



## Dr. Seuss’s The Cat In The Hat Live On Stage At The Colonial Theatre Saturday, March 14th



The renowned repertory company, National Theatre of Great Britain, will perform Dr. Seuss’s The Cat in the Hat at The Colonial Theatre.

A beloved classic leaps off the page and onto The Colonial Theatre stage on Saturday, March 14th when Dr. Seuss’s The Cat in the Hat is performed from 2 to 4 p.m.

This family performance is a timeless tale by Theodor “Seuss” Geissel with a twist. Expect laughs, surprises, and just a bit of delightful disorder as this children’s book is played out with all its zaniness.

This version of the show has been credited by the Dr. Seuss estate as being the #1 version of the show worldwide with over 300 performances in over 60 cities. The play was adapted for the stage in 2009 by the National Theatre of Great Britain, telling the story just like the book, of a brother and sister, bored at home on a rainy day (without their mother) when they are visited by none other than The Cat in his red and white striped hat. Of course, the story wouldn’t be complete without Fish, Thing One and Thing Two, and a mess that has to be cleaned up with the Picker-Up Machine.

The Colonial Theatre is located at 95 Main Street in Keene. For more details or tickets, call 603-352-2033 or visit [www.thecolonial.org](http://www.thecolonial.org).

## Madame Sherri’s Lounge & Cabaret Come For The Food, Stay For The Magic

*Savory Food, Creative Drinks, Lively Nightlife*



Madame Sherri’s Lounge & Cabaret owners – (L to R) Adam Toepfer, Paulee Mekdeci (Miss Ginger Souless), and Patrick Brown – have created a restaurant and nightclub venue where the LGBT community can feel supported.

## Community Push Grows To Preserve Historic Christian Hill Road Bridge

A grassroots preservation effort led by internationally acclaimed painter John Traynor and his wife Liz, is gaining momentum in Swanzey as residents prepare to vote on the future of the Christian Hill Road Bridge, a rare and historically significant structure located in West Swanzey.

Built in 1930, the Christian Hill Road Bridge is a timber stringer railroad bridge and was formally recognized in 2018 as the last remaining example of its kind in New Hampshire.

BRIDGE, page 10

## Ashuelot Concerts Performs Romantic Violin Sonatas This Weekend



British chamber musicians Louisa Stonehill and Nicholas Burns.

Ashuelot Concerts will perform romantic violin sonatas in three scenic New Hampshire venues this weekend: Stonewall Farm in Keene on Friday, February 13th at 7:30 p.m.; Alyson’s Orchard in Walpole

on Saturday, February 14th at 7:30 p.m.; and The Park Theatre in Jaffrey on Sunday, February 15th at 3 p.m.

British chamber musicians Louisa Stonehill (violin) and Nicholas Burns (piano) will present a program of duos by Schumann, Beethoven, and Schubert. Schumann’s *Violin Sonata No.1 in A minor* was written during a time when he was battling greatly with his mental illness. His struggles manifested into one of the most breathtaking violin sonatas ever composed. Beethoven’s *Sonata for Piano & Violin in G* features fascinating equality of dialogue between the piano and the violin, with the two instruments gorgeously interwoven throughout. From the soft, almost ghostly opening of Schubert’s *Fantasia in C*, the music very gradually enters into a beautifully lyrical and virtuosic space, fully justifying the work’s designation as a Fantasy.

Online booking for concerts is encouraged in advance as concerts often sell out. Tickets are \$50 for adult premium seating, \$35 for adult general admission, \$10 for young adults (18 to 30), and free for children under 18. Visit [www.ashuelotconcerts.org/events](http://www.ashuelotconcerts.org/events).

By Lori Catozzi Cook

Madame Sherri’s Lounge & Cabaret has become the energetic epicenter of the LGBT community in the Monadnock Region since opening its door in 2024. Located at 82 Main Street in Keene, Madame Sherri’s offers a full-service restaurant, live music, comedy, burlesque, and other adult entertainment to bring people together for a fun night out.

The venue is named after the scandalous and extravagant Madame Sherri, who held lavish parties with her New York City friends at her Chesterfield “castle” in the 1930s.

Co-owners Patrick Brown, Paulee Mekdeci (Miss Ginger Souless), and Adam Toepfer (VJ Adam Quincy) opened this locally owned and operated club, focusing strongly on queer art and supporting the queer community.

“We are the first venue of its kind in Keene,” says Brown. “That said, our doors are open to all who want to come out and experience delicious food,

catch a show, or maybe sing karaoke.”

“Such a welcoming, beautiful space,” says patron Amy Christiansen. “The owners put so much thought into designing a space that is elegant and welcoming. Amazing entertainment options. Lovely addition to our community.”

Mekdeci chimes in: “As Keene’s first openly LGBTQIA+ bar, restaurant, and nightclub, we always work hard to keep Madame Sherri’s a safe and welcoming space for our queer community as well as for our allies. Everyone is welcome at Madame Sherri’s. You don’t have to be queer to come in!”

He continues: “As a gay, non-binary, drag, and burlesque performer as well as an actor and filmmaker, it’s always been a dream to have a space that is centered around LGBTQIA+ art and amplifying the voices of these artists. Being a part of building a vibrant drag scene that didn’t exist in Keene a few years ago is something I’m extremely proud of.”

LOUNGE, page 10

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# Climate Cafe: The Ever-Changing But Resilient Forests Of Mt. Monadnock

The Keene Clean Energy Team will present Climate Cafe: The Ever-Changing but Resilient Forests of Mt. Monadnock on Tuesday, February 17th, from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m., in Heberton Hall at Keene Public Library, located at 60 Winter Street in Keene.

The program will be presented by Professor Peter Palmiotto, Environmental Studies faculty member at Antioch New England Graduate School. The

presentation will examine how the forests of Mt. Monadnock have changed over time in response to human activity and natural disturbances, and how a changing climate may affect the region's forest communities.

For more details, visit [cleanenergykeene.com/2025/12/21/climate-cafe-impacts-of-climate-change-on-mt-monadnock/](http://cleanenergykeene.com/2025/12/21/climate-cafe-impacts-of-climate-change-on-mt-monadnock/).

# United States Postal Service Hiring Event in Brattleboro February 23rd

The United States Postal Service is now hiring. A career event will be held on Monday, February 23rd, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Holiday Inn Express at 100 Chickering Drive in Brattleboro.

Attendees should bring a driver's license, education history with addresses, employment history for the past seven years, and DD-214 if ap-

plicable. Applicants must be at least 18 years old, or 16 with a high school diploma, and must be U.S. citizens, permanent residents, or citizens of U.S. territories. Successful candidates will pass a background check, drug screening, and medical assessment.

