

# The *Newport Times*

Newport's Good News Paper

Serving the Town of Newport, NH

March/April 2022

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*"I know that positive energy begets positive energy. I know that when I decide to see the good in something or someone, it's returned to me tenfold."*

~ Joshua Radin



The LaValley family at Harold and Gerry's 55th wedding anniversary in 2008

## 60 Years of LaValleys in Newport

Molly Shimko; photos courtesy of Jayna Huot Hooper

"It's a people business," co-founder – alongside his wife Gerry – of LaValley Building Supply, Harold LaValley, says about his work, "You get good people, you treat them properly, and people will be good to you. I learned that a long time ago." A long time ago indeed, as this year marks 60 years in business for LaValley Building Supply. The business found its start in 1962 in Newport, and has grown to a number of locations throughout the twin states.

Before all of that began, LaValley grew up in Claremont. Working at a restaurant in high school before heading off to Bryant University in Rhode Island, LaValley didn't have particular plans to return to the area. However, that all changed when he met his future wife Geraldine, known as Gerry, as a senior. "I was anxious to get back to Claremont after college because of Gerry," LaValley says.

After graduating, LaValley applied for a few jobs in the Claremont area and ended up in the plumbing and building supply sections of the department store Montgomery Ward. LaValley says he ultimately knew Montgomery Ward wasn't for him, "As time went on, we [LaValley and Gerry] saved a little money, bought a property, and started a business." This business, of course, was the very first LaValley Building Supply in Newport. Not wanting to compete with his old employer, LaValley found a perfect potential spot for a business – an abandoned saw mill. "There were already two lumber yards in Newport," LaValley says, "But Newport seemed to fit."

It was a barebones operation when the LaValleys began. "We had absolutely nothing," LaValley says, "No running water, no toilet. There was a big pile of sawdust out back, which would be handy in an emergency," LaValley laughs. LaValley does recall it was easier to get a business started at that time. "Things were

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## NEWPORT COMMUNITY TRUST



NCT co-trustees Mary Susan Leahy and Peter Burger

**"It is great to work with people who have such a commitment to find solutions and support for those who need it."**

~ Hunter Rieseberg

## Good Things Happen When Good People Care

Mel Reed

Newport is not a rich town. It has limited resources and must be selective about where to put what precious cash resources it has. Regardless of that, Hunter Rieseberg, Newport's Town Manager, brags that Newport has one of the biggest hearts he has ever seen in his 20 plus years in civil administration.

"If something needs to get done... if someone, or some organization needs help," he says, "people around here sit down together and figure out how to make it happen... funding or not! It

is great to work with people who have such a commitment to find solutions and support for those who need it."

He goes on to explain that many requests that come to the notice of the Town Welfare Office, especially those from individual residents, do not nicely align with the typically complex requirements set out by grants available to towns and cities designed to support those in need. In addition, getting funds from a grant can take months – even years – to complete.

"Often people need help NOW," Rieseberg states, "...not sometime months in the future."

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## PJ Lovely: A positive community influencer

Coach of the reigning track and field state champions, a father of four kids, and the recreation director, all while being one of Newport's biggest assets. PJ Lovely is the true definition of a Hometown Hero.

Mr. Lovely was born and raised in The Sunshine Town. He spent his time from a young age playing sports on the town common as well as making frequent visits to the Newport Recreation Center. After graduating from Newport High School, PJ attended Springfield College from 1987-1991 in Massachusetts. "My time there enhanced my decision to come back to Newport, but it also influenced how I feel about life in general," Lovely stated, "Find a way to enhance the lives of others, and in turn, your life will be enhanced." Lovely moved back to Newport after his time at Springfield College. PJ had heard Newport old-timers talking about how kids never come back to help this community, "I wanted to buck that trend," says Lovely.

PJ inspires many children, adults, and families, both in and out of the Newport community. He draws his inspiration from other Newport icons, including Ella Casey, Jim Lantz, Lilyan Wright, and PJ's hero, his father Pete Lovely. He admired Ella Casey's undeniable love for this town. "She always wanted what was best for Newport." He commended the way Jim Lantz always encouraged kids and the community to reach for bigger and better things for the town. "Lilyan Wright's dedication to a healthy community far surpassed what I thought was possible," says Lovely. He tells the story, "On snow days, at 92-years-old, she would shovel herself out so she could be on time to teach her exercise classes at the Rec Center. Most of the time she wouldn't have any participants because of the snow, but she would always show up, just in case." Lilyan Wright taught at

the Newport Rec Center for 25 years. PJ's father, Pete Lovely, was a familiar face in the town who put his country and community first. "He was all things Newport, standing proudly for the citizens of the town and making community projects come to fruition," says PJ.

PJ Lovely strives to change people's lives for the better and constantly encourages kids to be the best they can be. Mr. Lovely feels the most fulfilled when he sees a child who has been following a less-than-desirable path and taken action to change their life for the better. As accomplished as PJ feels watching people change, nothing compares to the pride he feels in his own children. Even after winning countless awards, including Champions for Children, Citizen of the Year, and Coach of the Year, his children are what he is most proud of. "Watching your kids succeed in high school athletics and then become responsible, caring, young adults is the achievement that I am most proud of."

