

VERMONT



Main Streets

& Back Roads

INSIDE THE SUMMER 2008 ISSUE

WHO COOKS FOR YOU?:

The Barred Owl

A LEGENDARY HORSE RACE

INTERVIEW WITH FILMMAKER JAY CRAVEN

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After a fairly intemperate spring, I've been looking forward to summer for some time. February, in fact.

A desire to enjoy the wind in my follicle-challenged hair, coupled with the exorbitant price of gas has lead me to the conclusion that I will be utilizing my bike as my primary mode of transport for the next 6 months.

I'd hate to find myself in a pontificating pose in this letter, so I'd just like to thank our new and old writers as well as the influx of new advertisers that came to us with this issue.

We are putting the final touches on a party / BBQ this summer, to be held at The Matterhorn Inn in Mt Snow. I'd hoped to get the date squared away by the time we went to print, but no luck, so check our website out when this issue arrives.

Marc Albano

Artist's Profile: Gregory Albright

Inspired by the abundance and workings of water, Gregory Albright settled in Vermont in 1893 from California. He received a BFA from the San Francisco Art Institute and has studied independently with the Russian painter, Ludmila Gayvoronsky and sculptors Elio Benvenuto and Robert Arneson. Participating in over twenty group and solo exhibitions since 2005, he was included in the Woodstock Art Walls mural project and Bridgewater's Painted Sheep benefit.



Gregory received a Vermont Studio Center Residency in February 2007 and in April of this year. His studio is at the Historic Woolen Mill in White River Junction.

"Inspired by lyrical lines and lively colors, these paintings develop out of my feeling and response to landscape motifs and natural forms," he notes. "I am inspired by the abundance and working of water in the New England landscape, in contrast to my childhood home in California. I enjoy painting the bucolic moods where I live in Vermont, and imbuing these with idealism and whimsy.

"The initial drawings sometimes serve as a tool for an imaginative exploration, and occasional glimpse into the spiritual forces working within our organic world."

To view more of Gregory's artwork and sculptures, please visit albrightart.com

The Pretend OUTDOORSMAN

It's All Uphill From Here

There seems to be no limit to the continuing hike in gasoline prices, so it should serve as no surprise that I should have taken to the pedaled wheel for fodder in this month's column.

At the time of this writing, prices are just under \$4.00 a gallon and look as if they shall continue to rise for some time. So, give me a backpack and a bicycle and I will do my part to save the environment, pinch pennies and bring back spandex biking shorts all in one fell swoop.

My other motivation of biking over the summer, other than transport, is the continued effort to stave off age. This September, I hit 39 years old. The good news is that I am a year away from a red convertible and a girlfriend ten years my younger. The bad news is that you need to work 4x harder to lose 1/2 as much weight.

In recent columns, I have had gravity on my side – jumping out of planes, kayaking down a river, snowboarding down a mountain. This would be my first foray that required both cardiovascular and muscular effort on my part.

That is, of course, where everything went wrong.

This past spring, I bought a mountain bike



on eBay, and asked all the pertinent questions about height, etc. It's a great mountain bike, but I am 5'11" and it has a 22.5" frame.

For those in the know, picture Hayden Panetiere or Kerry Strug riding a Morgan Horse. This bike is just too big, but trying to return something on eBay isn't worth the hassle. Luckily, being this high up allows me to converse with truck drivers in traffic.

Regardless, it is a great bike, and I have been cycling around Brattleboro from Exit 1 to 3 since April. It was my belief that this would be an adequate training regimen for my first grand trip – from Brattleboro to Mt Snow in southern Vermont. As my actual destination was to visit my parents in West Dover, this is about a 26 mile trip, the equivalent of a marathon.

For those unfamiliar, the word "marathon" comes from the legend of Pheidippides, a Greek messenger sent from Marathon to Athens to announce that the Persians had been defeated in a recent battle. He ran the entire distance of 26 miles, announced his message and fell dead of a heart attack.

I would be lucky enough to simply vomit upon myself trying to traverse Hogback Mountain.

I set off with a small backpack and a bottle of water from downtown Brattleboro and my ride to West Brattleboro was leisurely and quite enjoyable.

As I left West Brattleboro, I suddenly remembered that the first leg of this trip was nearly 6 miles uphill. As usual, I began to realize that writing this column is simply a fool's errand written by one better off sitting in a La-Z-Boy recliner watching Top Chef.

It takes an automobile about 1/2 hour to get from Brattleboro to down-

town Wilmington. During this first 6 miles, I would stop over 20 times, often walking my bike in lieu of peddling.

The reader may proclaim that for every uphill, there is a downhill; however, I am convinced that this is not the case for my trip. I now believe that Mt Snow lives outside the rules of traditional physics and geography, a modern day Brigadoon that requires its visitors to travel only uphill to reach their destination.

