



The Monadnock SHOPPER NEWS

The Original Keene Shopper – “The Weekly with a Heart” – 68th Year of Community Service / January 28–February 3, 2026

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An Impressive Wintry Presentation



This wintry photo by Mark Lanen of Richmond was the winner of our occasional photo contest.

With so much beauty to be found in the region, we want our readers to share their most amazing photographs with us. Each photograph that we print will earn the photographer a gift certificate to a local business.

Chosen photographs will show off the most beautiful aspects of our region. Photos do not need to be taken this month, though photographs printed

will be from the current season. If you have photos from past years, we encourage you to submit those as well.

Photo submissions should include first and last name of photographer, where the photograph was taken, a short description of the photo, and the phone number and address of the photographer.

The accepted photo formats are high resolution jpeg or tiff. Send them to shopper@shoppernews.com.

Voices Of Faith And Hope Free Concert Set For This Sunday At Keene Public Library

Music and fellowship bring people together. In these divisive times, the Monadnock Interfaith Project intentionally seeks to build community. They celebrate diversity, different faith traditions, and relationships with one another.

Folks will gather together in community at an event called Voices of Faith and Hope: A Monadnock Interfaith Project Free Concert on Sunday, February 1st at 2 p.m. at Keene Public Library, Cohen Hall. Snow date is February 8th.

There will be musical offerings from many dif-

ferent faith traditions, including Jewish, Christian, Hindu, and Sikh. The concert will also feature the popular MIP “Pop-Up” Choir comprised of members from faith communities around the Monadnock region.

To register, visit the Monadnock Interfaith Project website at mipnh.org/voices-of-faith-and-hope/. The concert is free and open to the public, and donations will be gratefully accepted. To join in with the MIP “Pop-Up” Choir, contact Rev. Becky Poor, rpoor@covliving.org. No previous experience is necessary.

Fueling New England Food And Farm Businesses

By Jen Risley

This February, celebrate Choose Black-Owned Month, an annual campaign hosted by the American Independent Business Alliance (AMIBA). Choose Black-Owned Month hopes to inspire you to support independent black-owned businesses and celebrate diversity. Since 2022, over 200 partners have joined

this campaign – from California to New Hampshire, and from Canada to Texas. While the federal government condemns such efforts, we believe we can still build stronger, diverse, inclusive, and equitable local economies at the grassroots level.

LOCAL, page 7

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CIRCULATION VERIFICATION COUNCIL

Health & Wellness... 10-11
Valentine's Day... 6 • Buy Local... 6-9

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40,247
Mailed Weekly

Mailed Into Every Home In
Keene and 36 Area Towns
Total Circulation 41,850



Free Appraisal And Purchasing Event In Peterborough Friday And Saturday Historic High Prices For Gold & Silver

On Friday and Saturday, January 30th and 31st from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., locally-based Historical Investments and Colony Antiques will present a free appraisal and purchasing event at Union Congregational Church in Peterborough at 33 Concord Street. Any donations will benefit the church. Appraisals are free and cash offers will be made.

Top prices will be paid for all gold (10K, 14K, and 18K), sterling silver, platinum, diamonds and precious gems, paintings, old photos and postcards, historical items, bottles, and antique and costume jewelry. Also in high demand are gold and silver coins, wrist

and mechanical pocket watches, and a broad array of collectibles including autographs, letters, photographs, signatures of famous figures, and so forth.

In the event of inclement weather necessitating cancellation, the snow date will be Friday and Saturday, February 20th and 21st with the same hours.

House calls are also available. See the ad on the back page for more specific information on the various item categories.

For more details or to request a home visit, call 603-233-9111 or 603-358-6343.

Gathering Waters In Keene Holds Open House Wednesday, February 4th

Gathering Waters Chartered Public School will host a High School Open House on Wednesday, February 4th from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at the Gathering Waters Upper School campus at 31 Washington Street in Keene.

Families and community members are invited to attend information sessions, take part in Q&A with faculty, and join an optional campus tour.

At Gathering Waters High School, students become capable thinkers, clear communicators, and responsible young adults prepared for college and beyond. Each day blends academic, artistic, and practical work, encouraging

them to meet the world with curiosity and integrity.

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For more details, email admissions@gatheringwaterscharter.org.

Music, Theatre, And Dance Performances At The Redfern Arts Center At KSC



Kaduna, a 2021 dance film featuring Nigerian brothers Victory and Marvel Ebinum, will be showcased by Motion State Arts' ScreenDance RoadShow on February 4th at The Redfern Arts Center at Keene State College.

The Redfern Arts Center at Keene State College (KSC) champions artistic practice as a catalyst for learning. The center is the performing arts hub at

Keene State College and features a full schedule of Music Department and Theatre and Dance Department events.

