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The Original Keene Shopper – “The Weekly with a Heart” – 66th Year of Community Service / February 14-20, 2024

Tribute Event To Honor Community Members Committed To The Health Of Region

Bill Chase, MD And Jay Kahn To Be Honored March 9th



Bill Chase, MD (left) and Jay Kahn (right)

Cheshire Health Foundation has named the honorees for the 11th annual Caring, Candlelight and Community: Celebrating Our Healthcare Legacy event. William Chase, MD and Jay Kahn will be honored at an event on March 9th. The event is a celebration of the commitment and dedication they have made to the health and wellness of the region.

Cheshire Health Foundation will recognize the invaluable contributions these individuals have

made to the people and nonprofit organizations in the Monadnock Region.

William (Bill) Chase, MD was meant to be a physician. The son of an anesthesiologist and an operating room nurse, his interest in surgery began early and after graduating from Colby College he attended Jefferson Medical College. Deferred by the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War due to his surgical training, he subsequently completed his military service in Alaska. Chase returned to New England planning to join a surgical group and was drawn to Keene by the brand new Cheshire Hospital and multi-specialty group practice at the Keene Clinic. He later earned a master's degree in management from Antioch and served as the clinic's president.

Chase retired from Cheshire Medical Center nearly 25 years ago but has continued to care for others. He served in the American College of Surgeon's Commission on Cancer through 2019. Medical volunteer activities have taken him to Haiti, Nepal, Lesotho, and Tanzania. With Global Volunteers he has worked in Ecuador, St. Lucia, West Virginia, and Montana. Locally, he volunteers with Project Home, helping asylum seekers navigate the healthcare system to obtain care.

TRIBUTE, page 5

Granite Gorge Mountain Park: A Thrilling Comeback To The Slopes



Ethan Kreischer, background, and Craig Korpi at Granite Gorge.

By Janelle Kreischer

Nestled amidst the scenic landscape of Roxbury, Granite Gorge Mountain Park boasts a rich history, tracing its roots back to 1959 as Pinnacle Mountain. Despite facing closures and rebranding, the mountain has resurged in 2022 with a renewed spirit and a commitment to offering an inclusive and thrilling experience for both locals and visitors.

The revitalization of Granite Gorge began in August 2022 when a dedicated group of five local partners took charge, determined to breathe new life into this beloved mountain. Strengthening the team, Keith Kreischer assumed the role of general manager, bringing his passion for the slopes and a commitment to making Granite Gorge a thriving hub for all.

Kreischer articulated the core values of Granite Gorge Mountain Park, emphasizing safety, affordability, and

inclusivity. “We want to be an active part of the community, where everyone wants to be and can enjoy year-round activities,” he declared. This commitment goes beyond mere words, as Granite Gorge has transformed into more than just a winter destination.

Granite Gorge Mountain Park is in the midst of an extensive revitalization initiative, surpassing mere words, as Granite Gorge has transformed into more than just a winter destination. This initiative strongly underscores our central commitment to ensuring the safety of all guests. Beyond the lodge transformation, the park has reimagined its terrain, seamlessly incorporating advanced snow-making and grooming equipment.

Emphasizing a dedication to inclusivity and safety, Kreischer notes, “As a freestyle family resort with terrain parks for all abilities, our upgrades are carefully crafted to cater to everyone.”

GRANITE GORGE, page 4

Free Celebratory Event At The Colonial Theatre Sunday

The Colonial Performing Arts Center on Main Street in Keene will throw a party to mark its 100th anniversary of its iconic main theatre on Sunday, February 18th following a screening of *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (1923) at 2 p.m. The viewing of this iconic film will be accompanied by a live piano performance by Jeff Rapsis.

The festivities after the film will be held in the newly renovated lobby and include free cake and champagne. This event is free and open to the public, making it a perfect opportunity for families, history buffs, and anyone who loves the magic of live entertainment to come together and celebrate The Colonial Theatre's remarkable journey.

Best Of Monadnock Voting Deadline Extended

Visit BestOfMonadnock.com To Cast Ballot Until February 21st

Everyone has a couple extra days to complete the ballots in the 2024 Best of Monadnock Poll. Originally due this Friday, ballots will now be accepted until the end of the day Wednesday, February 21st.

Readers are invited to fill out the ballot at www.shoppernews.com, bestofmonadnock.com, or use the QR code on the upper left corner of this page.

There are over 190 categories in which to vote. A minimum of 15 selections must be made per ballot. This year, for the first time, we are using Survey-

Monkey for this poll, so it should be a bit easier to complete on cell phones or other devices. Everyone who votes online will be entered into a drawing for one of several local gift certificates. Any local business is eligible to win a “Best Of” award.

The poll is meant to offer everyone a chance to give a vote of thanks to some of the people and local establishments who bring outstanding service, quality, and value to the lives of people of the region.

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PET OF THE WEEK
 from THE MONADNOCK HUMANE SOCIETY

Silas



Hey there, potential forever family! I'm Silas, the Catahoula Leopard Dog extraordinaire. I may still be a young pup, but boy, do I have the enthusiasm to light up your world. I'm currently learning all sorts of cool stuff in shelter dog class, and I'm a quick study, especially when there are treats involved. Now, let's talk about my furry companions. I'm totally cool with other dogs; in fact, I'd love to have a dog buddy to play with. But about those furry feline friends... yeah, not really my cup of tea. So, if you've got cats at home, I might not be the best fit. But hey, when it comes to kids, I'm all in. I absolutely adore children, although I'm still perfecting my manners. Sometimes I get a bit too excited and forget to keep all four paws on the ground – I'm working on it, promise. So, if you're looking for a lively, lovable companion who's bursting with personality, then look no further – I'm your guy. With a little love, patience, and plenty of treats, I know we'll make the perfect match.

The Adoption Center is located at 101 West Swanzezy Road just outside of Keene on Route 10 South. Currently, the adoption center is open to the public Thursdays through Sundays 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Learn more about the adoption process, and about other adoptable pets, at www.monadnockhumane.org.

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Jeffrey P. Smith Farm Scholarship Accepting Applications Through March

The Jeffrey P. Smith Farm Scholarship connects young people with agriculture and the natural world around them. This scholarship aims to inspire the next generation of local farmers and food supporters by giving regional children the opportunity to experience sustainable farming first-hand and watch their efforts bear fruit.