I would finally get past these grueling first six miles and coast a bit. Oh, blessed downhill! The bait and switch of biking up and down would continue for some time, until I hit Sweetie's General Store in Marlboro.

I bought some food and a beer and had a leisurely lunch. This would be my biggest mistake, as my body was now on a countdown to betray me at a most inopportune time.

For those not familiar, one of the most beautiful vistas in Vermont is that from atop Hogback Mountain, on the way to Wilmington (Route 9). You can see three states from this view and it is almost all natural setting, giving a person an idea as to how Vermont may have looked prior to such massive development.

For me, the 1.5 mile incline uphill would begin as a small rumbling in my stomach. It would end with me wearing a collection of beer and sandwich, along with either a piece of my lung or a small lifeform, thoroughly down my t-shirt. Add a combination of spackled drool and a incoherent wheezing sound and you will understand why even the largest of vehicles gave me quite a wide berth.

I should note that cell phone service along Route 9 in southern Vermont is spotty at best. It wasn't that I was worried about calling 911 for an am-

balance, as I felt that I was past that point. I was now looking for a helicopter airlift or a delivery of an iron-lung machine.

Still, I was all that closer to Wilmington. I was unsure just how far I had traveled when I hit town, as my speedometer now read (#)@(^* and similar inappropriate language I can not discuss here.

It was at this time that I decided to alter the course of this article, which is why you will find a small piece on summer beers later in these pages. I started at Poncho's Wreck downtown and would subsequently sample a variety of brews throughout the area.

An hour later, I would then decide to forget the last 6-7 mile leg of my trip to West Dover and chose, instead, to place my bike on the front grill of the Moover, the local Holstein-inspired transport system of the Valley.

It would get me as far as Country Club Rd in Dover, yet another mile of uphill in this downhill-challenged region of southern Vermont. The bike would then sit indolent outside for a couple of days, while I would alternate ice packs between groin and thighs.

In retrospect, I truly believe that, as we age, it is important to undertake what to me was a Herculean effort. It reminded me that I am not in the shape of my youth. In fact, I am more in the shape of a pear or yellow summer squash.

I will continue pedaling my bike around Brattleboro for the exercise and to stem off the debt that current gas prices may incur; however, my long distance bike rides are at an end.

Well, unless someone lets me know of a place that is all downhill.

the art of

Grilling

The grill has been a summer staple in America for quite some time, ranking up there with baseball, the 4th of July and heading off to the beach. Still, owning a grill and knowing how to utilize it to its (and your) best ability is an education all on its own.

There are the basic mishaps, of course: fish and/or meat sticking to the grill or simply burning it past any recognition of its original look. But there is an art to grilling which, when mastered, will forever change your summer eating habits.

Grill Selection

There are a variety of grills to choose from, of course. Gas and electric grills are generally considered to be the easiest to use and produce a fine result. They generate enough heat to make the distinctive char mark that should be expected. In addition, the drippings from the bottom of the grill pro-

duce just enough smoke to give your food that good grilled taste.

Charcoal is one of the most common fuels used, particularly on camping trips or picnic outings, and it burns very hot. It is good to stray away from the self-igniting briquettes, though, as they tend to taste like the fuel you are using. Try, instead, a natural chunk charcoal that burns hot but for a shorter period of time.

Wood is the oldest, and for many the favorite, grilling fuel. This is due mostly to the smoky flavors your food obtains while grilling; however, wood requires patience and practice. Let the wood burn down to hot embers before placing the item on the grill.

It can be difficult to grill over a fire, of course, so concentrate on keeping the flames to a minimum. For the best outcome, try hickory or mesquite,

and avoid using resinous woods that give off a thick, black smoke.

Some grilling aficionados will combine heat sources as well. For example, soak a few pieces of wood in water and then add to a gas, electric or charcoal grill. The wet wood will give off a nice smoky taste to your meal.

Food Selection

Almost anything can be grilled, from the traditional meats and poultry to less traditional fish, fruit and vegetables. Of course, the best meats for grilling will be those that are the most tender, such as loin or rib. You can certainly utilize tougher cuts, but try tenderizing first either in an acidic marinade or pounding the meat a bit.

Chicken, and other poultry, is perfect for grilling but keep that skin on! The skin will help the meat keep tender and keep in the taste. If you are ad-

amant about grilling boneless and skinless, be vigilant – the meat will dry out if you don't keep a watchful eye.

Fish is a wonderful grilling staple, but not often attempted by the acolyte. Remember this manta: the more oil, the better. Swordfish, blue fish, tuna, mackerel and salmon are rich in oils that both keep them from sticking to the grill and keep them moist and tasty. If lean fish is what you want, just brush them with oils of your own choice. Remember: fish is more delicate than a T-bone, so be careful when turning.

