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observer

The independent newspaper of eastern New York, southwestern Vermont and the Berkshires

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APRIL 2020

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Joan K. Lentini photo

Fresh food in a pandemic

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as shutdowns scramble local-food networks

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mostly pause
or go online

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The Hill Country Observer is published 10 times per year (monthly except Jan., March) by Observer Publishing Inc.

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HILL COUNTRY

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APRIL 2020

The independent newspaper of eastern New York, southwestern Vermont and the Berkshires

A note to our readers

Like many of you, we have had to improvise and change plans repeatedly over the past month because of the Covid-19 outbreak. For this issue, we have had to produce a shorter paper, without our usual extensive arts and entertainment listings. To mitigate the risk to our route drivers, and because many businesses are closed, we are delivering the paper to a smaller number of locations, focusing on higher-volume distribution points.

As this issue goes to press on April 1, we expect to follow a similar plan for our May issue. But if conditions in our region deteriorate, we may opt to publish online only until whenever the worst of this crisis has passed. We appreciate your understanding and urge you to check our website, www.hillcountryobserver.com, after April 15 for updates on our status.

Please be assured that, the coronavirus emergency aside, we are committed to producing a print newspaper for the long haul. We wish all of you safety and good health in this challenging time.



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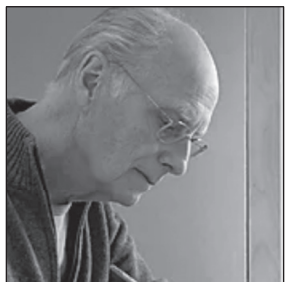


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VOTE



Direct-market farmers forge ahead amid shutdowns
As the Covid-19 outbreak began to shut down much of the Northeast last month, the region's farmers and food producers suddenly found that some of their customers and marketing outlets were evaporating, with restaurants, colleges and even some farmers markets temporarily shuttered. But with lots of people doing more cooking as they follow health officials' pleas to stay home, the demand for fresh, local ingredients seems stronger than ever. Page 3



Rural towns join forces to upgrade slow-lane Internet
Bill Meyer's online business requires him to send and receive many pages of documents. But the DSL line that serves his house, at the end of a dirt road in rural Rupert, Vt., is slow and unreliable. Now Meyer's town and others around southwestern Vermont are joining forces to bring high-speed Internet to their communities. Page 7

Retracing a family's roots - and uprooting
"Leaving China" tells the story of illustrator James McMullan's family roots in China, from his grandparents' missionary work for the Anglican Church to his childhood flight during the Japanese occupation of 1937-41. Page 17

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Maury Thompson: A statesman who fought to abolish slavery Page 15

Visual arts exhibition listings Pages 21-22

Cover photo by Joan K. Lentini: Lisa MacDougall of Mighty Food Farm in Shaftsbury, Vt., checks the spinach plants in one of her greenhouses.



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Fresh food in a pandemic

Region’s farmers forge ahead as shutdowns scramble local-food networks

By **TRACY FRISCH**
Contributing writer

As the Covid-19 outbreak began to shut down the nation last month, the region’s farmers and food producers suddenly found some of their customers and marketing outlets evaporating, with restaurants, schools, colleges and even some farmers markets temporarily shuttered.

But with lots of people doing more cooking as they follow health officials’ pleas to stay home, the demand for fresh, local ingredients seems stronger than ever.

That’s left direct-market farmers scrambling to find new ways to get their products into the hands of consumers while minimizing human contact.

They’ve set up delivery services, online ordering systems, and staggered at-the-farm pickup schedules that keep local customers from encountering one another.

Some farms whose customers are mainly in metropolitan New York City are figuring out new ways to get their wares to the center of the worst coronavirus outbreak, with at least one farm now shipping its meat and other products directly to consumers’ doors by UPS.

“Farmers as entrepreneurs have jumped right in,” said Margaret Moulton, executive director of Berkshire Grown, an organization devoted to supporting local food and agriculture. “They are setting up online stores and arranging for customer pickups outside. Some farmers are setting up new farm stands.”

In places where they’re being allowed to operate, the organizations that run local farmers markets are grappling with how to proceed – and how best to do so while minimizing the risk of spreading the coronavirus.

Berkshire Grown, which holds monthly winter markets, canceled its March 21 market. It’s normally held in a school gymnasium, but all the

continued on next page



Joan K. Lentini photo

Lisa MacDougall holds two flats of kale inside one of her many greenhouses at Mighty Food Farm in Shaftsbury, Vt.



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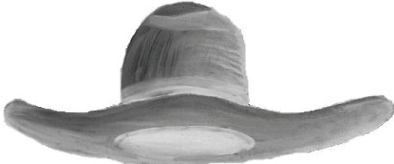
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schools were closed.

"We are looking into workable options for an outdoor venue, advance ordering, etcetera," Moulton said.

Beyond the task of getting their products to market, some larger farms also are facing new operational challenges in their own fields. Some who rely on seasonal foreign workers fear the supply of those workers will be cut off by travel restrictions. And some worry that farmworkers who live in close quarters could be at risk if Covid-19 makes it onto their farms.

Inventing a Plan B

For many food producers in western New England and eastern New York, the wakeup call came in mid-March, when a number of winter farmers markets in the region abruptly ceased operations to help stem the spread of the coronavirus.

When the Saratoga Springs Winter Farmers' Market canceled its March 20 indoor market, Pleasant Valley Farm, a vegetable farm in the Washington County town of Argyle, quickly announced it would offer free home delivery with a \$15 minimum through an online pre-order, pre-pay system.

The farm's owners, Paul and Sandy Arnold, spread word of the service through an email newsletter they already were sending to customers from the farmers markets that have been their major source of income for more than 30 years.

The next week, the Arnolds announced some changes in their new distribution system. The Saratoga Springs Farmers' Market had resumed operations, having moved outdoors six weeks earlier than planned, and their other winter farmers market continued to operate inside. The Arnolds decided to limit home delivery to residents of Saratoga Springs. They also started accepting pre-orders for the two farmers markets where they sell, and they began offering an additional pick-up site at another location.

At Laughing Earth, a 175-acre farm in the Rensselaer County hamlet of Cropseyville, Annie and Zack Metzger raise livestock, vegetables and cut flowers for the Troy Waterfront Farmers' Market as well as for the farm's member-customers. When the Troy market shut down March 14, the Metzgers had enough warning to set up an online store.

"We just used a Google app," Annie Metzger said. "It was free and easy."

They set up their online store to allow customers to place orders and pay electronically, with a choice of home delivery or at-the-farm pickup by appointment. On the Saturday the farmers market was suspended, they offered home delivery within a 15-mile radius of their farm, an area that encompasses the cities of Albany and Troy.

"The amount of support last weekend was really encouraging," Metzger said. "We were able to make up the income that we would have made at the market."

Working at home

Lisa MacDougall decided to try to reduce her risk of coronavirus by staying put at Mighty Food Farm, where she grows organic vegetables. The farm in Shaftsbury, Vt., operates on the model of community-supported agriculture, in which customers pay in advance for a share of each year's harvest.

MacDougall said she expects more people will be buying memberships in CSA farms. Because of concerns about the spread of Covid-19, farmers markets will have to set up new safety protocols, and some may not be able to open, she said.

"We will have to see how long the pandemic goes on for," she said. "But the reality is that ... farmers will be pre-packing custom orders for customers."

MacDougall and her crew are providing their customers with food via a pre-order pickup system. They leave packages outside their building, scheduling customer pickups one at a time to avoid encounters that might inadvertently spread the virus. To handle orders, the farm is using the online platform Farmigo, and MacDougall said she's been pleased with how the system works.

She said she encourages other farmers to update their websites and use social media to communicate with current and potential customers about changes in their delivery systems. Facebook, she said, "reaches my local community better" than Instagram. With Facebook, a farmer can post ads that target people in a local geographic area, she added.

More demand than supply?

At a time when shoppers are finding empty shelves in some supermarket aisles, farmers around the region say more people are showing up at farm stands and signing up to buy produce throughout the season from CSA operations.

The increased demand might put farmers in a stronger bargaining position with wholesale buyers such as food co-ops.

Chris Cashen of the Farm at Miller's Crossing, a large, diversified organic operation in the Columbia County town of Claverack, said the farm sold out of everything it brought to the Hudson farmers market in mid-March.

"I've had people calling to order 50-pound boxes of potatoes," Cashen said.

Customers were also asking for large amounts of beef, but the farm was approaching the end of its grass-fed beef inventory, and its cows were just starting to calf.

Cashen said his farm has also been getting more requests from wholesale customers than it can supply at winter's end.

"We only have 500 or 600 pounds of carrots left," he said. "I could have sold our carrots five times over."

He decided to hold out.

"I'd rather make individual retail customers happy by selling 5 pounds here and 10 pounds there than sell to wholesale customers," he explained. "There's double the money in that too."

Status of farmers markets

Many farmers in New York breathed a sigh of relief in the third week of March, when Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced that the state considers farmers markets to be essential services, like grocery stores, that should continue to operate during the Covid-19 shutdown. Massachusetts made a similar determination.

But in Vermont, Agriculture Secretary Anson Tebbetts said March 25 that farmers markets should not continue operations under Gov. Phil Scott's stay-at-home directive.

"Outdoor markets would likely attract large gatherings that would congregate close together," Tebbetts told Vermont Public Radio. "There is risk of person-to-person contact when exchanging goods."

Tebbetts said his agency would instead work with farmers and market managers to set up pick-up and delivery services for farm products.



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As of late March, the Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont was urging its members to contact the governor and push to classify farmers markets as essential, allowing them to open with appropriate precautions. At the same time, the organization has been trying to fill the void for farmers who suddenly lack access to farmers markets by helping them make connections to online marketplaces, food hubs and other farms that might distribute their products.

Even in New York and Massachusetts, the decision to classify farmers markets as essential services does not guarantee the markets will keep operating. Individual markets have their own governing boards, and some may decide to close.

Others have been forced to close, at least temporarily, because they're held at locations, such as schools or colleges, that are no longer available because of the pandemic.

Market boards and local governments will have to parse the meaning of declarations about essential services. Some markets may choose not to include vendors who offer nonfood items, alcohol or prepared foods.

Reducing risk

Where they're allowed to operate, farmers markets are trying to work out how to hold the safest events possible.

