

COVER STORY



Courtesy photos

Shown is Richardson's Tavern in Woodstock, Vt.

Winter in Woodstock

Vermont weekend getaway is filled with holiday charm

By PEGGY NEWLAND
Correspondent

Each of the houses is dolled up for winter in the Pentangle Holiday House Tour. Woodstock, Vt., is a festive winter postcard of white clapboard, and with a town center bonfire, carolers strolling and horse-drawn wagons, we don't mind the cold.

Instead of hibernating for the winter, Brian and I decide to celebrate the snow and spend a weekend tromping around in it. The Woodstock Inn and Resort is situated smack-dab central for all things chilled and frosty.

First, we visit a Greek Revival house with steep staircases, elegant molding, and porches built for rocking chairs. Then we take a horse-drawn carriage to the Dana House: Built in 1807 for three generations of Danas, this is now Woodstock Historical Society museum. With Late-Georgian architecture and Federalist moldings, the rooms are filled with history. Brian enjoys looking at the vintage wooden skis, leather ski boots and an antique rope tow; I imagine myself in a feathered winter bonnet, woolen skirt, bundling myself up with handmade quilts.

"Don't miss the equestrian Christmas parade," a docent tells us. "Just outside," she said, looking at her watch, "in a half hour. Piles of horses."

Brian and I zip over to the Benson Place. With its history of first being a water-powered sawmill, then tannery, and finally a lumberyard before a contemporary makeover, it's a modern showpiece. "I love this house," Brian said, snapping photos of the river-stone fireplace and soaring window outlooks to the Kedron Brook and Ottauquechee River.

"Hurry up," I tell him, because we can tour one more house before the horses make their stampede through town.

The Aylwin House is regal, with two-story Doric columns, restored wooden floors, and Persian carpets. We take our shoes off and put on blue booties for this house, and walk through a gallery featuring original New England artists and antique furniture from the mid-1800s.

"The horses, the horses," a woman shouts, and we empty into the streets, and stand along Elm Street.

Clydesdales clatter and ponies pull carts and wagons, filled with Victorian-clad equestrians. One horse is disguised as an elephant with a playful trunk and bows on its tail. Candy canes are tossed to us by elves. Brian and I love the rollerblading "pooper scooper" man who skates past us with a shovel, tossing the horses' contributions into a garbage cart.

The wind picks up and the sun disappears and suddenly my feet are frozen. I suggest we head back to the Woodstock Inn and grab some spiked cider. "Good idea," Brian said, blowing into his gloved hands.



The Wassail Parade in Woodstock, Vermont.

It seems as if everyone else at the parade thought the same thing. It's a madhouse of red-cheeked cheer and laughing families around a blazing hearth. Brian and I score maple bourbon concoctions at Richardson's Tavern and find a nook in the library to play a round of backgammon as our feet thaw.

This is Wassail Weekend, so of course there is a feast that evening. Donning festive Vermont flannel and wool ski sweaters after a nap on feather pillows and handmade quilts, we dine with other guests at group tables. Starting with a seafood "muddle" of fennel, leek and Yukon gold potatoes, we know we are in for a treat. Course after course, we are wassailing on smoked salmon, spice roasted squash,

golden beet salad, tavern dishes of herb-crust chicken, rosemary garlic prime rib, Yorkshire pudding, two potato gratins, and popovers. We finish with English trifle, pumpkin bread pudding, and yes, a slice of chocolate yule log.

Over coffee, we discuss the house tour. "You missed the best house of all," a woman from Virginia says. "The spirit of Christmas." She describes a magical house full of nutcrackers and charm.