For more details, visit [usps.com/careers](http://usps.com/careers).

# HCS Healthy Starts Benefits From Casino Program Through February 19th

Home Healthcare, Hospice and Community Services (HCS) Healthy Starts program has been selected as a recipient of Revo Casino & Social House's Rebels With a Cause charitable program, running February 10th through 19th. The casino is located at 172 Emerald Street in Keene.

"HCS is so grateful to the Revo casino for selecting HCS this year, where funds raised will benefit our Healthy Starts and Kinship Navigator families," said Sareen Sarna, director of growth and philanthropy at HCS. "Our dedicated Healthy Starts team brings education, care, nursing visits and comfort along with material items

to families in the Monadnock Region who need direct support."

Funds raised will support HCS's Kinship Navigation program, a free, community-based service for kinship caregivers; grandparents, aunts, uncles, siblings and other relatives who are raising children who are not their own. The program helps bridge gaps in community support and services, assists with eligibility and benefit applications, provides emotional support, and connects families with advocates.

To learn more, visit [www.HCSservices.org/healthystarts](http://www.HCSservices.org/healthystarts) or call 603-352-2253

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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



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Mason



Meet Mason, a shy but very handsome boy named after the town where his journey began. Mason came to MHS as a local stray and, despite their best efforts to find his people, no one has come forward – so now he's looking for a home that appreciates a quieter kind of companionship. Mason is a sensitive soul who is still pretty skittish in new situations and will likely always be a bit of a "spirit cat," preferring to observe the world from a safe distance rather than being right in the middle of the action.

Mason would do best in a calm home that understands he may always be more of a roommate than a lap cat, and that's okay. He would likely enjoy having a friendly feline companion, which could help boost his confidence, and may do fine with older kids or cat-savvy dogs with slow introductions. Starting out in a small, quiet space with all his essentials and a cozy hiding spot will help him decompress and feel secure. Mason is the perfect match for someone who believes love doesn't have to be loud-and who finds joy in earning the trust of a gentle, watchful friend.

Mason is a two-year-old male domestic shorthair. The Adoption Center is located at 101 West Swanze 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](http://www.monadnockhumane.org).

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# Paintings On Exhibit In Dublin



By Byron L. Levy

On Friday, February 13th from 5 to 7 p.m., the public is invited to attend a reception for an exhibition featuring paintings by Scott Niemi and Byron L. Levy. The event will be held at the Dublin Community Center at 1123 Main Street.

Niemi is an award-winning fine artist/illustrator. Currently he is a teaching professor in the BSDT program at Clark University, and has worked as a professor of Interactive Media/Design at Becker College, as an art lecturer at Franklin Pierce University, and as an art handler/installer for the Palm Beach Institute of Contemporary Art. His work can be seen in corporate collections across the country, as well as in hundreds of private collections.

Louisiana watercolorist Byron L. Levy (1921-2015) was born in New Orleans where he maintained an avid commitment to art over seven decades. His watercolors portray Louisiana wetlands, New Orleans vignettes, and diverse scenes encountered in his travels, including on repeated trips to New England. An active member of the Louisiana and New Orleans art scene, the Louisiana Watercolor Society awarded him its Lifetime Achievement Award in 2005. Levy's son Ron of Hancock has curated the extensive array of his father's work, including a vast collection of sketchbooks spanning eight decades, beginning with his experiences as an American officer in World War II.

The exhibit is available for viewing and purchase February 13th through March 5th during open hours and by appointment, with a closing event, Coffee & Conversation with the Artists on Thursday, March 5th from 10 a.m. to noon.

More details about the artists can be found at [www.dubhub-nh.org/calendar](http://www.dubhub-nh.org/calendar).



By Scott Niemi

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For more information: <https://cleanenergykeene.com/2025/12/21/climate-cafe-impacts-of-climate-change-on-mt-monadnock/>

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# Thank You For Not Getting Around To Your Fall Landscape Clean-Up



In my neighborhood, the top snapped off of a spruce tree during a storm years ago, leaving the bottom of the tree. Its broken top has become an incredibly valuable nesting location.

Thinking of our wildlife neighbors as the temperature drops, sleeting rain falls and snow piles up outside? Indeed, amphibians like turtles, birds, small mammals like racoon, skunk, mice and squirrels as well as insects (their food) are looking for a safe, dry place out of the wind and rain/snow for themselves and their families just like we do.

While the wildlife in our landscapes have evolved over millennia to reduce the amount of food they need to survive winter, our building on top of and paving over so much of their habitat is a problem. But today we have good news! The standing dead trees, fall leaves, shrub thickets, perennial stalks and open soil areas in your home landscape can provide exactly what our wildlife community members need.

**Hazard verses Habitat**  
Of course, a dead or compromised tree within striking distance of your home is a safety concern. But in my neighborhood, the top snapped off of a spruce tree during a storm years ago, leaving the bottom of the tree. Its broken top has become an incredibly valuable nesting location. The University of New Hampshire Extension Service states that “Ten species of New Hampshire forest birds excavate cavities for nesting and roosting...15 birds and 18 mammals use natural or excavated cavities in forests for nesting, roosting, or denning.”

Another neighbor’s maple tree has been declining for some years. Luckily he’s a birder. This snag in his front yard has allowed not only him but also the rest of the neighborhood to watch as several families of woodpeckers have come and gone.

**The Inevitable Brush Pile**  
This is all of the sticks, branches, and stems we accumulate over a season. Why spend physical effort loading this woody material onto your truck or trailer bed and then good money paying for the gas to drive as well as the fee to dispose of this material at a local landfill? You can instead, pick a location in a far corner of your landscape. Pile all of these materials here like a forest does, haphazardly, with some leaves on top. The resulting enclosed spaces inside and underneath are incredibly important and necessary for small mammals to shelter in. Over time, the material will begin to break down with the help of decomposers. These insects become breakfast, lunch and dinner for the larger critters.

**Bare Soil Spots**  
Did you know – I love this part – the *Farmer’s Almanac* tells us that our over 400 Northeastern, solitary bee species are nearly two to three times more effective pollinators than honey bees? And that

70 percent of our native bees are ground nesting? Even I still cringe when I see spots of bare soil in our demonstration “yarden.” But these bees, including bumble bees, need our loose, sandy soil for their nests. A client of mine had long-time concerns for the many bees she could see digging tiny holes in her front yard of very sandy soil. She was relieved to learn that she had not simply been lucky to not be stung, these bees are solitary and not aggressive. They nest in single holes with no honey to protect. In fact, the Xerces Society shares that “some ground-nesting bees are amongst the earliest to emerge in the spring, making them vital pollinators of cherries, plums, and other tree fruits.”