Grilled vegetables are fantastic and really add to the aroma, taste and health of the meal. Season them with an oil of fresh herbs and or garlic for added taste. Almost any vegetable can be grilled from traditional mushrooms, onions and peppers to eggplant, summer squash and asparagus.

Feel free to try grilling fruit as well, the firmer the better, such as apples or pineapples.

Grilling Technique

Hot, hot, hot!!!!

If the grill isn't hot enough, food will stick and you also won't obtain that smoky flavor your desire.

As you cook your food, move it around so that it doesn't burn, turning it over when cooked halfway. A great color indicator is the dark brown grill marks – NOT black grill marks.

Keep in mind, a grill isn't a uniform cooking apparatus. There are some spots hotter than others, which you need to know. While grilling, the artiste will know how to utilize the cooler and hotter spots to get those perfect marks noted above.

Also, closing the lid may increase the smoky flavor, but it speeds up the cooking time dramatically. It also increases the likelihood of small fires that will burn your food quite quickly.

Try out a couple books on grilling, as everyone has a secret they want to tell. There are as many books as there are marinades and BBQ sauces, so have fun. The art of grilling isn't just about the food but the atmosphere a great cook-out can create for friends and family!

bar menu

The Best Decks

Summer dining should be enjoyed with a view, so we wanted to point out some great locations for quality food and drink with an extra flavor of landscape.

▲ Brattleboro

Alici's Bistro

51 Harris Place

Fine food and a view of the Connecticut River unparalleled, this is a staff favorite. Already, we use it as an excuse to meet every other week.

The Marina

28 Spring Tree Rd

A wide selection of food, this is one of the few locales you rent boat and kayaks on the CT River. Open for lunch as well as dinner.

▲ Wilmington

Jerry's Deck - Old Red Mill

Downtown Main Street

Not a lot of room, but quality food in a "picnic" setting overlooking the Deerfield River.

▲ Killington

The Grist Mill

Killington Access Rd

Hearty New England fare at reasonable prices, they have a great deck on their own pond. Kids will love feeding the ducks.

▲ Manchester

Candalero's

Downtown, Historic Rt 7A

You can walk from downtown to sample regional Mexican fare.

Build a Better **burger**

Wall know that summer means grilling and burgers. Although a rite of passage for the season, sometimes the basic burger can get a bit old. Therefore, we've put together some ideas for healthier burgers to get you out of the "moo" burger rut.

There are many options to explore, from turkey and chicken burgers to equally savory concoctions such as venison, ostrich, elk, salmon, portabella, nut and bean burgers. With all these choices, let us address some preparation tips and health notes that are important to know before you fire up.

The bean, nut and salmon burgers need to be pan fried in a little olive oil until golden brown as they will fall apart if you try to cook on the grill. Frying burgers in oil also will be supplying you with essential fat your body needs

to operate. A nonstick pan also works if you've had too much fat or want to lose fat. Still, remember, if you are not getting enough fat to keep your body satisfied then your going to binge on chips and fries, so you might as well eat a type of fat your body really craves and benefits from, such as olive oil.

What you put into and on your burger also is important. There is so much growing right in our own backyards perfectly suited to accompany your meal. If you don't have a garden, head to a farmers' market or your local store and get in on the season's delights. There is nothing like a fresh tomato to add flavor to this summer staple. Also, don't forget to pick fresh herbs and use lots of lettuce and onions (I sometimes use basil instead of lettuce and even use lettuce as the bun itself). In any burger, be it beef or bean, you can

make it better by adding fresh herbs, and the herbs cook down and make the burger juicier and tastier.

I like to double my bean and nut burger recipes and freeze; you do need to pre-cook these before freezing. The bean, nut and salmon burgers are actually better for you, especially if you eat too much red meat and still want the satisfaction of a juicy burger with all the fixings. If you are going to eat red meat make a lean choice for the healthiest burger.

Let us not forget about the bun, as there are many ways to hold a burger: traditional white bun, or a bulky roll, bagel, pita, whole grain bread, toasted or not toasted, sprouted bread, spelt bread, or rolled up in a wrap. The main idea is to have fun and know that there are always ways to improve the burger.

Nut Burgers

Because this burger is a nut and grain combination it makes for a complete protein.