We decide a walk is in order. Woodstock's sidewalks are lit with hundreds of luminaries – lit candles in white paper bags. A huge Christmas

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Coats needed for winter warmth; Winter fun for kids



CHRIS GRAHAM
Chris' Mailbag

Today is Christmas, just one day away, and kids of all ages hope to hear Santa's sleigh, with Dasher and Dancer leading Prancer and Vixen, ahead of Comet, Cupid, Donner and Blitzen – but where is Rudolph? Rudolph with his

nose so bright has paused to check a list of items needed at the Nashua Soup Kitchen and Shelter, at the Lucky Dog Resale Shop, and some snow/ice related items offered in the Mailbag, great for outdoor fun during school vacation.

Soup kitchen needs warm coats, tube socks

The Nashua Soup Kitchen & Shelter, a nonprofit agency established in 1981, is dedicated to providing assistance and advocacy to individuals and families.

"NSKS is currently in need of donations of warm coats for men, women and children," says Carol Weeks, Community Outreach Manager (LTR 3,304). "The bitter cold temperatures and wind-chill factors have increased the need. Also,

we like to provide warm tube socks to the homeless men and women who come to the Soup Kitchen for breakfast, often with wet feet, which can have long-term effects on health

MAILBAG | PAGE D-2

Woman's use of free guest pass to gym isn't working out

DEAR ABBY: I go to the gym regularly. Part of my membership includes a free guest pass. Working out with others can be much more fun and a really good motivator. I have a friend who has taken me up on my offer to join me at the gym. She goes with me two to four times a week.

Initially, I made the offer to get her going. Never in a million years did I think she'd still be piggybacking off of my membership all these months later. Now that it has become routine, I feel bad saying anything to her. Should I suggest she get her own membership? Or must I just own this since I invited her along in the first place without clear and obvious boundaries?

— Working out at the gym



DEAR ABBY

DEAR WORKING: You have a right to draw the line. Tell your friend how pleased you are that she now works out regularly, and that because she seems to enjoy it, she should get a gym membership of her own. If she asks why, tell her it's so you can bring other people with you if you wish. If she objects, then she has been taking advantage of your generosity, and that's not how "friends" treat each other.

P.S. If money is an issue for her, you could always suggest she split the cost of your annual membership with you.

DEAR ABBY: I have been married to my wife for four years, but we have been together for 11. She has three children whom I love and treat as my own. My problem is that my wife is a baker and lets the kids eat whatever, whenever, and as much as they want.

My older daughter has graduated from college, where she worked out regularly and lost weight. However, my son and younger daughter have ballooned to obese. I have tried to talk to my wife about instilling better eating habits, but it never

materializes. Food with no nutritional value is consumed each school night, along with bowls of my wife's homemade ice cream. I know being obese will have lifelong consequences for them. How can I fix the problem and help them change how they eat?

— Needs guidance in Florida

DEAR NEEDS GUIDANCE: You're correct that childhood obesity can set the stage for lifelong health problems. I'm surprised your wife hasn't been told this by their doctor. If she thinks stuffing them with unhealthy food and failing to instill good eating habits is showing them "love," she's misguided.

If she is doing this because of some emotional need of her own, she may need both nutritional and emotional counseling to get past it. A step in the right direction would be for you to involve your kids in family time that includes exercise and encourage them to choose a sport that interests them and to pursue it. If you ask your older daughter, I'll bet she would be glad to support the idea.

DEAR ABBY: One of my friends says I work too much, that I have little to no time for myself or her, and when I'm off, I spend the majority of my time sleeping.

Abby, I'm a certified nursing assistant and work in a hospital that requires me to work 12-hour shifts.

(7 a.m.-7 p.m.) What should I do? Yes, they are long hours, but I love what I do. Does this make me a workaholic?

— Loves my work in Oklahoma

DEAR LOVES: No. It makes you a lucky person who is dedicated to a profession she enjoys. What matters is that your schedule works FOR YOU, not for your friend, and that you get sufficient rest to do it efficiently.

TO MY READERS: A very merry Christmas to you all!

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

HELPING HANDS

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Helping Hands* is a weekly feature that provides information about the needs of local nonprofit agencies. Please review your nonprofit's listing, and refresh it as needed. Send changes to kpalmern@nashuatelegraph.com. Thank you!

