



Art And Adventure At Tall Pines: A Legacy Of Local Art And History



The Hancock Town Library will launch their exhibit season with artwork from more than 100 years ago. The exhibit, opening January 7th, will feature paintings and prints of the Reaveley family, as well as historic souvenirs from a local summer camp. An opening reception will be held Sunday, January 11th from 2 to 4 p.m. (inclement weather date: Sunday, January 18th, 2 to 4 p.m.). A presentation with a talk and a short film will begin at 3 p.m. The exhibit will run through February 11th.

The Reaveley family moved to New Hampshire in the early 1900s and founded “Tall Pines,” a summer camp for girls. Two siblings of the family, Catherine and Evelina, produced promotional and informational pieces for the camp. Their artwork and many souvenirs of the camp history have been collected and preserved.

Their paintings largely portray the familiar beauty of New Hampshire, especially the Monadnock region.

Exhibits can be viewed in the Daniels Room of the Hancock Library during regular library hours. Call the library at 603-525-4411 before visiting to ensure no special events are scheduled at that time.

Catherine and Evelina Reaveley were prolific artists, and with a background in commercial art, they produced promotional and informational pieces for the camp.

Winter Hospice Volunteer Training Begins January 23rd

Hospice at HCS is offering a volunteer training program for those who are interested in becoming volunteers. The training will be held on Fridays from 9 a.m. to noon beginning January 23rd through February 20th. Training will be held at the agency’s Keene office at 312 Marlboro Street.

Volunteers are members of the hospice care team, providing support to the patient and to family members. After completing the training, volunteers

assist hospice patients with interests such as writing letters, reading, playing board games, scrap booking, or may accompany a patient to a community event or to visit friends. Volunteers also provide respite for caregivers.

The training program is offered free of charge, but class size is limited and registration is required by January 19th by calling Lorraine Bishop at 603-352-2253 or emailing lbishop@HCSservices.org.

Mill Hollow Works Free “Granny Squares For Good” Crochet Program To Support New Child Abuse Clinic

Mill Hollow Works is inviting the community to come together – one granny square at a time – to create handmade blankets for Cheshire Medical Center’s new child abuse clinic. The program is free, beginner-friendly, and designed to bring comfort to children.

Each blanket will be made from donated granny squares crocheted by community members. Mill Hollow Works instructors will teach participants how to crochet granny squares for free Sundays, January 11th, 18th, and 25th from 1 to 4 p.m. at United Church of Christ at 23 Central Square in Keene.

This community program offers multiple ways to participate: come learn to crochet granny squares in-person (no experience needed), stop by to pick up a granny square pattern and yarn kit to create squares at home for donation (while supplies last), or help assemble completed blocks into blankets. Sessions will include opportunities to return on additional Sundays to learn how to connect squares into a blanket (dates will be shared during January sessions).

Register in advance at www.millhollowworks.org so there will be kits and instructors available.

The Keene Chorale Welcomes All To Sing Mozart’s Requiem

When asked why they keep coming back to sing with The Keene Chorale, members respond, “I love to sing with people who love to sing!” “It’s a great hobby and makes me happy.” “The director and accompanist are excellent!” “It teaches me about music and singing.” “I am inspired by creating something that requires all of us.” “It’s my way of contributing something to the wider community.”

Chorale President Susan Tarolli reflects, “Singing Mozart’s Requiem gives us the opportunity to make beautiful music out of all the different feelings we experience in daily life, not just at a time of loss: strength, vulnerability, hope, hopelessness, gratitude,

pain, and peace. As a result, I often leave rehearsal feeling more hopeful.”

A welcoming choral community, The Chorale invites everyone interested in singing to participate. There are no auditions. Some singers bring decades of experience to the group, while many others find The Keene Chorale a fun and helpful place to start learning how to sing choral music, or find their voices again after years away. Singers range in age from 20-80, and come from New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Vermont.

CHORALE, page 6

Russian Brick Stoves: Fill Once A Day – Stay Warm All Day



Konstantin Cherkassov is shown standing next to the Russian Brick stove in his home.

(Photos by Diane Stolar)

By Diane Stolar

Who among us would not welcome a home heating system that’s not only efficient, but eco-friendly, durable, has universal applications, and reparable external parts?

Home heating costs are projected to rise by 9.2 percent this winter, with colder temperatures and increasing energy prices being the driving factors. This comes from a report from the National Energy Assistance Directors Association (NEADA), which represents state governments in securing federal funding. It projects that households will spend \$995 on heating this winter, an increase from last winter. Costs for households using electric and natural gas heat will increase by 12.2 percent and 8.4 percent, respectively. States in the Northeast face the highest bills overall thanks to their cold weather and older homes that cost more to heat. Are you someone who is wondering about alternatives to your existing heating system, or planning to build (or renovate) a house and looking for the most efficient and economical option for heat?