- 3/4 cup sunflower seeds
- 3/4 cup walnuts
- 1-teaspoon cumin
- 1-teaspoon oregano
- 1/8 teaspoon Cayenne

- 2 cloves garlic finely chopped
- 1 cup cooked brown rice
- 1 small carrot (or 1/2 large one), grated finely
- 2 tablespoons tomato sauce
- 1-2 teaspoons oil

Grind nuts and seeds to a fine meal in a small grinder or food processor. Pour into a bowl and add cumin, oregano, cayenne, and garlic; mix well. Fold in cooked brown rice. Add tomato sauce a little at a time until you get a stiff workable texture. Form this into patties with moist hands. Refrigerate patties for a few hours if possible. Lightly coat a pan with oil and brown on both sides. Serve on your favorite bun. I like sprouted grain buns. This makes 4 good size burgers.



Salmon Burgers



These burgers are packed with 100% daily value of heart-healthy Omega 3's and loaded with protein.

- 1 Can 15 oz Alaskan Salmon with liquid
- 3 Tablespoons fresh finely chopped Dill, chives, or parsley, or 3 Teaspoons dry herbs. You could use a tablespoon of each if you wanted.
- 1 Egg
- 3/4 Cup fine breadcrumbs or cracker crumbs. (I use rice cracker crumbs that I crush)
- Salt and Pepper to taste
- 1 Tablespoon Dijon mustard or lemon juice
- 1/4 Cup finely chopped red onion
- 1/4 Teaspoon garlic powder
- 2 Tablespoons olive oil (for cooking in pan)

Mix well in a bowl. Shape into patties. Fry each patty on each side in olive oil until golden brown.

These burgers are great with a little horseradish mixed with mayo on top. I like to use a healthier version when I can, which is a mayo called veganaise, made from grape seed oil. You can buy the veganaise at health food stores in the refrigerated section. Bring a jar to the next barbeque with some of these burgers you whipped up, and don't forget the horseradish. You can also make small patties with this burger and use them as an appetizer.

This makes 4-6 good size burgers.

Bean Burgers

- 1 can black beans rinsed and drained
- 3 tablespoons of fresh parsley, dill or basil. You can also use 3 teaspoons dry. I like to use all three if I have it.
- 2 cloves crushed garlic
- 3/4 cup breadcrumbs or quick oats
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1/4 cup finely chopped onion

Mix all ingredients together and form into patties. Fry in olive oil till browned to your liking.

This makes 4 to 6 burgers.



Sieglinde Joyce is a practicing Holistic Health counselor in West Dover, VT and can be reached at 464-2846 or healthy@sover.net. She will help you fill out your initial health history form online and do your consultation right over the phone.

Sieglinde works with you to accomplish health goals such as weight loss, fighting fatigue and depression and improving overall family or personal health.

WHO COOKS FOR YOU?

By Lauren Gilpatrick



AS THE VERMONT EVENINGS GROW LONGER AND WARMER, we find ourselves staying outside later than other times of the year. We sit and leisurely listen to the crickets call for the sunset around 9pm, savoring the warm weather, appreciating the bats for their insecticidal work and listening to the sounds of night approaching. Not only is this a great time to reflect on the day but it is also one of the best times to see and hear owls.

Most North American Owls belong to a mainly nocturnal family called Strigidae (typical owls). Owls are not physically able to roll their big, forward-facing, predator eyes so they have to turn their whole heads in order to look around. They also have very soft feathers that allow them to fly silently in order to hear and surprise their prey. Many species have dished faces fringed with feathers that funnel sound into offset ears that aid in exact sound localization. These are highly specialized tools that are extremely important when you hunt in the dark! There are so many interesting facts about different owls and their physiology, ecology and behavior but I will limit myself here to one species in particular.

One of my personal favorites is the Barred Owl (*Strix varia*) who in the late summer and early fall can often be heard loudly asking “Who cooks for you? Who cooks for you all?” which is sometimes followed with ascending barks and a series of “hoo-ah hoo-ah hooo-ahhh”. The Barred Owl often calls out 8 times and waits for a response from another owl (or someone with a really good impression of one); this makes them one of the most interactive avian species I know of. The males and females perform an elaborate display together that involves head bobbing, wing wobbling, loud vocalizations and even aerial antics.

The most common owl in Vermont, Barred Owls are regularly sighted and heard during the day. They do not flush easily from their roosts which make them an ideal bird to watch from the roadside or back porch. They are large, buffy, cream-colored owls with dark brown, vertical barring on the belly. Their backs and wings are brown with lighter horizontal barring all over. The Barred Owl has a rounded head with dark eyes, not yellow like a lot of other owl species. They feed mainly on small mammals, birds, amphibians and insects, but are also known to wade into water to catch crayfish. Some have even been observed with a pinkish tint to their belly feathers, thought to be from regularly eating crayfish!

These year-round residents of Vermont prefer mature, moist forests with a mix of deciduous and coniferous trees with water sources and ample cavity trees for nesting. In addition to natural tree cavities, they will also nest in old hawk, crow or squirrel nests and are known to reuse the same nest site year after year. The monogamous pairs begin breeding in mid-March and the young are tended by both parents for more than four months, much longer than other owl species.