Scholarship-eligible programs include select farm camps and after school programs at Stonewall Farm, Orchard Hill, Kroka Expeditions, U-Mass Farm Academies, and memberships to NOFA-NH. Scholarships cover the full program cost unless otherwise noted.

The Cheshire County Conservation District is now accepting applications and donations to the Jeffrey P. Smith Farm Camp Scholarship. Applications are due by Sunday, March 31st.

To learn more about participating programs, view application materials, or donate to the scholarship fund, visit www.cheshireconservation.org/jps-scholarship. Interested applicants may also request a paper copy of the application by calling the Cheshire County Conservation District at 603-756-2988, Ext.4 or emailing info@cheshireconservation.org.

Free Workshops On Medicare And Social Security In Keene February 27th And 29th

Two free workshops – held at Keene Public Library on Winter Street – will be presented by Steven Bergeron of Wealthcare Capital: a Medicare Workshop on Tuesday, February 27th from 6 to 7 p.m., and a Social Security Work-

shop on Thursday, February 29th from 6 to 7 p.m.

For more details, call 603-354-7770. To make a reservation, visit www.freemedicareworkshopkeene.com/upcoming-workshops.

Help The Greater Keene Rotaract Club Fight Food Insecurity

The Greater Keene Rotaract Club is hosting a meal packaging event as part of its World Rotaract Week celebration. They are looking for 100 volunteers to package 20,000 meals for community members facing food insecurity.

The event is hosted in partnership with the Rotary Club of Keene, the

Keene Elm City Rotary, and the Outreach Program. It will be on Thursday, March 14th from 5:45 to 8 p.m. at Herberton Hall in the Keene Public Library.

Those who are interested in helping should email rotaract.keene@gmail.com to sign up. All are welcome.

Quilt Raffle To Benefit Kingsbury Patient Relief Fund At DHMC

A Quilt Raffle is being held to benefit the Kingsbury Patient Relief Fund at Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center in Keene.

The beautiful handmade quilt (52" by 52") is made by the employees of New England Fabrics in Keene. Tickets are \$1 each or six for \$5 and are available at the store at its 55 Ralston Street location, with the drawing held on Saturday, March 30th. All proceeds will

be donated to the Kingsbury Patient Relief Fund.

The Kingsbury Patient Relief Fund helps patients – who are currently undergoing treatment – with everyday expenses including medical bills, groceries, gas for their vehicles, and most anything to help ease the financial burden some patients face during cancer treatment.

True Crime Journalism With NHPR Podcast Creator Jason Moon

On Saturday, February 17th at 9:45 a.m., Monadnock Writers' Group will feature New Hampshire Public Radio podcast creator Jason Moon at its monthly Speaker Series. This free event, held at Peterborough Town Library, is an opportunity to go behind the scenes with a master of documentary storytelling.

Moon won national acclaim for his true-crime podcast series *Bear Brook*,

which started as a 45-second news item and turned into a full-fledged series. The *New Yorker* magazine called *Bear Brook's* first season one of the best podcasts of 2018. In 2021, he and colleague Lauren Chooljian received a Third Coast/Richard H. Driehaus Foundation award.

For more details about this event or the Monadnock Writers' Group, email monadnockwriters@gmail.com.

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Bring President's Day To Life At Home

Monday, February 19th is the celebration of Presidents' Day. It's easy to recall some facts about a few different presidents over the course of history, but many of them fade into the background because they aren't the first president or connected with memorable historical events. Parents can help kids increase their presidential knowledge by introducing some fun facts and activities about various presidents throughout history.

Presidents' Day was first celebrated in the 1800s in honor of our first president, George Washington. Initially, it was a celebration of his birthday. Later the celebration was changed to honor both George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, and again to a celebration honoring all former presidents. The date was also changed from George Washington's birthday to the third Monday in February.

The only president from New Hampshire was Franklin Pierce. His homestead in Hillsborough is an historic site that is open to the public for tours. The state that is home to the most former presidents is Virginia, and they have many parades and celebrations honoring their citizens who have aspired to the office of the presidency throughout the whole month of February.

National parks usually waive fees for people visiting on Presidents' Day, making it a great time to see one of our National Parks. The only National Park named after a single person is the Theodore Roosevelt National Park in North Dakota, but there are many monuments, parks, and historic sites that are named after presidents throughout the US.

Grover Cleveland was the first president to serve two non-consecutive terms as president. The only president who ever resigned from office was Richard Nixon. The first woman to ever run for president was Victoria Claflin Woodhull in 1873. The first president born in the United States was the eighth president, Martin Van Buren. All of the presidents before him were born in England.

The shortest presidency was only 32 days. William Henry Harrison died 31 days after his inauguration. Abraham Lincoln was afraid of dentists and having dental work. William Howard Taft is believed to have gotten stuck in the White House bathtub. Theodore Roosevelt named the White House. Ulysses S. Grant was once given a speeding ticket for driving his horse and buggy too fast.

Andrew Johnson was a tailor before becoming president, and he insisted on sewing his own suits.

James Garfield could write in Latin with one hand while writing in Greek with the other hand at the same time. Zachary Taylor is said to have been killed by drinking a glass of milk with a cherry in it. The

Monadnock Family

with Sheri Lapointe



teddy bear was named for president Teddy Roosevelt.

Increase your family's knowledge about the presidents in honor of Presidents' Day. Get some books out of the library about various presidents to learn more interesting facts about the people who have served as president. Have a family trivia game with facts about the presidents.

Incorporate some fun foods into your Presidents' Day Celebration. John F. Kennedy loved waffles for breakfast, so you can honor him by making some waffles for your family to enjoy. Make an edible log cabin with pretzel sticks and peanut butter to remember how Abraham Lincoln was born in a one room log cabin in Kentucky. The classic toy Lincoln Logs are named for Abraham Lincoln.

George Washington's mother Mary was known for her gingerbread cake. Bake a dessert of this spicy treat and serve with some fresh whipped cream and some red and blue berries for a patriotic touch.

You could also bake a batch of cowboy cookies. Cowboy cookies became very well known during the Bush-Gore election in 2000 when Laura Bush's recipe for them beat Tipper Gore's gingersnaps. A cowboy cookie is an oatmeal cookie that has chocolate chips, flaked coconut, and roasted pecans. The recipe from first lady Laura Bush also included a tablespoon of cinnamon to make the recipe unique.