REDFERN, page 3

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PET OF THE WEEK

from THE MONADNOCK HUMANE SOCIETY

Comet



Comet is a 1.5 year old female, brown tiger domestic shorthair who is a quiet, independent girl that prefers to experience the world on her own terms. Naturally reclusive, she's happiest observing from a safe distance and taking in her surroundings rather than seeking hands-on affection. Comet would thrive as an indoor spirit cat, where she can feel secure while still having an important job to do. Comet has the instincts to be an excellent mouser and would take that role very seriously.

Comet may coexist well with another calm cat or a cat-savvy dog who respects boundaries. Once settled, Comet could also be a great indoor/outdoor companion when the weather is warmer, making her an ideal match for someone looking for a low-key, low-pressure feline presence who adds quiet companionship and purpose to the home. For more information on Comet, come visit her at the Monadnock Humane Society.

The Adoption Center is located at 101 West Swanzey Road, outside of Keene on Route 10 South. It's open Thursday through Sunday 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Learn more at www.monadnockhumane.org.

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Music, Theatre, And Dance

REDFERN, Continued from page 1

Performances by students, faculty, and professional guest artists this spring including:

Motion State Arts' ScreenDance RoadShow on Wednesday, February 4th at 8 p.m. This Rhode Island-based company is the only traveling short dance film series in New England that showcases contemporary creative voices exploring choreography for the camera. Each season, a diverse program of dance films from around the world are screened at venues across New England. The screening will be followed by a Q&A with the curators Ali Kenner Brodsky and Andy Russ.

On Monday, March 2nd at 7 p.m., Keene State College Music Department will present Concert Choir and Chamber Singers with Eastern Michigan University Choir. Dr. Sandra Howard will conduct the KSC Concert Choir and Chamber Singers, and the Director of Choral Activities, Dr. Brandon Johnson, will conduct the Eastern Michigan University Choir.

The Keene State College Theatre and Dance Department will present The Color of Our Lives from Wednesday to Saturday, March 4th to 7th at 7:30 p.m. with an added performance on Saturday at 2 p.m. This original puppet theatre production written and directed by Professor Celine Peron featuring KSC Theatre students.

In addition, the KSC Music Department has 14 student concerts, six additional guest and faculty concerts, and a free workshop series every Wednesday at 2 p.m. The KSC Theatre and Dance Department will also present an Evening of Dance from Thursday through Saturday, April 16th to 18th.

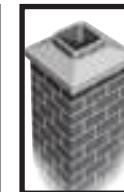
All performances are free to KSC students, faculty, and staff with a valid Owl ID (advanced reservations recommended). Ticket prices are always affordable to the community and discounts are available to seniors, youth, and students under 18 as well.

Visit www.keene.edu/redfern to view the full performance calendar. For more details or questions, call the Redfern box office at 603-358-2168 or email boxoffice@keene.edu.



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Listings At Close of Market January 23, 2026 • Courtesy of RBC Wealth Management
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	Week's Close	Change		Week's Close	Change
Honeywell (Allied Signal)	221.46	2.07	Danaher Corp. (Kollmorgen)	235.01	(0.98)
Becton Dickinson (C.R. Bard)	201.79	(5.32)	Merck (Hubbard Farms)	108.18	(0.65)
Toronto Dominion Bank (TD Bank)	95.11	1.26	Deluxe (NEBS)	24.23	(0.24)
PC Connection	56.86	(1.65)	Teleflex (Jaffrey)	103.40	0.40
Bank Of America (Fleet)	51.72	(1.25)	Timken (MPB Corp.)	93.94	0.38
Corning Inc.	93.30	(0.90)	M&T Bank Corp. (People's United)	213.82	1.54
Ametek, Inc. (Precitech)	220.74	5.09	Dover Corp. (Markem)	206.71	0.10

PRECIOUS METALS

	Close	Week's Change
Silver (\$ per ounce)	103.01	14.47
Gold (\$ per ounce)	4,983.00	387.60
Platinum (\$ per ounce)	2,771.50	430.74

	Close	Week's Change
Wheat (cents per bushel)	530.25	12.25
Corn (cents per bushel)	430.75	6.00
Soybeans (cents per bushel)	1,067.50	11.25
Cattle (cents per pound)	237.00	3.02
Crude (\$ per barrel)	61.29	1.85

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Charitable Gaming Event In Keene To Benefit Shelter From The Storm

Shelter From The Storm will partner with Revo Casino in Keene, located at 172 Emerald Street, for a charitable gaming event running from Saturday, January 31st through Monday, February 9th.

Funds raised during the charitable gaming run will support housing-related expenses such as rent, heat, and utilities for apartments, as well as the organization's automotive assistance program, which helps cover transportation costs related to employment and childcare. Proceeds will also support educational initiatives, including financial literacy workshops and job training, along with essential operational costs such as staffing and case management services.

