



Jim Westphalen

INSIDE VL

Fair Days

ONE DAY IN THE LATE '70S, I WAS allowed to skip school to attend the local fair. The day is forever etched in my mind because I could play hooky — unthinkable! — and go with my 23-year-old brother John, one of six older siblings. We shared pizza and cotton candy and pie, watched oxen and horse

pulls and went on rides that flipped us upside down, emptying our pockets of change. He won a goldfish for me. At 10 years old, it was pure happiness.

Shortly thereafter, that 170-year-old fair was plowed under, a victim of suburban sprawl in southwestern Connecticut. In its place grew up one of the largest shopping malls in New England. A parking lot now covers the ground where the midway and farm shows used to be.

Fortunately small-town agricultural fairs are alive and well in Vermont. Year after year, our fairs burst into life in what are usually quiet open fields: From Tunbridge to the Champlain Valley to Deerfield in southern Vermont, pies are judged, calves shown, rides enjoyed, and clowns ... well, clowns are avoided by most people.

The fairs provide fun and hope and relief from everyday life — a place for kids to let loose, for adults to forget the stress of field or office and for teenagers to meet — and sometimes even fall in love.

Last summer we asked photographer Daria Bishop to capture the magic of our fairs, and the result is "Ticket to Ride" (page 22) — a masterful portrait of the Vermont fair as it is today, complete with farm animals, rides, tattoos and text messaging. It is a glimpse into a part of summer that any Vermonter will surely recognize, but few stop to ponder. Our photos will help you see it, and appreciate it, in a whole new light.

Here's hoping the summer fair lives on in Vermont for many years to come, for generations of friends and families — sisters and brothers — to enjoy.

Also in this issue:

- Quadricentennial events celebrating Lake Champlain are hitting full stride this summer. For a quick take on some major festivities, turn to This Season (page 6). Also in this issue, we've devoted our book reviews (page 13) to the lake; provided a guide on how to get out on this magnificent body of water even if you don't own a boat ("Shore Leave," page 40); and added a rainy-day destination ("Open to Interpretation," page 46) about a traveling exhibit by 38 painters who convey their wonder of the lake. Want more Champlain? Look for our Celebrating Champlain special issue ... just visit www.vermontlifecatalog.com.

Mary Hegarty Nowlan, Editor
mary.nowlan@state.vt.us

Vermont Life

MAGAZINE

is published quarterly by the State of Vermont

James H. Douglas, Governor

Kevin L. Dorn, Secretary, Agency of Commerce and Community Development

Bruce J. Hyde, Commissioner, Department of Tourism & Marketing

Publisher Tom Kelly

Editor Mary Hegarty Nowlan

Managing Editor Bill Anderson

Art Director Jan Lowry Hubbard

Production Manager D. J. Goodman

Editorial Assistant Judy Thurlow

Business Manager Julie George

Marketing Manager Maude Chater

Fulfillment Manager Marilyn Wood

Business Manager's Assistant Tammy Duprey

Shipping Manager Joe Rossi

Projects Editor Sky Barsch

Vermont Life Advisory Board:

Pennie Beach, Paul Bruhn, Laura Carlsmith,

Jack Crowl, Katheran L. Fisher,

Brian Harwood, Fran Stoddard, Steven Wood

Editor Emeritus Tom Slayton

Editorial and Business offices: (802) 828-3241

Advertising and Product Sales Office

Smart Communication Inc.

P.O. Box 283, Vergennes, VT 05491-0283

Tel. (802) 877-2262, fax (802) 877-2949

E-mail: info@GetSmartVT.com

Advertising Director Gerianne Smart

Sales Representatives H. Abby Hummel, Tom Champnois

Newsstand Coordinator Howard White & Associates

Single Issue: \$4.95

One-Year Subscription Rates \$15.95 in U.S.A.,

\$22.95 Canada & Foreign Delivery

For Subscription Inquiries

please go online at www.VermontLife.com

and click Subscriber Services

or call toll free (800) 284-3243 or e-mail subs@VtLife.com

Vermont Life Magazine (ISSN 0042-417X) is published quarterly

in February, May, August and November.

Editorial and business offices are located at

6 Baldwin St., Montpelier, VT 05602

(802) 828-3241.

Editorial comments or questions: editors@VtLife.com

website <http://www.VermontLife.com>

Change of address must be received eight weeks prior to publication to ensure continuous delivery of magazine. Please include your old address as well as your new address. Periodicals postage paid at Montpelier, VT, and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send form #3541 to *Vermont Life*, 6 Baldwin St., Montpelier, VT. © Copyright 2009 by *Vermont Life* Magazine.

Printed in the U.S.A.

Privacy Notice: Subscribers, to have your name excluded from use by third parties, call (800) 284-3243.

The editors of *Vermont Life* will review any submissions. Due to volume received, all submissions cannot be responded to individually. No responsibility is assumed by the State of Vermont or *Vermont Life* for loss or damage to materials submitted. Return postage must accompany all manuscripts, drawings and photographs if they are to be returned. All rights are reserved. No part of *Vermont Life* may be reproduced without permission of the editor. *Vermont Life*™ is a trademark registered with the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

www.VermontLife.com

Member:
International Regional
Magazine Association