I remember one late summer evening on a friend's boat on Lake Whitingham. With the engine cut, we all sat in silence as the sun set behind the Searsburg wind farm (which I happen to find renewably beautiful). Soon a family of Barred Owls began calling back and forth across the purple waters. This went on for many minutes as we all appreciated the thrill of how fervently they called to each other. It remains to this day the only time I have ever felt privileged to be stuck in the middle of a conversation that I didn't understand.

Being the dedicated bird nerd that I am, I have to admit that I have their 9-syllable call set as the ring for my cell phone and I still smile when it fools me out in the field. I've even had a real one respond to my phone ringing while out at night. So the next time you hear somebody deep in the summer woods asking you who cooks for you, you might just answer right back and smile knowing that it's a Barred Owl or two.

Lauren Gilpatrick is a Wildlife Biologist that received her B.S. in Wildlife Biology from the University of Montana. She has spotted over 200 avian species across the nation and encourages people to consider their role in the ecosystem and how their daily choices might affect wildlife habitat. She can be reached at: lgilpatrick@hotmail.com



A Legendary Horse Race

The starting line was in Galveston, Texas; the finish line in Rutland, Vermont. At 1,799 miles long, it would be the longest and hardest horse race in American history. The victor would finish this grueling undertaking in only 31 days.

Maybe.

The facts of this 1886 race are a bit murky and separating historical record from American folklore is a grueling task. Often, a historical document can be clearly identified as valid and often when it was written (and by whom) can be verified, but this does not automatically mean that the information contained within the document is or ever was accurate.

This is the tale, tall or not, of Frank T. Hopkins and the longest cross-country race in U.S. history. Hopkins boasted to win not only this race, but many others, including *The Ocean of Fire*, dramatized in the movie *Hidalgo*, with Viggo Mortensen. He spoke of being present at Wounded Knee and to have headlined with Bill Cody in the Buffalo Bill Shows.

It is also a tale of discovery and research, to establish the veracity of Mr. Hopkins' account. Still, finding history is not the same as finding fact. Historical figures can be legendary, not necessarily because they did great things but because their story is larger than life and, at the same time, plausible. If one is really lucky, history is proved by independent sources which verify narrative account, but it is imperative to remember that much of history is not documented.

Regarding Frank T. Hopkins, it is fact that he lived, as his photos and personal narratives abound. It is fact that he knew how to ride and did so well. Professionals and amateurs alike have written about horse races and other events that Mr. Hopkins participated in and often won. His name has recently achieved international acclaim (and perhaps always had), with the release of the blockbuster, *Hidalgo*.

Separating the Hollywood version of his life with both Mr. Hopkins' own ability to tell tall tales and provable facts is akin to climbing Mt. Everest - the challenge is great and can be summited with success only if all conditions are favorable.



Frank T. Hopkins' shaking hands with Bud Tobel, his opponent, after a hard riding contest, which he won. (photo courtesy - The Horse, March-April 1935)

In the late 1800's, Rutland is a bustling community and the crossroads for Vermont railroads served to transport not only passengers, but also milk, animals, and marble. The quarry industry draws in European immigrants and the population triples between 1850 and 1880 to a staggering 12,000. As the population of Rutland increases, so does the need for mass transport. In 1885, a horse-drawn trolley system was up and running to aid residents in their city travels.

The search for facts within this historical quest focuses on the questionable cross country horse race, which is reported to have begun at Old Point Ferry Slip in Galveston, and ended in Rutland. According to Mr. Hopkins, Richard K. Fox, who owned a tabloid-like newspaper, *The Police Gazette*, backed the race.

"We started from Galveston on September 6, 1886, fifty-six of us" Hopkins would tell. "Conditions were hard on men and horses...we were controlled by a careful system of cards which we had punched whenever we stopped, so that judges knew exactly where every rider stood at any time... I was never a sprinter, but I knew a thing or two about long distance riding. I did not press Joe [his horse] at first. The others all passed me. Then I began passing them, one by one. I rode for thirty-one days. I came into Rutland."

Richard Fox did, indeed, own a newspaper called the *Police Gazette*. Mr. Fox is well known to have provided monies to back various sports events and, according to *The New York Times*, Mr. Fox gave away more than

\$1,000,000 in prizemoneythisway.

Mr. Hopkins further states that Elias Jackson paid \$3,000 to him personally for winning the race. Elias Jackson, A.K.A. "Lucky" Baldwin, was a prominent businessman from California and horse breeder of race horses. It would not seem unlikely that, if such a race occurred, Mr. Baldwin/Jackson might be interested.