**Woods and Gardens**

with Michele Chalice

**Perennial Stalks**  
The other 30 percent of our native bees nest in stems or stalks. We now know that springtime is when we cut, not remove the stalks from our perennial plants that feed their seeds to wildlife throughout the winter. Cutting these stalks, 18 to 24 inches tall creates the perfect location for stem nesting native bees to drill into. New leaves hide these stems from our view but the bees know where they are hibernating over the following winter to emerge the next spring!  
See, we knew that there was a good reason to only clean-up inside our homes, not outside in our landscape.  
**Resources:**  
NH Extension - <https://tinyurl.com/2c62ft9n>  
NH Audubon - <https://tinyurl.com/6kf776zm>  
Xerces Society - <https://tinyurl.com/mvsh3mjx>

*Michele Chalice, owner of @HealthHomeHabitats, an environmental landscape consulting and education firm in Keene, NH, loves to talk with groups and new clients about how their home landscapes can shift to growing native plants and food; special places for their family, pollinators and wildlife. 603-313-9153 or michele@healthhomehabitats.com*

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# Dancing With The Keene Stars Is Back

## March 20th And 21st At Keene High School

The major yearly fundraiser event in support of the Keene High School Project Graduation, Dancing with the Keene Stars, will be held on Friday and Saturday, March 20th and 21st at 7 p.m. (doors open at 6:30 p.m.), with a matinee on Saturday, March 21st at 2 p.m. (doors open at 1:30 p.m.) at Keene High School at 43 Arch Street.

Owners of Keene Fusion Studios, Rich and Pam Clough, have paired local “stars” with experienced dance community members for a fun dance competition; the audience will get a chance to vote for their favorite dance duo.

Statistics show that graduation night is one of the most dangerous nights for seniors. Project Graduation is a celebration that is a safe alternative to the dangerous tradition of party hopping the night of graduation, which often involves drinking and driving. The saving of just one life is priceless.

Tickets for Dancing with the Keene Stars are \$20 general admission and \$17 for seniors and students and can be purchased online at <https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/dancing-with-the-keene-stars-2026>.



The 2026 Dancing With the Keene Stars and their partners include: (front, left to right) Jay Hayston, Todd Rogers, Kris Kleine, Shannon Amlaw, Aubrey Saxton, Med Kopczynski, Erin Dallas-Patch, and Jenny Mackay, and (back row, left to right) Pam Clough, Shana Stack-Davis, Colleen Barry, Rich Clough, Toby Tousley, Bethany Ratliff, Matt Peake, and Artie Knowles.

# Valentine's Day

## Celebrate Valentine's Day With The Whole Family

When you think of Valentine's Day, you are likely to imagine couples enjoying candlelit dinners and exchanging expensive gifts. However, love isn't reserved for romantic encounters. If you are raising a family, kids are a huge part of the love a family shares. So shift the focus this year from one-on-one celebrations to embrace the whole family. Whether your family is comprised of infants and toddlers or teenagers getting ready to launch or something else entirely, create a family-centered celebration this Valentine's Day.

To shift the focus of Valentine's Day from romance to family, think about

connection. Rather than trying to create some impressive romantic gesture, make the day's activities more intentional. Build a family tradition to celebrate your family's love for one another. It doesn't need to be elaborate; just think about ways to make the day special for your family.

It could be as simple as a special meal. A breakfast of pancakes made in the shape of a heart with special touches like strawberries and cream or chocolate chips can be a fun way to start the day. A family tradition is really just a shared ritual. It can be something repeated year after year, creating anticipation and excitement for the holiday.

Another fun and easy tradition is writing family notes. Before the actual day, each family member can

write short notes or cards for everyone in the family to remind them of something you love about them. It can be as simple as a thank you for helping with something or how much you love their artistic talent or sports ability. Read them together on Valentine's Day to boost everyone's sense of family appreciation.

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Rather than gifts, focus on experiences. Shared experiences create lasting memories and build connection. Have a family movie night with a film that is likely to leave everyone in a good mood. Pop some popcorn or serve some of your family's favorite snacks while you enjoy the show.

For a more active bunch, create a Valentine-themed scavenger hunt around the house or, if the weather is cooperative, outside around your neighborhood. Create some simple clues to lead the hunters to different areas where you have hidden small surprises. Or you could have your family solve clues and the winner gets to win the opportunity to get a night off from chores, choose what to have for a dinner, or control of the TV remote for the night.

So much of how we interact can be enhanced by sharing food, and you can make that even more special by cooking and baking together. Cooking together shifts a simple meal into a collaborative event. Cooking is also an educational activity that promotes practice with math and science skills. Measuring, mixing, and adding heat allows you to turn simple ingredients into a new delight. Try making your own bread, pizza, soup, cookies, etc. Everyone can take part in creating the meal or snack. There are jobs that are appropriate for almost any aged child to participate.

Use the holiday to create space for meaningful conversations. Engage the family in discussions about different types of love such as family love, friendships, kindness to others, gratitude and appreciation, compassion and empathy, as well as romantic feelings. Over dinner, ask your kids about what makes them feel loved, how they like to show appreciation for others, and if there are gestures of love that they don't like. These types of pointed conversations open the door for kids to feel they can bring up topics when something is on their minds.

You can extend the celebration of love beyond your immediate family by including an aspect of spreading love. This could be writing letters to an absent family member, making cards for a favorite neighbor, or dropping off food and toys for a local animal shelter. Promoting these acts of kindness teaches kids to think about how they can spread love in their community.

As the day comes to a close, do something to bring the family together. Read a book together at bedtime. Follow a ritual where you remind each person why you love them. Rituals are a great way to reinforce the point that you have tried to make with creating a family celebration of love.

Your Valentine's Day doesn't need to be expensive or elaborate. It's a way to help your family reflect what makes your family special. Happy Valentine's Day.

Sheri Lapointe is a licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselor. She works as a behavioral health clinician for the Granite State Children's Alliance. Send comments to her at The Monadnock Shopper News, P.O. Box 487, Keene, NH 03431.

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# Pearly Suds, Residential And Small Business Cleaning One Spotless Space At A Time



The newly opened residential and small business cleaning service, Pearly Suds, is ready to make lived-in spaces clean.

This small, woman-owned and operated cleaning business is the brainchild of Amber Chickering, who wants to transform lives through her cleaning services one spotless space at a time.

“Cleaning has always been my passion,” says Chickering. “I want my clientele to feel like they are hiring someone who is passionate to be there to help them maintain their home or business, and not there just to make a paycheck.”

The services of Pearly Suds include basic cleaning, deep cleaning, and move-in, move-out cleaning. Chickering also offers small home improvement services, such as wall patching, painting, and such.