With winter carnival a close second, PJ enjoys the summer adventure programs he organizes for teens. This program allows kids to experience new challenges in the woods, on the water and on the field. PJ takes his love for the outdoors and shares it with the people around him. One of his biggest thrills is watching the smiles of the kids who participate in his trek to the summit of Mt. Washington, 100+ kids to date... and counting.

PJ thrives off competition, in addition to our traditional sports, he played rugby for a local club after college and then picked up mountain bike racing. To help maintain his active lifestyle and satiate his love for the outdoors, he has been section hiking the Appalachian Trail, adding, "Life is good..."

From a young age, the Newport Rec Center was a special place to him and in 1993, he joined the



*PJ Lovely and his daughter Maddox hiking and chasing waterfalls in Iceland*

Newport Rec Center's leadership team. He was now able to give back to the community and organization that helped cultivate who he is today. He continues to pour his heart and soul into the Rec Department with his contagious energy. PJ has been a strong advocate for the much-needed new building in Newport. Mr. Lovely lives and breathes sports, outdoor recreation, coaching "I want to share that love with others." Newport is lucky to have Mr. Lovely as part of its community, and for that, he is our Hometown Hero! ■

~ Riely Skarin, Newport High School Senior and Sturm Ruger & Co. Inc. Work Based Learning Intern



*PJ Lovely and Glenn Halleck hiking the Fimmvorduhals trail in Iceland in 2021*



*PJ Lovely, Ryder Lovely, Jagger Lovely, Erin Lovely, Maddox Lovely, Gavin Lovely, Steve McKenney, and Jill McKenney on a road trip to Yellowstone National Park in 2018*



*Ryder, Gavin, Jagger, and PJ Lovely on a winter hike of the Presidential Range of the White Mountains 2022*



# RUGER

is the proud sponsor of the Hometown Hero page

By focusing on our associates, our neighbors, and the town we all love, Ruger is committed to building a future Newport can be proud of.

## 'Healthy Habits' Advice From the Newport Senior Center



If we had to choose a mascot for the Newport Senior Center, it would have to be the wolf because the traits of the wolf represent our commitment to older adults. We can learn a lot from wolves if we take the time, watch, listen, and understand them.

Wolves put elders of the pack first. The older and sick wolves are seen upfront setting the pace and direction for the remainder of the pack to follow. This ensures the older and frailest wolves do not become invisible at the back of the pack and left behind to become isolated, forgotten or even sacrificed.

The alpha keeps a watchful eye over the entire pack as he positions himself at the back of the pack to control the direction needed to be able to help each other. Part of the mission of the Newport Senior Center is to support older adults to allow them to see 'the impossible' as possible.

After a recent survey, we know that all of our participants feel it is important for them to secure maximum independence and dignity while living at home with the assistance of support services as needed.

The Newport Senior Center provides those services. We understand that the aging process can be difficult, challenging, and sometimes stressful, but we are here to help. Everyone has experienced stress

at some point in their life, and we know this stress can cause serious health issues.

Studies have shown that there are three habits that can help prevent stress, and the Newport Senior Center can help you establish those habits.

### Eat a balanced meal

Sullivan County Nutrition Services drivers drove 82,000 miles last year to deliver over 137,000 home-cooked, nutritious meals throughout Sullivan County, including to residents of Newport. There was no interruption in service delivery during the pandemic, thanks to our dedicated staff.

These deliveries are known as Meals-on-Wheels (MOW). MOW are delivered to adults aging in place at home. Meals are prepared daily and are approved by a licensed nutritionist to ensure all meals meet at least 1/3 of the daily recommended allowance.

MOW deliveries include a daily wellness check. When our dedicated drivers are not able to make contact with the meal recipient, our Outreach Professionals will call emergency contacts to determine the safety of the participants. When emergency contacts are not reachable, SCNS relies on the Newport Police Department to provide a wellness check.

If you are homebound and unable to prepare your own meals, call

603-863-6770 to determine if MOW is right for you.

Grab-N-Go, formerly called congregate dining, is another great option for those 60+ to get a hot, daily meal. Congregate dining allows individuals an opportunity to socialize and be part of their community.

Although congregate dining has been transformed into Grab-N-Go, the fun has not stopped. The staff has organized many themed Grab-N-Go distributions to bring smiles and laughter to participants. Grab-N-Go meals are served each week day at 11:45am. Advance reservations can be made by calling 603-863-3177. Come join in the fun! You will be glad you did.

### Exercise

Studies show exercise relieves stress. Whether you like singing and dancing or low impact aerobics for your exercise routine, the Newport Senior Center has a variety of exercise programs becoming available.

Lilyan's Legacy exercise program is a low-impact program held each Tuesday and Thursday beginning at 9:30am. The indoor walking track will be opening soon. This is a safe way to walk with access to rest rooms, water and air-conditioning. Other exercise programs have included yoga, tai-chi and, before the pandemic hit, cardio drumming. Coming soon,

cardio drumming will resume. This is a fun, energized way to reach your exercise goals.