"A huge thank you to the Revo Casino in Keene for this great opportunity to raise money to help us provide transitional housing for the homeless in our area," says Linda Harris, executive director of Shelter

From The Storm.

Shelter From The Storm provides transitional shelter through fully furnished apartments, where guests typically stay for eight to 12 months while working toward stable, independent living. During their stay, guests participate in parenting and financial programs when available, save 30 percent of their income weekly, apply for subsidized housing, and meet regularly with a caseworker to work toward goals related to employment, housing, budgeting, transportation, childcare, legal needs, and credit.

Community members are encouraged to visit Revo Casino during the event to support Shelter From The Storm and its work to help individuals and families transition to independent living.

For more details about Shelter From The Storm, visit www.shelterfromthestormnh.org.

Business Tax Planning: Key Strategies For Small And Growing Businesses

On Thursday, February 19th, Rachel Wallach, owner of Wallach & Wallach, LLC, and Scot Ward, CFP with Edward Jones, will host a practical and informative tax-planning seminar where small business owners can learn how to reduce tax liability and plan with confidence before the end of the year. The presentation is free and will take place at 178 Main Street, Suite B in Keene from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

The seminar is ideal for LLCs, sole proprietors, small corporations, freelancers, and self-employed professionals who want a clearer understanding of how tax planning fits into their overall business strategy," says Wallach.

Attendees will gain clear, actionable insights they can use immediately, without jargon or sales pres-

sure. Topics will include: common tax mistakes small businesses make and how to avoid them; year-end tax planning strategies to reduce surprises; understanding deductions, credits, and record-keeping best practices; planning ahead for growth, cash flow, and compliance; and some nuts and bolts ideas that can be implemented now to make the 2026 tax season more efficient.

"Too many small business owners only think about taxes after the year is over," adds Wallach. "This seminar is about being proactive – giving business owners the knowledge they need to make smarter decisions throughout the year."

Reservations are required and can be made by calling 603-499-7134.

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Wood Boilers, Pellet Stoves And Heat Pumps, Oh My!

Winter in New Hampshire...when the most common phrase heard across many households is, "have you checked the fire lately?" From inefficient fireplaces to slick new pellet stoves to fancy wood gasification boilers, wood is an excellent locally sourced, traditional way to heat your home. But legitimate worries about climate pollution and the lung-clogging smoke and ash that come from burning wood have many people considering other options.

Green Monadnock

with Catherine Owen Koning

couple of heat pumps and paying electric bills forever, or buying a new wood stove or boiler and buying (and hauling) wood forever. And, if we are to keep our forests, we may need to keep our sustainable forestry industry in business by maintaining a demand for wood. Complicated choices for a complex world!

In our house, being the luddites that we are, we approach new technology carefully. "We" (meaning, my husband) installed one heat pump in the main section of the house. It allows us to heat without running the wood gasification boiler at all in spring and fall, and the cooling function was much appreciated in the hottest part of last summer. The heat pump is powered with clean electricity from our ground-mounted solar system. Apparently we are not alone in this hybrid approach. In researching this article, I ran across this quote from a contractor-homeowner: "Simply supplementing our gas boiler with a mini-split heat pump has cut our carbon emissions by almost four tons a year – more than if we took our car off the road entirely" (<https://www.houseandhammer.com>).

Interested in exploring heat pumps for your home? Contact the MonadnockSustainabilityHub.org to work with a free energy coach to help with planning and funding.

Catherine Owen Koning is a Professor of Environmental Science and Policy at Franklin Pierce University in Rindge. She is also a board member of the Monadnock Sustainability Hub, which strengthens the sustainability and resilience of our region by working collaboratively to reduce climate pollution and reach 100 percent clean energy.

The problem is, the planet is heating up so fast, the trees can't grow back fast enough to absorb the carbon dioxide from the wood (and fossil fuels) we burn to slow down climate change.

In addition to planet-warming carbon dioxide, burning wood also produces tiny particles of smoke and ash that contribute to lung disease. Modern pellet stoves and wood gasification systems produce less of this kind of pollution, compared to traditional wood stoves. Wood gasification boilers are extra efficient because they burn in a two-stage process that extracts more energy from the wood, producing less creosote in the chimney and less climate pollution overall – yet, still significant particulates and smoke.

Heat pumps, also called mini-splits, use electricity to create heat, but are much more efficient than regular plug-in electric heaters. Heat pumps use a refrigerant system that moves heat into the house to warm up (hard to believe it, but even at five degrees F there is heat in the outside air) or out of the house when you are trying to cool down. When the heat pumps are powered by fossil-fuel based electrical power, climate pollution results, but far less of that pollution, per unit of heat, compared to wood.

