed, should check: <https://www.greenmountainclub.org/volunteers/volunteer-opportunities>. For trail work, a good option is to connect with your local section. The 14 regional chapters each adopt a portion of the trail and run regular group work days. Section details and contact info can be found on the [greenmountainclub.org/our-sections](https://www.greenmountainclub.org/our-sections)

The Green Mountain Club maintains nearly 500 miles of trail, including the Appalachian Trail in Vermont and trails in the Northeast Kingdom, which are used by more than 200,000 yearly.

PHOTOS PROVIDED BY THE GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB

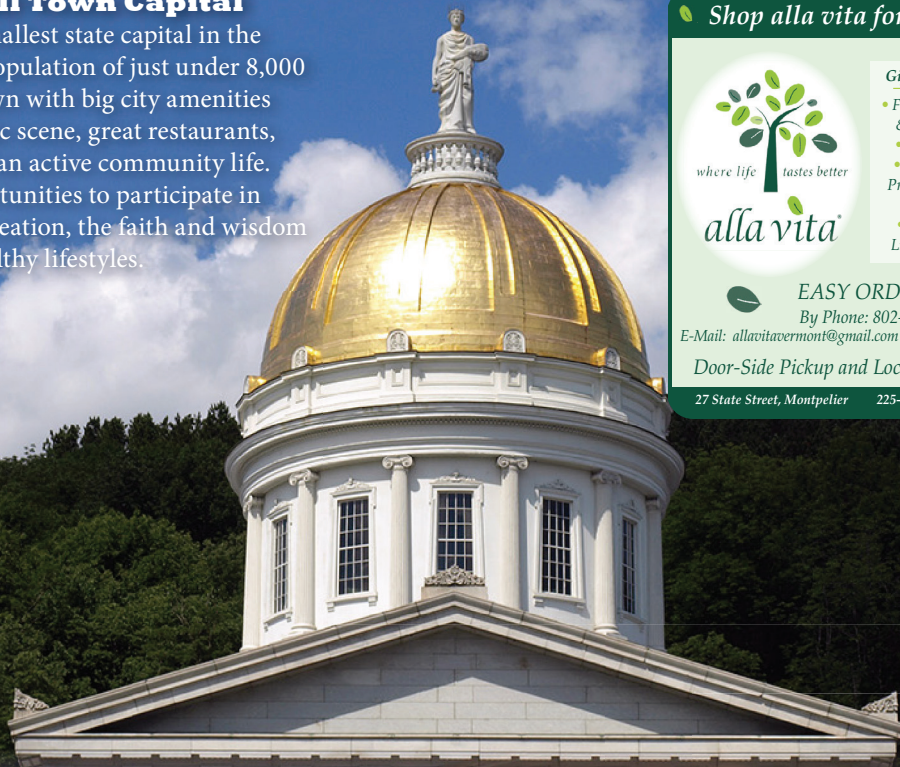




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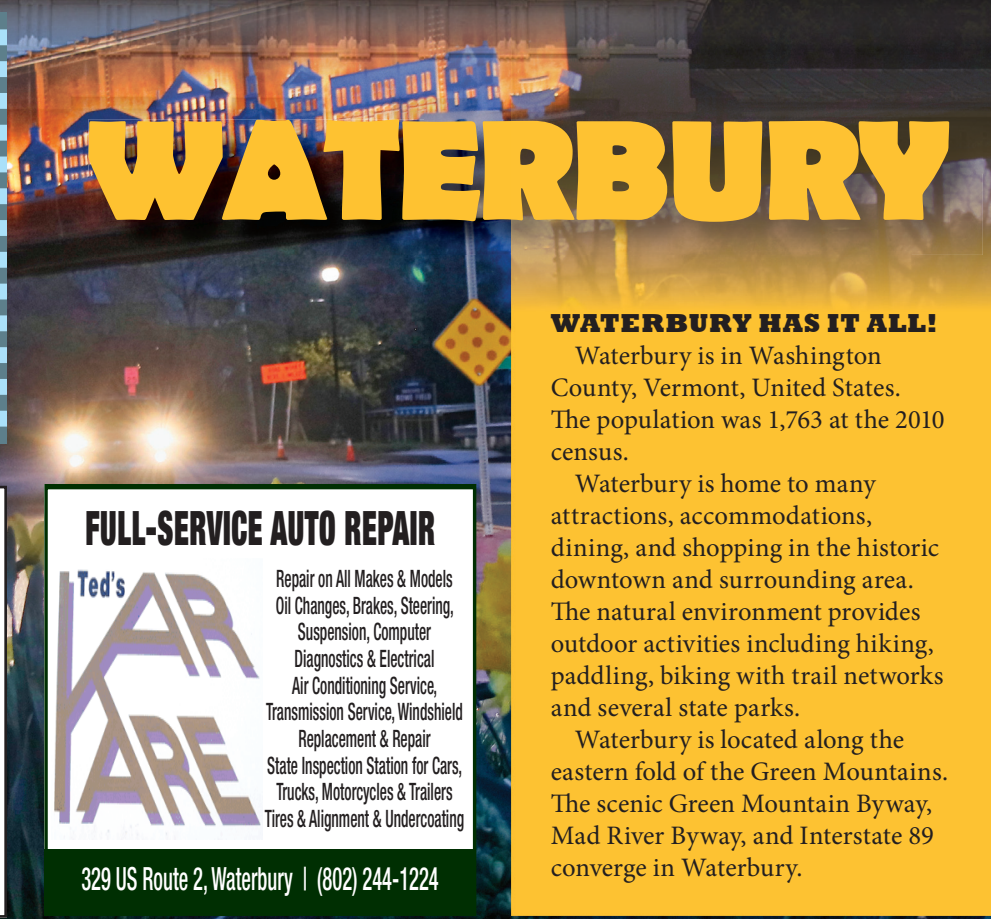
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Waterbury is located along the eastern fold of the Green Mountains. The scenic Green Mountain Byway, Mad River Byway, and Interstate 89 converge in Waterbury.