### Sleep

It is important to get enough sleep each night in order to re-energize the body and brain. Participating in mind active activities at the Newport Senior Center is sure to help you stay active during the day and ensure a good night's sleep. Activities include:

Pitch: Tuesday & Wednesday, 1 pm  
Cribbage: Thursday, 1 pm  
Bingo: Friday, 1 pm  
Cornhole: 4th Sunday, 1 pm

### Learn More

To learn more about all of the activities offered at the Newport Senior Center, visit our Facebook page at (Newport Senior Center Home of Sullivan County Nutrition Services) or stop by the center and pick up your very own newsletter.

Older adults deserve recognition for their commitment to family, employment and their community. It's time to put older adults first, just like the wolves. If you want happiness for a lifetime, help someone else. ■

*Consider volunteering or applying for our cooks, prep cooks and driving positions now available. Stop by the Newport Senior Center to complete an application or submit a resume to [scnsnsc@gmail.com](mailto:scnsnsc@gmail.com).*

## ANIMALS RULE

## Wags and Wiggles: Volunteer for the Love of It

Wagging tails and the smell of puppy breath greets our volunteers on a daily basis here at Wags and Wiggles Rescue. As a 501 (c)(3) non profit organization, we solely rely on volunteers to keep our daily operations running. We rescue dogs from Southern states and locally and work to reunite them with forever families. With training, consistency, and dedication, we are able to provide the dogs with an opportunity for a second chance. With four shifts running daily, and opportunities in between, to say

we are busy in an understatement! We are looking for dog-savvy volunteers who can assist us with daily operations, reference and home checks, and bring a positive attitude to our mission. If you are looking to give back to your community, please visit our website at [wagsnwiggles.org](http://wagsnwiggles.org) and complete a volunteer application.

**Christiane Dionne, MBA, Executive Director**  
**Wags and Wiggles Rescue**  
**51 John Stark Hwy., Newport**







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## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

### Good News Abounds in Newport!

I received a call out of the blue. It was like a blast from the past when Hunter Reiseberg—former town manager to Hartford, VT—was on the other end.

"Are you still publishing good news newspapers?" Hunter inquired. "I am now the Town Manager for Newport, NH and I've never seen a community with as much spirit as this one!"

The timing was perfect! It just so happened that I was ready to start helping other communities spread the good news in their towns.

Welcome *The Newport Times*!

When I first met with Hunter and his associate, Christine Benner, Economic Development Coordinator for the Town, I could feel the excitement and absolute certainty that a vehicle like this could bring to light all the good that already exists here. And once that happens, the ripple effect begins and uplifts us all.

Negative news is toxic. If we only read/hear the negative messages, then we start to believe them subconsciously. If you haven't already noticed, Newport is filled with good people doing good things every day, and they can serve as inspirations to us all as we read about their stories and motivations. Just watch... soon everyone will want to hop on the goodness train.

While it sounds a bit Pollyanna-ish, no one can deny that hearing good news uplifts the spirits. Please read *The Newport Times* and notice how good and proud you feel about this—your—remarkably resilient and vibrant community!

—Jen MacMillen

## The Newport Times

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Jennifer MacMillen, publisher: publisher@greatergoodmedia.net

A special thanks to all who made this good news publication happen!

Christine Benner (former Economic Development Coordinator),  
Hunter Rieseberg (Town Manager), and  
Roy Malool (Good Samaritan)

To contribute story ideas or to submit your organization's content, please email to  
NewportNHTimes@gmail.com  
Coming soon: www.newporttimes.net

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## KATHAN GARDENS

### Employee Spotlight: David Beauchaine, Facilities Manager



David was born and raised in Newport and has been here for 33 years – his whole life! He is married to Justine and has four kids ages 7, 10, 11

David believes in staying local and the importance of keeping businesses in the community. Being able to see your neighbors and small-town values are what keeps him happily raising his family in Newport.

"My co-workers are like family to me," said David.

David began his career at Kathan Gardens as a part-time, seasonal employee four years ago and worked his way up to Facilities Manager. With 15 greenhouses and other facilities to oversee and maintain, he has his hands full!

"The next 10 years could really make a difference in turning Newport around to what it could be." He believes that if everyone gets involved in community decisions, it will make a big difference. ■



Kathan Gardens  
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# Job Openings in Newport

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## West Central Behavioral Health

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## Bar Harbor Bank & Trust

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## Cinnamon Street Early Education & Childcare Center

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## Dominos Pizza

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## Eichenauer Inc.

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## LaValley Building Supply

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## Newport School District

**Math Teacher** (Middle) • **Library/Media Specialist** (Middle/HS) • **Special Education Teacher** (Elementary, Self Contained) • **Para Educators** (All Levels, help to become Para II certified) • **Bus Drivers** (will train!) • **Substitute Teachers for All Schools** [sau43@org](mailto:sau43@org); [schoolspring.com](http://schoolspring.com); Sally, [shoop@sau43.org](mailto:shoop@sau43.org).