If so, read on...



That open door? It’s an empty fire box that was filled early in the morning and burned for two to four hours. The stove itself remained quite warm to the touch at 4:30 p.m. when the photo was taken. The temperature in the house was very comfortable.

STOVES, page 6

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Oreo

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Oreo has good social skills with many dogs, and with a compatible dog and a thoughtful introduction, he can do very well.

He's a rambunctious, energetic guy who thrives with plenty of enrichment and exercise. He's curious about everything and loves having activities that keep his mind and body engaged.

If you're looking for a sweet, sensitive companion who will reward your patience with loyalty and laughs, Oreo may be the one. He's ready for someone who understands his needs and is excited to help him flourish in a loving home.

The Adoption Center is located at 101 West Swanzey Road just outside of Keene on Route 10 South. Its open hours are Thursday through Sunday 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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Smartphone Photo Contest Reception At The DubHub

The Dublin Community Center will once again hold a Monadnock Smartphone Photo Contest featuring images caught over the course of 2025 by those who live, work, or go to school in the Monadnock Region.

The deadline for photo submissions is Wednesday, January 7th. The contest is open to photographers in three categories: amateurs, professionals (defined as anyone who has received remuneration for their photography), and children (age 12 and under). Each entrant may enter up to three photos taken between December of 2024 and December of 2025 of a person, place, a detail shot, or an event anywhere in the Monadnock Region. Prizes will be awarded at a special reception at the DubHub from 5 to 7 p.m. on January 9th. The fee for entering the contest is \$10 per photo, which will cover the costs for printing an 8" x 10" glossy copy that the winners may keep.

For more details, email info@dublincommunitycenter.org for payment options and additional information.

Benedict Arnold, Patriot (And Traitor) Talk In Westmoreland

On Sunday, January 11th at 4 p.m., a free talk, Benedict Arnold, Patriot (and Traitor), will be held at the Westmoreland Town Hall at 780 Route 63.

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Off-The-Shelf Recipes

A well-stocked pantry can be a lifesaver, particularly when the power is out for any extended period of time. The basic pantry should include a variety of items that can be prepared quickly and easily during times of emergency, illness, or bad weather. You'll want to have basic baking items such as flour, baking powder and soda, yeast, nuts, and dried fruits. In addition to shelf items such as dried or canned beans, pasta, rice and seasonings, consider stocking other canned items as chicken broth and soups, tuna fish or salmon, vegetables and fruits, salsa, mushrooms, tomatoes and tomato sauce, juices, and evaporated or boxed milk. Feel free to make substitutions and try new combinations when you don't have a particular recipe item. When you need a quick meal, you'll be ready to try some of this week's recipes that use canned foods.

Light Alfredo Sauce with Pasta

A quick pasta meal that won't leave you feeling stuffed. If desired, add some flaked leftover or canned salmon and cooked broccoli. Serves four to six.

Ingredients:
12 oz. uncooked fettuccine (or similar pasta)
1 tablespoon olive oil
3 cloves garlic, minced
1/4 cup red pepper, finely chopped
1/4 cup sliced scallions
1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley, optional
1 tablespoon flour
1 can (12-oz.) evaporated skim milk
1/2 teaspoon dried basil leaves
1/4 teaspoon dried oregano leaves
1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese

Cook fettuccine to desired degree as directed on package; drain and keep warm. Heat olive oil in large skillet or Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add garlic; cook one minute. Add red pepper, scallions, parsley and flour; cook and stir one minute. Gradually whisk in milk until blended. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly; cook three to five minutes, or until sauce boils and thickens, stirring often. Remove from heat; stir in basil and oregano, then fettuccine. Toss gently; serve with Parmesan.

Chick Pea and Orzo Soup

Soup is a lifesaver when it comes to bad weather or tough times. This one's full of flavor and needs only some bread or biscuits to warm the belly. Six servings.

Ingredients:
3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
1 onion, finely chopped
1 teaspoon dried rosemary
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 cups canned tomatoes
1 (15.5 oz.) can chick peas
4 cups beef stock or bouillon
2/3 cup orzo pasta
salt and pepper to taste
1/3 cup chopped fresh parsley (optional)
grated Parmesan cheese

In large saucepan, sauté garlic, onion, and rosemary in oil until onion is soft, about five minutes. Add tomatoes and chick peas; cook 15 minutes. Add beef stock, orzo, salt, and pepper. Heat thoroughly and let simmer 20 minutes before serving. Top with parsley and Parmesan cheese.

Cooking Corner

with Nancy Adams



Huevos Rancheros Sandwiches

Enjoy these when you need something to boost spirits or just want something different for breakfast or supper. It's simple and satisfying!