If the electricity is produced by burning coal (which no longer happens in New England!), then the wood gasification boiler or pellet stove is less polluting than the heat pump. If the electricity is produced by burning natural gas, by nuclear, hydroelectric, or best of all, wind or solar, then the heat pump is the most climate friendly choice compared to wood boilers, pellet stoves, or even household natural gas boilers.

Of course, economics plays into this as well, not only the short-term and long-term costs of installing a

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CELEBRATE LOCAL

Fueling New England Food

LOCAL, Continued from page 1

While all entrepreneurs face significant challenges, building a business is even more difficult for black business owners across the country. Black-owned businesses receive less financing than businesses owned by other races. In 2022, the Federal Reserve reported that 35 percent of white business owners received all the funding they requested from a bank, compared to 16 percent of black business owners.

Even when firms have good credit scores, studies show that black business owners are less likely to receive full funding compared to white-owned firms. This lack of capital holds back revenue growth and employment for that individual business owner, and, through the multiplier effect, community wealth building in the broader local economy. One report noted that closing the wealth gap could add \$2 to \$3 trillion in annual growth to the US economy.

Supporting black-owned businesses does not mean abandoning others; it means working to level the playing field for all. That's why making a concerted effort to purchase from and invest in black-owned businesses has such a profoundly positive impact on local communities.

Much of the work to cultivate black-owned businesses in our region lies beneath the soil, invisible to most. Let's bring some of this work to the surface by highlighting one organization working hard in New England, the Black Farmer Fund.

About the Black Farmer Fund

Since 2020, the Black Farmer Fund (BFF) has invested over \$14 million in 14 black-owned farm and food businesses in New England, intending to deploy \$40 million across 75 investments within 10 years.

"When we initially started the organization, we looked at the USDA research," said Olivia Watkins, co-founder and president of the Black Farmer Fund. "When you look at net cash, farm income, for example, in the 2017 numbers, black farmers were making around negative \$906, while other farmers were making \$42,000. That was a really stark distance that we saw across the northeast."

The organization offers rapid response and capacity-building funds to build a brighter future for black farmers. An integral part of BFF's mission is to involve community

members in the investment process. Local farmers and food business owners participate in the fund's selection committees, helping decide who receives capital and other technical assistance.

One of the most exciting things about the Black Farmer Fund is that everyday investors, those shut out of accredited investor-only opportunities, can invest in this fund. That means I can invest \$1000 in BFF at a 3 percent interest rate for five years, putting my money to work for a mission I believe in.

New England Sweetwater Farm & Distillery in Winchester represents one of the beneficiaries of the Black Farmers Fund. This family-owned business offers locally made whiskey, vodka, gin, rum, moonshine, and ready-to-drink cocktails.

"Our spirits are cultivated from local products that spur local agriculture and sustainability," states the distillery's website. "We ferment and distill 'on the grain,' drawing out the subtle, unique flavor profiles of our locally grown ingredients. As a reflection of our dedication to creating superior spirits, our products are crafted in small-scale batches and manufactured using only high-quality food sources."

Learn more about New England Sweetwater Farm & Distillery at newenglandsweetwater.com.

At AMIBA's next virtual meeting on Thursday, February 12th at 1 p.m., join Olivia Watkins and learn more about how the Black Farmer Fund cultivates a thriving and sustainable food system for people and the planet. Register today at amiba.net/events. Learn more about the Black Farmer Fund at blackfarmerfund.org/investment.

We hope to see you there!

Jen Risley loves cultivating our local economy through her work at The Local Crowd Monadnock, American Independent Business Alliance, and The Main Street Journal.



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**Multiple
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A Multiple Sclerosis Support Group will be held on Saturday, February 7th at the Bond Wellness Center at the Monadnock Community Hospital from 10 a.m. to noon.

This is a free peer support group for people living with MS, and their families, friends, and caregivers.

CELEBRATE

Calling Ice-Fishermen Of All Ages, Derby Saturday, February 7th

On Saturday, February 7th from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., the 2nd annual Hinsdale Ice-Fishing Derby will take place with proceeds benefitting the Hinsdale High School Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA).

The event is sponsored by Rt 63 Country Store, Earl's Bait Shop, and S3 Heating. Prizes include \$250 for the heaviest pike, pickerel, or walleye, and \$75 for the heaviest perch or crappie. Registration opens at 7:30 a.m. at the Hinsdale Boat Launch on Prospect Street and the entry fee is \$20 for adults. Children ages 15 and under fish for free.

Food and drinks will be sold throughout the day and "non-fishermen" are invited to stay and tailgate from the parking lot while supporting those on the ice. Derby participants are required to bring their own gear and bait.