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## Exploring museums — ON CAMPUSES

PHOTO BY ALISON PALIZZOLO

In the Moment: Recent Work by Louise Hamlin on view at the Hood Museum through September 3, 2022.

### By Peter Cobb

It has been a tough three years for all museums including four college art museums in Vermont, Hood Museum of Art at Dartmouth College, and the Robert Frost Stone House Museum at Bennington College. All six museums either closed due to COVID 19 or changed how they presented their collections. All of them are now either already open to the public or are making plans to open in the near future.

#### Sullivan Museum and History Center

"In early 2020 the museum saw a rapid decline in attendance and in-person programs and educational outreach with students, as the university transitioned to a fully remote model due to the global pandemic. This continued for as long as we were in a hybrid model, approximately

six to eight months, however, we found ways to move programs online, create virtual interactive experiences, etcetera, to still provide, at that level, similar experiences as to what we could offer with visitors and students in the physical space," said John Hart Jr., director of the Sullivan Museum and History Center at Norwich University in Northfield. In a typical pre-COVID year, 30,000 visitors enjoyed the Sullivan. The first year of the pandemic the number of visitors dropped dramatically to fewer than 10,000, Hart said.

The museum is open to the public again. The current exhibit is "The World Through Their Eyes: The Art of William Brenton Boggs and Truman Seymour," which opened in early February and will run until Dec. 16, 2022. This exhibit features artwork created by two Norwich alumni, William Brenton Boggs, Class of 1828, and Truman Seymour, Class of 1844. Their works

show the precision drawing technique they learned at Norwich and that of their contemporaries.

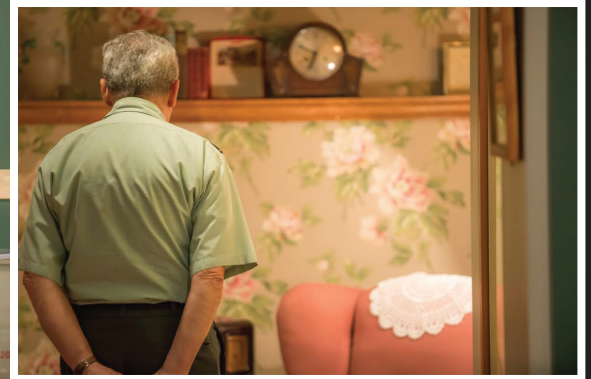
#### Fleming Museum of Art

"We are beginning the process of an almost museum-wide update to permanent exhibitions, as well as overseeing the design, fabrication, and installation of two new interactive exhibits set to open in early September," Hart said.

The Fleming Museum of Art, at the University of Vermont, reopened to the public in fall 2021 after being closed to general audiences from spring 2020, according to Chris Dissinger, the museum's assistant director.

This spring the Fleming is presenting two new provocative exhibitions, Unpacked: Refugee Baggage, and Dark Goddess: An Exploration of the Sacred Feminine. In addition, the museum continues with The Fleming Reimagined





PHOTOS PROVIDED BY THE SULLIVAN MUSEUM AT NORWICH UNIVERSITY.

from the previous year with a newly reinstalled Storytelling Salon and an all-new space for the Learning Studio. Unpacked, a multi-media installation is the work of Syrian-born, New Haven, Connecticut, artist, and architect Mohamad Hafez and Iraqi-born writer and speaker Ahmed Badr. This exhibit runs through May 21.

Dark Goddess, an exhibition of Shanta Lee Gander's photo series of the same name, was six years in the making and ends May 6.

The Fleming is open Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.; Wednesday, 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.; and Saturday, noon - 4 p.m.

### **The Hood Museum**

The Hood Museum at Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire, closed in spring 2020 and reopened to the public in August 2021. Operating hours are Wednesday, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.; Thursday and Friday, 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.; and Saturday 1-5 p.m.