Adult Learning Center

4 Lake St., Nashua, NH 03060
NEEDS: ESOL and Adult Basic Education tutors for 1½-2 hours per week.
HOURS: 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Monday-Friday.
CONTACT: Connie Cullen, 882-9080 ext. 208, or ccullen@adultlearningcenter.org.
WEBSITE: www.adultlearningcenter.org.

Anne-Marie House

180 Lowell Road, Hudson, NH 03051
NEEDS: High-efficiency laundry detergent pods, toilet paper, paper towels, disinfectant wipes, copy paper, tall kitchen bags, and large garbage bags.
COLLECTION HOURS: 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday.
CONTACT: 883-7338, ext. 1, or info@annemariehouse.org.
WEBSITE: www.annemariehouse.org.

Birthright of Manchester Inc.

247 S. Main St., Manchester, NH 03102
NEEDS: Diapers (larger sizes in most need 3,4,5) and wipes; baby clothing and gently used clothing up to 3T; new baby blankets/afghans.
COLLECTION HOURS: 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays or Thursdays (please call ahead, 668-3443). Nashua drop-off available as well.
CONTACT: Janet Heitmiller, 889-9333 or heits@comcast.net.
WEBSITE: Manchester@birthright.org.

Boys & Girls Club of Greater Nashua

1 Positive Place, Nashua, NH 03060
NEEDS: Volunteers to help in new science program. Volunteers must be at least

15 years or older. Program runs 5-6 p.m. Mondays and Fridays. Volunteers can choose which day they would like to volunteer. Also looking for volunteers to mentor Club members, at least one hour a week. Mentoring activities vary.
COLLECTION HOURS: 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
CONTACT: Bree Cosgrove, bcosgrove@bgcn.com or 883-0523, ext. 237.
WEBSITE: www.bgcn.com.

Corpus Christi Food Pantry and Assistance

43 Franklin St., Nashua, NH 03064
NEEDS: Our needs are currently for cereal, canned meats and vegetables, toiletry and personal hygiene items. We also need gently used household items such as pots and pans, kitchen utensils, linens and small working appliances.
COLLECTION HOURS: 10 a.m.-noon Mondays, Wednesdays; 2-4 p.m. Tuesdays, Thursdays.
CONTACT: Susan Dignan, 882-6372.
WEBSITE: corpuschristifoodpantry.org.

Front Door Agency

12 Concord St., Nashua, NH 03064
NEEDS: New twin bedding, healthy snacks for kids, juice boxes, paper towels, cleaning supplies, toilet paper, feminine products and 55-gallon black contractor trash bags.
COLLECTION HOURS: 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday-Thursday.
CONTACT: Nancy Paige, 886-2866, npaige@frontdooragency.org.
WEBSITE: www.frontdooragency.org.

Greater Nashua Habitat for Humanity - ReStore

352 Amherst St., Nashua, NH 03063
NEEDS: Volunteers to help run our ReStore! Donations of new and gently used building supplies, appliances, cabinets, lighting, hardware, tools, non-upholstered furniture and housewares are also needed.
DONATIONS OR SHOPPING: 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Tuesdays, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Wednesday-Saturday. Closed Sunday,

Monday.
DONATIONS, PICKUPS & VOLUNTEERS: 943-8980 or email restoremanager@nashahabitat.org.
WEBSITE: www.nashuahabitat.org/restore.

HEARTS Peer Support Center of Greater Nashua

5 Pine St. Extension, Unit 2K, Nashua, NH 03061
NEEDS: A freezer.
COLLECTION HOURS: 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday-Friday.
CONTACT: Ken Lewis or Tom Doucette, 882-8400.
WEBSITE: www.heartspsa.org.