Have fun celebrating Presidents' Day by learning some new facts about the men who have served as president over the years.

Sheri Lapointe is a licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselor with a Master's Degree from Antioch New England University. She works as a behavioral health clinician for the Granite State Children's Alliance. She also has many years of experience teaching in local schools. Send comments to her at The Monadnock Shopper News, P.O. Box 487, Keene, NH 03431.

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Granite Gorge Mountain Park: A Comeback To The Slopes

GRANITE GORGE, Continued from page 1

Importantly, all lifts have undergone rigorous testing and rebuilding processes, adhering to the highest safety standards. This meticulous approach harmonizes effortlessly with an overarching commitment to delivering a secure and enjoyable experience for each guest.

The mountain's offerings have diversified to cater to everyone, regardless of the season. In the summer of 2023, the team embarked on a bold project – building lift-serviced mountain bike trails for outdoor enthusiasts seeking a two-wheeled adrenaline rush. Granite Gorge now hosts scenic sky rides in the late summer and fall, a weekly summer music series called Granite Gigs, and the popular Fall Fest in late September.

A notable addition to the team is Emily Tucker, a local from Nelson, who took on the role of base area manager. Under her guidance, Granite Gorge reintroduced a rental fleet, making the mountain accessible to both young and adult winter sports enthusiasts. The Roxbury Bar & Grill, a newly established venue, provides an affordable and inviting space for visitors to savor culinary delights and create lasting memories.

Recognizing the importance of a strong team, Kreischer knew that success for the mountain hinged on assembling a dedicated group of individuals. Behind the scenes at Granite Gorge Mountain Park, a team passionately dedicated to the slopes and com-

mitted to excellence works tirelessly. Their collective vision aims to make Granite Gorge Mountain Park a thriving and enjoyable destination for all.

Kreischer emphasized the team's dedication, stating, "Our team embraces our motto of employment: work where you love to play. We work hard, but it's fun even on the hardest days." This shared enthusiasm translates into a seamless and enjoyable experience for visitors, as the staff at Granite Gorge goes above and beyond to ensure every customer has the best possible time, making each day at the mountain a breeze. Their shared love for the outdoors and the joy it brings is evident in their tireless efforts to create a welcoming and vibrant atmosphere at Granite Gorge Mountain Park.

Granite Gorge Mountain Park currently operates during specific hours, providing skiing and riding opportunities on Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 4 to 9 p.m., Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., and Sundays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For tubing enthusiasts, the mountain offers sessions on Thursdays and Fridays from 5 to 8 p.m., Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The mountain will host a Community Weekend on February 17th and 18th, featuring discounted tickets and a variety of activities to reconnect with the local community.

"We want our community to know we are back, we are better, and we want to show you we are here to stay," Kreischer emphasized. The mountain has already conducted a Winter Youth Shred Program to teach school-aged kids how to ski and ride and a Tiny Shredders program for the youngest riders aged two to four, with plans to expand and nurture a love for winter sports in the younger generation.

While this winter may not have seen abundant natural snowfall, Granite Gorge Mountain Park's snowmaking team has been proactive, taking advantage of every cold snap to cover the slopes in a fresh blanket of snow.

So, whether you're a seasoned snow sports enthusiast or a newcomer seeking thrills, Granite Gorge Mountain Park beckons with open arms and promises an experience that transcends seasons. As Keith Kreischer puts it, "Just because there isn't snow in your front yard doesn't mean there aren't feet of snow at Granite Gorge!" So, come, embrace the adventure, and be a part of the resounding success story of Granite Gorge Mountain Park – a place where the love for play and work converge, creating memories that will last a lifetime.

For more details, visit granitegorge.com or find them on Facebook.

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A free musical theatre production and arts gala is held on the last day of camp for parents, siblings, grandparents, caregivers, and friends to attend and see what we learned that week in camp!

See you soon!

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No Clowning Around When Teaching Circus Arts at Kurn Hattin Homes

Troy Wunderle recently brought his love of teaching and his love of circus arts to the students at Kurn Hattin Homes for Children in Westminster, VT.

Vermont native and Big Top Adventures founder, Wunderle spent a week with the students at Kurn Hattin Homes teaching them the art of juggling, plate and hoop spinning, balancing acts, showmanship, partnership, determination, and more.

His talent and teaching ability, combined with his passion for circus arts and dogged determination, earned him the 2022 Excellence in Circus Education Award from the American Circus Educators Association.

Aligned with the Kurn Hattin Homes' mission and core values, the Big Top Adventure programs are designed to empower individuals to imagine a world of possibilities, while inspiring communities to play and support each other.

"Having Troy come to the Homes is always a great experience for the kids," says Caleb Steever, the athletic director. "He teaches them new skills that require hand-eye coordination, balance, and focus. Not only are they learning something new, they are learning a whole new dimension of teamwork. In some cases, they are literally supporting each other and having to put their faith and trust in each other."

"Romance Me" Art Exhibit In Jaffrey

An art exhibition called "Romance Me," featuring Jill C. Fischman will take place through Monday, February 26th at Optimist Café at 16 Colls Farm

Road in Jaffrey. The show runs 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Fridays through Mondays. For more details on the artist, visit www.JillCFischman.com.

Tribute Event To Honor Community Members Committed To The Health Of Region

TRIBUTE, Continued from page 1

Chase helped establish Westmoreland's Emergency Management Department, of which he is currently deputy director, and is an active member of the Westmoreland Town Band. He currently serves on Cheshire Health Foundation's Board of Trustees. An active outdoorsman, Chase enjoys mountain climbing, sailing and spending time with his wife of 60 years, Barbara.

Jay Kahn came to the Monadnock region 35 years ago when he was recruited as Keene State College's vice president of finance and planning. His passion for education, rural economic progress and healthcare drove his involvement in various local nonprofit organizations, including Monadnock Economic Development Corp., Greater Keene Chamber of Commerce, and Cheshire Medical Center. He was a trustee on the Medical Center's board prior to serving as its chair from 2011-13. During his tenure Cheshire began exploring integrating with Dartmouth Health. Kahn served as a New Hampshire State Senator from 2016-22. He championed many healthcare-related issues during his time in office, including improving Medicaid reimbursement rates, adjusting licensing requirements for nurses and physicians, and expanding reciprocity between states for healthcare licensure. As the chair of the Senate's Education & Workforce Committee, he was instrumental to introducing a Licensed Practical Nursing program at River Valley, a program now available at four of the seven community colleges in the state. Kahn was working on a bill to expand telehealth services prior to the COVID-19 global pandemic, an effort that combined foresight and practicality with incredible timeliness. Kahn's senate term ended in December 2022 and in November 2023 he was elected mayor of the City of Keene. He remains staunchly committed to the health and well-being of Keene and other Greater Monadnock communities.