Ingredients:
1 (15.5 oz.) can refried beans
4 English muffins, halved and toasted
4 slices Colby jack or cheddar cheese
1 ripe avocado, pitted and sliced or guacamole
1/4 cup salsa
4 large eggs, cooked to your liking

Make the sandwiches: spread the bean mixture heavily on the bottom of each English muffin. Place a slice of cheese on the bottom halves, followed by a few slices of avocado and a dollop of salsa. Top with an egg for each sandwich and finish with the English muffin top.

'Forgotten' Pork Chops

I'd forgotten how good this long-time favorite dish is until I came across the recipe in my file box while looking for column ideas. I think you'll like them too!

Ingredients:
4 pork chops, a good 1/2-inch thick, trimmed of excess fat
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons flour
salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
1/8 teaspoon garlic powder
1 can cream of mushroom soup, undiluted
1/2 cup sour cream
3/4 cup sliced mushrooms, canned or fresh
2 tablespoons Sherry wine (or water)
1/2 cup water
1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
1 can (13½ oz.) French fried onion rings, divided

Heat oil in heavy skillet. Coat chops with mixture of flour, salt, pepper, and garlic powder, then brown in oil on both sides. Place chops in a single layer in a baking dish. In a bowl, combine soup, sour cream, mushrooms, sherry, water and ginger; pour over chops. Sprinkle with 1/2 can of onion rings. Bake, covered, at 350 degrees for 40-45 minutes. Uncover and sprinkle with remaining onion rings; bake five to 10 minutes longer. Four servings.

Canned Salmon Burgers

A quick meal of crisply-fried salmon patties, served on top of a tossed crunchy slaw. Makes three or 4 servings.

Ingredients:
12-14 ounces cooked salmon
2 large eggs
1/2 cup breadcrumbs
1/4 teaspoon each salt and garlic powder
3 tablespoons chopped fresh herbs or 1 tablespoon dried herbs, like chives, parsley, or dill (any choice or combination to equal the total ingredient amount)
a squeeze of lemon juice
olive oil for skillet

Slaw Ingredients: 1 small head green cabbage, finely shredded; 1 cup plain Greek yogurt; 2-3 tablespoons white distilled vinegar; 1/2 teaspoon salt; 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder; 1/2 cup chopped fresh herbs (like chives, parsley, and dill); a drizzle of olive oil.

In a bowl, flake the salmon apart and remove bones; mix all burger ingredients (except olive oil) together and form into three large or four medium patties. Heat olive oil over medium heat in a skillet. Fry the burgers for three to four minutes on each side until golden brown and crispy. Place on a paper towel-lined plate to drain. Meanwhile, in a bowl, mix all slaw ingredients together; taste and adjust seasonings. Plate slaw for each serving and top with a salmon burger. Top with a dollop of yogurt and a bit of dill, if desired.

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MYSTERY PHOTO

from THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF CHESHIRE COUNTY

The first person to answer the question correctly at 9:30 a.m. or after on Friday will receive a \$25 Gift Certificate from the Marco Polo Gardens in Keene. Call The Monadnock Shopper News at 603-352-5296

(Prepared by the Historical Society of Cheshire County)



Do you remember this popular Keene restaurant? What was its name?



The winner of last week's Mystery Photo contest was Joe DuMond of Keene. The businesses were located on Ashuelot Street in Keene.

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This Week's Winners



Colton Champney, Sullivan, 2
Margaret Pinard, Sullivan, 9

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Margaret Pinard, daughter of Tom & Anne Pinard, Sullivan, 9
Colton Champney, son of Krystal & Tyler Champney, Sullivan, 2

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Honeywell (Allied Signal)	195.88	(1.49)	Danaher Corp. (Kollmorgen)	230.40	0.08
Becton Dickinson (C.R. Bard)	194.94	(1.39)	Merck (Hubbard Farms)	106.45	(0.33)
Toronto Dominion Bank (TD Bank)	94.54	(0.11)	Deluxe (NEBS)	22.19	(0.50)
PC Connection	56.88	(2.78)	Teleflex (Jaffrey)	122.40	(0.36)
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Russian Brick Stoves: Fill Once A Day – Stay Warm All Day

STOVES, Continued from page 1

Enter Konstantin Cherkassov of Gilsum, a wiry, unassuming, engaging man with a warm smile and sparkling eyes, especially when speaking about the Russian Brick stoves that were common in his native Kazakhstan. “We design and build these stoves,” Cherkassov says, and he is eager to share their benefits along with his expertise. A little background: “For many years, I worked as a space engineer at the Baikonur Cosmodrome,” Cherkassov explains. “Later, I became involved in beekeeping and in building stoves. I did not just build stoves - grew up with them. One could say that my connection with stoves began when I was about three or four years old; I was literally born next to a traditional stove. Because of this, I understand very well how these systems work.”