Humane Society

24 Ferry Road, Nashua, NH 03064
NEEDS: Dry dog food (we use Purina Pro Plan Savor Adult); dry cat food (we use Purina Pro Plan Savor Adult Cat Chicken & Rice); gently used towels, blankets and sheets; bleach; Dawn dishwashing liquid; copier paper.
COLLECTION HOURS: Donations can be left anytime in our donation shed to the right of the main entrance.
CONTACT: 889-2275 ext. 21 or hsfn@hsfn.org.
WEBSITE: www.hsfn.org.

Joseph's Closet

75 Northeastern Blvd., Nashua, NH 03062
NEEDS: We are in need of wheelchairs, shower chairs, shower stools, tub transfer benches, commodes and adaptive equipment. For a complete list of items that can be donated, visit our website.
DONATION DROP-OFFS: St. Joseph Hospital Rehabilitation Services, 75 Northeastern Blvd., Nashua; St. Joseph Hospital Rehabilitation at Dartmouth-Hitchcock, 2300 Southwood Drive, Nashua; St. Joseph Hospital Rehabilitation, 382 Daniel Webster Highway, Merrimack; Rehabilitation Services at St. Joseph Hospital Milford Medical Center, 442 Nashua St., Milford; Rehabilitation Services at St. Joseph Hospital Family Medicine, 208 Robinson Road, Hudson; Rehabilitation Services at St. Joseph Hospital Medical Center, 442 Nashua St., Milford; Rehabilitation Services at St. Joseph Hospital Family Medicine, 460 Amherst St., Nashua.
CONTACT: Sheila Caron, 882-3000, ext. 63208, sca-

ron@sjhnh.org.
WEBSITE: www.stjosephhospital.com/community-health/josephs-closet.

Marguerite's Place

87 Palm St., Nashua, NH 03060
NEEDS: White valances, batteries (sizes C, D, AA, AAA), paper goods (toilet paper, paper towels, tissues), diapers sizes 5 and 6, diaper wipes, pull-ups (3T or 5T) new towels, shower curtain liners, shower curtains with rings, new crockpots, laundry soap, dryer sheets, bleach, magic erasers, window cleaner.
COLLECTION HOURS: 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday.
CONTACT: Melissa, 598-1582, ext. 14, msullivan@margueritesplace.org.
WEBSITE: www.margueritesplace.org.

Mary's House

123 W. Pearl St., Nashua, NH 03060
NEEDS: Urgent need for body wash and sanitary pads. Also deodorant, soap, shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste, toothbrushes and toilet paper.
COLLECTION HOURS: 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Monday and Tuesday.
CONTACT: Heidi Nielsen, 886-3562 or hnielsen@snhs.org.
WEBSITE: bit.ly/1PaZVEk.

Nashua PAL - Youth Safe Haven

52 Ash St., Nashua, NH 03060
NEEDS: A working refrigerator/freezer. 12x12 Velcro. Incline bench. Craft paint (any size bottles or containers; Crayola works great), fuse beads, sand art containers, sand and soccer balls.
COLLECTION HOURS: 2-6 p.m. Monday-Thursday and 2-5 p.m. Friday.
CONTACT: Shaun or Jaela, 594-3733, youthsafehaven@nashuapal.com.
WEBSITE: www.nashuapal.com.

The Nashua Senior Activity Center

70 Temple St., Nashua, NH 03060
NEEDS: New C and D batteries; reams of copy paper; blank 4x6 cards; stamps; 8½ x 11¼ perforated pads of writing paper.

Gently worn clothing for our Thrift Shop (must be for current season, as we have limited storage). Higher-end and designer apparel for our Designer Corner store.
COLLECTION HOURS: 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday-Friday.
CONTACT: 889-6155, or Judy Porter at 816-2649, jporter@nashuaseniorcenter.org.
WEBSITES: www.nashuaseniorcenter.org, www.facebook.com/nashuasac.