## Sturm, Ruger & Co. Inc.

**Production Associate** (1st/2nd/4th/5th shifts) • **Warehouse Associate** (1st Shift) • **Electronics Tech** (1st Shift) • **Service Technician** (2nd Shift) • **Manufacturing Engineer • Product Design Engineer • Supplier Development Engineer** Competitive Pa; 401k and Profit Sharing; Medical, Dental, Vision, Flex Spending, Supplemental Long Term Disability, and Supplemental Life Insurance. [ruger.com/careers](http://ruger.com/careers).

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## Town of Newport

**Truck Driver/Equipment Operator** (Full Time) • **Utilities Technician, Water & Sewer** (Full Time) Visit [NewportNH.gov](http://NewportNH.gov) and click on Job Openings.

## Town of Newport Police Department

**Patrol Officer** (Full time - 2 openings) Applicants can find more information about the hiring process at [policeapp.com/Entry-Level-Newport-NH-Police-Officer-Jobs/2556/?Preview=1](http://policeapp.com/Entry-Level-Newport-NH-Police-Officer-Jobs/2556/?Preview=1)

## United Construction

Hiring for the start of the Spring season: **CDL truck drivers, construction laborers, paving roller operator**. Pay aligns with experience. [UnitedConstruction.biz](http://UnitedConstruction.biz) or at the office, 250 North Main Street, Newport. NH



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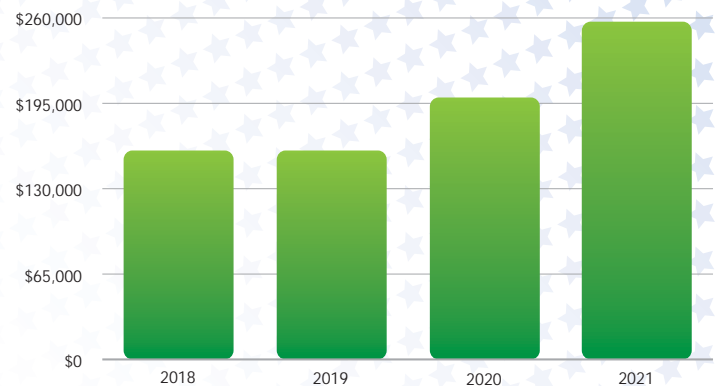
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# The History of the Rec Center

In 1939, Newport built the armory located at 65 Belknap Avenue which served the town for 28 years. It is rumored that the building cost one dollar. Bob Young was the first recreation director for the town's "community center." He started in 1967 and made an immediate positive impact on the community. The center was open for adults from 9 am to 12 pm. The afternoons were filled with various programs for kids and teens, while Wednesday nights were reserved for "girls-only programs." They offered practice space for high school basketball, cheerleading, and other school sports, as well as an archery club and pistol practice in the shooting basement, which now houses fitness equipment. One notable entry in the Argus for the basketball league was a team coached by former selectman Gary Nichols who won all the marbles. His team included Jimmy Bates, Mike Kennedy, Brian Towne, Eddie Little, Kevin Corliss, and Darty Dodge.

Larry Britton – Newport resident and teen council member from 1967 and president his senior year – wrote this: *In the fall of 1967, the first community recreation*



Newport Rec Center day camp started in the late '80s

*center opened its doors in Newport. The Rec director Bob Young, started a teen council consisting of 4 boys and 4 girls from each class of 9th through 12th grade. Together we helped set up a room called the "Canteen" or drop-in center. There were tables and chairs, board games and a jukebox with up to date records. This was long before video games and smart phones were invented. Kids could meet here after school and socialize and there was always a basketball game, a ping-pong game or a pool match going on. We also tried to have a dance a month with live bands from as far away as New York. Always a good showing and fun times. I still have a list of all the strange sounding band names. Lives were changed because of this new way to socialize. I know mine was, after all I was the only teen with a key to the place.*

In the '70s, the community center was filled with dances, adult volleyball leagues, drop-in programs, and such. Jay Harvey, the director, had a unique way of adding many interesting programs. He taught guitar lessons, offered the famous "Almost Anything Goes on the Sugar River Craft Race," and kept the center a place for the youth of Newport.

In the '80s, Larry Flint (and his motto "Life, be in it") took the helm and continued to enhance the program offerings. Most noteworthy was the Friday night roller skating nights (late '70s-early '80s). Skates were rented, and smiles would emerge, and they would enjoy a healthy night out socializing with their friends. Roller skating became so popular the famous "Barn" opened up downtown, where kids skated the night away. Newport Rec Day Camp also started in the late '80s



## MEET YOUR SUGAR RIVER BANK NEIGHBORS



**Neal P. Meagher**  
Vice President and Senior  
Retail Loan Officer  
NMLS #1049365

### **Favorite hobby:**

My favorite hobby is fresh water fishing

### **What fictional place and what real place would you like to visit?**

Fictional: Ceti Alpha 5  
Real: County Tipperary, Ireland

### **What skill would you like to master?**

Typing! This hunting and pecking slows me down!

### **What is the best way to start the day?**

Two hot cups of my favorite: hot coffee, cream and one Splenda.