Once the race was finished and Rutland was reached, Mr. Hopkins claims to have placed his horse, "Joe", at a small stable owned by Louis Butler. To date, proof that a Louis Butler owned a livery has not come to light. The stable referred to by Mr. Hopkins is not named specifically and no direct links between a Butler and a stable have been found; however, it should be noted that locals would put up animals and travelers and not be listed as a business.

After staying in Rutland for a couple of weeks, Mr. Hopkins headed west where he states he met Bill Cody of the famed Buffalo Bill Wild West Show, joined the Show that same winter of 1886, and toured to Madison Square Garden. The Wild West show did, in fact, tour in New York that winter, but Mr. Hopkins' name is not mentioned, nor are many of almost 200 members being paid by Buffalo Bill.

Numerous people, now famous, joined Buffalo Bill, including Annie Oakley. Looking for memoirs written by Ms. Oakley which might mention Mr. Hopkins, her Grandniece, Mrs. Bess Edwards, was contacted. Alas, no memoir is readily available to the public.

In an attempt to verify that Mr. Hopkins rode with Buffalo Bill at any time, The Buffalo Bill Historical Center in Cody, Wyoming, was also contacted. Again, no records indicate that Frank Hopkins was a part of the very large entourage (some supporters of Mr. Hopkins suggest he went by the show name "The Laramie Kid").

Of special interest, though, is that Buffalo Bill's Wild West Routes included Rutland during the years 1895, 1897, 1908, and 1911. Ms. Oakley is reported to have been present for 2 of these tours.

While evidence has not yet been found to prove that Mr. Hopkins participated in or won a cross country horse race which ended in Rutland, evidence does exist of him being in Vermont, specifically Woodstock. It is reported that, due to his great knowledge of horses and skill as a rider, he was one of the judges for the annual Green Mountain Horse Association's One-Hundred Mile Trail Ride.

Like other legendary figures of history, Mr. Hopkins has woven a colorful



Frank T. Hopkins (hands in pockets) and Dr. Earl Johnson. This photo was taken in Woodstock, Vermont during The Green Mountain Horse Associations Sixth Annual One Hundred-Mile Trail Ride (photo courtesy - Neill Hamilton)

and knowledgeable tale of a marvelous cross country horse race that includes many details of provable fact and many other details of wondrous adventure.

Those tales that we often enjoy most are about larger than life adventurers and performers; Mr. Hopkins can take his place amongst those stellar figures.



interview with filmmaker Jay Craven



Vermont is more than just a backdrop in your movies, but almost a character in itself. Why do you think that Vermont seems to resonate as such a force in your films?

I work to make the sense of place a key element in the films—in *Where the Rivers Flow North*, Noel Lord (protagonist) can not let go of this spectacular natural world—and neither can he tame it. In *Disappearances*, this is also true, but the natural world is also a source of magic, mystery, even ghosts. At least that’s the idea—that the world of the films create meaning and express film themes. Because I live here and spend so much time exploring and working to understand Vermont’s many layers, I can’t help but work that into the films. I shot a majority of both *Rivers* and *Disappearances* within two miles of my home—these locations mean a lot to me -- and they express more than just beauty.

Many of your films are adaptations from the works of Vermont author Howard Frank Mosher. What do you find so attractive about his writings?

Mosher writes from the place I’ve lived for 34 years. I developed an arts organization there and became very connected to the Northeast Kingdom. So, it made sense to keep burrowing into that part of Vermont when I set out to make narrative films. Plus, the Mosher stories re-

mind me of the westerns I grew up on, as my Texas grandmother took me to see them—*Red River*, *The Searchers*, *The Alamo*, *Shane*, *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*. Mosher enlarges character and our sense of the place and gives it mythic resonance, similar to the old westerns, but still unique to the New England north country where family, community, and culture resonate in ways that are quite different from the western. But other themes—of the end of the frontier, an outlaw culture thriving in the margins, extinct ways of life, and of certain honor codes—these borrow from the western and attracted me.

After concentrating on more fictional films, you recently created the documentary “After The Fog (Of War).” Why the change in your manner of storytelling?

I started making documentaries and hope to always make them. War is a theme that has always interested me. I came of age during the Vietnam war era and I made a dramatic film, *The Year That Trembled*, that is set then. As we continue to be involved in war, unlike other modern western nations, it made sense, when a WWII vet approached me, to make a film that explores the human impact of war on the men and women we send into combat. I like to address contemporary themes, in both narrative and documentary work—and “*After the Fog*” provided that chance for me on a most compelling subject.

As an independent filmmaker, how do you get the “masses” to see your movies?