"This event is fun for the club and the whole community, and helps us raise a lot," says Julia Des Chenes, FBLA member. For more details, email bfraser@hnhsd.org.



Junior fisherman
Clayton Dingman poses with his cash winnings that he received under the perch/crappie category at last year's derby.

Enjoy Winter Outdoors In Rindge Under The Full Moon

Rindge Conservation Commission will host a free hike at Tetreault Park on Saturday, January 31st at 7 p.m. The Moonlight Owl Prowl will start at the parking area located on Rand Road.

Throughout the hike, participants will be on the lookout for birds hunting after dark, especially Great Horned and Barred owls that feed throughout winter on small animals like mice, opossums, and shrews. These silent predators are active in January preparing for their breeding season in February. Even if hikers don't see the park's resident owls, they can stop and

listen for the owls' distinctive courtship hoots.

Hikers should protect themselves with warm hiking boots, gloves or mittens, hats, and layered clothing. If snow is on the ground, snowshoes or cross-country skis are optional. Cleats or boots with good traction are advisable under icy conditions. Even in winter, good hydration is important during outdoor activities. Hikers are encouraged to bring water and snacks.

In case of inclement conditions, visit www.rindgenh.org for a cancellation notice.

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Last month's winner was Philip C. Huckins who chose a \$50 gift certificate to The Monadnock Food Coop.



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Rindge Conservation Honors Laurel And Jim Cameron



Longtime Rindge residents, Laurel and Jim Cameron, were recently honored as the 2025 Rindge Conservationists of the Year at a Conservation Commission event. The award recognizes commitment to one or more aspects of conservation within the Town of Rindge.

While highlighting the Camerons' dedication, Al Lefebvre said: "Ten years ago, a call went out for people to join our newly established Conservation Corps. Jim and Laurel Cameron were among the first to offer their support. In those 10 years they never stopped helping, whether cutting brush, sawing apart trees blocking trails, or cheerfully sharing an extensive knowledge of the plants and animals." In addition, Laurel designed the popular Rindge Conservation Commission logo seen around town on hats and T-shirts.

Multiple nominations for the award were received from residents of Rindge. Three judges with knowledge of conservation and the local community reviewed the nominations and selected the awardee.

Commissioner Al Lefebvre is pictured in the middle of this photo with Laurel and Jim Cameron when they received the 2025 Conservationist of the Year Award recently at a Rindge Conservation Commission event.

(Photo by Deni Dickler)

Monadnock Conservancy Offers Free Hike, Art Walk

The Monadnock Conservancy will offer a free HeArt Hike at the Gramwick Trail at Mountain Brook Reservoir in Jaffrey beginning Sunday, February 1st.

The conservancy has hidden 20 commissionned designed hearts by local artist on the Gramwick Trail, part of the Mountain Brook Reservoir property in Jaffrey.

For more details, including directions to the Mountain Brook Reservoir and the Gramwick Trail, visit www.monadnockconservancy.org.

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FEBRUARY 12

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Robert Spencer, MD of
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health&

The Power Of One

This year 2026 is equated with the number one by numerologists. Indeed, if you add up all the letters in this year, you get the number 10 which reduced to a single digit is the number one. The number we teach the young ones to begin with when they learn to count.

Healing Perspectives

with Skye Stephenson



How can we navigate and find balance in a Year One? What lessons are we being offered, and what possible spiritual gifts might be possible in 2026 – for each of us, and collectively?

The year (as we have already seen in just a few short weeks) may be a period of bold and rapid events. New beginnings. New shake ups. New possibilities. We have already experienced the United States President, without Congressional authority, invade another sovereign nation and seize that leader. And we have also witnessed the unexpected and inspiring election of Zohran Mamdani as Mayor of New York City: the city where I was born and my sister and cousin reside. Both bold beginnings/changes of very different ilk.

But this column is not about politics, it is about healing. Although, of course, our politics and policies do impact our health and well being in multiple ways and thus, politics and healing are not separate from one another.

But what might 2026 mean for you, at a soul level?

Is there something big and bold or maybe, simple and postponed, that you have been thinking about and dreaming of for some time? Something that tugs at you with yearning? Perhaps this is the year you try to make this dream/vision/idea actionable; to make it real on the physical plane of existence.

I have the tradition of watching the Ifa reading of the year on New Year's Day. This is a divination carried out by several different centers of Santería. For a few years, I have followed a center in Houston, Texas.

Their reading features the Orisha (Yoruba spirit deity) named Ogun. He is associated with metal working, iron, labor, craftsmanship, technology, and also community politics. Practical and focused, it is Ogun's hard work that makes things happen in society.