Pearly Suds serves Keene and the surrounding areas. For a free quote, call or text 603-852-4239 or email pmarie3810@gmail.com.

Amber Chickering of Pearly Suds is ready to take on local cleaning projects.

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# Valentine's Day

## Top Valentine's Day Scams

This Valentine's Day is shaping up to be big, according to projections by the National Retail Federation, which suggests that total consumer spending may reach \$27.5 billion.

As you prepare to celebrate, there are a few common scams that you need to be aware of. Whether hoping to spark a new relationship or buying gifts for loved ones, beware of these four scams regularly reported to the Better Business Bureau (BBB).

**Impostor websites**

Consumers should always be alert for impostor websites, from fake jewelry sellers to online dating sites. Scammers can easily lift official photos, sale promotions, and logos directly from the website of a popular jewelry brand. With professional graphics and unbeatable prices, scammers build an attractive website that looks eerily similar to the real thing.

Similar methods may be used to build fake online dating platforms, often used to steal personal data and credit card information.

**Red flags:**

- Products are available at extreme discounts.
- The seller requests customers pay with cash transfer apps or cryptocurrency.
- Customer service is unreachable.

**Romance scams**

Romance scammers often target vulnerable people who have experienced a recent breakup or other hardship. They take advantage of that heartbreak to establish a connection and gain sympathy. Once they've gotten their victim on the hook with a sad story, they begin pursuing their true goal—money.

Falling victim to a romance scam can be particularly devastating. Victims can lose thousands of dollars, and they're often left feeling heartbroken and betrayed because they believed they'd found a good partner. Read more about romance scams for safe online dating advice.

**Red flags:**

- The relationship moves very fast.
- You never meet in person.
- They ask for money.

**Wrong number scam**

Responding to a text message from someone who messaged the wrong number might seem harmless. It might even seem like the polite thing to do if they say they're looking to reconnect with a potential match.

The text message, however, is bait to lure you into a conversation. If you keep chatting, they eventually try to get your personal information by directing you to sign up for an adult site. Learn more about wrong number texts and scam bots.

**Red flags:**

- The messages don't stop.
- The sender directs you to sign up for a website.
- They try to get your personal information.

**Fake florist scam**

Ordering flowers for Valentine's Day? Don't procrastinate or you may end up falling for a scam. BBB has received many reports of shoppers who thought they were ordering flowers from an online florist... but either got nothing at all, or a disappointing arrangement. Don't let phony florists ruin Valentine's Day.

**Red flags:**

- The business has no reviews or bad reviews (always check BBB.org).

You can't find a return policy or satisfaction guarantee.

The deal is "too good to be true."

What to do if you encounter a scam

If you encounter a suspected romance scam, cut off all contact with the perpetrator by blocking their accounts and phone number. Then, report your experience to BBB.org/ScamTracker. Dating site users should also report suspicious activity to the platform so they can take action against the scammer's account.

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Becton Dickinson (C.R. Bard)	210.02	6.39	Merck (Hubbard Farms)	121.93	11.58
Toronto Dominion Bank (TD Bank)	96.68	3.22	Deluxe (NEBS)	27.80	1.41
PC Connection	67.92	9.11	Teleflex (Jaffrey)	108.42	4.05
Bank Of America (Fleet)	56.53	3.29	Timken (MPB Corp.)	106.04	12.86
Corning Inc.	122.16	18.87	M&T Bank Corp. (People's United)	238.01	16.41
Ametek, Inc. (Precitech)	231.91	7.90	Dover Corp. (Markem)	223.66	22.06
PRECIOUS METALS			COMMODITIES		
	Close	Week's Change		Close	Week's Change
Silver (\$ per ounce)	77.28	(4.87)	Wheat (cents per bushel)	530.75	(7.75)
Gold (\$ per ounce)	4,977.60	100.20	Corn (cents per bushel)	430.75	2.50
Platinum (\$ per ounce)	2,104.12	(42.36)	Soybeans (cents per bushel)	1,114.75	50.50
			Cattle (cents per pound)	237.65	0.90
			Crude (\$ per barrel)	63.50	(2.36)

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# Community Push Grows To Preserve Historic Christian Hill Road Bridge

BRIDGE, Continued from page 1

Preservation advocates note that the bridge is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and represents an increasingly rare link to the state's transportation and engineering history.

The bridge was closed by the State of New Hampshire in 2014 following inspections that identified the need for repairs. Although no longer open to vehicular traffic, the structure remains intact and visible, continuing to serve as a landmark within the West Swansey community. The Town of Swansey currently plans to remove the bridge and replace it with a concrete culvert.

In response, the Traynors led a petition drive that successfully placed two citizen-initiated warrant articles on the 2026 Swansey Town Meeting warrant. The articles seek to give voters a direct role in determining the bridge's fate. One article proposes delaying demolition for one year in order to study preservation, rehabilitation, or adaptive reuse options. The second asks whether the town should preserve the historic bridge rather than proceed with removal.

Supporters argue that demolition would result in the permanent loss of a nationally significant historic



John and Liz Traynor at the bridge

resource and believe that alternatives should be carefully evaluated before irreversible action is taken. Opponents have cited concerns related to infrastructure planning, costs, and funding timelines.

Town meeting voters will decide on March 10th whether to preserve the bridge, delay its replacement, or allow the town to proceed with plans to replace the historic structure with a modern culvert.

# Madame Sherri's Lounge & Cabaret Come For The Food, Stay For The Magic

LOUNGE, Continued from page 1

"Madame Sherri's is a welcoming space for everyone," adds Toepfer. "We are open for families to have dinner up until 9 p.m. After 9 p.m., we switch to a 21+ space. Come in and grab some dinner and enjoy a show! Where else in Keene can you do that?"

"My favorite is all the amazing drag performers that turn the bar into a community," says Hayley Feyh. "It's a rare and wonderful feeling to feel safe expressing your true self."

Madame Sherri's calendar of events, [www.madamesherri.com](http://www.madamesherri.com), is packed full of amusements and entertainment. For Valentine's Day, a Cher The Love tribute to the one and only Cher is scheduled for this evening of enjoyment. Other upcoming events include Nerd Night (for all ages), featuring board games, card games, Xbox games, Cards Against Humanity, and more. For those who would like to showcase their gift of music, Music Open Mic is held on most first and third Wednesdays of the month. This local hot spot also hosts Lip Sync Battles, screening parties of RuPaul's Drag Race, Trivia Nights, the Soulless Family Showcase (adult show), Flex Friday Dance Parties with DJ Flex, and more.