In the Hudson Valley village of Cold Spring, 50 miles north of New York City, the local farmers market moved outdoors early, on March 14. By the following Saturday, new precautions were in place. Vendor booths form one long line, with a one-way entrance and a one-way exit, and a limited number of people allowed in at one time. Only one household may visit each vendor table at one time, vendors pre-bag all items, and customers are asked not to touch produce or other products. The market is providing contact information for all vendors to encourage customers to email or text orders in advance, and it's looking into online apps to facilitate pre-orders for future markets.

In Massachusetts, Moulton said Berkshire Grown is urging the state to change its rules to allow online advance payments with EBT (electronic benefit transfer) cards. Many people, she said, use Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits to pay for produce at farmers markets, but the state's current rules require

these payments to be processed on site. Allowing advance payment, she said, would reduce interpersonal contact and possible exposure to the coronavirus at farmers markets.

On many farms that operate under the CSA model, produce pickup days for member-customers have traditionally been a fun social event.

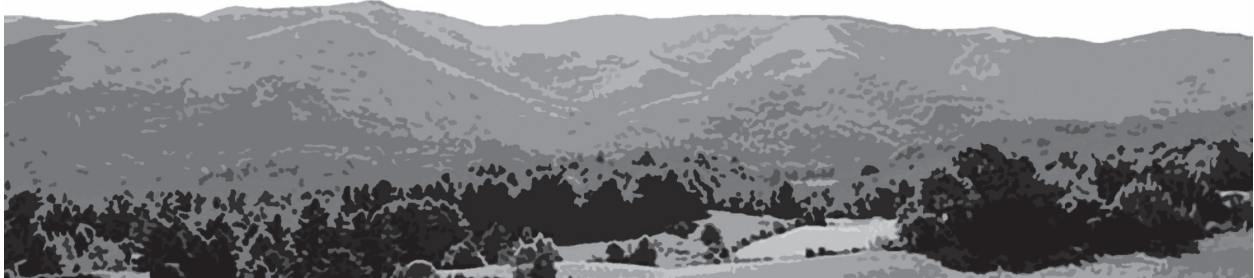
"We'll have 100 people here at a time on Wednesdays," said Metzger, of Laughing Earth, recalling prior seasons. "Often the whole family comes. People hang out in the picking garden. Parents with little kids meet up and play."

But all of this will change during the Covid-19 outbreak. Instead of market-style distribution days, CSA farmers are contemplating two different options – either pre-boxing standard shares for all customers or using online platforms to allow shareholders to pre-order what they want.

At Cambridge Corner Farm in Cambridge, N.Y., Stephen Holbrook and Julie Callahan already serve their CSA members using a pre-order model. They also participate in a small farmers market that Callahan manages in nearby Greenwich.

Holbrook said he is impressed with "how

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well local growers and producers have done in accepting the challenges of getting their product to customers during the pandemic."

And customers, he said, have been very supportive.

"Even without the pandemic, this is what supporting the local food system should be like – high demand and lots of support," Holbrook said.

He said he views the Covid-19 crisis as "a wakeup call" that the nation's food system is not as durable as many people suppose.

"The country is closing the borders so workers can't get in," Holbrook said. "We have one little disruption in the food system, and grocery stores have shortages."

Feeding an outbreak's center

At Windflower Farm in Cambridge, Ted and Jan Blomgren market their produce through nine community-supported agriculture groups in New York City as well as under several United Way contracts to supply fresh produce to food pantries in the city. They had 1,150 CSA shareholders in the city last year and have three "drop and go" sites for food pantries that require minimal handling by the farm.

After 15 to 20 years in operation, Windflower Farm's core groups of member-customers are well established, and they continue to have high demand for memberships even in the midst of the Covid-19 outbreak, Ted Blomgren said.

"When we opened the first four sites" for the

season, he said, "the enrollments came in really fast."

But many of the CSA groups in the city that buy their produce have distribution sites in schools and churches that are now closed because of the pandemic.

"Before opening these sites, we may need to wade through a bureaucracy that's also shut down," Blomgren said.

Because of Covid-19, Blomgren said Windflower Farm will stop offering open, farmers-market-style distribution to its CSA customers. But he has been reluctant to deliver pre-boxed shares in new cardboard boxes every week, which

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NEWS & ISSUES

Work at home? Not so fast

Rural towns work to upgrade spotty, slow Internet links

By EVAN LAWRENCE
Contributing writer

RUPERT, Vt.

Bill Meyer lives at the far end of a dirt road. His online business requires him to send and receive many pages of documents. But his Internet service, via a DSL (direct subscriber line) connection, is slow and unreliable. The wire that links him to the online world goes through a forest. If the wind is strong or snow brings down a branch, he may lose his connection. It's a common situation in this small town in the Taconic Mountains along Vermont's western border.

"This is typical of rural areas," Meyer said. The tiny hamlets of East Rupert and North Rupert, along Route 30 at the eastern edge of town, have comparatively high-speed cable service through Vermont Telephone Co. But the homes in that area account for less than 10 percent of the town's population of about 700, he said.

Everyone else has DSL – or nothing at all. The mountains block satellite signals. Thanks to a state program to bring libraries online, the town library has high-speed service. But the small library is open only a few hours a week, Meyer said.

A business in West Rupert that makes replica Early American lighting had to bring in its own fiber-optic line so it could send pictures and work orders to customers, he said.

And now, with people across Vermont, Massachusetts and New York being directed to work at home because of the Covid-19 outbreak, those in towns like Rupert are at a disadvantage.

"There are a lot of people in town who could really use broadband," Meyer said.

But the town's small population and rugged terrain make it an unlikely new market for the commercial companies that provide high-speed Internet connections in more populous areas.

"No Comcast or any of those big companies is going to come in and provide service," Meyer said. "The only way we'll ever get fiber optic here is through a consortium."

That's essentially what Meyer and others across a swath of southwestern Vermont are now working to create, using a legal and financial structure encouraged by recent state legislation.



Joan K. Lentini photo

Arlene Bentley and Bill Meyer stand with a laptop computer outside the Rosalind K. Kittay Public Library in Rupert, Vt. The local library is the only WiFi hotspot in the rural town, where most residents can't get high-speed Internet service at home.

Few options

Rupert's slow-lane Internet service is a common one in this mountainous, thinly populated state – and in parts of western Massachusetts and eastern New York.

"Every town is essentially in the same situation," said Tim Scoggins, the Select Board chairman in Shaftsbury, three towns south of Rupert along the New York border.

"It's generally the case around here that Comcast is the only option," he said, referring to the local cable provider. "If you have a Comcast wire going down your road, you're in good shape."

Otherwise, Scoggins said, depending on one's distance from the town center, "you have good DSL, poor DSL, or HughesNet satellite, which is barely anything at all."

A wireless company in New York claims to cover part of Bennington County, but Scoggins said he doesn't know anyone who uses it.

"Most Internet service providers exaggerate their coverage area," he said.

Bennington County has a few public WiFi hot spots at schools, libraries, and state and local offices, mostly in Bennington and Manchester. In Rupert, the only public WiFi is at the library. (See

continued on next page

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a state map at <https://publicservice.vermont.gov/content/public-wifi-hotspots-vermont>).

No one expects private broadband providers to fill the void on their own.

According to a February report by the Brookings Institution, broadband in the United States is the sixth most expensive among 23 industrialized countries, about double what Sweden pays. The top reason for the high cost here, according to the report, is that U.S. regulators stopped enforcing pro-competition policies, leaving many people with only one or two Internet providers. Providers aren't required to offer access to every potential customer, nor do they have to offer everyone the same speeds.

Vermont lawmakers tried to remedy the situation in 2015 by passing legislation that allows towns to form communications union districts, effectively banding together for better broadband coverage. One such district, EC Fiber, was already operating in the east central part of the state. It now has 27 participating towns.

Last year, the state decided to give rural towns in other parts of the state more support to do the same.

Towns join forces

State Rep. Kathleen James, D-Manchester, explained that under Act 79, which passed in 2019, the Legislature provided "a lot of financial tools and resources for underserved and rural communities to improve broadband service."

Under this new law, she said, communications union districts can receive state grants of up to \$60,000 to hire a consultant, conduct a feasibility study, and draw up a business plan. Districts can also apply for loans of up to \$4 million from the state Economic Development Authority to pay for up to 90 percent of the costs of construction and installation. More construction funds are available through federal programs.

"Over the summer I saw Windham County rallying" to form a communications district, James said. "I thought we needed to do the same here."

So she reached out to her statehouse colleague, Rep. Laura Sibilia, I-Dover, who sent her a checklist of what Windham County was doing and what Bennington County towns would need to do to form their own district.

James organized a public forum in early November, featuring state and local officials involved in broadband expansion.

"We had a really good turnout," she said. "We had representatives from 15 or 16 communities who wanted to work on this together. They agreed to establish a task force and start meeting regularly to figure out the next steps."

Scoggins agreed to head the task force, and Meyer stepped in as clerk.

Last month, on Town Meeting Day, 12 Bennington County towns voted to become founding members of the Southern Vermont Communications Union District.

"We're in the process of forming a governing board," James said. Each participating town appoints one delegate and one alternate. The board plans to meet in May to organize formally, Scoggins said. Then the new communications district can start applying for grants.

When it has a business plan, the district can request proposals from Internet service providers who would build and operate the system.

Under state law, the communications district cannot take local tax money to pay for infrastructure. Once it's past the startup stage, the district will pay for its loans and ongoing costs through subscriber fees.

Communications districts elsewhere in the state have proved to be competitive with private providers, but "our first effort is to serve unserved and underserved areas," Scoggins said.

Based on state data, Scoggins estimated that 8,000 to 10,000 of Bennington County's 30,000 residents could benefit from fiber-optic service through the district.

Getting connected

High-speed Internet brings many advantages to businesses, education, health care, and even housing in its service area. Vermont has a chronic housing shortage and struggles to attract and retain younger workers.

"Real estate agents say the first two questions that people who want to move to Vermont ask are about schools and availability of broadband," Meyer said. "People would come here because it's a beautiful town, but they can't live without Internet."

As a former teacher, Meyer said he also understands what happens when some students have Internet access and some don't.

"It's hard to run a fair program if you rely too much on Internet resources," he said.

Scoggins pointed out that better Internet connections are also a matter of public safety.