According to David Ala Aggayu, who shared this reading on YouTube, this is a year to not just follow the crowd, but to use our own intelligence to grow in maturity and wisdom. Like the forge of a blacksmith, the fires burning in so many ways around us (figuratively and even literally in some cases) can be a cauldron of personal initiation and transmutation. For fire can burn and it can also transmute what no longer serves us, so we can step forward into the new unfolding. By "thinking well."

He urged us to not believe and spend too much time in social media this year. Much of social media is not true, and this will be even more so as the year progresses. We should focus instead on keeping a calm head, and reaching our own conclusions through careful reading, thinking, and processing. And heeding the advice of those we trust.

This idea circles us back to the number one. One being ourselves, and our own truths.

Complementing the Orisha Ogun this year will be the Orisha Ochún, the female deity of rivers and sweet waters, sensual love, and beauty, and all the sparkles and shines. Her presence reminds us to balance hard work and the mind with emotional intelligence, love, and sweetness.

I hope by briefly sharing these energetic potentialities of 2026, according to various spiritual traditions, you may find a few guideposts to help you navigate what promises to be a powerful and transformational year for all.

Skye Stephenson enjoys writing and researching about sacred stones and place. She lives in Keene. <https://skyestephenson.com/>

Celtic Imbolc Celebrated At Aloha Keene

The Celtic Imbolc celebration of the time midway between the Winter Solstice and the Spring Equinox is taking place is celebrated the first two days of February.

In celebration of Imbolc, Debra LeClair, PsyD. will offer an ecstatic dance, a Celtic Cauldron, on Saturday, January 31st from 7 to 8:15 p.m.; the cost is \$20. On Sunday, February 1st from 10:30 a.m. to noon, LeClair will guide a Shamanic Drumming Journey into the quiet promise of spring; the cost is \$25. Both events will be held at Aloha Keene at 83 Court Street.

Register at vagaro.com/alohakeene or call 603-762-3129.



Book Crush: A Romance Reader Group At Keene Library

Keene Public Library will host Book Crush: A Romance Reader Group on Wednesday, February 4th from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. in the Miller-Vincent Room at the library, located at 60 Winter Street in Keene.

Book Crush is a non-traditional book group for romance readers. Each month focuses on a theme connected to romance tropes, conventions, or sub-genres. Participants choose their own book that fits the monthly theme, share selections with other readers, and discover new titles.

The theme for February is Black Historical Romance.

The program is open to adults and does not require participants to read the same book.

For more details, contact Parker Goodreau at 603-352-0157 or pgoodreau@keenenh.gov.

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wellness

The Importance Of Teaching Manners

Some children struggle with social interactions and this might be eased through a better understanding of manners. Manners are behaviors that help children to show respect, politeness, and consideration for others. They help create positive social interactions and can help your children be more successful in social situations.

It's good to be aware that there may be cultural differences in manners. In some cultures, removing shoes when entering a home is considered polite, while other families may not expect this. When it comes to such differences, teach children to be aware. If the household members remove shoes, it would be polite to remove shoes as well or at least ask it that is desired.

Monadnock Family



with Sheri Lapointe

Teaching manners from a young age will help children develop good habits, boost their confidence, and provide them with the tools to be respectful and considerate toward others. While teaching manners, remember to emphasize the importance of keeping safe so children don't feel obliged to allow someone to do things that make them feel uncomfortable. While manners are important, safety and the ability to set personal boundaries is even more important.

Teaching good manners starts with modeling the behaviors you want your children to use. Children learn more from how they see adults behave. If parents use polite language and respectful behaviors toward others, children learn that this is the expected behavior. It also provides parents with the ability to reference appropriate behaviors to correct children when they struggle with manners.

Give reinforcement to the behaviors you want your children to exhibit. Children will respond to reinforcement and the best way to get them to do what you want them to do is to let them know when they are behaving appropriately. It's tempting to address the negative behaviors. Those are the behaviors that are irritating and call your attention. However, remember that children will engage in behaviors that get them the attention they need.

Focusing on the negative too much will end up reinforcing the behavior you don't want. A good rule of thumb is to correct any unsafe behaviors immediately, and comment on the positive behaviors while ignoring mild inappropriate behaviors. That

doesn't necessarily mean not addressing them, but if you ignore the behavior and give positive feedback to better behaviors, they will shift their behavior. In the event that your child has done something or repeats negative behaviors, have a pointed conversation where you explain what they did wrong and why; then help your child think of a way to fix the problem. This provides a teaching opportunity and then you can focus on the positive result, reinforcing their improved behavior.

Incorporate manners into daily routines. At meal-times, teach children to use table manners. Asking for more of something with polite words, sharing, passing dishes, thanking people for helping them. Teach them not to talk with their mouths full of food or jump up from the table the minute they finish. Meal times offer many opportunities to practice manners.