"We went to Brolesque last Saturday night," says Jen O'Neill about her experience. "The place was packed with amazing people all there to have a good time, and Madame Sherri's did not disappoint! Great food, even better drinks, and I'll be talking about the show and friendly staff for years."

"I love this place so much. There is always something fun to do on the weekends. I absolutely love the food and it truly feels like a community. I come here fairly often and I always leave very happy," says Tesla Nikole.

"Such a great place to have a good time. I highly recommend," says Casey Volikas. "It is well ventilated/cooled in the summer and there are plenty of places to sit down."

To celebrate a special event, Madame Sherri's also caters to private events (check out the website for more information).

"I celebrated my 70th birthday at Madam Sherri's, and it was fabulous," says Elizabeth Ossip. "The food and service were perfect, and the help with planning and creating the perfect event was wonderful. Thank you to the entire team! All my guests had a marvelous time."

The savory menu at Madame Sherri's includes starters like Patrick's Poutine, Madame's Wings, Vegetarian Wings (mushroom-based), Veggie Dumpplings, and Empanadas. Patrons will find sandwiches, wraps, and more on the menu, like The LGBT (lettuce, guac, bacon, and tomato on sourdough), ABC Melt (avocado, bacon, cheddar with tomato on thick griddled sourdough), Chicken Parm Sandwich, Bacon Jam Burger, Madame's Mac & Cheese, Fish and Chips, Caesar Salad, and others.

Every Tuesday at Madame Sherri's is Burger Night, Wednesday is Wing Night (75-cent wings), Adam's Cheap Date Night is held every Thursday, and Friday is Fish Fryday with a fish and chips special.

The bartenders at Madame Sherri's create fun cocktails with names like Adam's Cheap Date, Drop Dead Gorgeous, and A Dirty Shame, and mocktails labeled Paris Is Burning, The Pink Flamingo, and Fire Island.

"Incredible drinks," says Matt Brooks. "I got an Apple Cider Margarita and a Fromage à trois (three cheese grilled cheese); so delicious. The staff and the owners are all wonderful. They also have all sorts of fun events going on. Glad to finally have a queer bar in the area."

"This is the best thing to ever happen to the Keene area and has provided such a welcoming and fun space for everyone," says Jenessa Leray. "I don't know what I'd do without this place. Music and dancing are great, and the food and drinks are excellent."

"Our staff is a family," Brown concludes. "Paulee, Adam, myself, and bar manager Katie, bartender Sam, and bar backs Ginny and Logan – we all work together to make an experience for our guests, from food and drink to entertainment."

Madame Sherri's is open Tuesdays through Thursdays from 5 to 10 p.m. and Fridays and Saturdays from 5 p.m. to 1 a.m.

For more details, call 603-354-3377 or visit the website.

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# The Year Of Beauty



Josephine in India by an ancient temple.

Each year, as the new year rolls in, folks often create new years resolutions. I do similarly, except I give the new year a name, as the Chinese do. We are now in the year of the Snake – soon to enter the year of the Fire Horse.

This year for me is the Year of Beauty. What does this mean for me? Daily, for a year, I have the intention to notice beauty. Really notice. To pause, to reflect, and to observe with all my senses what thing of beauty is in front of me. To smell the roses. To see the sunset. To feel, with a hug, my beautiful son or daughter. To listen to a concert of classical music.

## Healing Perspectives

with Josephine Russell



To taste a beautiful and delicious pomegranate. The inside of a pomegranate looks like garnet jewels. With any of these images, I could focus on something else. With the rose, I could notice the thorns. With the sunset, I could look closer to me and see the trash on the ground which a driver threw from his/her window. With my children, I could notice that they are wearing a pair of pants torn. And with the pomegranate, I could taste the white flesh rather than the jewels.

When I have visited India, I have often been struck by the dichotomy around. In India, trash is abundant and smelly and actually repulsive if we choose to focus on it. But, we can choose not to focus on it, but rather simply look around and something of beauty will appear. Maybe a flower, the smiling face of a child, a river flowing to the sea, a large or small statue of a deity, or gorgeous colorful spices and herbs in the market. Take the river as an example. There may be debris floating by. We can focus on this

## Exploring The Benefits Of Qigong, Tai Chi & Sound Immersion Program

A free Peterborough Presents program, Exploring the Benefits of Qigong, Tai Chi & Sound Immersion, will be held at Peterborough Unitarian Universalist Church on Tuesday, February 17th from 1 to 2 p.m. and Saturday, February 28th from 2 to 3 p.m.

There will be two presentations. In Discovering Balance and Harmony Through Movement and Sound Immersion with Cynthia Hajjar, participants will be introduced to gentle practices to support physical and emotional well-being.

Tai Chi & Fall Prevention with Tracy Trudeau will present scientific research showing how regular practice of simple Tai Chi movements can reduce fall risk.



A mother and daughter share a beautiful moment while eating on a dirty sidewalk in India.

or we can focus on the water flowing. In India, this is so poignant. I could let my mind wander off into the filth or I can choose to focus on the beauty.

A friend recently told me that each morning she and her husband go into a rampage as they watch the news which points out the horrors of the world. Instead, they could choose to focus on a morning ritual which evokes a calm and peaceful feeling within. Relax into the day, enjoy the aroma of coffee or tea, journal, do a few sun salutes, step outside for a breath of fresh air, and the list goes on. To me, this seems a better choice for each of us. To create a beautiful ritual for the morning hours. What we do first thing in the morning will set the tone for the day.

As I write this, I am only five weeks into the Year of Beauty. Already I have noticed more beauty than I imagined. This is especially true when I pause. Instead of letting it be a fleeting moment, I make it a lasting moment. Then it feels that my soul is filling up with beauty. I can only imagine how this practice will change me by the end of 2026.

*Josephine Russell has been traveling around this amazing earth since the 60s. It was during her early travels abroad that she took her first yoga class while on a slow boat to India. Josephine has been on the path of yoga since that time. She is owner of Aloha Keene, a Healthy Living Center, at 83 Court Street. You can contact her at josephine@alohakeene.com.*

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ENTERTAINMENT

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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 Gift Certificate to Key Road Car Wash. 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 was the name of this well-known grocery store, shown here soon after this building was completed?

The winner of last week's Mystery Photo contest was Gerry Keith of Harrisville. Russ' Garage and Volkswagen dealership was located in Swanzy.