I self-distribute my theatrical releases and take them across the country, mostly to art houses—but also deep into New England, to all kinds of audiences. We played 100 Vermont towns with *Disappearances* and nearly as many with my other films. Last summer, I took the picture to 50 more towns, further into New England. Independent filmmakers have to build their own audiences if they are to succeed. I’m lucky to have a regional audience for these Vermont films—it gives me the chance to take the movies directly to people, where they are—in movie theaters, old opera houses, schools, grange halls and town halls...anywhere we can find an audience. That’s also the great pleasure in being a regional filmmaker—directly connecting with so many audiences.

You are currently a professor at Marlboro College. What led you to this educational tangent?

I’ve always worked with young people, through our summer program, Fledgling Films and by teaching earlier in

my career. My Marlboro College job keeps me in touch with a vital spirit that young people carry forward in each generation. I remain immersed in film culture—and learn from my students. Indeed, I learn by teaching, in general, through film screening and research and reading what the best of my students write which, in many cases, surpasses what I’m reading from urban film critics. So, it’s stimulating. Plus, I’ve hired some three dozen students and former students over the years, to shoot, edit, light, record sound, and help teach. Ten Marlboro students and seven alumni worked on *Disappearances*. I’ve hired an aspiring young Marlboro producer for the summer. Another former student is editing my wife’s new film, *Shout it Out* (which tours Vermont this summer and fall) and she’s shooting a new documentary I’m shooting on the future of agriculture in the state. Another recent alum is directing a doc on kids and education -- that I’m producing. So, my connections here have expanded my capacity to keep making films. It takes time, for sure, and that probably slows project development, but the College has been very supportive and allows me to take time when I need it.

What’s next on the horizon?

I’m planning to shoot a Vermont television series next summer based on Archer Mayor’s book, *Bellows Falls*—about Brattleboro detective Joe Gunther. I’ve also got two other feature films in development, *Judgment Ridge*, based on the Pulitzer Prize finalist book about the Zantop murders, and *They Don’t Dance Much*, a “country film noir” about robbery gone wrong in a small town. I’m also trying to develop a couple of book projects. My company, Kingdom County Productions, is non-profit—and we depend on support from Vermonters to move all this work forward. We’re lean and committed to remaining here and working outside the Hollywood system. People should contact me (jcraven@marlboro.edu) or go to our website (www.kingdomcounty.com) if they’d like to help or get more information—or arrange a screening.

Filmography:

- ★ *Disappearances* (2006)
- ★ *After the Fog* (2005)
- ★ *The Year That Trembled* (2002)
- ★ *In Jest* (1999)
- ★ *Stranger in the Kingdom* (1998)
- ★ *Where the Rivers Flow North* (1994)
- ★ *High Water* (1989)
- ★ *Gayleen* (1986)
- ★ *Dawn of the People* (with Doreen Kraft) (1984)

And the Emmy winning comedy television series “*Windy Acres*” (2004)

For more information on Kingdom County Productions, visit their website at www.kingdomcounty.com



A Vermonter's How To Guide To:

Summer Beers

Summer and cold beer go hand in hand, but with such a huge selection of branded and micro-brewed libations on the market, choosing the right beer isn't as easy as it sounds. In Vermont, especially, we take our beers seriously.

Be open to tasting varied brews. Vermont offers a wide range of great brewers (Magic Hat, Long Trail, Harpoon, etc) and micro-breweries, so there are hundreds of beers to choose from. Here are some helpful hints, though, to get started:



Know what you are looking for, of course. Summer is not the time to go dark & heavy. Try a light, refreshing brew perfect for the heat of the sun and the BBQ.



These hot months are perfect for sampling some wheat beers. Their flavor is a bit more citrus, offering a wonderful aftertaste for the heat.



The German pilsner style represents the primary model for most American lagers and there are hundreds for you to choose from. This lighter brew is perfect for any summer event and any summer food.



Pale ale and Indian Pale Ale (IPA) aren't particularly pale and many offer a greater alcohol content, so be careful to check those labels. These brews represent a more robust and crisp taste.



For the more adventurous, search out a Belgian saisons. These farmhouse ales hail from a time when it was near impossible to brew during the summer and these country ales offer a nice respite from the more traditional beer menu.



Another Belgian treat is the witbier, or white beer, brewed from malted barley and raw wheat, then specied with coriander and Curacao bitter orange peel. They are difficult to find but are a wonderful treat during a summer heat wave.



Lastly, we have the fruit beer, a pairing of wheat beer with fruit syrup or, perhaps, an infusion of whole fruit. You will find these much easier to find the witbier and many are very refreshing.