This celebration features special presentations recognizing the dedication and contributions these outstanding citizens have made to the community. More information about participating is available online at Cheshiremed.org/CHF. Sponsorships and donations in celebration of the honorees are also available. For more details, see the website or call Jim Boden at 603-354-6810. Proceeds from the event benefit Cheshire Medical Center's Patient Care Equipment Fund.

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The Future Of Technology In Healthcare

In today's information-rich era, having a search engine at our fingertips is a marvel, providing instant answers. However, amidst this wealth of information can be misinformation, particularly in healthcare. Many of us are guilty of spiraling into worst-case scenarios after Googling symptoms.

Thankfully we have doctors, people who do their best to guide us back when we've followed a rabbit trail. But doctors and their medical support staff are human, and even the most efficient can be too busy. Most days at a clinic, there is more information funneled into charts than there are people to keep up with it. They manage, but it's no small feat. Human beings have limitations, and this is the current reality of fast-paced medicine.

What if there was a better way? A way to streamline and speed up office processes?

Love it or hate it, there might be. And whether we want it or not, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is on the horizon in medicine, already being used in some offices.

Is it progress? Or is it the beginning of the end of humanity in healthcare?

Technology already exists in medicine. Take for example a CGM, (Continuous Glucose Monitor), a device worn by diabetics. One of the latest models can predict a dangerous drop in blood sugar 20 minutes before it occurs and warn the wearer, affording them valuable minutes to fix the situation. This was something unheard of even five years ago, and it can certainly save lives.

Google Health can predict acute kidney injury up to two days before it occurs. Currently, kidney injuries are identified after they've occurred and treatment is damage control, not prevention. There are unarguable benefits to these technologies.

Healing Perspectives
with Brianna Schaefer



Then there are electronic medical records, which hold vital information about an individual's health. AI programs can process this data rapidly, whereas traditional healthcare often requires doctors to interpret it manually within limited appointment times. With AI handling much of the data analysis, doctors could focus more on patient care during visits, potentially reducing burnout, and enabling them to show up with the healing energy of connection and kindness, rather than the breakneck pace often required in healthcare. What if your doctor could walk into the exam room and spend more time listening to you, making eye contact, understanding your concerns? AI programs also can document visits in real-time, meaning fewer after-hours work to chart notes.

As with any new technology, there are many unknowns, many questions and not as many answers. Widespread adoption of AI raises complex questions about where to draw the line and who should set these boundaries. Maybe more importantly, who is drawing the lines?

A colleague recently said, "I've come to learn that human beings are clever, but we aren't always smart." This might apply when considering the introduction of AI, perhaps the very existence of AI for that matter. We're clever enough to invent it, but are we smart enough to manage it?

Will human roles in healthcare diminish? Automation in fields like radiology could raise concerns about the erosion of human expertise. The old "use it or lose it" adage comes to mind. Computers, while efficient, are not infallible, and errors in AI algorithms could have widespread consequences.

Additionally, the security of medical records in a digital age raises concerns about data breaches and potential ransomware attacks. How will sensitive medical data be protected? What if AI could diagnose Parkinson's based on a user's trembling while using a computer mouse? (It may very well be possible!) Would that be accessible in medical records and shared with life insurance companies resulting in higher premiums or outright denials?

Effective management of these risks requires significant investment and oversight. It's essential to address concerns about data privacy, bias, and the potential consequences of AI errors before widespread adoption.

For all the possible benefits, there might be twice as many risks. Thankfully, for most of us, for now at least, our human healthcare workers are the ones who can offer a shoulder to cry on, give hugs after a difficult appointment, and pass a box of tissues when needed. Connection and kindness are human traits and for now, ones that remain strictly human. But the future is a big place...

Brianna Schaefer has been a Medical Assistant at Sojourns since 2016. In addition to helping with all the behind the scenes work that happens to make a clinic run, she's always there to take a call and truly listen to patients. Working primarily with Dr. Booth, she is part of the team to ensure the details aren't missed, patients have access to their provider, and are offered the best care the clinic can offer.

A seventh generation Vermonter, Schaefer has heart for her community and seeks to provide a safe place for patients in need of a kind ear, an MRI, or a simple check in with their doctor. Attention to detail and compassion toward others are all first and foremost.

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The first two of these free gems is a Microgreens Kit and the second is a Seed Starting kit. Both can be borrowed free of charge for you and your bestest partner to grow, you guessed it, microgreens, as well as flowers and/or vegetable plants, at home. No more worrying about salmonella poisoning from sprouts at the store. No more driving from place to place finding the particular plant you know that they want to grow.

Woods and Gardens

with Michele Chalice

The American Heart Association states, "The health benefits of sprouts include improved digestion of both carbohydrates and proteins. Germination stimulates the release of enzymes to pre-digest starch, which may aid in gut health and reduce intestinal gas." And we all know the wide range of health benefits of fresh vegetables. Let alone, the joy of watching the first flowers or, let's say pea pods, of the spring open from seeds you've planted together. Priceless.

Now is the perfect moment to call the Keene Public Library Circulation Desk at 603-352-0157 to reserve your very own kit for the two of you. You'll pick up this oblong plastic bin from the library and I suggest setting an alarm on your phone for the kit's return due date. I'd add a big red bow to the container as

well. Both kits contain everything you need except for the seeds: an LED plant grow light with directions sheet, a pair of gardening gloves, a seedling heating mat with directions sheet, a flat seed tray, a seed tray dome, a copy of *The New Seed Starter's Handbook* by Nancy Bubel or a copy of the *Microgreen Garden* by Matthew Braundstein.

And, though it's just a smidge early in the season, for icing on the cake, while you're there, you can saunter over to the library's atrium to see what free seeds they may already have available that you think your special someone would enjoy. How sweet is this?