“When I worked at Baikonur,” he continues, “I operated thermal machines. A rocket converts the energy of fuel into motion – that is a thermal machine. A human being converts the energy stored in food into movement and heat – so a human is also a kind of thermal machine. A car is a thermal machine. And a household stove works by the same principle: it converts the energy of firewood into heat that keeps our home warm in winter.”

Traditional Russian wood-fired brick masonry stoves are environmentally friendly heating systems with up to 80 percent efficiency. Just one firing per day is enough to maintain comfortable heat around the clock, while significantly reducing firewood consumption. In addition to heating, the stoves can be equipped with a cooking surface, a heated sleeping and resting bench, additional heating sections, an oven for baking and cooking, and wide panoramic glass doors.

To help reduce project costs, a Russian brick stove can often incorporate existing structures, such as an existing chimney or foundation. Reclaimed brick may be used as well. In many cases, these bricks are an even better option than new ones, as they have already proven their durability over time,” Cherkassov says. “All metal components can be ordered from Kazakhstan, allowing for additional savings on materials.”

Many folks are looking for ways to heat their homes using firewood, while also adding beauty and character to their living space.

People had already seen Cherkassov’s posts on Facebook which included photos of the stoves he’s built. They read the explanations and left comments, and this generated a lot of interest. As a result, Cherkassov organized a small in-person event to answer questions and explore the topic from all sides and in greater depth. Twelve people attended, coming from Vermont, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts. There were many thoughtful and interesting questions, and those who participated learned a lot of new and useful information. Cherkassov and the attendees compared different types of stoves, discussed the materials used in construction, safety requirements, permit requirements, what kind of firewood should be used, and how these stoves are maintained and cleaned.

When they compared the Russian brick stove to an open fireplace and a metal slow-combustion wood stove, the results were clear: a Russian brick stove can reduce firewood consumption by up to three times. Daily firing time is typically reduced to just two to four hours, and harmful emissions into the atmosphere are significantly lower.

Beyond efficiency, a Russian brick stove can also become a beautiful architectural element of a home. It is a highly multifunctional system. In addition to heating the house, it can be used for cooking, heating water, drying clothes, and warming a sleeping or resting area such as a heated bench or stove bed. It can also be designed to heat additional rooms, or even a sauna and sauna stones to produce steam.

Cherkassov has a fully operational masonry stove available for customer demonstrations, where people can see its performance in real conditions. He also hosts regular events where he demonstrates the stove, explains its features and benefits, and answers questions. He also mentions that he appreciates the work of The Alliance for Green Heat. They publish an informative monthly newsletter which provides updates on legislation, policy, and innovation in biomass heating. In their most recent newsletter, they published an analysis by the state of Maine of heating costs by fuel per MMBtu (Million British Thermal Units).

For more details or if readers are interested in attending an event to learn more about Russian Brick stoves, contact Cherkassov at 781-888-1155 or by email cherkasovk007@gmail.com.

Branch River Theatre Holds Open Auditions For *Clue: On Stage*

Branch River Theatre will hold Open Auditions for *Clue: On Stage* at the American House at 197 Water Street in Keene on Saturday, January 10th from 10 a.m. to noon, Sunday, January 11th from 3 to 5 p.m., and Monday, January 12th from 6 to 8 p.m.

Clue: On Stage is a fast-paced whodunit comedy of murder, mayhem, and madcap antics. Auditions will consist of cold readings from the script (provided at audition). Additional information, including character descriptions and line sides can be found on the www.branchrivertheatre.org and on the Branch River Theatre Facebook page.

Auditionees should bring their acting resume or a list of acting experience and be prepared to list all potential schedule conflicts between March and June 21st. Rehearsals will be held in Keene and Marlborough and will start in March. The six performance dates are June 12th, 13th, 14th, 19th, 20th, and 21st at the Marlborough Community House.

For more details, visit the website, or if unable to attend the scheduled audition dates, call Director Lynda Buck at 603-769-1057 or email lbuck@branchrivertheatre.org.

The Keene Chorale Welcomes All To Sing Mozart’s Requiem

CHORALE, Continued from page 1

Under the leadership of Music Director Jonathan Colby and accompanied by world-renowned pianist Vladimir Odinkikh, Chorale members learn to bring out the best in the music they sing, while also developing their individual skills as singers.

Rehearsals take place on Tuesdays from 7 to 9 p.m. beginning January 13th at Monadnock Covenant Church at 90 Base Hill Road in Keene. Interested singers are encouraged to register online at The Chorale website, though in-person registration is offered at 6:30 p.m. on January 13th and January 20th. These first two rehearsals are open rehearsals, providing an opportunity for singers to experience the Chorale before making a commitment to join. The rehearsals will lead to The Chorale’s performance of Mozart’s Requiem on May 1st.