"One of the big reasons for the fiber-optic push is that remote areas are only served by land lines," Scoggins said. "The copper wires are old and deteriorating, and the providers aren't maintaining them. These areas aren't covered by cell phones. Some people could wind up with no phone service at all."

James said the Covid-19 outbreak has added urgency to the project.

"I don't think there's anyone who wasn't behind this, but it's been triple underscored by the pandemic," she said. "Internet access is critical to people who suddenly have to home-school, for telemedicine, for elderly residents, and for public safety. I look at all the state agencies putting vital information on their websites, and I'm thinking all the time of people not seeing this information because they're not connected."

Meyer predicted that Vermont eventually will have 15 communication districts providing high-speed connections to all parts of the state.

"But it's like defending the U.S. with 50 state militias," he said. "We're stuck with a hodgepodge for the time being."

In Mass., a split over structure

In Massachusetts, Berkshire County has struggled with many of the same problems as Vermont when it comes to Internet service. In the hill towns of the Berkshires, a small population is widely dispersed over rugged terrain, and many houses are occupied only on weekends or seasonally.

According to 2014 data from the Massachusetts Broadband Institute, the state had 44 towns, mostly in the Berkshires and north-central Massachusetts, with limited or no broadband access. Nineteen of those towns were in the Berkshires. As in Vermont, people in more densely settled communities – the cities of Pittsfield and North Adams, and towns along major corridors like U.S. Route 7 – generally had

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- from Williamstown 1 hr, 30 min

See map on page 15

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good coverage. Two clusters totaling seven towns along the New York border and 12 towns on the east side of the county had poor or no service.

The state established the Massachusetts Broadband Institute in 2008 to enable broadband access in all areas of the state. According to information provided by the Massachusetts Technical Collaborative, MBI received \$50 million from the state in 2014 to extend existing broadband connections in town centers, created under the previous Middle Mile program, to all homes.

At first, the MBI worked with Wired West, a nonprofit cooperative of about 30 towns that wanted to address their broadband issues as a group. Under a state law that allows towns to form their own utility companies, the goal was for towns to own their broadband systems and contract with Internet service providers to construct and maintain them.

What happened next is a matter of some controversy. According to MBI, some towns balked at the high up-front cost of the collaborative model. Progress stalled.

"The Baker-Polito administration made direct community engagement a core part of the Last Mile program's relaunch in 2016, which included towns having final say over the solution for their community," said Peter Larkin, the MBI's board chairman, in an email. "We also moved away from a one-size-fits-all approach. That allowed us to get towns direct grants to support municipal fiber-to-the-home projects and to launch the process to identify proposals for private companies to close gaps in towns."

In other words, instead of pursuing a multi-town utility to create infrastructure the towns would collectively own, the MBI's new approach allowed individual towns to negotiate with private companies who would build, own and operate broadband systems under a franchise agreement.

David Dvore, Wired West's town and delegate liaison, took a different view of the change in the state's approach.

"The money got hijacked a little bit," Dvore said. "The MBI realized that if Wired West went forward with a regional network, it could bypass

the Middle Mile network [in town centers], and it wouldn't provide enough money for the Middle Mile providers."

At that point, "the MBI did an about-face," Dvore said. "Every town would have to be on its own. In my mind, that was a huge mistake."

The MBI "started offering extra money to towns if they'd let the cable or wireless companies own the networks," he said. "Some took the bait. They'll be at the mercy of a monopoly."

However, the Baker administration, in the person of key officials including Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito, "did make broadband a priority and get things moving," Dvore said.

Work under way

According to the Massachusetts Technical Collaborative, all 44 towns in the original group, plus another nine who came in later, now "have a path to broadband." Some, including Mount Washington, West Stockbridge, Hinsdale and Lanesborough, have completed their projects.

continued on page 16

Destination: BALLSTON SPA, NY

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- from Great Barrington 1 hour, 30 minutes
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See map on page 15

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A MONTH IN THE HILLS

Virus arrives in region, upending all plans

The coronavirus crept into the region stealthily, probably sometime in late February, then burst into public view on the weekend of March 7-8.

That weekend, Vermont officials announced that a patient being treated at Southwestern Vermont Medical Center in Bennington had the state's first confirmed case of Covid-19.

A patient at Berkshire Medical Center in Pittsfield also tested positive for the virus that weekend, and the hospital would soon learn that two other patients, who'd independently sought treatment for severe upper respiratory symptoms, were infected too.

Until then, public health officials had said Covid-19 was a risk only to people who had traveled to China or other hot spots abroad or had direct exposure to someone known to have the disease. But none of the patients in the Berkshires and Bennington had any known exposure through travel or personal contacts. Their cases made it clear the virus was now spreading in local communities.

Across the state line in New York, Saratoga County reported its first two Covid-19 cases that weekend: a pharmacist who worked in Glens Falls, and his wife, who had encountered an infected person at a conference in Florida.

Within days, the virus – highly contagious and far more deadly than the seasonal flu – began to upend nearly every facet of life across the Northeast.

In an effort to curb the spread of Covid-19, governors declared states of emergency, closing schools and forcing bars and restaurants to shut down or switch to offering meals only for takeout

and delivery.

Soon the governors of New York and Massachusetts, and later Vermont, issued stay-at-home directives urging everyone to avoid going out except for essential tasks like grocery shopping – and to practice “social distancing” by staying at least six feet away from other people in public.

The states ordered non-essential businesses to close, leaving everything from hair salons to shopping malls shuttered. Bans on mass gatherings stopped all concerts and sports events.

Museums, performance spaces and other arts organizations across the region shut down and canceled all public events through mid-April or in some cases mid-May. And as the number of Covid-19 cases in the region continued to rise, some began to reconsider their summer programming. Barrington Stage Company of Pittsfield canceled its first production of the summer season, which had been scheduled for early June. And on March 31, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival announced that, for the first time in its 88-year history, it would cancel its entire season, which normally runs from late June through August.

The shutdowns and cancellations led to widespread layoffs, reduced hours and pay cuts for workers at businesses large and small, as well as at nonprofits and arts groups. The *Times Union* of Albany reported that in a mid-March survey of local businesses by the Saratoga County Prosperity

Partnership, 41 percent said they had already laid off employees – and 59 percent said they were at risk of closing permanently.

To keep businesses afloat, a \$2 trillion federal relief package, passed by Congress in late March, provides for low-interest loans to small businesses and nonprofits, and those loans can be forgiven if they're used to retain payroll employees or to pay a mortgage, rent or utility bills.

Even in a presidential election year, the coronavirus mostly put politics on hold. New York postponed its presidential primary, which had been scheduled for April 28, until June 23, and state officials began to discuss strategies for increasing the use of mail-in ballots. Massachusetts Democrats moved to cancel their state nominating convention, which had been scheduled for May 30. And Vermont eliminated requirements for this year's

continued on next page

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candidates to gather petition signatures.

By the end of March, health officials were reporting more than 400 Covid-19 cases across southwestern Vermont, the Berkshires and the neighboring New York counties of Columbia, Rensselaer, Washington, Saratoga and Warren. But because tests for the coronavirus were only being given to patients who were seriously ill, experts said the actual number of infections might be far higher. Seven people in the region had died.

Much of the nation's attention was focused on metropolitan New York City, where the number of Covid-19 cases exploded into tens of thousands in March (nearly 50,000 in the city alone by month's end) and was expected to peak by late April, potentially overwhelming hospitals and health care workers. New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo ordered hospitals statewide to increase their capacity of beds by at least 50 percent – and up to 100 percent if possible – and raised the prospect of transferring patients from New York City and its suburbs to upstate hospitals in the Albany area and beyond.

In Vermont, the *Rutland Herald* reported officials were working toward a goal of doubling the state's supply of 575 hospital beds and 163 ventilators. Gov. Phil Scott and other top officials told reporters at a March 25 news conference that the Vermont National Guard was in the process of building three additional medical sites that together could handle a surge of up to 250 patients beyond the capacity of the state's hospitals.

Hospitals and health care workers across the region pleaded throughout March for more test kits and a stronger supply of protective gear they said would be needed for the coming wave of patients. The potential hazards to health care workers were on display at Berkshire Medical Center, where some 160 staff members were furloughed for 14-day quarantines after unknowingly coming into contact with the coronavirus while treating the area's first patients before they were diagnosed. *The Berkshire Eagle* reported that the hospital wound up so short-staffed that it had to hire 50 temporary nurses from outside the area.

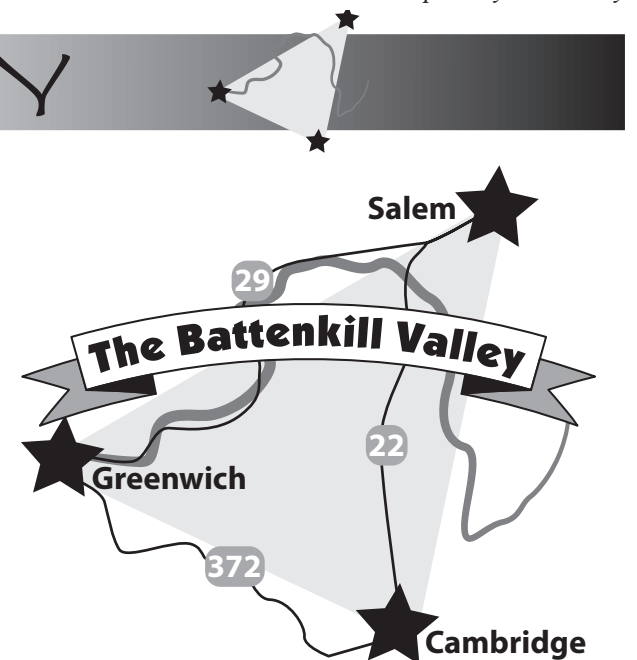
Health officials say Covid-19 poses especially high risks for people over 60 and for those with pre-existing medical conditions such as diabetes and heart disease. Because of the risk to the elderly, nursing homes across the region locked down in early March, banning all visitors and restricting residents to their rooms.

But at least two area nursing homes were experiencing outbreaks of Covid-19 by the end of the month. In Massachusetts, *The Berkshire Eagle* reported that 17 residents of the Williamstown Common Nursing & Rehabilitation Center were confirmed to have the virus, and one of those patients died March 29.

In Columbia County, the *Times Union* reported that four residents of the Pine Haven Nursing & Rehabilitation Center in Philmont had tested positive for Covid-19 as of March 27, while four others showed signs of the illness. On March 28, a Pine Haven resident became the first person in the county to die from Covid-19.