### **Name a book you'd recommend?**

1776 by William McCullough

### **What was cool when you were younger, not now?**

Wearing at the same time your Timberlands, a pair of sweats and a leather jacket (and the mullet!)

### **What is your favorite movie from childhood?**

The Blues Brothers.

### **What is your life motto?**

I live my work life "Half-Windsor" and my play life "Full Nelson" ~ Neal P Meagher

### **What is your theme song?**

For some strange reason, whenever I get on my riding lawnmower I start singing "Born To Be Wild"

### **What one animal/plant/part of our earth would you save or protect?**

Lobsters and butter

### **What superhuman power would you like to have?**

To be able to mind meld with people to force them to go right on red after stop.

### **What famous person would you have dinner with (alive or dead)?**

Rodney Dangerfield



**Tor Stenberg**  
Loan Originator  
NMLS #2139989

### **Favorite hobby:**

Boating and being on the water

### **What fictional place and what real place would you like to visit?**

Fictional: Hogwarts.  
I would really like to see the building specifically  
Real: Switzerland

### **What skill would you like to master?**

Sailing. I grew up sailing with my family but have never gone alone

### **What is the best way to start the day?**

A cup of coffee!

### **Name a book you'd recommend?**

Rich Dad Poor Dad by Robert Kiyosaki and Sharon Lechter

### **What was cool when you were younger, not now?**

Playing outside

### **What is your favorite movie from childhood?**

Chitty Chitty Bang Bang.  
I used to watch it every day when I got home from school

### **What is your life motto?**

Failure is success if we learn from it

### **What is your theme song?**

Everything's Going To Be Alright by David Lee Murphy and Kenny Chesney

### **What one animal/plant/part of our earth would you save or protect?**

Fresh water

### **What superhuman power, would you like to have?**

Time travel

### **What famous person would you have dinner with (alive or dead)?**

Steven Tyler.  
He is a local celebrity; I have met him, but I would like to sit down and talk to him about the area and his success.



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after morphing from “Playground” days where a supervisor would watch the kids all day long at Meadow Park while kids played.

In the '90s, the center was still home to many programs for youth, and began expanding their program offerings to toddlers through the senior population. A major program of note was the emergence of a Boxing Club, headed by Joe Szelangowski, which became so popular they were able to start a boxing club business in the next town over in Claremont. At least two fighters turned pro from



Rec Center wrestling

the club and had some epic boxing matches at the Newport Opera House. Aerobics classes and karate classes were offered as well as the popular adult volleyball programming and youth sports offerings.

In the 2000s, the building saw even more demand as more programs were added to the mix. A youth wrestling program began in 2008, which saw numbers skyrocket in its early years with as many as 95 kids grades K-8 wrestling in the winter season. The program was able to crown 48 state champions at the youth level, with many kids winning more than once. That program also crowned over ten high school state champions, all getting their early training from Newport's youth wrestling program, started under the direction of Rick Sharron. Old School PE also made its appearance in the 2000s as the Rec started a program to focus on spirit, mind, and body. Adults got together to play old PE games while socializing, laughing, and working up a sweat. The program got national attention with a spot on NBC. Copycat programs popped up across the globe. Newport lived up to the Old School PE motto: “Old games, new friends.”

The Community Center has had programs for youth, adults, and seniors for over 50 years, positively impacting the lives of many people over those years. The building hasn't changed much, but the participants have: Adults who grew up here now have kids that have grown up here. I am 53 now, and still remember playing on the “cookie monsters” basketball team when I was a kid. There are great memories at the Rec, and we are always looking to create more memories for the folks that call Newport home. ■

~ PJ Lovely

## Hidden Gems

### Pier and Wright's Railroad Covered Bridges

At one time, Newport had 19 covered bridges – 13 railroad and 6 highway. Most people are not aware that there are only eight railroad covered bridges left worldwide and Newport has two of them! There are five in New Hampshire, two in Vermont and one in Oregon.



These two bridges, the Pier and Wright's, were built in 1906 replacing ones that were not strong enough to carry the weight of newer, heavier engines. The Pier gets its name from the cement pier in the middle of the river upon which it rests. It is 217' and the longest of the eight remaining. The Wright's Bridge is approximately 120' long and is named after S K Wright whose property the railroad passed through. It is listed on the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER No. NH-35) that documents historically significant engineering and industrial works in the United States. The laminated arch that spans the length of the bridge is what makes the bridge unique and carries most of the weight of the train. Both bridges are listed on the National Historic Register.

To visit them, turn left onto Chandlers Mill Road in Kelleyville. The Pier bridge is about one mile out and right near the road, so you can't miss it. The Wright's is about ¾ mile beyond the Pier, also on the right. Look for the orange stanchion where the rail trail crosses the road. The portal can be seen about ¼ mile down the straightaway. These two railroad covered bridges are huge and well worth your time to visit. ■

~ Jackie Cote

## PJ's Pointers

### Take an Adventure Trip



Make a plan and book it. Each day we all sit around and have wandering thoughts about what we want to do with our life... Our thoughts are filled with awesome adventures and really cool places to visit, or new opportunities we want to try. We read someone's blog or adventure on Facebook or Instagram and say “I want to go there.” Well, book it. It is that easy. My personal bucket list is a mile long, way too overwhelming to get to. However, a wise man once told me that while the Elephant may appear too big to eat, you can eat it. You just have to do it one bite at a time. So make a plan and book it. Post it on Facebook. Tell your friends about it. Invite others to your adventure and make it happen.