For more details, visit www.keenechorale.org.



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Workhorses Give A Little Extra Work

Back in November, our workhorses gave us a little extra work to do. Two out of three of the rascals found every bit of burdock in the pasture and came into the barn with manes and tails full of burrs. We sighed and put burr removal on the list.

Since it was both the first two weeks of horses-in-their-winter-paddock and the last two weeks of CSA distribution, the horses were close by for our CSA members to see. As we were thanking everyone for their support of small farms, farmers, and farm horses, the members could visit and admire the horses.

On the first of four harvest days in that two weeks, we told our members that we were a little embarrassed to have our horses looking so unkempt. On the second day, we were a little more embarrassed. By the third and fourth, we wondered if we should try to hide our burdocky horses behind the barn.



It wasn't until a week after harvest days ended that we had time to tackle the burdock. We were cleaning the manure out of the paddock, and I haltered the horses and took breaks from shoveling to work on the burrs. My fellow took a break from shoveling too, to walk with the pooch, who was tired of behaving nicely around the horses.

Then I quit shoveling altogether and worked on the burdock. Fern, who is an easy-going gelding, didn't mind at all. Willow, a high-strung mare, wasn't so sure about it. Once she figured out what I was doing and that I was going to be doing it for a long, long time, she relaxed. She dropped her head. She closed her eyes. I sang to her. She leaned her head towards me, happy to have that annoying burdock by her ear removed.

It was getting later and later and darker and darker, and I got the last burdock bits out by feel. After three weeks and three plus hours of concentrated work, we had two burr-free horses. Actually, we had

three, because Molly, our wise old retired horse, never got into the burdock at all.

Instead, wise old Molly, on a very windy day in December, was happy to discover that the paddock gate had blown open. She is a most excellent tip-toer through slightly open gates or tiny holes in the fence.

Some time later, my fellow and I came outside to work in the greenhouses. The paddock was empty.

"Where are the horses?" I said.

He checked the barn. No horses.

Then we noticed the gate swinging in the wind and followed the tracks. Wise old Molly had led the herd out of the paddock, skirted around the end of the first greenhouse, and squeezed along the narrow walkway between the greenhouse and the garden fence. We found all three of them in the tiny patch of land between the first and second greenhouses, happily pawing through the snow to find a bite of grass. Such clever naughty horses!

While I was holding the dog so he wouldn't overexcite any horses in tight quarters, my fellow led Molly back, then Fern and Willow. It was still windy, and the gate almost immediately blew open again while my fellow was checking the rest of the fence.

"Here she comes!" I hollered, meaning Molly, who was gleefully racing right back to the open gate. My fellow darted over to stop Molly while Willow and Fern raced around the paddock in all the excitement. The dog barked by my side. He wanted to join the fun too.

This time we tied the gate shut. We admired all our burr-free, high-headed horses high-stepping it around the paddock, kicking and bucking.

"Glad that didn't happen next to the greenhouses," said my fellow.

"Or in the dark," I added.

"Let's take a long walk to celebrate!" said the dog. So we did.

Kim Peavey farms and writes from southwestern New Hampshire. She and her family, as well as two teams of draft horses, grow vegetables biodynamically for 100 local families through a CSA garden. See www.hillsidespringsfarm.com for more information on the horse- and hand-powered farm, CSA garden, or Kim's writing.

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Reaching Your Goals In Small Ways

You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream. C. S. Lewis

A new year means new goals, positive changes, and a fresh approach to tackling the aspects of what we'd like to improve in our lives. New Year's resolutions can be broad: lose weight, exercise more, spend more time with the family. This generalization doesn't always work for people; we need specifics, a breakdown, to help us reach those goals.

Health

Any positive changes you make in what you eat, drink, or the care of your body will help with your overall health goals. Your resolution focus could be more like this:

- Drink more water
- Choose healthier foods
- Get more sleep or rest
- Get less screen time
- Get your body moving more
- Get more fresh air
- Eliminate a bad habit
- Meditate more

Family

When you stop and think about it, spending more time with your family is quite easy when you make a list of just what you can do to achieve this goal. Your connections could include:

- Play more games. Before everyone disperses after dinner, why not bring out a board or a card game to play? It's amazing how just 30 minutes of connection can make a big difference.
- Learn a new skill together
- Cook or bake as a family
- Volunteer as a family
- Read together
- Spend any time together that doesn't

include technology

Mind

There are times when we need to settle our minds from the constant go-go-go of family life, work, and extracurricular activities. Here are some ideas on how to settle our minds:

Monadnock Family

with Lori Catozzi Cook



Get organized. This is something that I must stay persistent about. If I'm not organized, my mind feels bogged down, and I'm unmotivated. Organized life equals an organized mind.