The collections at Hood are among the oldest and largest of any college or university in the country. The collections are drawn from a broad range of cultures and historical periods. Among the museum's most important holdings are six Assyrian stone reliefs from the palace of Ashurnasirpal II (about 900 BCE) and the remarkable fresco by José Clemente Orozco titled *The Epic of American Civilization* (1932–34), which is now a National Historic Landmark.

The 65,000 objects in the museum represent the diverse artistic traditions of six continents, including, broadly, Native American, European and American, Asian, Indigenous Australian, African, and Melanesian art.

### **Robert Frost Stone House Museum**

Erin McKenny, director of the Robert Frost Stone House Museum at Bennington College, said the museum plans to open to the public May 1 through Oct. 31; Monday and Thursday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.; and Tuesday, Friday, and weekends, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The museum is a literary landmark located only minutes away from Frost's gravesite in Old Bennington. Frost lived in the house from 1920 to 1929, during which time he composed many of the poems that became part of "New Hampshire," his first Pulitzer Prize-winning volume that includes "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening." This year is the 100 anniversary of "Stopping by The Woods" and the museum plans to focus the summer exhibit on the poem. Frost wrote the poem on a hot June morning in 1922 at the dining room table in the stone house. The entire room is devoted to this American classic. The museum is open from 1-4 p.m., Thursday through Monday.

### **The Usdan Gallery**

The Usdan Gallery, also at Bennington College, is featuring

a "Sweater Parade" by Lisa Anne Auerbach through April 30. For more than 25 years, Auerbach has been knitting sweaters emblazoned with slogans, quotations, and catchphrases that document her experience, reflect on history and respond to political events. The museum is open Thursday through Saturday, from 1 to 5 p.m.

### **The Middlebury College Museum of Art**

The Middlebury College Museum of Art is currently open to members of the Middlebury College campus community and will open to the public April 15, according to museum Director Richard Saunders.

The museum's collection includes both Asian and western art from the fourth millennium B.C.E. to the present. Permanent installations of antiquities, Asian art, and American and European painting and sculpture from the Renaissance through the 19th century are on view at all times.

The museum's collection of twentieth-century and contemporary art encompasses works in all mediums, with particular strength in prints and photographs. These works are frequently on view in temporary installations, often in conjunction with faculty demand and the college curriculum. A significant collection of public sculpture, overseen by the college's Committee on Art in Public Places, is displayed throughout the campus.



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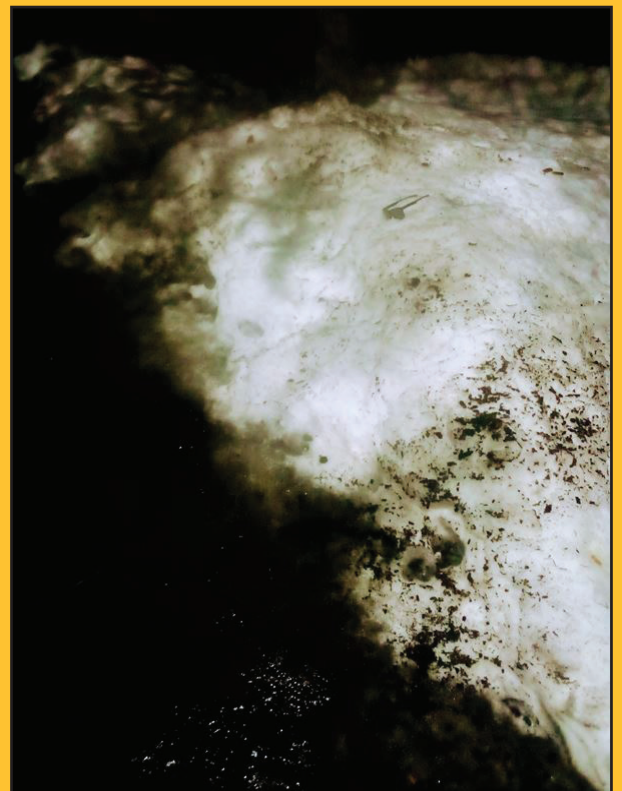
Central Vermont

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PHOTO BY CLAUDE MUMBERE  
OF RUTLAND

### *"Powder"*

First there was a lake. When the lake is heated by  
the sun's radiation, liquid water becomes water  
vapor (cloud). The clouds glide above our heads  
till they're too heavy to stay afloat. Then it snows,  
or rains, depending on the season as well as  
geography. The sun sets the cycle in motion.



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Aron Temkin, of Montpelier, making hand-built pottery at The Mud Studio.

# CRAFTS PEOPLE

## By Peter Cobb

**M**iddletown Springs potter Nicholas Seidner of Rising Meadow Pottery has participated in Open Studio, for 22 of the past 23 years. The only year he missed was 2020, the pandemic year when the event was online.