Teach children etiquette around their digital interactions. Teach them to be aware of protecting their privacy when it comes to interactions online. Have conversations about online bullying and how to handle situations that make them uncomfortable. It's important for kids to be respectful and kind in the language they use online. Discuss how things that are posted online may be accessible to others and what they share with another user may be forwarded to others without their consent. Be aware of how your children are using online apps and even games that might seem harmless but could lead to potential safety issues.

Teach children to be aware of how others may be feeling. Having conversations about emotions and help them look for clues to how other people may be reacting to their words and behaviors.

Developing good manners will support your child's social development and general well being. It will help them to develop skills to get along with others and be successful across a variety of types of interactions. Good manners can improve relationships with friends, family, and other adults. As they grow, it will help kids to succeed in school, extracurricular activities, and employment.

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.

Drop-in Knitting Circle Planned In Richmond

The Richmond Public Library will host a Drop-in Knitting Circle every Saturday in January from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. The group is open to hand-crafters of all abilities and experience levels.

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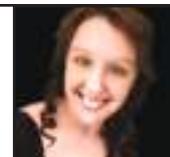
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(Prepared by the Historical Society of Cheshire County)



On what street in what Cheshire County community was the Riverside Sport Shop located?

The winner of last week's Mystery Photo contest was Garrett Greeley of Keene. The restaurant was known as Penuche's Ale House in more recent years.

The Old Homestead Documentary To Be Produced, Materials Needed

Swanzey's Denman Thompson wrote the play *The Old Homestead* in the 19th century. He acted in the play more than 15,000 times and it was viewed by 20 million Americans during Thompson's lifetime. *The New York Times* called it "the play of the Century."

Keene documentarian Larry Benaquist is working on a short documentary on the film. The popular play was twice produced as film by Paramount Pictures during the silent film period – in 1915 and 1922. Those films have been

restored and will be shown in conjunction with the new documentary.

The play was revived in 1939 and was repeated in Swanzey annually for many decades. Benaquist is asking anyone who may have photos, programs, videos, or film of any of the productions to contact him as they may be useful in the production of the documentary. The materials will be copied and returned to the owners.

For those who have materials to share, call Benaquist at 603-355-9007.

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Cooking Just For Fun

Sometimes I like to think of cooking something just for fun. Sure, a meal or a party can be something you enjoy cooking for fun. But also there are times when an idea hits the brain and says, "Hey, let's just cook this because it might be fun to do." How about cooking some homemade donuts from scratch? What about making some potato chips while I've got the fat hot? Or how about surprising the birthday special person with a huge stack of pancakes for breakfast—topped with rainbow sprinkles, a candle, and some drizzles of real maple syrup! Or maybe it would be fun to switch up the usual sandwiches and make BLT's or crispy chicken tenders served on croissants. What about putting a plate of "Toad in the Hole" in front of the kids for dinner tonight? Or try out some of the fun food recipes from this week's Cooking Corner.



Skillet Pop Tart – this take-off on the popular toaster tarts is easy to make at home.

Skillet Pop Tart

This take-off on the popular toaster tarts is easy to make at home. Kids, and adults who were once kids, love these jam-filled quick treats. You don't need much jam to sweeten this thin pie remake that's baked in a nine-inch cast iron skillet or a nine-inch pie plate. Recipe idea adapted from Shawn Williams' blog Kitchenswagger.com.

Ingredients:

2 pie crusts, ready-to-bake (or your own)
1/2 cup strawberry jam or preserves (or other favorite)
rainbow sprinkles

Icing: 1/2 cup powdered sugar mixed with 1 tablespoon milk and 1/4 teaspoon vanilla

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease a nine-inch skillet with shortening of choice. Flour ready-to-bake pie crust lightly and roll it out just a bit to extend the size so it will come up the sides of the skillet about 3/4 of the way. Line the bottom of skillet with one crust; spoon jam over bottom crust, spreading over the entire bottom until it is thinly covered. Roll out top crust in the same manner and place it on top of the jam. Fold any excess dough from the top crust downward so it lines up with the bottom crust inside the skillet rim. Crimp the edges together all around with a fork. Use a toothpick to poke 10 to 12 holes in the top crust for ventilation. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes or until the crust is just baked and lightly browned in color. Remove from heat and cool on rack for 40 minutes. Combine icing ingredients in a small bowl until runny enough to drizzle over top of the crust; smooth thinly over the top with a spoon or spatula. Top with sprinkles as desired. Let glaze set for 20 to 30 minutes in refrigerator before cutting into wedges or pieces as desired.

Honey Champagne Fondue

This is fun to make and fun to eat, with a wonderful flavor of Swiss cheese and a hint of sweet honey. It clings well to any kind of dipper, from crusty bread pieces to cooked shrimp. Share the fun soon with some friends. Makes four cups.