Surround yourself with positive people. Try to distance yourself from negativity. No good can come from constant negativity. If you have someone who has made you their "person" to spout out negativity whenever you talk with them, try turning the conversation into a positive one. They will either switch their mindset or not come to you with their constant complaining.

Limit screen time

Try new things

Have a daily affirmation – a positive quote, Bible verse, or something to build your self-esteem – sent to your inbox or text to you.

Finances

Having a handle on your finances is less stressful and puts you in control of your

present and your future. Here are a few ways to reel in your finances:

Create a budget and then stick to it

Pay off debt. When you look at your debt, it can be overwhelming. There are different ways you can pay down debt. If you are unsure about your next move, seek the help of a financial advisor.

Cut unnecessary spending

Try a no-spend challenge for a week or a month

Check your subscriptions to see if there are any you really don't need or use

Plan for something fun

Friendships

Sometimes we get so busy that our friendships get pushed to the wayside. Even when life gets hectic, there are little things to keep the relationship flourishing.

Make time for your friendships. Even a quick coffee to catch up can make all the difference in those relationships and will boost your mental well-being.

Show your support

Do something new together

Set up a weekend away together. Even if it's not doable right now, start making plans together for a weekend this spring, or summer, or whenever! The planning can be just as fun as the trip itself.

Have fun with the changes you'd like to make this year. Make your list and read it often to remind yourself of what you are striving for. Happy 2026!

Lori Catozzi Cook is the assistant editor and a feature writer for The Monadnock Shopper News.

Weekend Yoga Retreat At Aloha In Keene

This weekend, Aloha, located on Court Street in Keene, will host a yoga retreat.

Friday, there will be Heart Centered Kirtan performing at 7 p.m. Attendees can enjoy their heart centered chanting and music to get into the vibe.

On Saturday, there will be a Slow Flow class from 9 to 10:15 a.m. In the afternoon, folks can take a walk in nature.

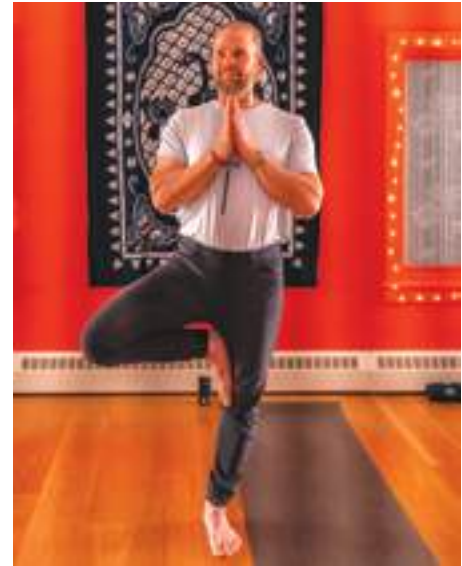
To cap the self retreat, on Sunday, January 11th will be Vision and Vibes from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., which includes lunch. Attendees can practice yoga with like minded folk, create a vision board for the new year, and imbibe in the plant medicine of cacao

to create a blissful open hearted state. There will be guided meditation. Students in Bryan Russell's 300 hour Yoga Teacher Training course will be facilitating.

All proceeds go to MCVP. There will be a sliding scale fee, \$54 up or down. Register at vagarog.com/alohakeene.

Also on Sunday, January 11th will be Zen Tangles from 3 to 5 p.m. \$22 includes all supplies. This month attendees will create a mandala.

Bryan Russell's students will be facilitating a workshop Vision and Vibes



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Mindfulness Practice During A Period Of Deep Grief

On November 12, the day after coming back from a wonderful family reunion, my sister called and told me that my brother had taken his life. In that moment, my mind/heart went to two places. One was a silent wail: nooooo! The other was realizing that he finally did it. He had struggled with major bipolar disorder his whole life and chronic medical issues contributed to his recent despair. So how does mindfulness help deal with an unexpected and tragic death that rocks you to the foundation of your being?

One of my meditation teachers summed up what this whole practice is about in three short sentences.

1. Pay attention with a curious and nonjudgmental awareness; this helps us see more clearly what is needed in each moment.

The day after my brother's death, a quiet inner voice urged me to walk to the big cemetery in town. After reading some of the grave stones, I said out loud "my brother killed himself yesterday" and then just started bawling. I began to realize that so many people buried there had died tragically. I was not alone in my suffering.

That first week the only people I wanted to talk with were my wife, my sisters, and my two adult children. In the second week, I reached out to people who had also suffered losses of this magnitude: a friend whose brother died of a drug overdose, a couple whose first grandchild only lived three days, a friend whose mom had taken her life, and several more. I also attended a survivors of suicide support group and heard other people's stories. These conversations helped me remember that so many people have suffered such great losses.

Over the next few weeks, I listened to that inner voice that helped me see what was needed: letting my wife hold and cradle me, asking for a massage, when to be alone and when to be with others... While a part of me wanted to isolate, I listened to other inner voices encouraging me to connect more and let others in.