The event takes place each year over Memorial Day weekend. “Open Studio gives me the opportunity to invite the public to see what I do, to share my excitement and passion for my art,” he said.

To deal with COVID-19 concerns, Seidner is setting up tents and has ample space in the workshop for social distancing.

Seidner opened Rising Meadow in 1998. The studio is complete with a

variety of kilns, studios, a teaching facility, and a gallery.

Rising Meadow pottery is intended for use in everyday life. All glazes are food safe and lead-free. Pottery is dishwasher and microwave safe. Casseroles and baking dishes are oven safe, but not ovenproof and should come up to temperature with the oven to avoid thermal shock.

This year is the first year for George Sawyer, owner of Sawyer Made in South Woodbury, to participate in Open Studio. Sawyer builds heirloom-quality furniture that blurs the line between traditional and modern furniture. He joined the event this year to help the Vermont Arts Council celebrate the 30th anniversary of the event.

“I’m hoping to meet some people and show them what I do. It’s been three-and-

a-half years since I’ve been able to open my studio. I’m looking forward to it.” Sawyer grew up amidst the wood shavings in his father Dave’s Windsor chair studio. He left home to study Industrial Design at the Rhode Island School of Design and worked for several years in product design, architecture and building steam engines. He returned to Vermont to train at his father’s side and formally launched Sawyer Made in 2012.

Mike Sullivan, the owner of The Mud Studio in Waterbury, supports the open studios’ event not only to promote his studio but also to support Vermont Crafts Council. The more studios open the more successful the event, he said. His studio is open to visitors year-round so Open Studio is just one of many opportunities for visitors.

The Mud Studio is a full-service





pottery studio and gallery. The studio offers classes for adults, teens, and children, rental space, and gallery space for artists and craftspeople working in clay. The studio offers 12 pottery wheels, a slab roller, extruders, a variety of hand tools, more than 30 glazes, a variety of colored slips, two large kilns, one gas, and one electric, eight different clay bodies, and classroom spaces for throwing, and hand-building sculpture, as well as dedicated practice areas.

Kendra Schpok, the owner of 7th Circle Glass Works in New Haven, said the best thing about Open Studio is the opportunity for her to meet her customers and for them to meet her and others artists. Schpok's craft is custom stained-glass panels.

"It's a really wonderful event. I have great respect for the artists in Vermont. Open Studio is a chance for the public to see what we do. I've met some people from out-of-state who come here just for this weekend."

For more information, go to <https://www.vermontcrafts.com/open-studio-weekend/>



PETER COBB PHOTOS

Sarah Dayton, of Montpelier, is making a cup at The Mud Studio





R. Sanford Stragnell, of Castleton, in metal shop.



Peter Evans, of Northfield, with grandchild.



Hallie Monroe, of North Chittenden, in welding regalia.



Elissa Campbell, of Montpelier, book-binding tools.

Right, Gerry Martin, of Shrewsbury, with wood turned platter.



Carolyn Shattuck, of Rutland, print-making studio.



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| May 1    | 24th Community Bank N.A. 150 - ACT Late Model Tour                       | Post Time 1:30pm |
| May 29   | 59th Mekkelsen RV Memorial Day Classic — Late Model 125                  | Post Time 1:30pm |
| June 10  | Myers Container Triple Crown Series #1 - (NEBSMS)                        | Post Time 7:00pm |
| June 16  | Casella Waste Systems Night - NEAR                                       | Post Time 7:00pm |
| June 23  | Community College of Vermont Night — Marvin Johnson Memorial             | Post Time 7:00pm |
| June 30  | Scout Night — Kid's Rides  | Post Time 7:00pm |
| July 3   | Preston's KIA Independence Day Spectacular - Northstar Fireworks Display | Post Time 7:00pm |
| July 7   | Myers Container Service Triple Crown Series #2                           | Post Time 7:00pm |
| July 14  | 43rd Vermont Governor's Cup  | Post Time 6:30pm |
| July 21  | Times Argus Midseason Championships - Driver Autographs                  | Post Time 7:00pm |
| July 28  | WDEV Radio/Calkins Portable Toilets Night - Port-a-Potty Grand Prix      | Post Time 7:00pm |
| Aug. 4   | Cody Chevrolet/Cadillac Night - Myers Triple Crown Series #3 (100 laps)  | Post Time 7:00pm |

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# How sweet it is

MAPLE



PHOTOS BY JEB WALLACE-BRODEUR

## STAFF REPORT

**T**he thing about spring in Vermont is just how sweet it can be.

Yes, the end of the winter can feel bland. But sugaring and syrup bring a bold dimension to the shoulder season. It is the treat that comes from the renewal of this magnificent landscape.

It's a big deal.

We take our maple syrup seriously. In fact, the regulations that go into Vermont syrup are higher than in other parts of the world. It is dense and thick. Connoisseurs of maple syrup can taste the terroir.

It is also a major industry for the state.