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Special Events at the DubHub:

Art Reception

Friday, February 13 • 5-7pm

Featuring paintings by Scott Niemi and Byron L. Levy

Storytelling & Spoken Word Circle

Wednesday, February 18 • 6:30-8:30pm

with Sebastian Lockwood & PapaJoe Gaudette

Coffee House & Open Mic

Saturday, February 21 • 6-9pm

Feature: The Milk House Heaters

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Wednesday, Feb. 11

ARTS, MUSIC & THEATER

**Reel Night Out: February Faves/Movie Night at the Library** 6-8pm. Keene Public Library, Ruth Huntress Auditorium, 60 Winter St., Keene. Every Wednesday evening the library screens a film and whips up some popcorn for patrons to enjoy. Film ratings vary from PG to R, so be sure to double check the calendar before bringing the kids. February line-up includes award winners and cult classics with A-list casts. Amy Kraemer: 603-352-0157. [akraemer@keenenh.gov](mailto:akraemer@keenenh.gov)

MISCELLANEOUS

**Home Healthcare Hospice & Community Services: Walk-in Wednesdays-By Appointment** HCS Charles-town, 33 Arborway. Confidential, free of charge discus-sion of services that are available. 603-352-2253. [www.HCSservices.org](http://www.HCSservices.org).

**Home Healthcare Hospice & Community Services: Walk-in Wednesdays** 1-3pm. HCS Peterborough, 454 Old Street Road Medical Arts Building, Suite 208. Confi-dential, free of charge discussion of services that are avail-able. 603-352-2253. [www.HCSservices.org](http://www.HCSservices.org).

**Walk-in Wednesdays** 1-3pm. Family Resource Center at HCS, 312 Marlboro Street, Keene. Confidential, free of charge discussion of services that are available. From Healthy Starts to Hospice care. 603-352-2253. [www.HC-Sservices.org](http://www.HC-Sservices.org).

**Teen Sit & Scribble** 5:30-6:30pm. Booras Room, Keene Public Library, 60 Winter St., Keene. 12-19, judgment free writing group. Share stories & ideas in a creative space. Eleanor Green: 603-352-0157. [egreen@keenenh.gov](mailto:egreen@keenenh.gov).

Thursday, Feb. 12

ARTS, MUSIC & THEATER

**Putney Public Library Writers Salon: Hosted by Toni Ortnor and Putney Public Library** 7-8pm. Winter Zoom Series. Elizabeth Drake and Roberta Harold will be read-ing. This event is free and open to the public. [www.put-neylibrary.org/event/writers-salon-elizabeth-drake-and-roberta-harold/](http://www.put-neylibrary.org/event/writers-salon-elizabeth-drake-and-roberta-harold/).

**Marked Women** 7:30pm. The Edge Ensemble Theatre Company, 310 Marlboro St., Suite 112, Keene. Original monologues written and performed by 11 local playwright/actors. \$20/seniors & students \$18. For reservations call 603-352-5657. [www.EdgeEnsemble.org](http://www.EdgeEnsemble.org).

Friday, Feb. 13

ARTS, MUSIC & THEATER

**Art Reception: Paintings by Scott Niemi & Byron L. Levy** 5-7pm. Dublin Community Center, 1123 Main St., Dublin. 603-563-8080. [info@dublincommunitycenter.org](mailto:info@dublincommunitycenter.org).

**Ashuelot Concerts: Valentine's Day Violin Sonatas** 7:30pm. Stonewall Farms, 242 Chesterfield Rd., Keene. Schumann, Beethoven, & Schubert. Book tickets at [www.ashuelotconcerts.org](http://www.ashuelotconcerts.org).

**Keene Lions Club: Mary Poppins** 7:30pm. The Colonial Theatre, 95 Main St., Keene. For audiences of all ages. \$35 - \$40. 603-352-2033. [boxoffice@thecolonial.org](mailto:boxoffice@thecolonial.org).

**Marked Women** 7:30pm. The Edge Ensemble Theatre Company, 310 Marlboro St., Suite 112, Keene. Original monologues written and performed by 11 local playwright/actors. \$20/seniors & students \$18. For reservations call 603-352-5657. [www.EdgeEnsemble.org](http://www.EdgeEnsemble.org).

FAMILY FUN

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

**Homeschool Library Day** 11am. Conant Public Library, 111 Main St., Winchester. A time when homeschool fam-ilies can meet together, find resources, and have fun. Come on in and make a craft, check out a book, and hang with other homeschool families. Meeting every other Friday, this event is open to all homeschoolers. 603-239-4331.

MISCELLANEOUS

**Journey Dance: Caitlin Clarke** 4-5pm. Aloha Keene Yoga Studio, 83 Court St., Keene. Heal and grow together in movement, music, and sacred connection. Beginners wel-come. Donation based ~ \$25 suggested. 100% donations for Morning Sun Mindfulness Center. 603-762-3129. [www.vagaro.com/alohakeene](http://www.vagaro.com/alohakeene).

**Yoga Nidra: Caitlin Clarke** 5:15-6:15pm. Aloha Keene Yoga Studio, 83 Court St., Keene. Relax into another state of being. Suggested \$15 donation. 100% donations for Morning Sun Mindfulness Center. 603-762-3129.

**Ballroom Dancing Social** 6:30-9pm. Keene Family YMCA, 200 Summit Rd., Keene. No partner required. Light refreshments will be served. All levels welcome. 603-352-6002. [www.keeneymca.org/events](http://www.keeneymca.org/events).

Saturday, Feb. 14

ARTS, MUSIC & THEATER

**Keene Lions Club: Mary Poppins** 1pm. The Colonial Theatre, 95 Main St., Keene. For audiences of all ages. \$35 - \$40. 603-352-2033. [boxoffice@thecolonial.org](mailto:boxoffice@thecolonial.org).

**Ashuelot Concerts: Valentine's Day Violin Sonatas** 7:30pm. Alyson's Orchard, 615 Wentworth Rd., Walpole. Schumann, Beethoven, & Schubert. Book tickets at [www.ashuelotconcerts.org](http://www.ashuelotconcerts.org).

**Keene Lions Club: Mary Poppins** 7:30pm. The Colonial Theatre, 95 Main St., Keene. For audiences of all ages. \$35 - \$40. 603-352-2033. [boxoffice@thecolonial.org](mailto:boxoffice@thecolonial.org).



Saturday, Feb. 14  
ARTS, MUSIC & THEATER

**Marked Women** 7:30pm. The Edge Ensemble Theatre Company, 310 Marlboro St., Suite 112, Keene. Original monologues written and performed by 11 local playwright/actors. \$20/seniors & students \$18. For reservations call 603-352-5657. www.EdgeEnsemble.org.

DINING PLEASURES

**Second Saturday Roast Beef Supper** 5pm. United Church of Bernardston, MA, 58 Church St. Second seating at 6:15. Roast beef with gravy, mashed potatoes, vegetable, rolls, baked dessert. \$15. Call for reservations or to reserve take-out meals. Second Saturday of the month now through April 2026. 413-648-9306.