How did this come about? Well kudos to the many organizations that made this possible: the Keene Public Library, the Cheshire County Conservation District, Antioch University New England's Community Garden Connections (CGC), and the National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT) programs, the Urban Agriculture Conservation Grant initiative, the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) which established the Urban Agriculture Conservation Grant Initiative in 2016.

So, lucky us. Let's share these wonderful resources with our special someone. Let's spread the idea far and wide so that many someone specials can grow plants, flowers and food that they love, with someone they love, at home, together.

Michele Chalice is a former licensed Landscape Architect and owner of Healthy Home Habitats (HHH). Watch for HHH's public programs and workshops in the Monadnock Region. Hire HHH to create a home landscape of more color, more native plants, less turf grass, and more joy. Like and follow HHH on FB and IG for more ecologically-restorative, home landscape stewardship tips. 603-313-9153, hhhhabitats@gmail.com

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Bride Amber Varley, now Amber Kozo, joins her wedding party for a celebratory "jump for joy."

Pictured (L to R): Kayla Pierpaoli, Rachel Evans, Bailey Varley (age 12), Amber Kozo, Justyne Simso, and Samantha Evans.

"It was an October wedding in Marlow, NH at her fathers house," says Allyson Santaw, the wedding photographer. "Despite how cold it was that day there was nothing but the heat of pure love in the air. A wedding that will stay with me forever. Laughter, smiles, and dancing are what consumed the day."

(Photo by Santaw Photography)

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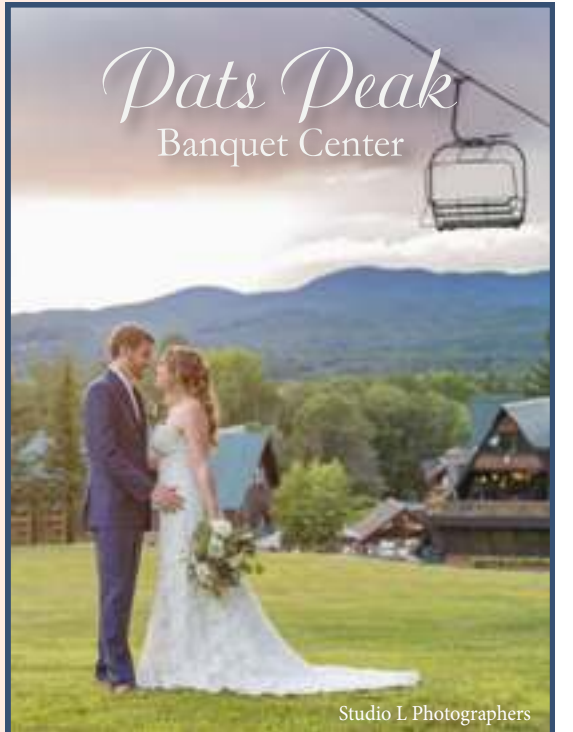
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Becton Dickinson (C.R. Bard)	243.75	6.56	Merck (Hubbard Farms)	125.45	-0.96
Toronto Dominion Bank (TD Bank)	59.36	-0.90	Deluxe (NEBS)	20.16	-0.64
PC Connection	67.39	1.22	Teleflex (Jaffrey)	252.04	6.30
Bank Of America (Fleet)	33.07	-0.40	Timken (MPB Corp.)	82.56	-3.36
Corning Inc.	32.04	-0.21	M&T Bank Corp. (People's United)	133.33	-0.16
Ametek, Inc. (Precitech)	168.50	1.06	Dover Corp. (Markem)	160.53	1.78

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Gold (\$ per ounce)	2038.70	-16.50	Corn (cents per bushel)	430.50	-12.25
Platinum (\$ per ounce)	880.50	-21.10	Soybeans (cents per bushel)	1,185.00	-3.00
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Have These Financial Conversations Before You Get Married

Talking about money often can be a source of anxiety and frustration in committed relationships. But for engaged couples, it's a critical step to take before meeting at the altar.

"Navigating money issues when you're single is completely different than when you're married," said Amy Maliga, financial educator with Take Charge America, a nonprofit credit counseling and debt management agency. "That's why it's important to talk money before your big day to better understand each other and how you can find marital money success."

Maliga suggests couples have the following money talks:

What are our attitudes about money? You each bring a unique perspective about money formed by your own experiences. Discuss your similarities and differences with honesty and respect. Understanding each other's unique attitudes about money will allow you to create financial goals that meet both of your needs.

What financial assets and obligations do we have? Share with each other what types of and how much debt and/or assets you are bringing into the marriage. Successful relationships are built on trust and honesty. When you have a full financial picture, you can work together to set realistic goals and determine what financial success looks like for you as a couple.

Should we combine our finances? Whether you combine your money, keep separate accounts or decide on some combination of the two, there's no right or wrong answer. But it's important to talk about as it can help you establish ground rules for money such as who is responsible for certain bills, savings or other obligations.

What will our budget look like? A budget is not about limitations, but rather creating a plan for your money. Budgeting is more than just a list of your expenses: It's where you execute on your shared financial goals like saving for a house, retirement or vacation. Discuss what a realistic budget looks like, factoring in your respective incomes and attitudes about money.

Are our finances protected if something happens? It may not be an easy conversation, but it is important to discuss how to protect yourselves and your finances if something happens to either one of you. Review beneficiary details for your retirement accounts. Create or update your wills. Explore life and disability insurance policies to protect your income.

February Books And More Sale Saturday

On Saturday, February 17th, a February Books and More Sale will be held in the Fellowship Hall at 9 South Village Common in Westmoreland at 9 a.m.

The sale includes books, a variety of yarns and fabrics, sewing machines, quilting and sewing books, board games, and more.

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Electric Vehicles In New Hampshire

As we continue the slow move away from fossil fuels, New Hampshire has its eye on electric vehicles. With well over 100 charging stations across the state, it seems like New Hampshire is ready for EVs to replace modern combustion and challenge the current trajectory.

But are we? Changes in overall habits happen sluggishly when the market is stable. With no concrete incentive, many are waiting for the cost of EVs to come down as the technology ages. A federal rebate of up to \$7500 is available for any US resident who purchases a hybrid or electric vehicle. No state rebate is available, but many utility companies are giving rebates up to \$1000 for an EV purchase made last year in 2023. Both used and new vehicles qualify for this rebate. Drivers are encouraged to reach out to their local utility companies and apply for the Federal rebate.