Nashua Soup Kitchen & Shelter

2 Quincy St., Nashua, NH 03060
NEEDS: Peanut butter, pasta, canned or boxed soup, rice (any sized bag; bigger ones are rebagged to share), cereal, shampoo (10 oz. or bigger will be appreciated for our families), toothbrushes and toothpaste, soap or body wash, razors, deodorant (for men or women).
 Volunteers also needed throughout the day to serve breakfast or dinner, sort donations and help in our food pantry. Check the volunteer page on our website or call for more information.
DONATION DROP-OFF: Enter our parking lot and pull up to our loading dock. Ring buzzer by the door if no one is outside.
COLLECTION HOURS: 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday and 8-11 a.m. Saturday.
CONTACT: Carol Weeks, 889-7770, carol@nshks.org.
WEBSITE: www.nshks.org.

Nashua Special Olympics

NEEDS: Adult and teen volunteers needed to offer their time and smiles to Nashua Special Olympics athletes ages 8-60. Coaches, partners and other volunteer positions are available for those who are looking for a little more sunshine in their lives.
CONTACT: Email nsoleadershipteam@gmail.com or visit nashuaspecialolympics.org.
WEBSITE: www.nashuaspecialolympics.org.

Partnership for Successful Living

45 High St., Nashua, NH 03062

NEEDS: Harbor Homes is in dire need of new twin and double size sheet sets, blankets, pillows and towels.

COLLECTION HOURS: 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday.
CONTACT: Carolyn McLaughlin, 882-3616 ext. 1169, c.mclaughlin@nhpartnership.org.
WEBSITE: www.nhpartnership.org.

The PLUS Company

NEEDS: Volunteers needed to teach a variety of special interest classes in performing arts, nutrition, photography, crafts, literacy, money management, etc. Volunteers also needed to train and compete with our Special Olympics athletes.
CONTACT: Leni Hodgins, 889-0652 ext. 124 or lhodgins@pluscompany.org.
WEBSITE: www.pluscompany.org.

The Salvation Army

1 Montgomery Ave., Nashua, NH 03060
NEEDS: Postage stamps, office supplies (copy paper), canned tuna, chicken, beef stew, soup, vegetables, fruit, sauce, peanut butter, cereal, rice, macaroni and cheese, pasta, laundry soap, deodorant, larger-size diapers (sizes 3-6), and feminine protection products.
COLLECTION HOURS: 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday-Friday.
CONTACT: Rosemarie Dykeman, 889-5151, ext. 10, rosemarie_dykeman@use.salvationarmy.org.
WEBSITE: www.use.salvationarmy.org.

SHARE Outreach

1 Columbus Ave., Milford, NH 03055
NEEDS: Juice, canned vegetables, tuna, peanut butter, rice, cereal, canned soup, bar soap, toothpaste, large diapers, baby wipes, new socks and underwear (all sizes).
COLLECTION HOURS: 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday-Thursday and 8:30 a.m.-noon Friday.
CONTACT: Christine Janson, 673-9898, info@sharenh.org.
WEBSITE: www.sharenh.org.

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Vermont

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tree is ablaze with light and carolers sing around a bonfire, some toasting marshmallows. We come upon an "Irish Christmas in America" concert at the town hall, and decide to stay for some dancing and singing.

The next morning, I knock on the "spirit of Christmas" house and the owner invites me into a delightful world.

"I do this to bring happiness," Ron Garwood tells me.

Electric trains encircle one tree; another has photographic ornaments of friends and family who have "passed on from this world." Garwood designed the Christmas windows of Wanamaker's Department Store in Philadelphia for many years. "An elegant building. One of the first department stores in the United States." Every shelf, every nook, ev-

ery place setting, every animated elf is intricately displayed in this gable cottage. A chandelier is a blazing floral forest. Individualized stuffed bears and woodchucks, handmade by Garwood, are dressed in bright red flannel and Victorian lace ensemble. They sit and stand throughout the piano room and above us are hand-painted beams with festive quotes in curlicue writing.