According to [vermontvacation.com](http://vermontvacation.com), Vermont generates more than 50 percent of the country's maple syrup and in 2020 produced a record of 2 million gallons. That's coming from more than 3,000 sugarhouses statewide, according to the state's website.

It requires constant innovation and research.

Cold nights and warm spring days activate the flow of sap in Vermont's sugarbushes. The sugar-making process has evolved from sap buckets carried through the woods on a horse-drawn sleigh to today's ultra-modern reverse osmosis technology. In the Spring, visit a sugarhouse to see firsthand how Vermont's sweetest export is made and sample the goods. Bring home Vermont maple products to enjoy in your coffee, cocktails, baking, and cooking.

According to the University of

Vermont, their Proctor Maple Research Center has been at the cutting-edge of maple research and served as a model facility for maple producers for the last 75 years.

"From growing the ability to tap trees and boil maple sap utilizing leading-edge technology to studying the potential impacts of climate change on the state's maple trees, PMRC is widely recognized in the industry as playing an important role in the cultural growth and economic importance of the traditional agricultural crop," the center states.

Established in 1947 as the first permanent maple research facility in the country, PMRC is renowned as an international leader in basic and applied research on maple trees and maple production. Throughout its history, UVM maple scientists have worked in the lab, the sugarhouse and around the

state to understand the issues facing maple producers and help advance the science to solve them. Their contributions — from understanding the physiology of maple trees to assessing the impact of modern processing technologies — have been invaluable to the industry and helped Vermont become the top producing maple state in the country.

"We are proud of our long history in maple research, demonstration and outreach at the University of Vermont and pioneering contributions of UVM maple scientists," said Leslie Parise, dean of the UVM College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, home to PMRC. "We look forward to continuing to better understand the most pressing issues facing Vermont maple producers and advancing the science to address them."







In a typical year, PMRC produces about 3,000 gallons of syrup, which is served in UVM campus dining halls and sold through a packer around the state. The center's three-pronged approach – research, demonstration and outreach – enables PMRC scientists to understand first-hand the key questions that matter most to producers and work with them to improve their practices and product.

“We know that the work we do changes practice and increases economic viability. By reaching out and teaching producers about what we’re learning, we can help them make a better life for themselves and a better maple product,” said Perkins.

In more recent years, PMRC’s research focus has shifted toward high-yield maple production made possible through modern processing technologies and understanding how to mitigate impacts of climate change on yields. Historical records show that already, Vermont’s sugaring season has shifted about a week or more since the 1970s, but many questions remain around how production will be impacted in the longer-term.

“Our work today builds on decades of research of those who’ve come before us,” said Perkins. “We look forward to building on this legacy and helping to advance Vermont’s maple industry for decades more to come.”

Maple syrup is such a big deal that, as a state, we celebrate it every March with two weekends to mark Maple Open House Weekend. (Put it on the calendar for 2023. It was March 19-20, and March 26-27 in 2022.)

The open house weekend is essentially a self-guided tour of Vermont’s participating maple sugar operations. People can look to the association’s

## MAPLE MUFFINS

### Ingredients

4 eggs, separated  
4 oz. Vermont maple syrup  
4 oz. pure honey  
3 tablespoons butter  
3 cups all-purpose flour  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
1 teaspoon cinnamon  
1 orange, zested and juiced  
1/2 cup sour cream  
1/2 cup strong coffee  
1 cup sugar  
1/2 toasted walnuts, chopped

### Preparation

Heat honey and maple syrup to boil, then cool. Beat yolks with butter until light in color and fluffy. Add maple and honey mixture until well blended. Add sugar, blend again. Sift all dry ingredients, and add to honey and maple mixture with orange juice, zest, sour cream, and coffee. Whip egg whites to soft peaks and fold into the mix. Add walnuts. Pour into muffins tins that have been greased and floured. Bake at 350 degrees F for approximately 30-35 minutes or until the toothpick inserted comes out clean. Turn out onto wire rack and cool. For bread loaf: Bake at 325 degrees F for about 60 minutes.

website, [vermontmaple.org](http://vermontmaple.org), for a list of participating sugar makers. Tours of sugar houses, product samples, pancake breakfasts and sugar-on-snow parties are common attractions.

There have been challenges over the last few years.

In 2021, maple producers didn’t make as

much product as they normally would. Coupled with high demand from the pandemic, Québec Maple Syrup Producers decided to tap Canada’s national reserve of maple syrup to keep up.

A bigger problem facing Vermont’s maple producers was one facing nearly every other industry as well, supply chain troubles. The company that makes the syrup jugs that bear the Vermont Maple Sugar Makers’ Association label wasn’t able to keep up with demand, prompting Vermont’s sugar makers to get creative.

“Our maple industry leads the nation, supports our economy and strengthens the Vermont brand, while the Proctor Maple Research Center at UVM reinforces that,” stated Gov. Phil Scott, as he tapped the first tree of 2022 at the facility in Underhill. “With the strong brand recognition of Vermont Maple comes a responsibility to keep our standards at the highest level, and our maple producers have been doing that for decades with the help of the Proctor Maple Research Center.”