Vermont Brewers

Long Trail Brewery - Bridgewater Corners

Magic Hat Brewery - Burlington

Harpoon Brewery - Windsor

Maple Leaf Brewery - Mt Snow

McNeill's Brewery - Brattleboro

Otter Creek Brewing - Middlebury

Picking the perfect summer wine



Buy lighter wines with a lower content of alcohol. They are generally less expensive and there are great opportunities on the market.



A crisp Sauvignon Blanc offers a fresh and fruity taste perfect for the hotter months. It also goes great with seafood. Soaves, a nice dry Italian wine, offer a wonderful blend of white grapes and can be very refreshing.



With pasta dishes, accompany with a fruity, light-bodied Spanish wine (also, great with seafood).



Pair grilled fish with an Australian or Californian Chardonnay.



Try a light Shiraz when grilling ribs and other meats.



travel

Fourth of July Parade

Wardsboro, Route 100

This tiny town has been putting on it's annual event longer than most residents can recall. The real excitement is watching the small area swell up to almost 5000 visitors. The parade itself consists of floats, antique cars, local marching bands and regional fire and rescue trucks, but it is the real local camaraderie that gives it such appeal.



This is Vermont's oldest continuous parade, operating since 1949.

Booths of all kinds, from face painting to local artisans and wonderful Vermont fare, open at 9 a.m. The parade begins at 10 a.m.

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Parking is limited, so carpool, take the Moover, or walk.



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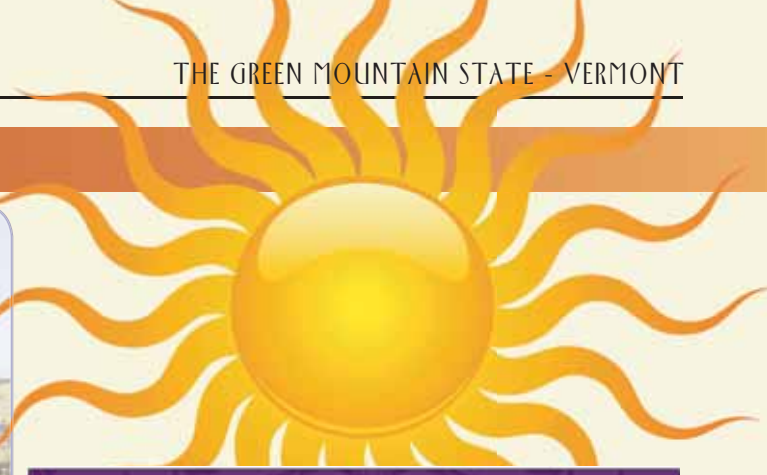
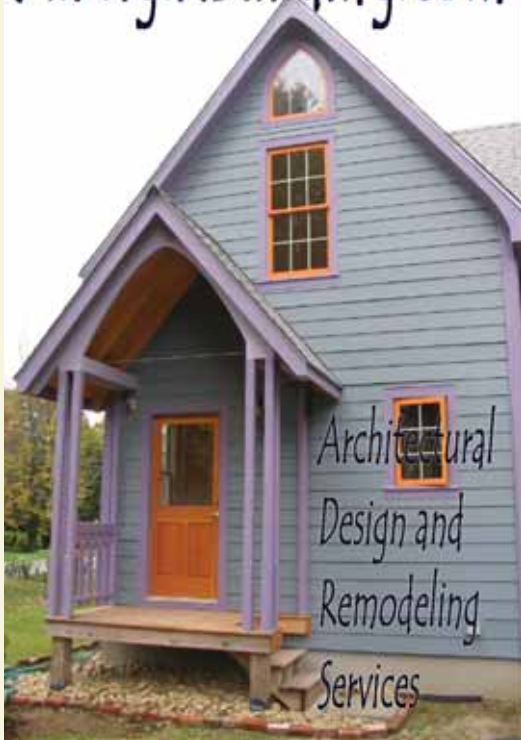
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Tinmouth - July 13, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.

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Bennington - August 30 & 31, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

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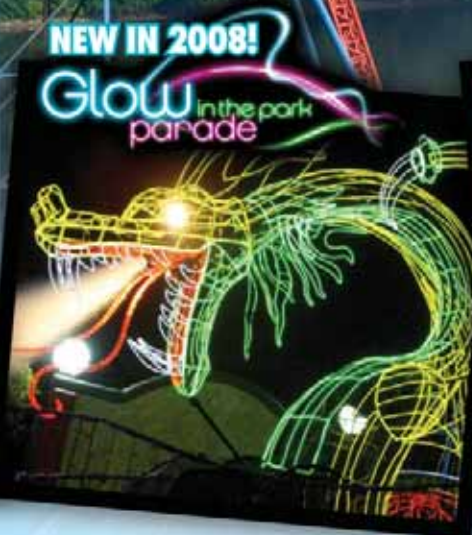
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