Truth is, the adventure lies within the planning, the research, and the excitement leading up to your big trip. Each year, I go on a “mancation” with the guys. We have secret meetings where we get together and plan. Those meetings build excitement as you get to talk about the adventure. We usually go on extended hikes on the Appalachian Trail, and each one of us researches the section we want to hike and tries to find hidden gems around that part of the trail. We find great food stops, cool historical places to visit, and get to see beautiful parts of America on foot. My point is, the planning is half the fun. The trip itself is also a blast, as usually plans don't work out perfectly and you end up somewhere new, experiencing life in a vastly different way than the day-in, day-out doldrums of everyday life. So, grab some friends, sit around a table, and brainstorm some cool ideas that you all want to do. Before long, you will see it morph into a trip of a lifetime. ■



A few of PJ's “mancation” buddies



# The Right Time for the New Community Center is Now

Newport's Recreation Department has been located at its location in the 80-year-old former armory since 1967. Starting in the 1990s, the space limitations of the former armory has been impacting the number of children and fellow citizens that could participate in activities. And since the 1990s, architects and engineers have outlined the space needed to serve the community and indicated the extent of the decaying condition of the former armory. In 2014, a committee of community members surveyed 641 of us and learned the Recreation Department is servicing us well, and that we need a new or improved recreation center. The committee also discussed the difference between a recreation center and a community center and determined Newport needed a Community Center. Their report and survey results are at [newportnh.gov/community-center-committee](http://newportnh.gov/community-center-committee). Since this link and the others may not work well when reading this in print, go to the Town's web page at [newportnh.gov](http://newportnh.gov) and click on the "Proposed Community Center Information" link at the top of the yellow column on the left of the page to access all the Community Center information.

## Community Center Committee

Shortly after becoming Newport's Town Manager, Hunter Rieseberg revived the Community Center Committee. Members of the Community Center Committee, are our neighbors, include Timothy Bates, Brian Coronis, Todd Fratzel, Cindy Gallagher, P. J. Lovely, Jeff North, Kevin Pollari, Christy Whipple, Hillary Halleck, Barry Connell, Jeffrey Miller, and Larry Flint. Town Manager Rieseberg and the Community Center Committee, with the support of the Board of Selectmen, commissioned a feasibility study for a community center. The feasibility study looked at three options, renovating and expanding the current recreation department building (the old armory), using Towle School, and building a new facility. Building a new facility was the least expensive option to meet the recreation and community needs in a center.

At the May 2018 town meeting, the voters approved an expense of up to \$200,000 to hire a firm to take our feasibility plan and create design/build plans that would give our community the details and the not-to-exceed cost for a new community center. The Community Center Committee, after interviewing several candidates, hired Bread Loaf Corporation of Middlebury VT to develop the plans for our community center. Our Community Center Committee members, working with the professionals from Bread Loaf over the course of several meetings, took the feasibility study proposal and refined it into a smaller facility that shares the property with the little league field by Meadow Park and reduces the project cost, while meeting the needs of the Recreation Department and opportunities for community groups. The expected cost of the new Community Center is \$7 million. The town is raising at least \$3 million in grants and donations, leaving the cost to the taxpayers at \$4 million. All the current Community Center Committee work with Bread Loaf can be reviewed at [newportnh.gov/home/pages/proposed-community-center](http://newportnh.gov/home/pages/proposed-community-center).

## New or Renovate?

This new community center will allow many more of our children to be able to have a safe place to go after school and to attend summer day camp. Our current recreation department building (the old armory) is full after school and in the summer. Many of our children must be turned away. The current Recreation Department building is at the end of its useful life. The town had the building assessed in 2017 [newportnh.gov/town-manager/files/recreation-building](http://newportnh.gov/town-manager/files/recreation-building). As part of their work for the Community Center Committee, Bread Loaf looked at the cost to renovate the existing Recreation Center building. That cost in 2019, including bringing it into



compliance with current building codes, was \$2.9 million. Reviewing the option of renovating the undersized, 8500 square foot recreation center for a cost of \$3 million to keep it open, or replacing it with a new 19,720 square foot Community Center for a cost of \$4 million after donations, building the new Community Center is the better investment for our Newport community.

There have been several questions asked about the proposed new community center. The Community Center Committee asked and answered many of the same questions. The size and layout of the center is the result of their many meetings developing the Community Center. Some common questions include the cost of utilities (about \$9,000 more per year), or why there is no pool (about \$4 million more to build and about \$150 thousand for annual upkeep). Costs for the new Community Center include the cost of removing the ambulance and town storage garage on the community center site and removing the existing recreation center building and building a new ambulance/storage garage in its place on Belknap Avenue.