– Compiled by Fred Daley

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EDITORIAL

First battle was lost in failure to test

As we prepare this issue for press at the end of March, the Covid-19 pandemic has shut down much of the Northeast and is threatening to hit New York City and its suburbs with catastrophic force over the next few weeks.

For now, the focus of the nation and our region is appropriately on how to limit the height and breadth of the crisis in the metropolis to our south – by sharing our health care workers and facilities, and by helping in any way possible in New York's effort to marshal ventilators and protective equipment for the doctors and nurses on the front lines.

But the coronavirus also poses special threats to our own region, with its graying population and tourist-dependent economy, and the virus is already here and spreading. In the eight counties that make up our readership area, the number of confirmed Covid-19 cases has grown from a half-dozen on the weekend of March 7-8, when the disease made its first appearance here, to more than 400 on March 31.

Because so few people have been tested, however, the actual number infected in our region likely exceeds the number of confirmed cases many times over. Amazingly, even now, weeks into this crisis, local health officials have so few test kits that they reserve them only for seriously ill patients, health care workers and first responders – and sometimes not even for them.

We have arrived at our current situation in part because of a spectacular failure by our federal government to anticipate and respond promptly to this epidemic, and nowhere is that failure more in evidence than in lack of testing.

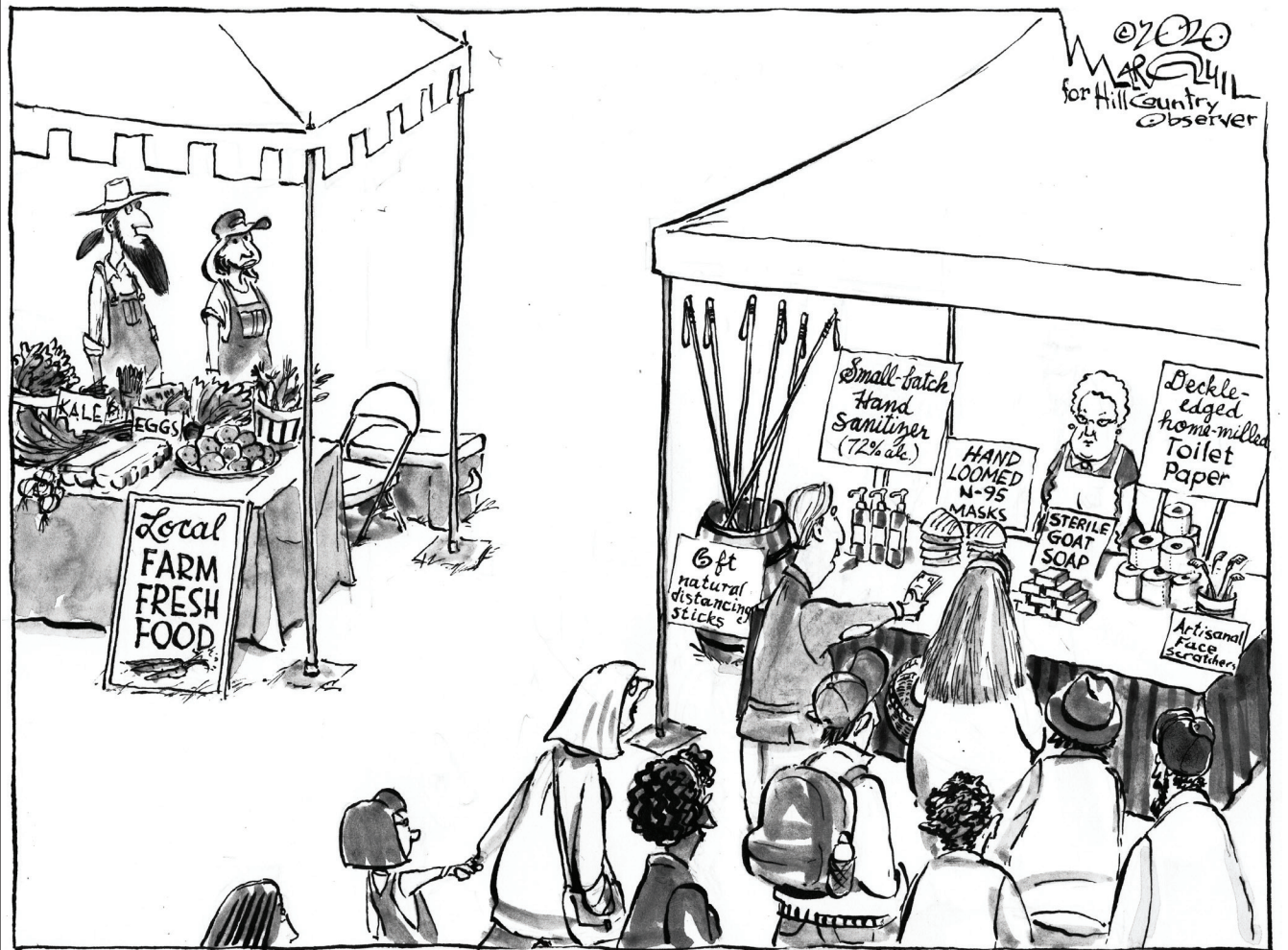
As Covid-19 spread from its initial outbreak in China late last year, countries like South Korea, Singapore and Germany, instituted rigorous testing to track the spread of the disease. When someone tested positive, health officials traced and tested that person's contacts in an effort to contain the disease. Because of that effort, those countries managed to slow the growth of cases and the mortality among those infected.

But after the coronavirus reached the United States in mid-January, we lost precious days and weeks through all of February when containment through widespread testing might have been possible. Now, having lost that battle by default, we've turned to the far more costly and difficult task of slowing a disease that's already spread to all 50 states and nearly every county.

The question of how we missed the window for containment will need to be answered in due course. When the worst of this crisis is over, we'll need a truth commission to sort out what our top federal officials and members of Congress knew and when they knew it.

For now, the strategy of staying in our homes as much as possible and practicing social distancing when we must go out is our best chance of avoiding a fate like Italy's. But it's a strategy that assumes that, even with social distancing, many of us eventually will be sickened. The goal is to "flatten the curve" – lowering the number of cases at any one time and keeping hospitals from becoming overwhelmed, thereby resulting in better care for everyone.

The statistics from other countries show that even if we're sickened by Covid-19, the vast majority of us will survive. But if our efforts at staying home and social distancing fail and the worst-case projections become real, we might all know someone who didn't.



Letters to the editor

Halting election interference involves more than Russia

To the editor:

As Lee Russ says [letter to the editor, February-March issue], one bad thing about President Trump is that he admires authoritarian rulers, from Russia's Putin to Egypt's el-Sisi, and has acted as if he dreams about ruling more like them.

But as far as Russia interfering with our elections:

- Russia is/was not the only country attempting to influence our elections in 2020 and 2016.
- The years 2020 and 2016 are not the only ones in which Russia and other countries have tried to influence our elections.
- The United States is not the only country whose elections other countries have tried to influence.
- The United States has been trying to influence other countries' elections for decades.

In other words, with modern communications, everybody is doing it to everybody. Therefore, before singling Russia out for attempting to influence our elections, we need international standards for behavior in other countries' elections and to judge every country's behavior by them.

In addition, statements like "Country A is trying to influence Country B's elections and referenda" imply that these efforts stem from or get support from Country A's government. But what about private individuals who contribute toward influencing an election or referendum in a country not their own, regardless of whether their own government knows, cares or approves?

What about activist organizations for vari-

ous causes? What about multinational corporations? There should be standards for each of these categories.

Needless to say, developing the standards should have input from people from all countries.

Jeanette Wolfberg
Hudson, N.Y.

Panic and empty shelves: Is society breaking down?

To the editor:

"We're very sorry, but we have no toilet paper."

That is the message everywhere in Bennington. The Price Chopper was so full of shoppers at 7 a.m. on a Thursday that I just left with nothing. The toilet paper aisle was completely empty.

The rest of the stores had the same problem: no toilet paper. It was panic city.

With this type of dilemma facing us what do we do? When an entire town is out of toilet paper and many other basic things, we are being subjected to a cruel and painful existence.

This situation here in Bennington is bad and reminds me of what would happen in a nuclear weapons attack. It's every man and woman for themselves!

Thomas W. King
Shaftsbury, Vt.

A leader known as a foe of slavery, friend of workers

Vice President Henry Wilson, a former U.S. senator from Massachusetts known as “always the working man’s friend,” rode on the driver’s seat as he took a coach from Glens Falls to Lake George and back again on Aug. 6, 1874.

Wilson went to Lake George to have lunch at The Fort William Henry Hotel, and returned to Glen’s Falls (spelled with an apostrophe in that era) in time to catch the afternoon train south.

“Mr. Wilson looked the well-to-do pleasant, farmer-like gentleman in search of recreation and enjoyment, and determined to find them without making a great ado about it,” *The Glen’s Falls Republican* reported on Aug. 11, 1874.

Wilson, who served as vice president in the second term of Ulysses S. Grant, also spent time in Saratoga Springs in 1874, working on writing his three-volume masterwork “History of the Rise and Fall of the Slave Power in America.”

Wilson, born in 1812 in New Hampshire, rose from poverty to become a newspaper editor and a politician dedicated to the abolition of slavery.

“While his youth was spent at the shoemaker’s bench, by the force of his mind and the earnestness of his purpose, he rose through the various stations of editor, member of the Massachusetts legislature, member of its constitutional convention, United States senator, and vice president of the United States,” lawyer Joseph Shippen of St. Louis wrote in a tribute published Nov. 26, 1875, in *The State Journal* of Jefferson City, Mo.

Wilson also was a state legislator in New Hampshire before his political career in

Massachusetts.

Born Jeremiah Jones Colbath, he legally changed his name to Henry Wilson at age 21, when he was freed from being an indentured servant farm worker.

He learned the shoemaking trade and set up a small manufacturing operation in Natick, Mass. Later, he became owner and editor of the *Boston Daily Republican* from the late 1840s until 1851, by which time he was already serving as a Massachusetts state senator and was chosen to be Senate president.

He was known for being outspoken and transparent.

“Mr. Wilson is not the man to horde up facts and inferences for his own selfish contemplation,” *The Daily Saratogian* reported on June 7, 1875. “Quite on the contrary, he shares them with the press and thus with the public in a manner exemplarily liberal.”