There are so many opportunities to try syrup (and maple products) across Vermont, we would do a disservice trying to guide you to specific places. But suffice it to say there are plenty, between large-scale facilities to hobbyist sugarers.

For the foodies, Vermont maple is used in products from batters and cereals, to whiskey and as a sweetener for cocktails. (It’s great in coffee and lattes, too.) We would be remiss not to mention maple creemees. If you don’t know, you need to go find one and try it.

So, you feel like you want an excuse to enjoy some syrup this spring? Here is a simple recipe provided to us by New England Cooks, based in Barre.



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# Explore

Central Vermont

## Summer Photography Contest



**Have a great summer scenic photograph?**

If so, we may publish it in our next edition of Explore Central Vermont and maybe even use it on the cover. Specifically, we are interested in photo submissions that depict the spectacular outdoor scenery of Vermont. Each entrant is invited to submit up to six of their favorite summer outdoor scenic photos, each labeled with the photographer's name and a short description. Photographs may include flora, fauna, landscapes, close-ups or panoramic views. People and/or animals can be included in the photo but should not be the subject of the shot.

We are looking for high resolution photo submissions of 300 dpi or higher in .jpeg format. The more vibrant the colors, the better. Judging will be done by our editors taking into consideration exposure, focal point, color and contrast as well as subject matter.

**The deadline for submissions is May 13, 2022.**  
**Winners will be announced in our next edition.**

**SUBMIT ENTRIES ONLINE**

[www.timesargus.com/explorephotos](http://www.timesargus.com/explorephotos)

Questions may be directed to 802-774-3028.

*\*By entering this competition, entrants agree that Brunswick Publishing, LLC has permission to publish submitted photographs in print, in special promotions and online with credit to the photographer. All photos must be taken in Vermont.*



# Getting from here TO THERE



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY CROSS VERMONT TRAIL ASSOCIATION

## By **PETER COBB**

**M**ost drivers who read the Cross Vermont Trail signs on Route 2 probably aren't sure what the signs refer to: Is Cross Vermont Trail a snowmobile trail, a bike trail or something different? The short answer is yes to all three.

Cross Vermont Trail is a 91.8-mile, family- and biker-friendly, multi-use route from Lake Champlain to the Connecticut River. 33.6 miles are trails maintained by Cross Vermont Trail Association in partnership with private landowners, towns, and state agencies and the remaining 58.2 miles are signed as a scenic bike route on town and state roads.

The ultimate goal, according to Greg Western, CVTA executive director, is a complete off-road trail.

"The trail really is a route not a trail. It is a work in progress. Bit by bit we are working with willing landowners who

want to sell or donate property to make the trail corridor, and then we are leading actual trail building with volunteers, youth groups, and, where needed, skilled contractors. We are also coordinating with and supporting and applauding the ongoing trail building efforts by many other trail groups, municipalities, and state agencies," Western said.

The route begins in Burlington, generally parallels the Winooski River through Waterbury and Montpelier to Marshfield and Groton State Forest. The trail continues along the Wells River through the villages of Groton, South Ryegate, and Wells River to the Connecticut River.

The Cross Vermont Trail started in the early 1990s as a way to promote the idea of linking local trails together into a statewide network.

This June CVTA will celebrate the latest accomplishment, the bridge across the Winooski River on the border between Berlin and East Montpelier.

"Our current big project in East Montpelier is being built and opened in phases. The first phase, the new Winooski (River) Bridge itself, and a short section of trail on either side, will be opened at a ceremonial ribbon cutting June 4. The second phase, trails through the U-32 school forest and providing access to the shoreline of the Winooski, will be opened later in 2022. Finally, in 2023, we will complete the trail building across East Montpelier from the new Winooski Bridge all the way east to Route 14, where the existing rail trail begins. Ultimately, the project will build and open five miles of new trail, getting the Cross Vermont Trail off a long section of Route 2, which is high speed with heavy truck traffic and the worst section of road for walking and biking along our statewide route," Western said.

"Statewide, the main job is to talk with communities and landowners and learn where folks want or need trails to be. As we start to fill in the gaps in the statewide





route, with landowner permissions, then we expect there will be a lot of trail building to do for many years to come. However, we believe the current big project in East Montpelier is the biggest project we will ever need to do. Most of the future trail building needed will be smaller scale and incrementally done,” Western said.

The Cross Vermont Trail Association is a member-based, volunteer-driven, nonprofit corporation with two part-time staff members.

“Our purpose is to assist municipalities, recreation groups, and landowners in the creation and management of a four-season, multi-use trail across the state of Vermont

for public recreation, alternative transportation, and awareness of our natural and cultural heritage,” Western said.