Even with EVs becoming more and more popular, it remains unclear if our state pocketbook is actually capable of supporting an influx of new vehicle types. Tax revenue from gasoline sales largely funds road construction in our state. New Hampshire is one of the states "penalizing" hybrid and electric vehicle owners for the loss of this revenue.

During registration, EV owners are being charged a fee to "offset gas revenue" for their vehicles, according to a bill signed last year in September.

Citizens who drive electric vehicles have mixed feelings about being asked to pay out of pocket as a \$50-\$100 fee for road upkeep instead of paying the gas tax. Many regard the fee as backwards and unhelpful of larger sustainability movements, but road maintenance is vital to any state. It is a difficult and complicated matter. If the state relies too much on the gas tax, drivers won't be as incentivised to buy EVs, but without the gas tax, other forms of revenue will have to be raised, somehow.

Seed Celebration & Sustainable Community Fair February 24th

The Sustainability Project will host its 17th Annual Seed Celebration & Community Sustainability Fair on Saturday, February 24th from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Gilsum Steam Academy at 640 Route 10 in Gilsum.

The keynote presentation, "Your Sacred Place in the Journey of Seeds," will be delivered by Michele Chalice, owner of Healthy Home Habitats in Keene.

This day includes exhibits and demonstrations by The Caterpillar Lab, Dog Days Farm, Whole Body Coaching, Ko'asek Abenaki, Orchard Hill Breadworks, and Wichland Woods. Workshops include sound healing, guided therapeutic movement, nature-inspired community leadership, and an introduction to Aikido. Lunch includes soups, stews, and baked goods from local restaurants and kitchens.

This is a family-friendly event with children's activities offered throughout the day. The event will wrap up with the Firebird Morris Dancers and a raffle-picking finale.

The View From Here Color Schemes For Your Window Treatments

Selecting the perfect furniture, paint colors, and accessories is essential for setting the tone of your home. Equally important are your window treatments, as they not only contribute a functional role to your home, but to the overall aesthetic. There are four schemes that will help you to pick a winning window treatment for your space: Monochromatic, where a variety of the same color is used; Complementary, a two-color scheme that pairs warm and cool choices; Split Complementary, a three-color scheme on opposing sides of the color wheel; and Analogous, a multi-color scheme, which relies entirely on one side of the color wheel. Window treatments can even be made to match popular paint colors, existing fabrics within the customers' home, or a favorite item.

To discuss options, Monadnock Shutter & Shade is located at 28 Roxbury Street in Keene. Visit www.monadnockshutterandshade.com or call 603-352-0511 to schedule a free, in-home consultation.

Matt DeGrosky is the owner of Monadnock Shutter & Shade, located at 28 Roxbury Street in Keene. For more details about this topic, they can be reached at 603-352-0511. Visit them online at monadnockshutterandshade.com.

The looming burden of our dependence on fossil fuels cannot be ignored. Real solutions for addressing road damage due to climate change need to be found. Hybrid vehicles and EVs aim to challenge the status quo, but the manufacture of their batteries can tip the scales back towards environmental damage.

Our state is still 24th of 50 according to a national air quality survey. Even though we are top ranked for cleanliness and pollution mitigation, New Hampshire struggles to reach even a moderate air and water quality score.

Not all of this is due to vehicles, although our roads present unique challenges. Logging and long distance commutes contribute to the deep wear and tear on our road systems. Soft ground that freezes seasonally is always difficult to maintain, and add in our winter salt consumption and you can see why we are still at 24 of 50.

New roundabouts being installed all over the state are mitigation efforts aimed at idling traffic. It helps, but only to reduce climbing numbers. Concerns over safety are being met with the reality of Climate Change. It's clear we need multiple fronts for this effort. EVs are a step towards independence from fossil fuels and their emissions.

<https://www.nhpr.org/nh-news/2017-08-25/you-asked-we-answered-aroundabouts-becoming-more-common-in-n-h>
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Amie Spicer moved to the Monadnock area seven years ago from Denver, CO. Before the pandemic, they ran the community supper at All Saints' Church in Peterborough and created the community supper master list, a statewide data base of local free food resources. They love being active within the local community and taking long drives into the mountains. They are also a long-time performance artist with an emphasis in the circus arts.

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When Ken and Chris decided to expand operations, they met with Savings Bank of Walpole's Andrew Richardson to secure financing, and were so impressed they moved all their business accounts.

"Andrew took time to really understand ABTech and was genuinely interested in what we needed to grow and prosper," says Ken. "That mattered to us."



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Band Concert At Keene State College Thursday, February 22nd

The Keene State College Music Department will hold a Band Concert at the Redfern Arts Center in Keene on Thursday, February 22nd at 7:30 p.m.
 Tickets are \$12 for the general public, \$7 for seniors (65 and older) and youth. Call the box office at 603-358-2168 or visit <https://keene.universitytickets.com>.

Wednesday, Feb. 14 DINING PLEASURES

Winter Dinners: Valentine's Day 6-9pm. Aldworth Manor, 184 Aldworth Manor Rd., Harrisville. Doors open at 6 and food service begins once you are seated. \$75 per ticket for food and a glass of prosecco or wine. Tickets and more info available at www.aldworthmanor.com/events.

MISCELLANEOUS

February Adventure Bus Trips: Foxwoods Adventure Limousine & Transportation. \$49 per person. 603-357-2933. www.advlimo.com.

Al-anon Zoom Meeting 6-7pm. Keene. Check out Al-anon's free service to friends and families who suffer from the impact of a loved one's drinking. Meeting ID: 825 6820 3953. Passcode: Antrim. To join by phone use same ID and password 480560 and dial 646-876-9923.

RELIGIOUS

Ash Wednesday Service 7pm. St. James Episcopal Church, 44 West St., Keene. All are welcome. www.stjameskeene.com.

Ashes To Go 8-9am. St. James Episcopal Church, 44 West St., Keene. The Rev Elsa Worth will be present to offer a quick prayer and the administration of ashes to anyone who would like them. Find this event on the sidewalk in front of St. James – rain, snow, or shine. www.stjames-keene.com.

Coffee House & Open Mic Susan Lee Anderson & Jake Garrels 7-10pm. Dublin Community Center, 1123 Main St., Dublin.