Wilson was a Whig when he first entered politics. In 1848, he co-founded the Free Soil Party, a short-lived party that merged into the Republican Party in 1854.

Wilson joined the Know-Nothing Party in 1854, hoping to convert it to an abolitionist force, but was disappointed with his lack of success and joined the Republican Party a few years later.

When Wilson visited Lake George and Saratoga Springs in 1874, there was concern about his health. He had suffered a stroke the previous year.

On July 16, 1874, *The Essex County Republican* of Keeseville, citing “a leading Republican senator,” reported that Wilson was expected to

resign soon because of poor health. The report turned out to be unfounded.

Wilson did not appear ill when he passed through Glen’s Falls in August.

“He appeared ruddy and well, and we hope his health is permanently improved,” *The Glen’s Falls Republican* reported.

At Saratoga Springs, the vice president appeared to have stamina.

“While in Saratoga last summer, Mr. Wilson enjoyed more than ordinary health for him,” *The Daily Saratogian* reported on Nov. 10, 1875. “He was in the best of spirits so far as his personal relations with society went.”

Wilson appeared healthy when he again visited Saratoga Springs about a year later to dine at the Grand Union Hotel with James Scovel, the former president of the New Jersey state Senate.

“The vice president is in good health, and he speaks at Brattleboro, Vt., next Wednesday,” *The Daily Saratogian* reported on Aug. 12, 1875.

The seemingly good health would not last long.

Wilson had been ill for a couple of weeks when he died of a stroke on Nov. 22, 1875. He was 63.

“Vice President Wilson awoke at 7 a.m. He said he felt well and asked his nurse for a glass of water,” *The Daily Saratogian* reported. “He sat on the bed, drank the water, lay back on his left side and died without a struggle in a few minutes.”

Maury Thompson was a reporter for The Post-Star of Glens Falls for 21 years before retiring in 2017. He now is a freelance writer focusing on the history of politics, labor and media in the region.

Maury Thompson

News that’s slow-brewed for a high-speed age

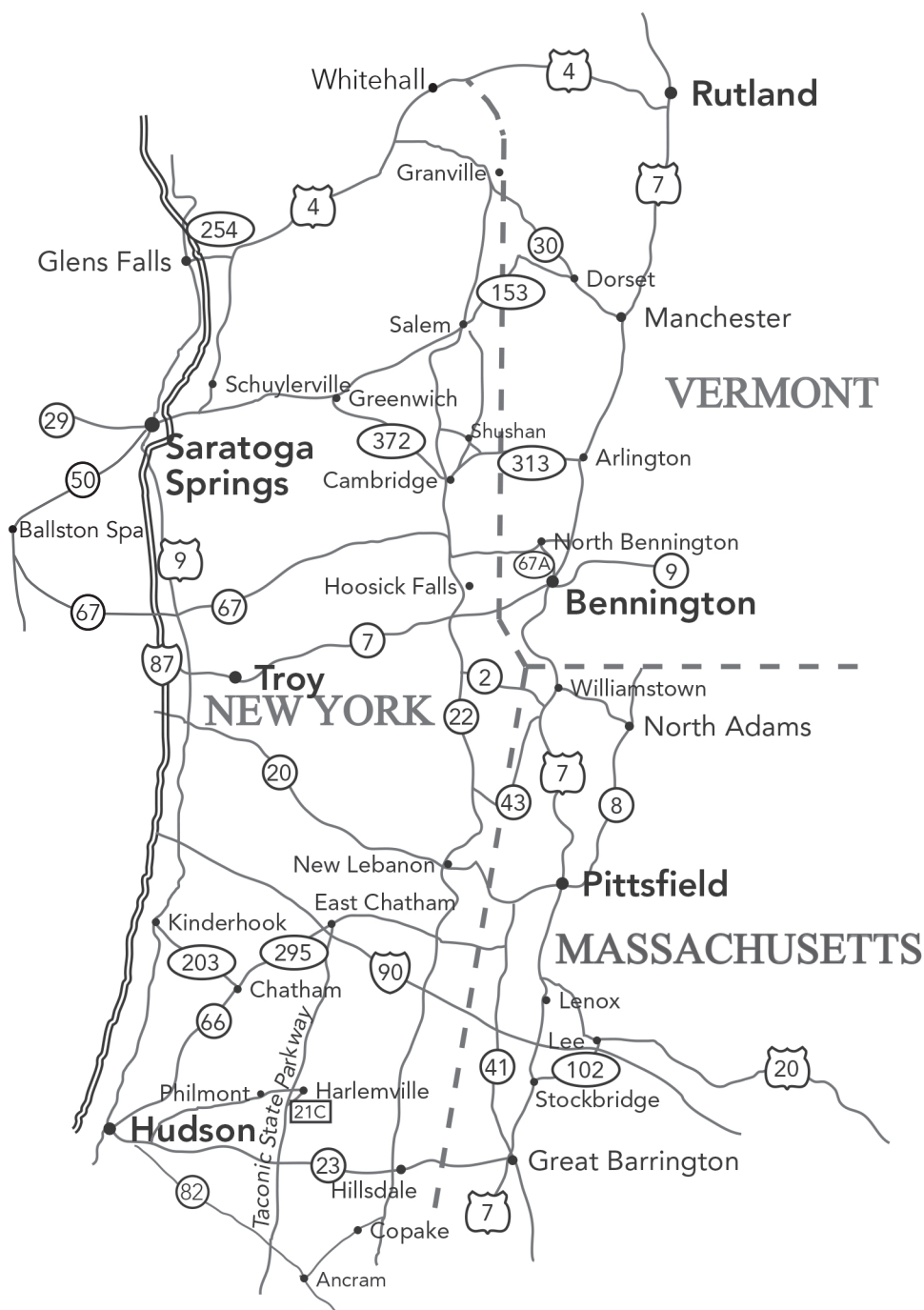
We’re told we live in an information age, yet the traditional gathering of news is in decline.

Conventional news organizations are scaling back their efforts to ferret out the facts, even as they spread each factoid ever more widely via 24-hour broadcasts and the Internet. Is this the best way to keep you informed?

At the *Hill Country Observer*, we still take time to connect the dots, to put the news and issues of our region into a broader perspective. We only publish once a month, but we shine a light on stories and trends that aren’t getting much attention elsewhere.

Judging from our growing circulation, readers like the results. Tell us what you think.

HILL COUNTRY
observer



Internet continued from page 9

Others are in various stages of construction or negotiations.

Connection to individual homes has been delayed by the coronavirus outbreak, because workers now can't enter houses, Dvore said.

"We've celebrated completed projects in 17 towns, and it's clear that residents and municipal leaders are pleased with the new high speed connections," Larkin wrote. "We've heard from residents who can now access new educational software. Town leaders have talked about the increase they've seen to residential home values. And we've heard from small business owners that can install new point-of-sale systems and communicate with customers and vendors. It really is life changing for these small communities."

The towns of Becket, New Salem, Rowe, Washington and Windsor stayed with Wired West, Dvore said. They contracted with Whip City Fiber, a subsidiary of Westfield Gas + Electric, to construct and operate the system for them.

"We're getting rave reviews" from customers who have been connected, Dvore said. "We think some towns who decided to operate on their own, once they see what's involved, may return to Wired West."

Supporters of Wired West have argued that by banding together, towns can have more control and develop better, higher-speed service than what individual towns can get commercial companies to provide.

"Towns don't always have the people with the expertise needed to do it themselves," Dvore said. "It would have been a lot more efficient if the towns could coordinate."

Service now "is kind of a patchwork thing," he said. "It's not as good as it could have been, but the towns are getting service."

In N.Y., state takes charge

Where Vermont is encouraging towns to forge their own paths and Massachusetts has a town-state model, broadband expansion in New York has been very much top-down. The state has contracted directly with private providers

to build and operate new fiber optic, cable and wireless service, seemingly with little or no input from counties or municipalities. The state's Broadband Program Office did not respond to requests for comment in mid- and late March.

In 2015, when Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced the New New York Broadband Program, an estimated 2.42 million locations in the state lacked broadband access, with the greatest need upstate. The goal was to ensure access for everyone by 2018, with minimum speeds of 100 megabits per second (mbps) in most areas and 25 mbps farther out.

The state made a \$500 million commitment in 2015 to fund Round 1, which brought service to 2.2 million locations. Round 2 added more than 80,000. Round 3, announced in 2017, awarded \$209.7 million to connect the remaining 122,000 homes, businesses and community institutions.

Some Round 3 projects received an additional \$170 million in federal funds. All the work was to be done by 2018, but crews were still installing cables in southern Washington County in the early months of this year.

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See map on page 15

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ARTS & CULTURE

Retracing a family's roots — and uprooting

Illustrator's memoir draws on childhood in wartime China

By JOHN SEVEN
Contributing writer

STOCKBRIDGE, Mass.

With a family story centered on China that stretches back 100 years, illustrator James McMullan is coming to the Norman Rockwell Museum to talk about his book that chronicles that tale.

"Leaving China" tells the story of McMullan's family's life in China, from his grandparents' missionary work for the Anglican Church, starting in the late 19th century, through McMullan's childhood and eventual flight during the Japanese occupation and beyond.

McMullan's grandparents, James and Lily, began to expand their mission to support efforts to save baby girls who were being left to starve to death. This led to them to raise funds and open an orphanage and school.

After infanticide ceased to be a problem, Lily taught the orphaned girls embroidery skills that used silk and cotton produced in the region, providing them with important job skills that funded the orphanage and led to an industry that still exists.

"The book was not published in China, but it was published in Korea, and it got to China," McMullan said. "I got these amazing emails from this woman who works at an embroidery place as a kind of executive, and she said, 'You may not realize this, but we hold your grandmother in great esteem because we feel that she really started this business which we are still making our livings from.'"

The family business expanded to the next generation, with McMullan's uncle developing James McMullan Agencies, which sold insurance and Ford cars, printed newspapers, and



Courtesy photo

James McMullan's memoir tells the story of his family's life in China and his childhood there amid the Japanese occupation of 1937-41.

imported goods.

McMullan's father was a musician who went to Canada but returned to China with a wife and two stepchildren. McMullan was soon born, and this is the world he grew up in.