2. Meet what arises, which includes being compassionate with all that is arising.

Many people who have lost someone to suicide talk about all the unanswerable questions that can drive you crazy: why didn't he leave a note, did he plan it, why didn't I see it coming, why didn't I call him more often, etc. The meditation practice, when those voices become overwhelming, is to acknowledge those parts that are freaking out, to be kind to them, and then to step back and just watch the thoughts, like watching a movie.

3. Include it all means to include what your mind and heart can manage right now.

Sometimes, the grief was overwhelming and I couldn't manage it. So I watched a lot of movies and football, and munched on snacks more than usual.

While I did little formal meditation practice the first two weeks other than simply to be aware of my breath at times, it was important to commit to feeling my feelings. As a meditation, this involved letting the thoughts flow, but not interacting with them. It also helped to name the feelings: sadness, overwhelmed, fatigue, numbness, disbelief, spaciness, irritation, impatience, fear, and anger.



Developing Patience For The Long Haul
Almost a month after my brother's death, I was starting to feel less unmoored. Then I got a call that another close friend, who had been in hospice, had just died. I burst into tears and in some ways felt like I was back at the beginning. From what I have read about deep grief is that it's a long process and not a linear one. This brings up another important mindfulness attitude: patience, not rushing the process.

Ultimately, mindfulness practice is not just a collection of techniques and practices; it's more of an attitude toward what's happening. Knowing that has made such a difference during this terribly difficult time.

The Monadnock Mindfulness Practice Center offers instruction and practice in mindfulness meditation. Visit www.mindfulnesskeene.org.

Tom Bassarear has been practicing mindfulness meditation for almost 40 years and has taught mindfulness and meditation at Keene State College, at Cheshire Medical Center, at the county jail, in local schools, and at the Monadnock Mindfulness Practice Center, which he helped to found in 2002.

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Hospice volunteers at HCS are vital members of the care team, offering their time to support patients and families through compassionate presence, emotional support, and respite for caregivers.

Joely - HCS Hospice Volunteer

(603) 352-2253 | www.HCSservices.org

HEALTH AND WELLNESS SEMINAR

Join us for a FREE seminar!
Start your year with knowledge and empowerment at our health and wellness seminar focused on Nutrition Tips for PCOS. Learn how simple, sustainable changes to your diet can help manage symptoms, balance hormones, and boost your energy. Whether you've just been diagnosed or have been navigating PCOS for years, this session will offer practical guidance to support your health goals in the new year. Let food be your foundation for a stronger, more balanced you!

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458 Old Street Road Peterborough, NH 03458 | 603-924-7191 | MonadnockHospital.org

From Plate to Progress: Nutrition Strategies for PCOS
Thursday, January 22
5:30 – 6:30 PM
Presenters:
Whitney Hightower MS, RDN, LD
Kaldyn McCarthy RDN, LD, CDCES
Location: Bond Wellness Center Conference Room

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ENTERTAINMENT

and DINING

Wednesday, Jan. 7

ARTS, MUSIC & THEATER

Reel Night Out: Drop the Ball! Movie Nights 6-8pm. Keene Public Library, 60 Winter St. Every Wednesday, film and popcorn. Film ratings vary from PG to R, so check the calendar before bringing kids. Free, snacks allowed inside the theater. January is screening sports flicks. Amy Kraemer: **603-352-0157**. akraemer@keenenh.gov.

FAMILY FUN

Storytime 10am. Richmond Public Library, 19 Winchester Rd. Stories, songs, and an easy craft for toddlers and pre-schoolers. **603-239-6164**. www.richmondnh.us/.



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MISCELLANEOUS

Home Healthcare Hospice & Community Services: Walk-in Wednesdays-By Appointment HCS Charlestown, 33 Arborway. Confidential, free discussion of services that are available. **603-352-2253**. www.HCSservices.org.

Home Healthcare Hospice & Community Services: Walk-in Wednesdays 1-3pm. HCS Peterborough, 454 Old Street Road Medical Arts Building, Suite 208. Confidential, free discussion of services that are available. **603-352-2253**. www.HCSservices.org.

Walk-in Wednesdays 1-3pm. Family Resource Center at HCS, 312 Marlboro Street, Keene. Confidential, free discussion of services available. From Healthy Starts to Hospice care. **603-352-2253**. www.HCSservices.org.

Book Crush, A Romance Reader Group 6-7pm. Keene Public Library, 60 Winter St. A non-traditional book club for romance readers. January's theme is dragons. Parker Goodreau: **603-352-0157**. pgoodreau@keenenh.gov.

