**ABOVE & BEYOND: JFK AND THE U-2 PILOTS DURING THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS**

**SEPTEMBER 4**  
*Michael Tougias, NY Times Bestselling Author*

This presentation follows Tougias’ newest book, which chronicles the thirteen harrowing days of the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1964. U-2 pilots who flew unarmed over Cuba were able to secure photographic proof that the Soviets were installing nuclear missiles on the island. These pilots helped President Kennedy achieve a difficult objective: have the nuclear missiles removed from Cuba without triggering Armageddon. Learn about lesser-known events that put us on the brink of nuclear war.

**CUBA: PAST AND PRESENT**

**SEPTEMBER 18**  
*Elayne Clift, Writer, Journalist, Traveler*

We will hear a first-hand account of a complex and cordial country from our speaker who visited Cuba in late 2017. Clift talked with people from all walks of life and took copious photographs. Explore the reasons that make Cuba a difficult country to understand how its history, politics and economic reality come together. We will be challenged to make sense of this island country once dominated by Spain and America, then ruled by the late Fidel Castro.

**CALVIN COOLIDGE:**  
**VERMONT IS A STATE I LOVE**

**OCTOBER 2**  
*Tracy Messer, Living History Performer*

It was in September 1928 that President Coolidge delivered this eloquent impromptu speech after touring Vermont by train to see the recovery efforts following the devastating floods from the previous year. In honor of its 90th anniversary, hear Tracy Messer explain how the world came to know the “brave little state of Vermont” through his first-person portrayal of our 30th President of the United States.
THE MEANING OF MAPS

OCTOBER 16

William Morris, Cartographer

The state of cartographic technology in 2018 is radically different than it was even two decades ago. Appreciate how satellites, the internet and mobile devices have rewired our present understanding of geography.

THE BLACK BEAR: NATURE’S VORACIOUS OMNIVORE

CO-SPONSORED BY ASCUTNEY MOUNTAIN AUDUBON SOCIETY

OCTOBER 23

Kurt Valenta, Naturalist and Educator

Join us as we explore the secretive world of the Black Bear, the smallest of three bear species found in North America, which lives in a wide variety of habitats. They move with a lumbering grace and stealth that belies their size. Part of many children’s tales, understand how the fiercely protective female and the belligerent solitary male are anything but cuddly ‘Teddy Bears.’

THIS YEAR IN POLITICS IS REALLY DIFFERENT (AND THAT’S NOT FAKE NEWS)

OCTOBER 30

Jon Margolis, Political Commentator

While candidates usually claim that each election is unique, this one is really weird – a president with the lowest mid-term approval rating ever. We’ll discuss issues in Vermont state political news as well – a Vermont Democratic Party which dominates the state but cannot come up with a credible candidate for governor. And who knows what other oddities we will examine? All happening amidst confusion over what is fake and what is fact, if there still is any such thing as fact!

I COULD HARDLY KEEP FROM LAUGHING: VERMONT HUMOR FROM COOLIDGE TO TRUMP

NOVEMBER 13

Bill Mares, Author, Teacher, Legislator

Vermont humor began in hardscrabble times as farmers made light of heavy and odious work. Visitors and immigrants (‘Flatlanders’) brought new recruits for gentle derision, and politicians were always fair game for the public and each other. Join Bill Mares on a guided tour of Vermont humor from the era of Calvin Coolidge to that of Donald Trump,

CLASSICS OF HOLLYWOOD’S GOLDEN AGE

NOVEMBER 27

Rick Winston, Film Historian

Why do so many old films fail the test of time while a few are rediscovered by each generation of moviegoers? Hear Rick discuss some of the elements of those classics from Hollywood’s ‘Golden Age’ – writing, acting, directing and cinematography – and watch clips from 12 of his favorite films from 1935 – 1963.

THIS WINTER’S FORECAST

DECEMBER 4

Mark Breen, Senior Meteorologist, Fairbanks Museum, VPR’s ‘Eye on the Sky’ Forecaster

The challenges of predicting Mother Nature are considerable. Even weather forecasts from day-to-day can vary considerably as a storm changes track, a weather front stalls, or a thunderstorm pops up to spoil your outdoor plans. So why would we think we can predict the weather months in advance? Understand the differences between daily and seasonal weather forecasting, including looking at ocean temperature cycles, sun spot cycles, El Nino, and the Polar Vortex. Using these features, as well as over 120 years of detailed weather records from the Fairbanks Museum, Breen will make a specific forecast for this winter!

THANKS TO OUR LOCAL BENEFACCTOR: BARBARA SANDERSON

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