McMullan, now 85, began toying with a memoir through illustrated stories and artwork that go back to his days in art school. Working from his father's letters, memoirs written by relatives, and historical accounts of

his grandmother's work with the embroidery factory, McMullan combined these accounts with the intensity of his own childhood trauma, which had branded itself into his memory.

"The thing in the book where the sound of these Japanese soldiers going around in these squads and doing their chants at night was very, very frightening to me," McMullan said. "And I'm like most kids that when your parents try to keep things from you, you have a sense of that. And it makes it worse, the idea that something is happening that's so bad that the parents are lying and not talking about it and when you come in a room, they're hushing up."

Fleeing war, discovering art

In fighting that began in July 1937, imperialist Japan invaded China and scored a series of military victories, capturing and occupying major cities including Beijing and Shanghai and forcing the Chinese central government to retreat to the interior of the country. The occupied territory included Tsingtao, where McMullan's family lived.

"There's a lot about the years from 1937 to 1941, where the Japanese had taken over

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that town, that was a big part of my childhood anxiety, just knowing that this bad stuff was happening and my parents were trying to protect me from it," McMullan recalled. "So I just think I grew up with some floating anxiety."

McMullan and his mother eventually fled to stay with relatives in Canada, while his father joined the Royal British Army. McMullan saw his father once more while he and his mother stayed in India. His father died in a plane crash in 1945 after the Japanese surrender, and McMullan and his mother left for North America for good.

McMullan was living on Salt Spring Island, off the coast of British Columbia, with his aunt and uncle, when a Saturday Evening Post subscription opened up possibilities he never knew existed.

"That's when I realized, 'Boy, there's

something in the world called an illustrator, and boy, look at what they're doing,'" he said.

McMullan attended the Corner School of Allied Arts in Seattle and later switch to Pratt Institute in Brooklyn. While there, he started getting illustration work for Harper's Magazine. After graduation, he got an unusual big break: drawing the covers for Everyman's Library, a literary reprint line from E.P. Dutton.

"They were really interesting books, and it suited me very well," McMullan said. "They're all very arty and far out, but he let me do it. And that was, as I began to understand that that's my thing. I like reading. I like thinking about complex subjects and reducing them to one image. That's what suits me."

Filling Warhol's shoes

McMullan had difficulty getting work with ad

agencies, because his art was not considered very commercial. At one point an agent accidentally placed photostats of his illustrations in the back of someone else's portfolio. The agent got a call from the art director at I. Miller, the shoe manufacturer, seeking to hire not the portfolio artist, but whoever had done the work in the photostats.

Andy Warhol had just left I. Miller to pursue fine art, and McMullan was his replacement.

"I did these crazy drawings for I. Miller Shoes, and I think I got maybe five of them into The New York Times, big ads in The New York Times," he said. "The guy that owned I. Miller said, 'What the hell is going on here?' I got fired right away. The art director got fired too."

It wasn't the end of his career, though, and McMullan went on to further magazine illustration, including for Sports Illustrated. He

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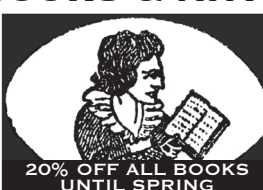


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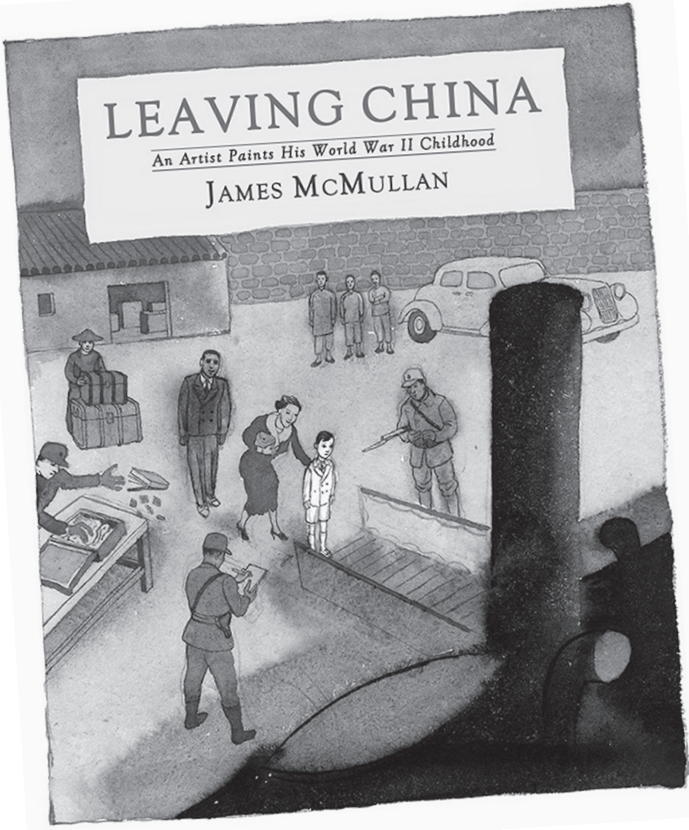
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McMillan’s memoir relies on illustrated stories and artwork that go back to his days in art school.

also signed onto Pushpin Studios for three years, working alongside the studio’s two owners, Milton Glazer and Seymour Chwast. In 1976, he illustrated the article “Tribal Rites of the New Saturday Night” for New York Magazine. The article, by Nik Cohn, became the inspiration for the film “Saturday Night Fever.”

McMullan has also made a career of theatrical posters, creating more than 80 for Lincoln Center. He’s currently working on one for a new play from Sarah Rule called “Becky Nurse of Salem.”

In the 1990s, McMullan began illustrating children’s books in collaboration with his wife, writer Kate McMullan, starting with 1992’s “The Noisy Giants’ Tea Party.” They’re currently working on a book about democracy, aimed at second-graders, that will explain the political system in terms of interactions that happen to kids of that age.

McMullan’s family history did come up one more time in his life, in 1952, while he was in the Army after he and his mother emigrated from Canada to the United States. McMullan worked in a unit in North Carolina that was focused

on psychological warfare, typically creating diagrams of loudspeaker placement on Sherman tanks and crafting instructions on how to prepare leaflets to be thrown out of planes across enemy lines.

One day his commanding officer informed him that his security clearance was revoked because it had been discovered that he was a “communist landlord.”

McMullan’s father had inherited property from his brother but lost it when the Japanese invaded. Years later, the property became linked to McMullan on paper.

“The colonel realized how ridiculous it was,” McMullan said. “He said just keep doing what I was doing but just don’t tell anyone that I was dealing with somewhat secret information. That was my experience in the Army. A lot of rather dumb things went on.”

As of late March, McMullan was still scheduled to discuss his picture book “Leaving China” at 1 p.m. Sunday, April 19, at the Norman Rockwell Museum – and to conduct a master class at 10:30 a.m. April 18 at the museum. The museum has been closed since March 13 because of the Covid-19 outbreak; it plans to re-evaluate its schedule on April 1. Please visit www.nrm.org for updated information on the timing of McMullan’s visit.

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Manchester, VT: 2083 Depot Street (802) 362-3083

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Farms *continued from page 6*

he sees as costly, polluting and wasteful.

After getting assurances from two professionals that plastic totes and other surfaces can be adequately cleaned, he is contemplating an assembly process to prepare CSA share bags at each site. Someone would hand out those bags to people in line, who would wait outdoors. In late March, with the first delivery more than two months away, there's time to work out the details.

Another issue on Blomgren's mind is how to communicate better with customers during the disease outbreak, as CSA members will not be able to interact directly with farmers or attend the open house Windflower Farm normally hosts each year.

"Now it's time to play up the positive side of social media," he said.

Door-to-door delivery

From the Washington County town of Jackson, Lewis Waite Farm markets its own grass-fed beef and pork along with products from a number of other farmers and food producers in its region and delivers these foods through CSA groups in New York City, about 175 miles to the south.

"Sales are booming," said Nancy Brown, the farm's co-owner, even as coronavirus outbreak was shutting down New York City in late March.

But because of the coronavirus, Lewis Waite has had to change its distribution model.

"We've stopped driving a vanload of food orders to New York City and dropping multiple orders off at CSA sites where people would have to mingle in order to pick up their order," Brown explained.

Instead, the farm is offering home delivery via United Parcel Service for its New York City customers and local delivery for its customers from area farmers markets.

Because people are staying home, shipping direct is the only way distant customers can receive local small-batch foods direct from the farm.

"There is a whole new way to pack our orders, and we must treat each one individually in its own insulated box," Brown said.

Though they have tried many ways, they just can't ship eggs, she added.

Because of the changes, Brown said the farm is working harder to pack orders and keep regional suppliers' products on hand.

Some producers already deliver to Lewis Waite without any human contact: A bakery leaves the bread order in the foyer, and a regional distributor of farm products will put frozen items into the farm's freezer.

Brown's employees also drive around to gather foods from different farms and food producers – for example, picking up milk jugs from a local dairy farm that bottles its milk.

Willing and able hands

Because of the coronavirus, some farms around the region are facing new uncertainty about whether they'll have the workers needed to support their normal operations.

With many people laid off from restaurants, bars and other businesses that have been forced to shut down, some farmers are reporting an unprecedented pool of potential employees.

"We have people pounding on the door," said Brian Denison of Denison Farm in Schaghticoke, where he and his wife, Justine, raise naturally grown vegetables for farmers markets and member-customers of their own large CSA operation.

Many of the region's larger vegetable farms obtain some of their farm labor through the federal H-2A guest worker program, which allows seasonal agricultural workers from countries such as Mexico, Guatemala and Jamaica to work at farms in the United States.

But because of the pandemic, some farmers who rely on H-2A workers aren't sure when – or even if – their foreign workers will show up.

Chris Cashen and Katie Smith of the Farm at Miller's Crossing submitted their H-2A paperwork early this year and were expecting four seasonal workers through the program. The four men, who have worked at their farm in the past, were

scheduled to arrive from Guatemala around St. Patrick's Day, but their flight was canceled after the Guatemalan president closed down the airport to discourage the spread of Covid-19.

Cashen said he and Smith don't know whether they need to start worrying.

"Information is scarce," he said.

For the time being, they've started calling around in an effort to find workers locally. Cashen said they have some good prospects, including a cousin and her husband a couple towns away and a nearby apple grower's packinghouse workers, who are not needed full time in the spring. Even in the worst-case scenario, he said, "I can probably get through the planting season with a patchwork crew."

But once the farm is simultaneously harvesting, transplanting and weeding, he added, it will need the superior skills of the experienced H-2A workers.