## Community Concerns

The biggest concern about building a new community center is cost and our ability to pay for it. Recognizing this, the Board of Selectmen, the Friends of Recreation, and the Community Center Committee are committed to raising at least \$3 million of the cost

of the community center through grants, donations, and other non-tax sources. The bond article for funding the center also requires that construction shall not start until at least \$3 million of donations is committed. At least \$2.4 million of donations have already been committed. We will then be responsible for payment of the \$4 million bond over the next several years. Because of the way bonds work, Newport would not execute the bond until the center is substantially complete. By the time we would need to start paying for the center, in a year or two, we will be able to visit and enjoy what we are buying. While the actual terms of the bond would not be decided until it is time to execute it, and the tax impact will decrease

over time, the worst case tax impact is estimated to be 72 cents. The Board of Selectmen and the Town Manager have worked over the past several years to keep the town's tax rate relatively level. The manager's proposed budget for next year has a 17-cent increase in the tax rate. But this year's tax rate is down 15 cents from the year before, so the proposed increase is up 2 cents from 2 years ago. By managing our expenses, the community can plan for the capital expense of the Community Center without concern about the management of the Town's operating budget.

Why is now the time to vote to build a new Community Center in Newport? I hear that this is not a good year. Well, I don't remember when we ever said this is a good year. But this year will be better than next year. Inflation will increase the cost next year, and so on every year after that. The town has commitments to most of the \$3 million of donations for this project. There is no guarantee that those donations will be committed after this year.

Therefore, the time for the new community center in Newport is now! It will always cost more next year, \$1.7 million of donations will not be available if this year's vote fails, and we have more children that can benefit from the new center today than the current center can serve. I urge all citizens of Newport to learn more at the deliberative session on April 5 and to vote on the bond for construction of the Community Center when voting on May 10. ■

~ Jeffrey Kessler, Chairman  
Newport Board of Selectmen



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# Town Meeting 2022

## Budget, Costs, and Non-Money Actions to Consider

As Winter turns to Spring, the Town is gearing up for the annual Town Meeting. The Town's budget process started in October with the department heads assessing their department's needs and preparing their budget requests. These recommendations and corresponding estimates became the basis of departmental budget requests. This budget was then turned over to the Town Manager to be reviewed with the Department Heads. The Manager's recommended budget is then created and passed on the Board of Selectmen, which starts another round of review with the Board, the Manager and the Department Heads. Following that review, the Board adopts the budget to be presented to the Town Meeting. The amounts to be voted on at the meeting are broken down into separate articles for the operating budget, including the General, Water, Sewer, and Airport Funds, and other individual articles for specific items and transfers.

The 2022 Operating Budget to be voted on at the meeting is currently \$10,200,969 is \$849,728 less than the prior due to last year's one-time \$869,000 expenditure for the Sand Hill Bridge replacement, leaving a net increase of \$19,272. This budget maintains current operation levels for departments

and provides a modest increase in Town employee pay as well as the funding for necessary infrastructure, road crack sealing, sidewalks, and fire station roof and equipment, including a police cruiser, second (final) payment for a highway truck, and the second (of 5) payment towards a new fire truck. One shift in this budget is for the payment of the bond on 2021's road paving project, which did 4 years of paving in one project. Accordingly, there will be limited road work in 2022 as we use the annual paving budget to repay the bond. Overall, the presented budget will result in a tax rate increase of \$.21, or 1.75%.

The first individual warrant articles requested by the Board is \$7,000,000 for the costs associated with the construction of a new community center. This project will be funded with \$3,000,000 in grants and donations and a \$4,000,000 20-year bond. The estimated tax impact of this project is \$.75 in the first year and decreasing annually thereafter.

There is a warrant article for a \$75,000 bond for study of the Dorr sewer lagoons. The lagoons have not been in use since the early 2000s, but still need to be maintained and monitored. We need to prepare a plan for the work. The State has a planning grant which will provide loan, with 100% forgiveness, to begin this planning.