Ingredients:

1 tablespoon cornstarch
1 teaspoon ground dry mustard
1/4 teaspoon white pepper (optional)
1 1/4 cups champagne
1 teaspoon lemon juice
2 tablespoons finely chopped shallot
1 garlic clove, minced
1 1/2 lbs. Swiss cheese, shredded
2 tablespoons honey
pinch ground nutmeg

Suggested dippers: crispy bite-size chunks of bread, slightly steamed broccoli or asparagus, endive spears, tart apple slices, cooked shrimp

In large saucepan, combine cornstarch, mustard, and white pepper. Whisk in champagne and lemon juice until smooth. Add shallot and garlic; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook and stir until mixture is thickened, about one minute. Gradually stir in cheese, a few handfuls at a time, until melted. Stir in honey and sprinkle with nutmeg. Keep warm in a fondue pot or slow cooker; serve with suggested dippers as desired.

Cooking Corner

with Nancy Adams

**Ploughman's Lunch**

This is one of my favorite fun foods to compile and serve – whether it's a few items suitable for a workingman's lunch or a pub-style meal for various friends. More an assembly job than a recipe, this is still a popular British pub lunch that contains a few cheeses, crusty bread, pickles, chutney, meats and assorted salad vegetables. Assemble your own Pub-Style Lunch with a few of these suggestions, served with some ale or wine:

sharp cheddar and a blue cheese; cooked ring of favorite grilled sausages; thin slices of ham; one or two spicy and grainy mustards; a sweet chutney; some pickled onions and small gherkin style pickles; some crisp slice apples and a cluster of tomatoes; a crisp lettuce/arugula salad dressed with vinegar and a bit of oil, salt and pepper; rustic, crusty bread and butter.

Apple-Bacon Bread Pudding

Bread pudding is not just a dessert. It's also fun to turn it into a savory dish and serve it as a surprise side-dish or a supper meal. This savory pudding is baked in a loaf pan and served warm. Enjoy it paired with salad of tossed mixed greens. Serves four to six.

Ingredients:

6 slices lean bacon
1 each shallot and garlic clove, finely chopped
2 cups peeled, diced apples
1 1/2 cups whole milk
1/2 cup heavy cream
5 large eggs
salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
6 cups cubed (about 1-inch pieces) Challah bread, air-dried for a few hours
3/4 cup grated Gruyère cheese, divided

Preheat oven to 350 degrees and place rack in middle. Butter a 9x5-inch loaf pan. In large skillet, cook bacon until crisp, four to six minutes. Transfer bacon to paper-towel-lined plate to drain, then coarsely crumble. Pour off most but not all of bacon fat from skillet. Over medium-high heat, sauté shallots and garlic, stirring until softened, about 1 minute. Add apples and cook, stirring until softened, about two to three minutes. In large bowl, whisk together milk, cream, eggs, salt and pepper. Stir in bread, apple mixture and bacon. Sprinkle 1/4 cup of grated cheese in bottom of loaf pan, then pour batter into pan. Sprinkle remaining 1/2 cup Gruyère cheese on top. Cover pan with foil and bake 30 minutes; remove foil and bake until golden, about 15 to 20 minutes.

Floating Island

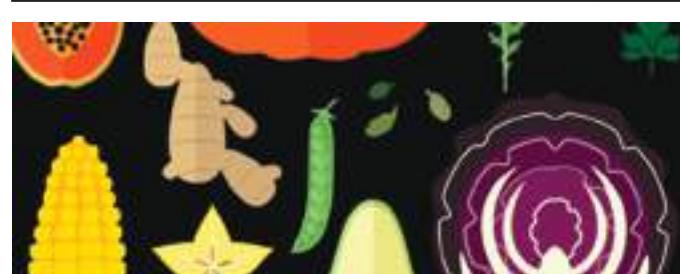
Even the name sounds exotic. This classic French dessert still reminds me of fun-filled childhood days when my mother would prepare this soft pudding from her *Fanny Farmer Boston Cooking School Cookbook*. Makes four servings.

Ingredients:

2 cups scalded milk
6 large egg yolks
1/4 cup sugar
1/8 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon vanilla

In the top of a double boiler, beat egg yolks slightly with fork; add sugar and salt. Add milk gradually, stirring constantly. Cook and stir in double boiler over simmered water until mixture coats the spoon. Strain through a sieve, chill, and flavor with the vanilla when ready to serve. Top each serving with a large spoonful of meringue, floating it in the center of the pudding.

Meringue Topping: With egg beater, beat 6 egg whites with 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar and 1/4 teaspoon vanilla until it forms stiff peaks.



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