"They know our farm, and they can manage themselves once they're shown what to do," Cashen said.

Local, less experienced workers cannot replace them, he said. And the need is greater this year because Cashen is recovering from recent knee surgery.

Because of the coronavirus outbreak, the United States has temporarily closed its embassy and consulates in Mexico and its embassy in Jamaica, two of the countries that supply many agricultural workers under the H-2A program.

Taking precautions

At Windflower Farm, Blomgren said local workers make up the majority of the farm team, though it also gets some seasonal help through the H-2A program. For the past 15 years, the farm's foreign workers have all come from one particular extended family in Mexico. This year, the farm applied to bring in five people from this family, but Blomgren said he's not sure whether they'll all be able to come.

Some farmers also are focusing on how to reduce the risk of coronavirus transmission at their farms.

At Mighty Food Farm, MacDougall said her highest concern is the health of her crew, all of whom live locally. She is training employees on the farm's new sanitization standards and what she described as "very strict" hand-washing protocols. The farm is sanitizing surfaces multiple times a day.

MacDougall said she is "basically not leaving the farm," which she says is on "lockdown" except for the employees coming in daily. One of the challenges will be dealing with incoming crewmembers later in the season, she said.

Mark Anderson, a partner in a 1,400-cow dairy farm in New York's Washington County, has also turned his attention to the need to prevent farmworkers from contracting the virus. Anderson said the farm's owners are careful about who comes onto the farm, and they have begun regularly disinfecting bathrooms and break rooms. They've also done some shopping for their workers.

Anderson signed up to attend a Cornell University webinar last month on Covid-19. The webinar recommended that dairy farmers educate their employees about the virus and put up Spanish-language posters about the disease and how to prevent exposure.

With workers living in shared housing on the farm, the virus would be hard to stop if one person became infected. Anderson said that as a sort of insurance, the farm is retaining a couple of extra employees, a cousin and a niece of existing workers, who came looking for jobs. They are housed in an apartment, separate from the other employees, to help keep them from getting infected, should an outbreak occur.

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Albany Center Gallery • 488 Broadway, Suite 107, Albany, NY • 518-462-4775 • <https://albanycentergallery.org>
• through May 1: If necessary, Online • Mohawk-Hudson Regional Invitational 2020, with Cyndy Barbone, Jane Feldblum, Joy Muller-McCoola, Barbara Todd, and Victoria van der Laan

Art Omi International Arts Center • 1405 Co. Rte. 22, Ghent, NY • 518-392-4747 • www.artomi.org
• Sculpture & Architecture Park • outdoor, self-guided audio tour, download from website

The Arts Center Galleries • 320 Broadway, Saratoga Springs, NY • 518-584-4132 • Saratoga-arts.org
• through Apr. 25: VIRTUALLY at Saratoga-arts.org: The 120° Intercollegiate Regional Exhibition

Bennington Museum • 75 Main St., Bennington, VT • 802-447-1571 • benningtonmuseum.org
• developing online & virtual rogramming opportunities. Email ideas to ideas@benningtonmuseum.org
• ongoing: "History You Can Touch: Replica Cannon and Carriage"
• ongoing: Grandma Moses Collection, Center Gallery: Fine & Decorative Art, Sloane Gallery: The Battle of Bennington, Bennington Pottery Gallery, and more
• through Jun. 10: "Love, Marriage, and Divorce"

Berkshire Botanical Garden • 5 West Stockbridge Rd., Stockbridge, MA • www.berkshirebotanical.org
• Visit the grounds while following current guidelines on keeping your distance • No restrooms

Berkshire Museum
• 39 South Street (Rte. 7), Pittsfield, MA • 413-443-7171 • <https://berkshiremuseum.org>
• through May 5: "The Art of Warner Bros. Cartoons"
• through May 25: "She Shapes History"
• ongoing: "Window on the World: A Look into the Permanent Collection"

Brattleboro Museum & Art Center • 10 Vernon St., Brattleboro, VT • 802-257-0124 • www.brattleboromuseum.org
• through Jun. 14: Steven Kinder: "552,830"
• through Jun. 14: "Coffee & Conversation: Stories of Homelessness"

Brookside Museum (Saratoga County Historical Society) • 6 Charlton Street, Ballston Spa, NY • 518-885-4000 • www.brooksidemuseum.org
• through Apr. 13, at least: Live-stream or sharing online

Canfield Gallery • Martha Canfield Memorial Library • 528 E. Arlington Rd., Arlington, VT • 802-375-6153
• through Apr. 15: "Aperture Magazine/Paris Photo Best Photobooks"

Carrie Haddad Gallery • 622 Warren, Hudson, NY 12534 • 518-828-1915 • carriehaddadgallery.com
• through Apr. 19: "Color Quest," paintings by Christopher Engel, Ralph Stout, Jack Walls, and collage by David Dew Bruner

Castleton University Bank Gallery • 104 Merchants Row, Rutland, VT • 802-468-5611 • castleton.edu/arts/art-galleries/
• through Apr. 11: "Sarah Wilson

Chapman Historical Museum • 348 Glen St., Glens Falls, NY • 518-793-2826 • chapmanmuseum.org
• ongoing: "Hands-On History Galleries: Experiences of Hometown Life" in the DeLong House

Christine Price Gallery • Fine Arts Center, Castleton University, 45 Alumni Dr., Castleton, VT • 802-468-5611 • castleton.edu/arts/art-galleries/
• through Apr. 11: "Sarah Wilson Ceramics"

(Sterling & Francine) Clark Art Institute
225 South St., Williamstown, MA • 413-458-2303 • clarkart.edu
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Collar Works • 621 River St., Troy, NY • 518-285-0765 • www.collarworks.org
• through Apr. 25: "TRACES | 28 Days in Elizabeth Murray's Studio," by Kyoung Eun Kang

The Colonial Theatre • 111 South St., Pittsfield, MA • 413-997-4444 • www.BerkshireTheatreGroup.org

Columbia County Historical Society
5 Albany Ave., Kinderhook, NY • 518-758-9265 • cchs@cchsny.org
• many ongoing, including: "Early Hand Tools & Farm Implements;" "100 Years of Collecting;" "A Study of Style: Caned Construction;" "Fragments of the Past: Van Alen Archaeology"

Courthouse Gallery • Old County Courthouse, 1 Amherst St., Lake George, NY • 518-668-2616 • www.lakegeorgearts.org
• through Apr. 10: "Katherine Chwazik"

Crandall Public Library • 251 Glen St., Glens Falls, NY • 518-792-6508 • crandalllibrary.org/folklife-center
• Folklife Center
• Friend's Gallery

Cynthia-Reeves • 1315 MASS MoCA Way, North Adams, MA

Dorset Historical Society • Rte. 30 at Kent Hill Road, Dorset, VT • 802-867-0331 • dorsetvthistory.org

EPOCH, 18 Vermont Artisans Gallery
• 4927 Main St., Manchester Center, VT • epochvermont.com • 802-768-9711

Gallery at 46 Green Street
46 Green Street, Hudson, NY • 518-303-6446 • 46greenstreetstudios@gmail.com

Historic Salem Courthouse Community Center • 58 East Broadway, Salem, NY • 518-854-7053 • salemcourthouse.org
• through Apr. 15: The Dave and Lynne Show" (quiet lease, social distance req'd)
• Apr. 21 - Jun. 2: Penelope Poor

Teaching Gallery • Hudson Valley Community College, Administration Building, Rm. 013, 80 Vandenburg Ave., Troy, NY • 518-629-8006

The Hyde Collection VIRTUALLY at <https://hydecollection.org> • 161 Warren St., Glens Falls, NY • 518-792-1761
• through Apr. 26: "Fransisco Goya: The Caprichos Etchings and Aquatints"
• Mar. 28 – Jun. 14: "Images of the People: Russian Laquer Painting"

Image Photos Gallery • 34 Main St., Stockbridge, MA • 413-298-5500
• photography of Clemens Kalischer

The Laffer Gallery • 96 Broad St., Schuylerville, NY • 518-695-3181 • www.thelaffergallery.com
• through Apr. 12: "Gravity and Balance" with Constance Kheel and Chris Duncan

LARAC (Lower Adirondack Regional Arts Council) • 7 Lapham Pl., on City Park, Glens Falls, NY • 518-798-1144 • www.larac.org

Museum of Contemporary Art • 1040 MASS MoCA Way, North Adams, MA • 413-662-2111 • massmoca.org
• through Apr.: Cauleen Smith, "We Already Have What We Need"
• through May: "Still I Rise"
• many ongoing, including "Sol LeWit: A Wall Drawing Retrospective, 105 of the artist's large-scale wall drawings;" Gamaliel Rodriguez: "La Travesia/Le Voyage;" James Turrell: "Into the Light;" Titus Kaphar: "Language of the Forgotten"

Matt Chinian Studio-Gallery • 138 W. Main St, Cambridge, NY • 518-708-0759 • mattchinian.com

McCartee's Barn (The Gallery at) • 23C East Broadway, Salem, NY • 518-854-3857 • mccarteesbarn.com
• Displaying and selling over 25 artists' creations

(The) Mount (Edith Wharton's home) • 2 Plunkett St., Lenox, MA 01240-0974 • 413-637-1899 • www.edithwharton.org
• ongoing: "Life in the Dale: Augustus Martin's Lenox"
• ongoing: "Edith Wharton and the First World War"
• ongoing: "The Backstairs Project"

Arts & Culture

AREA EXHIBITIONS

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continued from page 21

National Museum of Dance • Saratoga Spa State Park • 99 S. Broadway, Saratoga Springs, NY • 518-584-2225 • www.dancemuseum.org
• "Art of the Dance: Posters from Hollywood's Golden Age;"
• "On Being Still: Portraits by Joanne Savio;" • "Dancers After Dark: Photographs by Jordan Matter"
• "Gen" outdoor installation by sculptor Alice Manzi

New Russia Cultural Center • 1550 Broadway, Rensselaer, NY • 518-382-9438 • newrussiacycenter.org

New York State Military Museum • 61 Lake Ave., Saratoga Springs, NY • 518-581-5100 • nysmm.org
• ongoing: "Battleground for Freedom: New York During the Revolutionary War;" "Fiery Trial and Sacrifice - New York and the First World War;" "World War II - United for Victory;" "The Capitol Collection" (Civil War artifacts)
• "Hotspots in the Cold War: Korea and Vietnam" (2 exhibits)
• ongoing: "The Revolutionary War to 9/11: 258th Field Artillery, NY National Guard