Thursday, Jan. 8

MISCELLANEOUS

KPL Fiction and Memoir Writers Group 6-7:50pm. Keene Public Library, 60 Winter St. Provides prose fiction writers with a friendly, supportive environment to share work. Meets virtually and in person. Amy Kraemer: **603-352-0157**. akraemer@keenenh.gov.

Walking the Voie de Vezelay with Howie Peterson 6:30pm. Putney Public Library, 55 Main St., Putney, VT. Peterson hiked through rolling countryside, stopping in quaint villages and impressive cities along the way. He'll be sharing his photos and stories. Free.

Zumba Gold 10:45-11:45am. Keene Rec. Center, 312 Washington St. Zumba Gold meets Tuesdays and Thursdays through February 26. Dances will be taught to Latin and pop music. Classes are open to seniors and beginners. **603-357-9829**.

Friday, Jan. 9

ARTS, MUSIC & THEATER

Opening Reception: Art of the Anasazi Photography by Harvey Halpern 4-6pm. Peterborough Town Library, 2 Concord St. Artist talk at 5:30pm, with time for questions at the end. **603-924-8040**. www.PeterboroughTownLibrary.org.

FAMILY FUN

Kids Comic Club: Special Guests 4:30-5:30pm. Kay Fox Room, Keene Public Library, 60 Winter St. For comic fans ages 8-12. Create together, discuss graphic novels, and watch interviews and tutorials from favorite artists. Registration appreciated. Parker Goodreau: **603-352-0157**. pgoodreau@keenenh.gov.

MISCELLANEOUS

Reception: Smartphone Photo Contest 5-7pm. Dublin Community Center, 1123 Main St., Dublin. Deadline for submission is January 7th. **603-563-8080**. info@dublincommunitycenter.org. www.dubhub-nh.org/calendar.

Special Events at the DubHub:

Smartphone Photo Contest

Reception: Jan. 9 • 5-7pm
Deadline for submission: Jan. 7

Coffee House & Open Mic

Saturday, Jan. 17 • 6-9pm
Featuring Dragonfly

Storytelling & Spoken Word Circle

Saturday, Jan. 21 • 6:30-8:30pm



Dublin Community Center

1123 Main St., Dublin, NH
info@dublincommunitycenter.org

Upcoming Performances



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02/05 LES BALLETS TROCKADERO de MONTE CARLO
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01/25 RANI ARBO & daisy mayhem
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01/30 LATE & ALONE
An intimate portrait of Johnny Cash

02/28 HEADLINERS COMEDY CLUB
Rob Steen: A seasoned stand-up favorite

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Saturday, Jan. 10

ARTS, MUSIC & THEATER

Forks Over Knives Documentary 4pm. 31 Howard Hill Rd, Jaffrey. Showing how people shed excess pounds and unwanted medications through healthy, plant-based diets. \$15 pp. Samantha Bontempo: **603-532-7863**. www.jaffrey.recdesk.com/Community/Program.

Branch River Theatre Auditions: Clue 10am-12pm. American House, 197 Water St., Keene. Cold readings from the script (provided). Bring list of acting experience and be prepared to list potential schedule conflicts between March and June 21. www.branchrivertheatre.org.

Sunday, Jan. 11

ARTS, MUSIC & THEATER

Opening Reception: Art and Adventure at Tall Pines 2-4pm. Hancock Town Library, 25 Main St., Hancock. A Legacy of Local Art and History. The exhibit features paintings and prints of the Reaveley family, as well as historic souvenirs from a local summer camp. A presentation with a talk and a short film will begin at 3 pm. **603-525-4411**.

Branch River Theatre Auditions: Clue 3-5pm. American House, 197 Water St., Keene. Consist of cold readings from the script (provided). Bring list of acting experience and be prepared to list all potential schedule conflicts between March and June 21. www.branchrivertheatre.org.

MISCELLANEOUS

Benedict Arnold, Patriot (and Traitor) 4pm. Westmoreland Town Hall, 780 Rte. 63, Westmoreland. Free. Reception to follow. www.westmorelandhistoricalsociety.org/.

Al-Anon Meeting: Help and Hope for Friends and Families of Alcoholics 5pm. St. James Episcopal Church, 44 West St., Keene. For questions call or e-mail **603-369-6930**. district7@nhal-anon.org. www.nhal-anon.org.

Monday, Jan. 12

ARTS, MUSIC & THEATER

Branch River Theatre Auditions: Clue 6-8pm. American House, 197 Water St., Keene. Cold readings from the script (provided). Bring list of acting experience and be prepared to list all potential schedule conflicts between March and June 21. www.branchrivertheatre.org.

MISCELLANEOUS

Teen Crafternoon: Perler Beads 3:30-5:30pm. Keene Public Library, 60 Winter St., Keene. Middle and high schoolers, design 3D art with perler beads. Eleanor Green: **603-352-0157**. egreen@keenenh.gov.



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