**Westmoreland United Church Valentine Italian Supper** 5-6:30pm. Town Hall, 780 Rte. 63, Westmoreland. Spaghetti, lasagna, bread, salad, dessert, beverage. \$14, \$5 children 10 & under. All you can eat. Take out available. Jo Ann LaBarre: 603-399-9028.

LECTURES & WORKSHOPS

**Cheshire Floral Farm: Basics of Houseplant Care** 11am. Stonewall Farm Learning Center, 242 Chesterfield Rd., Keene. Bring 1-2 plants from home for personalized advice. Learn easy propagation techniques. Enjoy a mimosa or cocktail. Plants available for purchase. \$45. Advance registration required: www.ticketsignup.io/w.

MISCELLANEOUS

**Love From Within: A Valentine's Day Offering** 9:30-11:15am. Aloha Keene Yoga Studio, 83 Court St., Keene. Let your intentions flow into body, mind, and heart with yoga mantra, chanting & meditation, savasana with gong. Suggested \$35-\$75 donation. Benefit for Morning Sun Mindfulness Center. 603-762-3129.

**Children's Story Time & Craft** 11am. Conant Public Library, 111 Main St., Winchester. Join for a fun Valentine's Day Story Time. The library's assistant director Patty will be reading, "The Day it Rained Hearts" by Felicia Bond and afterwards will show everyone how to make a fun Valentine's themed craft. Free. 603-239-4331.

**Lunar New Year Celebration** 11am-2pm. Keene Public Library, Youth Department, 60 Winter St., Keene. Come learn about the lunar new year. This year is the year of the Horse. Stations available to create lanterns, stamps, masks and more. Amy Kraemer: 603-352-0157. akraemer@keenenh.gov.

Sunday, Feb. 15  
ARTS, MUSIC & THEATER

**Keene Lions Club: Mary Poppins** 1pm. The Colonial Theatre, 95 Main St., Keene. For audiences of all ages. \$35 - \$40. 603-352-2033. boxoffice@thecolonial.org.

**Marked Women** 2pm. The Edge Ensemble Theatre Company, 310 Marlboro St., Suite 112, Keene. Original monologues written and performed by 11 local playwright/actors. \$20/seniors & students \$18. For reservations call 603-352-5657. www.EdgeEnsemble.org.

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\*Age child will be on this birthday.

**Ashuelot Concerts: Valentine's Day Violin Sonatas** 3pm. The Park Theatre, 19 Main St., Jaffrey. Schumann, Beethoven, & Schubert. Book tickets at www.ashuelotconcerts.org.

LECTURES & WORKSHOPS

**"Luminary Jewish Artists of the 20th Century"** 3pm. Congregation Ahavas Achim, Hastings Ave., Keene. Presented by Kimberley Olmstead of Keene State's CALL program. Free.

Monday, Feb. 16

LECTURES & WORKSHOPS

**Birding on the Farm Workshop Series** 8-10am. Westmoreland Garden Project, 193 River Rd., Westmoreland. This workshop series is open to birders and enthusiasts of all skill levels. Bring binoculars and weather appropriate dress & boots for walking. Workshops are free and registration is required. 603-904-3011. info@cheshireconservation.org.

Tuesday, Feb. 17

ARTS, MUSIC & THEATER

**Black History Month Screening: Shadows Fall North** 5:30-8pm. Heberton Hall, Keene Public Library, 60 Winter Street. Shadows Fall North brings to light the overlooked Black history of New England and the people working to reclaim it. This event is free and open to the public. Doors open at 5:30pm and the screening will begin at 6pm. Marti Fiske: 603-352-0157. mfiske@keenenh.gov.

**Cheshiremen Chorus: Weekly Meeting & Singing** 6:30pm. United Church of Christ-Keene, 23 Central Square. All men welcome. Use Vernon St. entrance. Meets every Tuesday. 877-312-7467. www.cheshiremen.org.

FAMILY FUN

**PJ Storytimes: Aimee LaRue** 5pm. Peterborough Town Library, 2 Concord St., Peterborough. Head of Youth Services, LaRue will feature stories around a theme and a craft. Theme for February is the celebration of the Chinese New Year. PJ Storytime is open to kids of all ages; stories and crafts are geared towards preschool through early elementary school aged children. 603-924-8040. www.PeterboroughTownLibrary.org.

MISCELLANEOUS

**"Peterborough Presents: Exploring the Benefits of Qigong, Tai Chi & Sound Immersion" Program** 1-2pm. Peterborough Town Library, 2 Concord St., Peterborough. First of two free info sessions. Second session will be presented on Saturday, February 28th from 2 - 3. 603-924-8040. www.PeterboroughTownLibrary.org.

**Keene Pride Youth Book Club: The Corruption of Hollis Brown** 5:30-6:30pm. Keene Public Library, Eppes Room, 60 Winter St., Keene. Discussion of The Corruption of Hollis Brown by K. Ancrum. There will be snacks, crafts, and the chance to talk all about this month's pick. Eleanor Green: 603-352-0157. egreen@keenenh.gov.

Thursday, Feb. 19

LECTURES & WORKSHOPS

**Business Tax Planning Seminar** 5:30-7:30pm. 178 Main St., Suite B, Keene. Key strategies for small and growing businesses. Hosted by Scot Ward and Rachel Wallach. Reservations required. RSVP to 603-499-7134.

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Schubert

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Keene, NH

Feb 14, 7:30pm  
Alyson's Orchard  
Walpole, NH

Feb 15, 3pm  
The Park Theatre  
Jaffrey, NH

ashuelotconcerts.org

Black History Month

Documentary Screening

The City of Keene Human Rights Committee will present a Black History Month screening of the documentary *Shadows Fall North* on Tuesday, February 17th, from 5:30 to 8 p.m. at the Keene Public Library at 60 Winter Street in Keene.

*Shadows Fall North* highlights the often-overlooked Black history of New England and the individuals working to reclaim and preserve it. Doors will open at 5:30 p.m. Light refreshments will be available. The event is free and open to the public.

A follow-up discussion will take place on Thursday, March 5th, at 6:30 p.m. at the Historical Society of Cheshire County.

For more details, contact the City of Keene Human Rights Committee at 603-352-0157 or mfiske@keenenh.gov.

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Laura Broad

The Laura Broad Memorial Arts and Culture Series presents:

"Luminary Jewish Artists of the 20th Century" with Kimberley Olmstead

Sunday, February 15th at 3:00 pm

Kimberley Olmstead has been teaching Art History at Keene State's CALL (Cheshire Academy for Lifelong Learning) program since 2010. Covering everything from the art of regional museums to Renaissance master works, her classes are always fun, informative, beautiful, and full of engaging PowerPoint slides.