New York State Museum Cultural Education Center • 222 Madison Ave., Albany, NY • nysm.nysed.gov
• through Apr. 26: "Model of Statue Honoring Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony"
• through May 5: "a small fort, which our people call Fort Orange"
• through Oct. 25: "Enterprising Waters: New York's Erie Canal (Phase Two)"
• through Jan. 31, 2021: "Henry DiSpirito: Stonemason to sculpture"

Norman Rockwell Museum VIRTUALLY link at <https://www.nrm.org> • 9 Glendale Rd. (Rte. 183), Stockbridge, MA • 413-298-4100
• Collection, exhibitions, videos, curriculum, interactives, websites

North Country Arts Center • www.northcountryartscenter.org
• 2nd Floor Gallery, City Hall, 42 Ridge St., Glens Falls, NY
--through May 8: Drawings, prints and sculptures by Jack R. Montoya
• NCA Gallery at The Shirt Factory, Suite 114, 71 Lawrence St., Glens Falls, NY
--through Apr. 25: "What's Old is New"

Olana State Historic Site • 5720 State Rte. 9G, Hudson, NY 12534 • 518-828-0135 • www.olana.org
• Free access to 250-acre landscape • Daily, 8 am - sunset

Sharp Family Gallery
Old Fort House Museum & Campus
29 Broadway, Rte 4, Fort Edward, NY. 518-747-9600 • www.oldforthousemuseum.com
• Highlights of Fort Edward Historical Association Collection: 1927-present, in the Dutch House

Paul Nigra Center for Creative Arts
• 2736 NY-30, Gloversville, NY • www.pncreativeartscenter.org

R Gallery at Arlene's • 57 Fuller Rd, Albany, NY • 518-482-8882 • rgalleryarlenes.com

Rensselaer County Historical Society • 57 Second St., Troy, NY • 518-272-7232 • www.rchsonline.org
• "Rensselaer County Then and Now: Celebrating 225 years of Rensselaer County History"
• through Nov. 30: "How We Work(ed)"

Rutland Railroad Museum • Center Rutland Depot, 79 Depot Lane, Center Rutland, VT (open Saturday)
• ongoing: regional railroad artifacts, photos and documents and operating model railroad lay-outs

Salmon Falls Gallery • 1 Ashfield St., Shelburne Falls, NY • 413-625-9833 • salmonfallsgallery.com
• Q Li Homes: VIRTUALLY at <https://youtu.be/4kAEc-lpoE0>
• through Apr. 26: Marilyn Andrews: works in clay

Schantz Galleries • 3 Elm St., Stockbridge, MA • 413-298-3044
• "Studio Focus with Seattle artist Nancy Callan: "Vision + Process" video • <https://www.schantzgalleries.com/notes-from-the-directors/2020/3/21/studio-focus-nancy-callan>

Schick Art Gallery • Skidmore College, Saisselin Art Building • 518-580-5049
• through Apr. 19: "Ink Well"

SEPTEMBER Gallery
449 Warren St. #3, Hudson, NY •
• VIRTUALLY through May 10: "Ashley Garret: Aegis" at septembergallery.com/space/aegis.html

Slate Valley Museum
17 Water St., Granville, NY • 518-642-1417 •
VIRTUALLY at slatevalleymuseum.org

Sohn Fine Art Gallery
69 Church Street, Lenox, MA • 413-298-1025 • www.sohnfineart.com
• through Apr. 12: Peggy Braun: "A Retrospective"

Spa Fine Art
• Whimsical Works of Trip Park: ONLINE sales at <https://www.spa-fine-art.com/trip-park-1>

Start Space • 263 Depot Street, Manchester Center, VT • 802-768-8498 • www.startspace.art
• 17 artists on exhibit

Suzanne Lemberg Usdan Gallery • Helen Frankenthaler Visual Arts Center, Bennington College, One College Dr., Bennington, VT • 802-440-4399 • bennington.edu
• through May 9: "Patricia Johanson: House & Garden"

(Frances Young) Tang Teaching Museum and Gallery (at Skidmore College) • 815 N. Broadway, Saratoga Springs, NY • 518-580-8080 • tang.skidmore.edu
• through Apr. 10: Hyde Cabinet #6: She Is My Unit
• through Apr. 12: "Between the Mountains," feat. Irene Chou, Zhang Daqian, Li Hua-sheng, Yun-Fei Ji, Li Keran, Qiu Mai (Michael Cherney), & Yang Yongliang
• through Apr. 26: "Elevator Music 40 – Melissa Thorne, Landslide/Solid"
• through Jul. 12: "Mary Weatherford: Canyon—Daisy—Eden"
• through Jun. 7: "Flex"
• through Sep. 11: "Nicole Cherubini – Shaking the Trees"

Thompson Giroux Gallery • 57 Main Street, Chatham, NY • 518-392-3336 • www.thompsongirouxgallery.com
• through Apr. 19: William Thompson: "The Space Within"

University Art Museum • University at Albany, State University of New York, 1400 Washington Ave., Albany, NY

Valley Artisans Market • 25 East Main, Cambridge, NY • 518-677-2765 • www.valleyartisansmarket.com
• through Apr. 14: Elizabeth Phillips: "Ledges"

Ventfort Hall Mansion and Gilded Age Museum • 104 Walker St., Lenox, MA • 413-637-3206 • gildedage.org
• extended indefinitely: "Les Petite Dames de Mode"

Warren County Historical Society & Museum • 50 Gurney Ln, Queensbury, NY • 518-743-0734 • wcnyhs.org
• ongoing: "Warren County 360: Celebrating Place and People"
• ongoing: displays on Warren County postmarks and post office history; "Hands-On History" Station

Widlund Gallery • Tannery Pond Community Ctr, 228 Main St., North Creek, NY • www.tannerypondcenter.org • 518-251-2505

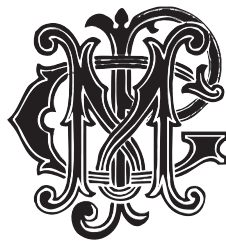
Williams College Museum of Art • 76 Spring St., Williamstown, MA • 413-597-2429 • wcma.williams.edu

World Awareness Children's Museum • 89 Warren St., Glens Falls, NY • 518-793-2773 • www.worldchildrensmuseum.org
• Check Facebook for fun cultural posts throughout the week

HCO

Arts & Culture

A P R I L 2 0 2 0					
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed / Thu	Fri	Sat
12 We may have to physically isolate, but we can still virtually connect: In an effort to share joy and beauty while we live through very distracting times, the following performances have been generously made available to the public by each institution. Other VIRTUAL art offerings may be found throughout our Exhibits venues. Be sure to check your favorite gallery or museum’s website, as well. Andrew Appel and The Four Nations Ensemble: The Violin at Versailles: Olivier Brault, Loretta O’Sullivan & Andrew Appel, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KvKf69Am38k Saratoga Chamber Players: https://www.saratogachamberplayers.org or https://soundcloud.com/saratoga-chamber-players • info.saratoga-chamberplayers@gmail.com	13	14 Before you go, verify events are still being held as scheduled.	15 16	17 misc. Dewey Hall • Spring Gala Dinner and Silent Auction with The Wanda Houston Band • Cocktail hour 6 pm, dinner 7 pm, Band 8 pm • www.deweyhall.org	18  Trio benefit: Cindy Kallet, Grey Larsen & Will Brown • 7 pm • Millerton United Methodist Church, 6 Dutchess Ave., Millerton, NY • willbe@tidewater.net or 518-789-4655 misc. North Adams, MA • Spring Community Day of Service • 8:30 am check-in • Register at https://tinyurl.com/spring2020DOS Late Season Ski Session • 9 am • Main St. Park, near fire stn. off Center St., Rutland, VT • Call to confirm: Sandy Bragg at 802-492-2143
19 misc. Killington section Annual Meeting & Potluck • 1 pm • Godnick Ctr., Deer St., Rutland City, VT • Call to confirm: Sue Thomas at 802-773-2185 Salmon Falls Gallery • Fine Art Pastel Workshops with Becky Clark • 2-4 pm Regenerate Ecosystems: Put Carbon in the Ground reforestation initiative • 2 pm • Gov. Jonas Galusha Homestead, Rte. 7A, Shaftsbury, VT • www.climateadvocatesbennington.org	20  Dewey Hall • Aaron Jonah Lewis: Workshop+Concert+Jam • 5:30 p.m.	21	22 misc. 50th Anniversary of Earth Day • Confirm events at 350vt.org • Manchester Earth Celebration • 3-5 pm • Factory Point Green 23 misc. Storytelling: Tales of Fossil Fuel Resistance • Confirm details at 350vt.org	24 misc. Storytelling: Tales of Fossil Fuel Resistance • Confirm details at 350vt.org	25  Dewey Hall • Sheffield Contra Dance • Lessons 7:30 pm , dance 8-11 pm misc. North Adams, MA • 125th Anniversary Celebration • Details TBA • northadamshappenings@gmail.com
26 misc. Reservoir Trail Hike, Woodford State Park • 9:30 am • Call to confirm: Larry Walter and Vivian Bebee at 802-775-3855	27	28	29 30  Clark Art • Artist Talk with Pia Camil • 6:30 pm		



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2020 Events



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- High Tea *(2nd Sunday of each month)*
- Paint n' Sip *(1st Monday of each month)*
- Cigar & Bourbon Club *(2nd Tuesday of each month)*
- PMc Talks *(3rd Tuesday of each month)*
- Aerobics on the Lawn *(every Wednesday)*
- Croquet League *(every Thursday)*
- PMc Concert Series *(1st Friday of each month)*
- porch + cork *(2nd Friday of each month)*
- Outdoor Movies *(Last Friday of each month)*

SPECIAL EVENTS

- Mother's Day Tea Party
- Official Opening/Memorial Day Weekend
- Red, White, and Bluegrass
- Annual Gala
- Annual Member Meeting
- Harvest Barn Dance
- Village Block Party *(Free Public Event)*
- Brews & Blues
- Old-Fashioned Christmas *(Free Public Event)*

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- \$750 BIG HOUSE (\$1620 VALUE)**
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- \$1250 CUPOLA (\$3290 VALUE)**
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