FAIRS & SALES

February Books and More Sale 9am-1pm. 9 South Village Common, Westmoreland. Fiction books, variety of yarn colors and yarn weights \$2 a bag. Yarn books 5 for \$1. Variety of fabrics \$2-\$3 per yard. Two Singer sewing machines. Board games for the winter night sold by donation.

LECTURES & WORKSHOPS

Monadnock Writer's Group Monthly Speaker Series: Jason Moon 9:45am. Peterborough Town Library, 2 Concord St., Peterborough. Moon's work is rooted in serious journalism combined with the emotional elements of storytelling. monadnockwriters@gmail.com. www.monadnockwriters.org.

Sunday, Feb. 18

MISCELLANEOUS

Al-Anon Meeting 5pm. St. James Episcopal Church, 44 West St., Keene. Help and hope for friends and families of alcoholics. For questions call or e-mail 603-369-6930. district7@nhal-anon.org. www.nhal-anon.org.

Tuesday, Feb. 20

MISCELLANEOUS

Is The Tarot For Real? 7pm. Hancock Town Library, Daniels Room, 25 Main St., Hancock. With Nancy J. Razza, PhD. Free and open to all. 603-525-4411.

Zumba Gold Winter Session 10:45-11:45am. Keene Rec. Center, 312 Washington St. The winter session of Zumba Gold meets Tuesdays and Thursdays through March 28th. Register on Rec Center website or call 603-357-9829.

Wednesday, Feb. 21

LECTURES & WORKSHOPS

Drinking Liberally 7:30pm. Fireworks Restaurant, Keene. Meet-up for left of center political discussion and other current events. No RSVP needed; just ask for them at the reception desk. 603-352-1707. keene@drinkingliberally.org. www.livingliberally.org/drinking/chapters/NH/keene.

MISCELLANEOUS

Monadnock Storytelling & Spoken Word Circle 6:30-8:30pm. Dublin Community Center, 1123 Main St., Dublin. With Sebastian Lockwood & Papa Joe Gaudet.

Friday, Feb. 23

ARTS, MUSIC & THEATER

The Power Station Coffeehouse Ministry 6pm. Whitcomb Hall, 17 Main St., West Swanzey. Live music, good coffee set in an intimate setting. For more info call or visit Tom Travers: 603-381-9077. tom@powerstation-nh.com.

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Thursday, Feb. 15

ARTS, MUSIC & THEATER

Cheshire Village at Home Social: Alouette Iselin 1pm. HCS, 312 Marlboro St., Keene. (New home of Keene Senior Center). Iselin is a singer/songwriter. Public welcome. 603-903-9680.

Ella Fitzgerald: the Queen of Swing 6pm. Veterans' Memorial Hall, 159 Old Homestead Hwy. Richmond. Richmond Public Library: 603-239-6164. library@richmondnh.us.

Friday, Feb. 16

ARTS, MUSIC & THEATER

The Power Station Coffeehouse Ministry 6pm. Whitcomb Hall, 17 Main St., West Swanzey. Live music, good coffee set in an intimate setting. For more info call or visit Tom Travers: 603-381-9077. tom@powerstation-nh.com.

Art Exhibition "Romance Me" 8am-3pm. Optimist Café, 16 Colls Farm Rd, Jaffrey. Featuring Jill C Fischman. Runs Friday - Monday, February 26th. www.theoptimistcafe.com.

Saturday, Feb. 17

ARTS, MUSIC & THEATER

Valentine Dance: "Silvertones" with Carol Clark 3-5pm. Charlestown Senior Center, 233 Old Springfield Rd. There will be light refreshments, lots of singing and dancing. \$5 /person. Door prizes.

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- February 20, 2024**
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MYSTERY PHOTO

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The first person to answer the question correctly at 9:30 a.m. or after on Friday will receive a certificate for \$25 to The Pub. Call The Monadnock Shopper News, West Street in Keene, at 603-352-5296. You may win only one contest every three months. Only one call per person per week. No walk-ins, please.

(Prepared by the Historical Society of Cheshire County)



What product was made in this large Keene factory?



The winner of last week's mystery photo contest was Linda Rabel of Gilsum. The "giant elm" photo was taken in Hinsdale.

Yoga For Backcare At Aloha Sunday



Josephine Russell

Josephine Russell has taught Yoga for Backcare for many years. Back problems are almost universal. She will offer a Yoga For Backcare program at Aloha in Keene on Sunday, February 18th from 10:30 a.m. until noon.

Attendees will go home with their backs feeling better and will receive a five-minute and a 40-minute home practice. Back problems need constant care. Many folks who have come to Russell's backcare workshops report that they use the five-minute practice daily and never have had a back problem again.

For more details, visit vagaroo.com/alohakeene or call 603-762-3129.

Is The Tarot For Real? Talk In Hancock

On Tuesday February 20th at 7 p.m., a talk – Is The Tarot For Real? – will be held in the Daniels Room of the Hancock Town Library at 25 Main Street with Nancy Razza, PhD.

This behind-the-scene look at the tarot includes its long and mysterious history, scholarly study, and connections to ancient mystery schools and religions.

Razza has a PhD in clinical psychology from Fairleigh Dickinson University and has been a practicing therapist for over 30 years. She recently retired to New Hampshire and has had an interest in tarot for over 20 years. This event is free and open to all. For more details, call 603-525-4411.

Valentine Dance At Charlestown Senior Center

A Valentine Dance will be hosted at the Charlestown Senior Center at 223 Old Springfield Road in Charlestown on Saturday, February 17th from 3 to 5 p.m. with music by Silvertones with Carol Clark.

There will be light refreshments, singing, and dancing. Admission is \$5 per person. There will be door prizes as well.

St. James Episcopal Church To Offer "Ashes To Go"

St. James Church at 44 West Street in Keene will once again offer "Ashes to Go" on Ash Wednesday, February 14th from 8 to 9 a.m. The Rev. Elsa Worth will be present to offer a quick prayer and the administration of ashes to anyone who would like them. Attendees can find this event on the sidewalk in front of St. James – rain, snow, or shine. Pull up next to the church and get out or, if necessary, Worth can pray with people in their cars.

Many who are unable to get to an Ash Wednesday service either because of scheduling or infirmity appreciate the opportunity to mark the beginning of Lent with this simple ceremony. For those who are able, there will also be an Ash Wednesday service held at St. James at 7 p.m. in the church. All are welcome.