"Can I live here?" I ask Mr. Garwood, and he laughs.

Bringing your winter happiness to Woodstock. There are plenty of roaring fireplaces, town hall concerts, hot toddies, flannel shirts, classic inns, and magical shows to go around.

The Woodstock Inn and Resort. Woodstock, Vermont. 1-888-338-2745. www.woodstockinn.com. Ask for the Romance in Woodstock package, which includes dinner in the Red Rooster, a bottle of champagne, breakfast buffet, and welcome amenity.

Mailbag

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and mobility. Donations of tube socks would be greatly appreciated and with the socks 'one-size-fits-all' design, sizing is never an issue. Help with coats and/or tube socks would be greatly appreciated." When the Nashua Soup Kitchen originally began, it was open only a few hours, three days a week, serving soup and sandwiches. Today, the soup kitchen serves breakfast Monday-Friday, with dinner served every day, averaging 1,700 meals each week. NSKS programs/services, in addition to the soup kitchen and food pantry, include emergency shelter, transitional housing, employment, education, social work assistance and more. If you or your family find your closets filled with more coats than needed, or Santa leaves a new coat under your tree which finds you with an extra, Carol can be reached at the Nashua Soup Kitchen and Shelter at 889-7770, ext.

21, or email carol@nshks.org. Hours may vary during the holidays, but donations of coats and socks are "warmly" appreciated!

Doggie coats, pet food needed cats and dogs

The Lucky Dog resale shop in Nashua is a unique store where all proceeds of sales directly benefit local animal and humane charities as well as local residents facing hardship veterinary bills. "For the seventh year, our nonprofit shop, part of the 'Tails To Freedom' vision, welcomes donations of doggie coats in all sizes to be given out to family pets who visit the shop (leashed) with their owner through the upcoming week," says Lucky Dog shop owner, Kat R. of Nashua (LTR 2,721). "With the extreme cold, short-haired dogs are especially a concern. We are also in need of pet food, bags of dry dog food as well as canned cat and dog food, to help individuals and families struggling to feed their pets. Donations of these items as well as monetary donations are always greatly appre-

ciated." Sometimes folks neglect their own nutritional needs to provide for a four-legged family member, so pet food donations can benefit everyone. The Lucky Dog Thrift Shop, 23 Elm St., can be reached at 882-3647 (882-DOGS); more information at www.luckydogthriftshop.com or www.tailstofreedom.org. "Thanks" is often seen as a happy wagging tail.

Kids' snow boards and skis, girl's ice skates

"Snow on the ground, snow-making machines in operation at ski and sledding areas, and frozen ponds makes this a good time for me to pass along some of the winter-related items for children that I've come across," says Bert the Picker of Nashua (LTR 1,775). "There are two children's snow boards, both are colorful, (one is a Snow Tiger, the other says Aurora); a pair of skis, white, labeled Snow Cats - Techno, measuring 50 inches in length, with ski poles; and a pair of white, girl's ice skates, shoe size 4. The skates are in excellent condition. Hope someone

will enjoy these." In 1964, Sherman Poppen, a young ocean surfer who dreamed of surfing on snow, built his first prototype, a plastic plank/two kids' skis bolted together ... at least we know he "went down in snowboarding history"! Bert can be reached at 883-0990; leave a message with a phone number and he will get back to you.

Updates

Lauren O. of Nashua, Director of Adult Education at the Adult Learning Center in Nashua (LTR 3,294) says "More than 60 backpacks have been donated for our adult students, coming to us from all over the world. Thanks to everyone who generously dropped off backpacks." Wishing all my Mailbag readers "Merry Christmas/Happy Holidays!"

Contact Chris' Mailbag by emailing christine.graham33@gmail.com or sending mail to Chris' Mailbag c/o The Telegraph, 17 Executive Drive, Hudson, NH 03051. Include full name and address, along with telephone number or email address for publication, if applicable. Items eligible for publication are for donation, trade or barter only.