“The big story for how this project was funded is that it has been a true grassroots effort. CVTA has raised over \$350,000 in contributions from local individuals, businesses, and also all of the towns in the U-32 School district as well as Montpelier and Plainfield but most of the money came from

individual contributions, from over 300 local people. This funding has been used as the 20% match for a few large competitive government grants that CVTA was awarded which are mostly federal money, administered by VTrans,” Western said.

“Our vision is to make trails inviting for people of all ages and abilities, providing safe travel to desired destinations, convenient places for healthy activity, and a permanent greenway for easy local access to the natural world across Vermont,” he said.

For a trail map and the latest details about Cross Vermont Trail go to <https://www.crossvermont.org>





## DIY TIPS

# Early spring LANDSCAPING

**D**uring the cold months of winter, many people stare longingly out of the window dreaming of spring and time spent outdoors. For those with green thumbs, images of tending to the garden and other aspects of their landscapes no doubt dominate such daydreams.

One of the first steps is to apply a preemergent weed killer to get a head start knocking out weeds that can plague the lawn during the growing season. Killing weeds at the roots early on can mean far fewer hassles in spring and summer, and may prevent new generations of weeds from cropping up each year.

It may be tempting to take a prematurely warm day as a sign that spring is in full force and purchase a

bunch of annuals, but it's better to know the last of the possible frost dates (check *The Farmer's Almanac*); otherwise, you may waste time and money planting only to have them zapped by another frosty day.

Amend the soil so that it is the right consistency. Soil that is too muddy after spring thaw can harden, making it difficult for plants to flourish later on. Speak with representatives at a local lawn and garden center about which types of amendments you can add to the soil in your particular area to enrich it.

Lawn and garden experts suggest filling in bare patches of lawn now by mixing a few shovelfuls of soil with grass seed. Then apply this patch to the bare areas, water, and continue to care for the area until the spot fills in.



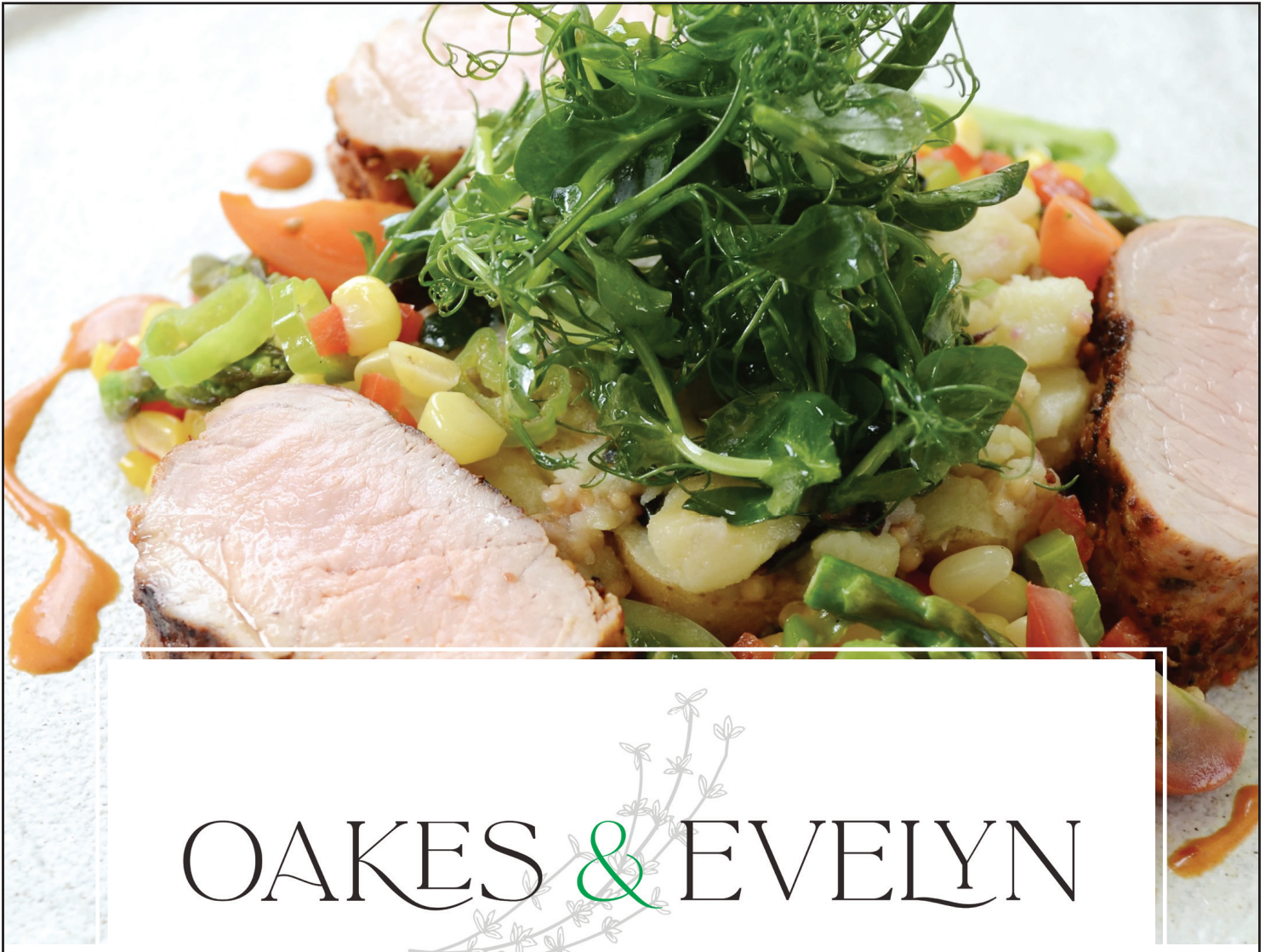
Give outdoor entertaining spaces a good scrubbing, clearing away dirt and grime that may have accumulated over the winter. Use a leaf blower to blow away any leftover leaves.