For more details, visit www.stjames-keene.com.



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At-Home Travel With Mardi Gras Foods

Mardi Gras is an annual holiday traditionally celebrated with traditional Cajun and Creole influenced foods on Fat Tuesday to mark the culmination of the feasting period that falls before Christian Lent. And while that celebration ended yesterday, there's still time this week to carry on the tradition of Mardi Gras with comforting, flavor-packed traditional dishes for your own Big Easy dinner or party at home. Classic recipes like gumbo, jambalaya, shrimp creole, red beans and rice, and King Cake are all incredible dishes that'll make you feel like you're in the Louisiana bayou. Choose your own favorites or try some of this week's Mardi Gras-inspired recipes.



King Cake

Easy Shrimp Boil

A shrimp boil on the stove sounds like a lot of work, but this recipe is actually an easy one-pot dinner for four; serve along with cornbread or rice.

- Ingredients:**
 4 quarts water
 2 small yellow onions, halved
 1/2 cup dry, Cajun shrimp boil seasoning (see note below)
 1 lemon, halved, plus wedges for serving
 1 head garlic, halved crosswise
 1 tablespoon kosher salt
 8 ounces small red potatoes, halved
 8 ounces andouille sausage, cut into 8 pieces
 1 1/2 pounds large unpeeled shrimp
 2 ears fresh corn, shucked and cut into thirds (frozen corn-on-cob may be substituted)

Bring water, onions, Cajun seasoning, halved lemon, garlic, and salt to a boil in a large stockpot. Add potatoes and sausage and boil until potatoes are just tender, 18 to 20 minutes. Add shrimp and corn and cook until shrimp are opaque, about three minutes. Drain and serve on a large platter with lemon wedges. Or, for a festive occasion, cover your table in a washable tablecloth and serve straight from the surface.

Note: to make your own Cajun-style seasoning for a boil or other such-seasoned recipes: In a bowl, combine 1/4 cup each garlic and onion powder, 2 tablespoons paprika, 1 tablespoon cayenne pepper, 1 tablespoon black pepper, 1 tablespoon each dried thyme and oregano, 1 teaspoon salt and 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper. May adjust amounts according to taste.

Cornbread-Oyster Stuffing Patties

Two Southern favorites, cornbread and oysters, are combined to make a stuffing that can be used as a side dish, or fried into patties. About five cups.

- Ingredients:**
 6 tablespoons butter, divided
 1 cup thinly sliced carrots
 1 cup each diced onion and celery
 1 cup chicken broth
 1 tbs minced fresh sage or 1 1/2 teaspoon dried
 1/4 teaspoon each salt and pepper
 4 cups crumbled cornbread (about 1 nine-inch skillet recipe) or purchased
 1 pint shucked oysters, drained (save the liquid if stuffing needs added moisture)

Heat a large, heavy skillet over medium-high heat and melt two tablespoons butter. Add carrots and brown in an even layer until just tender, about five minutes. Add the onion and celery and cook for two to three minutes. Stir in chicken broth, sage, salt and pepper and bring to a boil. Lower heat and simmer for one to two minutes. Stir in remaining four tablespoons butter and let it melt. Add the oysters and cook three to four minutes, stirring gently; remove pan from heat. Place crumbled cornbread in a bowl and pour the vegetable/oyster mixture over the bread; toss well to coat. Serve the cornbread as a side dish. Or refrigerate mixture for a few hours and then form it into individual patties about two and a half to three-inch diameter. (Add a little oyster liquid if mixture seems too dry). Fry patties in two or three tablespoons hot oil, turning once or twice, until nicely browned on both sides.

King Cake Monkey Bread

A can of pre-made cinnamon roll dough is the secret to this traditionally-inspired carnival season dessert. King cake is one of New Orleans' local delicacies, a coffee cake-like confection covered with white icing and sugar sprinkles. There's a trinket, usually a plastic baby, hidden inside each one as a good luck symbol. Per tradition, if you end up with the baby (or other hidden trinket) you get to be in charge of bringing the King Cake to the next Mardi Gras party.

- Ingredients:**
 3 (17.5-oz.) cans Pillsbury cinnamon rolls grands
 1 (8-oz.) pkg. regular cream cheese, softened
 1/2 cup sugar
 2 large eggs
 1 tsp. vanilla extract
 1 cup evaporated milk
 garnish: reserved icing and purple, yellow, green sanding sugar

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray a tube pan with cooking spray. Cut each cinnamon roll into four pieces (save icing to use later). Place cinnamon roll pieces into tube pan.

Make cream cheese mixture: beat together cream cheese and sugar. Add eggs, vanilla, and milk. Mix until combined. Pour cream cheese mixture over cinnamon rolls. Bake for 45 to 50 minutes, then let pan cool 10 minutes. Turn out to cool completely before topping with cinnamon roll icing and decorating with sanding sugar.

Note: If you chose to add a trinket (or even a pecan), don't bake it into the cake. Rather, cut a small hole in the top of the cooked, cooled cake before icing it. Insert your trinket and replace the small piece of cake removed. Then ice over the top and add the sanding sugar garnish.

Cooking Corner

with Nancy Adams



Mini Muffuletta Sandwiches

This recipe is great for a party and is made the day before.

- Ingredients:**
 1 cup pimiento-stuffed olives, drained and chopped
 1 can (4 1/4 ounces) chopped or sliced ripe olives
 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
 1 1/2 teaspoons red wine vinegar
 1 1/2 teaspoons olive oil
 1 garlic clove, minced
 1/2 teaspoon each dried basil and oregano
 6 French rolls, split
 1/2 pound thinly sliced hard salami
 1/4 pound sliced provolone cheese
 1/2 pound thinly sliced Cotto salami (cooked salami)
 1/4 pound sliced part-skim mozzarella cheese

In a large bowl, combine two kinds of olives, vinegars, olive oil, garlic, basil and oregano; set aside. Hollow out tops and bottoms of rolls, leaving three-quarter-inch shells (discard removed bread or save for another use). Spread olive mixture over tops and bottoms of rolls. On roll bottoms, layer hard salami, provolone cheese, Cotto salami and mozzarella cheese. Replace tops. Wrap tightly. Refrigerate overnight. Cut each into six wedges; secure sandwiches with toothpicks. Makes three dozen mini sandwiches.



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