This lecture is free and open to the public.



For more information:

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MARKED WOMEN

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Directed by Kim Dupuis

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# The Soothing Comfort Of Soups

With all the cold weather we’ve had recently, it feels right to share some recipes for a few nourishing and warming soups that make me feel good inside. Soups feel comforting and soothing at different times, in different ways, to different people. From times when we’re feeling “down in the dumps,” to times when we might be feeling upset and frightened, soups can help to give us a feeling of well-being. So grab the soup ladle, a hearty loaf of bread, and enjoy a good bowl of soup to comfort both body and soul!

### Un-Stuffed Peppers Soup

There’s nothing like the taste of classic stuffed peppers. Let the aroma of this easy soup-version fill your kitchen some chilly day this winter. Serves four to six.

**Ingredients:**

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 lb. lean ground beef
- 1 teaspoon dried Italian seasoning
- 1 medium onion, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 2 large green or red bell peppers, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- salt and freshly ground black pepper as desired
- 3/4 cup long grain white rice
- 4 cups beef broth
- 1 (28 oz. ) can tomato puree
- 1 (10 oz. ) can diced tomatoes with green chiles
- 2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
- 1½ cups grated pepper jack cheese (about 6 ounces)
- chopped fresh parsley, for topping

Heat the olive oil in a large Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add the beef, sprinkle with the Italian seasoning and cook, breaking up the meat into small pieces with a wooden spoon, until browned, four to six minutes. Add the onion and bell peppers; cook, stirring, until they start to soften, four to six minutes. Stir in the garlic, salt, and pepper and cook for 30 seconds. Stir in the rice, then add the broth, tomato puree, and diced tomatoes. Stir to combine. Bring the soup to a simmer, then reduce the heat to low, cover and cook until the rice is tender, about 20 to 25 minutes. Stir in the Worcestershire sauce. Ladle the soup into bowls and top with the cheese and parsley.

### Folkway Cabbage Soup

A recipe from The Folkway, a popular restaurant and musical gathering spot in Peterborough from 1975 until 1996. This soup recipe, given to me by a friend, is only one of many collected and cherished over the years by Folkway gatherers.

**Ingredients:**

- 1/3 cup canola or olive oil
- 7 cups shredded cabbage
- 1 large sweet onion, diced
- 1/4 cup sesame seeds
- 1 large can diced tomatoes (28 oz.)
- 4 cups vegetable stock
- 4 tablespoons butter

**tamari (low sodium) soy sauce to taste**  
**freshly grated black pepper to taste**  
**toasted bread slices, grated Parmesan cheese for garnish**

In a heavy pot or five-quart Dutch oven, sauté cabbage, onion, and sesame seeds in oil for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add remaining ingredients, except bread and cheese, and simmer one and a half hours, stirring now and then. Add toasted bread slices and Parmesan cheese when ready to serve in warm bowls. (I’m thinking this might make six to eight servings).

### Cooking Corner

with Nancy Adams

### Hearty Lentil-Sausage Soup

This hearty main-dish soup will warm the bones of any man, woman or child. Any leftover soup may be frozen or saved for another meal, if needed.

**Ingredients:**

- 1 lb. fresh pork sausage links or other sausage links of your choice
- 4 parsnips, cut into chunks
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 cups brown lentils
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon marjoram
- 10 cups hot water
- 1 can (16 oz.) tomatoes
- 8 slices Italian bread, cut diagonally about 1-inch thick (toasted if desired)
- 1 cup shredded Swiss cheese

In covered five-quart Dutch oven our soup pot, cook sausage over medium heat in two or three tablespoons of water for five minutes. Remove cover and cook sausage until well browned, about 10 minutes, turning often. Drain sausage on paper towels, cut into chunks and set aside.

Pour off all but two tablespoons of drippings from pan; add parsnips, onions and garlic. Cook over medium heat about five minutes or until onion and garlic are tender, stirring occasionally. Stir in lentils, salt, marjoram and 10 cups of hot water; heat to boiling. Reduce heat to low, cover and simmer 30 minutes, until lentils are tender. Add tomatoes, with their liquid, and sausage chunks; cook until heated through. To serve: place a bread slice in each soup bowl. Spoon soup over bread and top with about two tablespoons cheese. Makes about eight main-dish servings.

### Pasta and Bean Soup

A simple, yet pleasing pasta and bean combination is both simple and satisfying. Another type of pasta or beans may easily be substituted, if desired. Serves four to six.

**Ingredients:**

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 cup canned crushed tomatoes and their puree
- 3 garlic cloves, chopped
- 2 fresh rosemary sprigs or 1 teaspoon dried, crumbled Italian seasoning
- 4 cups canned or homemade vegetable or chicken broth, divided
- 2 cans (15 or 16 oz.) garbanzo beans (chick peas), rinsed and drained
- 4 ounces fresh fettuccine, cut into 1/2-inch pieces (about 1 cup)
- freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Heat oil in heavy large saucepan over medium heat; add tomatoes, garlic and rosemary. Simmer five minutes; add three cups broth and stir to blend. Puree remaining one cup broth and one cup garbanzo beans in blender; add to saucepan. Add rest of whole garbanzo beans. Bring to a boil; reduce heat and simmer 10 minutes. Add pasta and cook until just tender, about six minutes. Season with salt and pepper and serve, passing Parmesan separately.

Nancy Adams is a native of Peterborough and resides in Hancock. She and her husband, Bud, have raised four sons. She has been featured as one of Yankee Magazine’s great New England cooks. Nancy welcomes suggestions – send them to: Nancy P. Adams, 22 Birch Road, Hancock, NH 03449.

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Karin Royce is a Keene-based entrepreneur and business owner with more than two decades of experience in small business leadership. She is the owner of Shipping Shack, a locally owned small business she purchased and revitalized a year and a half ago to serve the Monadnock region with packing, shipping and business services. In addition, Karin is a part owner of a FedEx delivery business she has successfully operated for over 20 years and a part-owner of Real Steel Fitness, where she supports health, strength, and community wellness. Known for her hands-on leadership and commitment to community growth, she is passionate about supporting local businesses, promoting health and wellness, and building strong, sustainable operations in the region.

Karin has inspired nearly 30,000 followers by openly sharing her personal fitness journey on Instagram, motivating others through dedication, consistency, and authenticity. Along the way, she has built a strong and supportive community that follows her progress and celebrates her milestones. Last year, Karin took that passion to the stage as a contestant on Dancing with the Keene Stars, where her energy, commitment, and joy of movement truly shone. She danced her way into the hearts of the audience, leaving a lasting impression.



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