Check if the front porch, railings or decking need painting and/or staining. Tackle these projects when the weather is cooler so everything will be ready for those peak spring days.

Think about any annuals you might want to plant in the landscape this year that will complement any existing shrubbery or perennials. Come up with a theme so that the entire yard is cohesive.

Before homeowners know it, winter is gone and it is time to once again enjoy long days spent outdoors. Get a jump start on spring lawn prep as soon as you can.





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# 2022 Schedule

# 2022 Highlighted Special Events

- 5/7 BRS official Car Show Bradford Fair Grounds Lower Plains
- 5/7 NAPA of Bradford "F.M.S. Autoparts LLC" ~ **USAC Midgets** ~ (DP)
- 5/14 Forwards Garage & Plumbing LLC's VP Racing Fuels  
**DIRTcar Eastern Region Sportsman Mods Series Event Race GSMS**
- 5/21 Ron's Fix It Shop **USAC Midgets** ~ **VT Foodbank Benefit**
- 5/28 95.3 & 107.1 The Wolf ~ BRS remembrance of Lost Friends  
**4/6 Cylinder ENDURO - 360 Sprints (SCoNE) DS OFF**
- 6/4 Woodsville Guaranty Savings ~ **USAC Midgets** ~ **Ridge Runner Madness**  
6/10 USAC Midgets at Albany Saratoga
- 6/11 FC of Racing Mods/Coupes/Late Models/Dirt Stocks/Ridge Runners **GSMS**
- 6/18 JTB Towing and Recovery
- 6/25 Wells River Savings ~ **4/6 Cylinder ENDURO 360 Sprints (SCoNE) LM OFF**
- 7/2 Pellerin Auto Parts, Body, & Automotive **4TH OF JULY** ~ **USAC Midgets**  
**Fireworks Mod Madness**
- 7/9 Dennis Preston Builder MID Season Champs (DP) **GSMS David's House Benefit**
- 7/16 Twin State Ford ~ **Late Model Madness**
- 7/23 Lucky's Truck & Trailer Sales **360 Sprint Cars (SCoNE) Special**
- 7/30 PT Farm **USAC Midgets** ~ **4/6 Cylinder ENDURO DS OFF**
- 8/6 Walker Motor Sales Inc. ~ **GSMS** ~ **John Poor Memorial Coupe Madness**  
8/12 USAC Midgets at Albany Saratoga
- 8/13 Swenson Insurance Co. **TOPESS Night Bradford Bull Dogs Benefit**
- 8/20 Sabil & Sons ~ **NEAR** ~ **Old Timers Night**  
**55 years of racing Celebration - 360 Sprints (SCoNE)**
- 8/27 Dead River Co ~ **USAC Midgets** ~ **4/6 Cylinder ENDURO LM OFF**
- 9/3 Valley Floors ~ **Dirt Stock Madness - 360 Sprints (SCoNE)**
- 9/10 Key Chevrolet **USAC Midgets DIRTcar Eastern Region Sportsman Mods**  
**Series Event Race #2**
- 9/17 FC of Racing ~ **GSMS** ~ **Late Models final night twin 15's & Time trials**  
General Auto Salvage 99ROCK NE Dirt Track Championships Points Night Full
- 9/24 schedule pending (SM/SC/Midgets/DS/RR) **100 Lap Sportsman Modifieds 50**  
**Lap Sportsman Coupes ~ ENDURO**
- 10/9 Dad's 4 By Tool & Supply **5th Annual Fun Day at the Ridge**

**July 2nd Bear Ridge Speedway annual 4th of July Extravaganza**  
**Fireworks courtesy of Noise R Us**  
**DIRTcar Sportsman Modified MADNESS**  
**Plus DIRTcar Sportsman Coupes**  
**USAC DMA Midgets**  
**Late Models/Dirt Stockers**  
**Ridge Runners**  
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 Adults/Teens/Seniors \$15.00; Kids 11 & under \$2.00

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