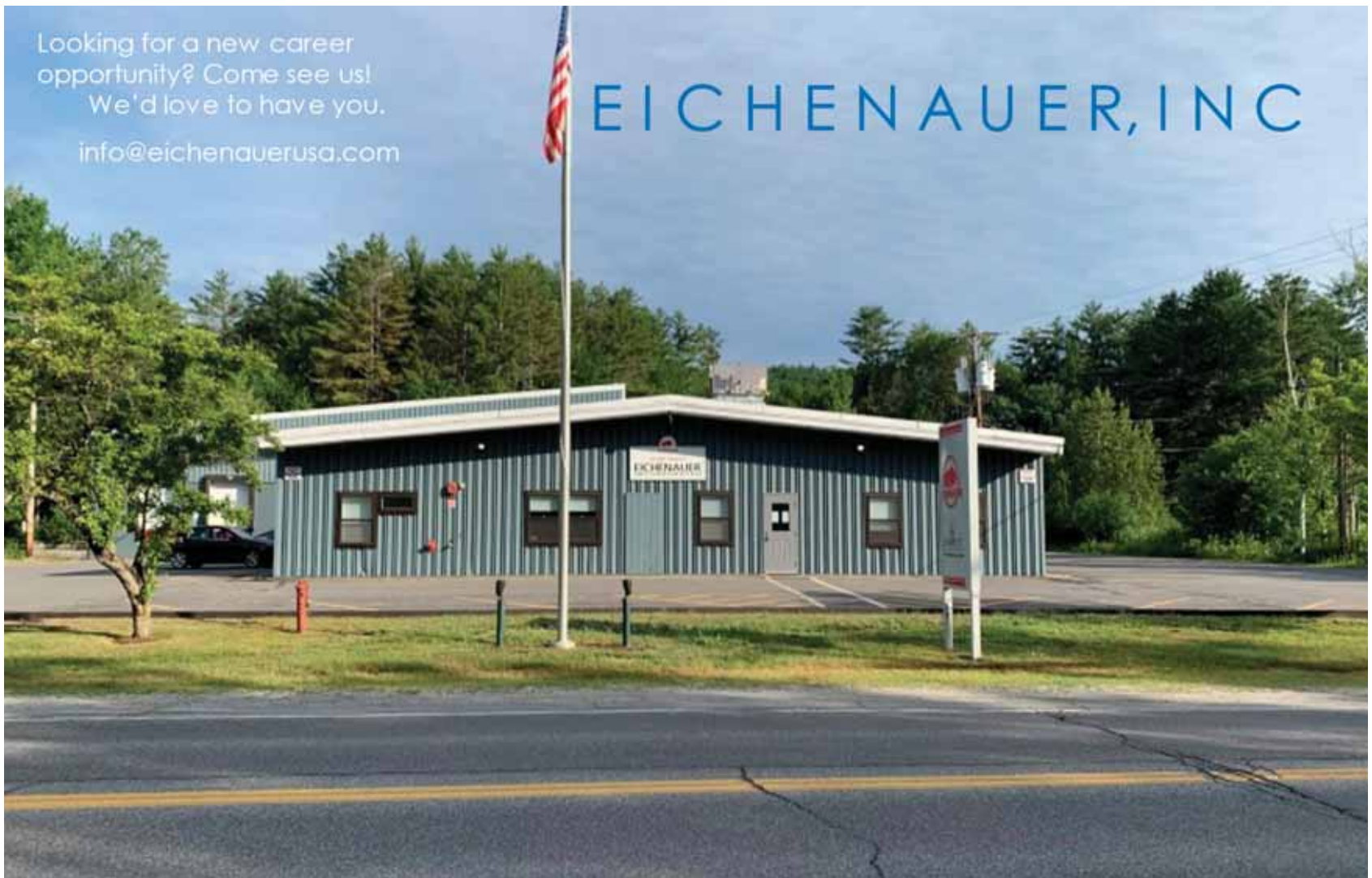
There is a warrant article to approve the cost items of a new 4 year contract, beginning July 1, 2021, with the Newport Police Union. The estimated costs for the final 3 years of the contract are approximately \$40,000 per year.

The final warrant articles from Board are continued approvals for transfers to Capital Reserve Funds for future capital purchases for an ambulance, the emergency communications system, the district court building, recreation facilities (courts, fields, structures, etc).

There will be non-money actions at the meeting for the election of officers (2 Selectmen, 1 Supervisor of the Checklist, 1 Trustee of Trust Funds). There is also an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance regarding sheds.

There will be other warrant articles for funding requested by petition which have not yet been finalized. If all of the Board recommended articles pass, there will be a total tax increase of \$.17, or 1.4%.

All articles for the Meeting will be discussed at the **Deliberative Session on April 5th at 6 pm**, and the **all-day voting on those articles is May 10th**. Both meetings will be held at the Newport High School gymnasium. We hope to see you there. ■







La Valley Building Supply received the New Hampshire Business in the Arts Award in recognition of their charitable giving in 2003

different at the beginning." He recalls that he didn't have to get permission from a planning board, and a 2x4 piece of lumber that today would cost about nine dollars cost about 60 cents!

They began to remodel and had a few customers trickle in – "more out of curiosity than to buy," LaValley recalls. Regardless, the company began to meet its projections and with the assistance of local banks, started to grow and soon opened more stores in nearby places such as Claremont and West Lebanon.

Even with the expansion to twelve locations throughout Vermont and New Hampshire, Newport remains a special place for LaValley and his family. In addition to currently living there with his wife, all four of LaValley's children graduated from Newport High School, and one of his daughters, Nancy Huot, and her family still remain in town. "Newport is a very nice little town," LaValley

says, "People here are friendly. We couldn't ask for a better place." LaValley recalls with pride that in the 1970s when his daughter Lori was at the high school, there wasn't much in the way of athletic facilities. His daughter then connected him with a fellow named Bernard Towne, and together they started a company called the ARC (Athletic Recreation Complex). With the assistance of a State of New Hampshire planner, they created facilities including a football field, tennis courts, and a soccer field. LaValley recalls everyone in town becoming involved and people walking side-by-side picking up stones from what was to become the football field before the final grading. "We're very proud of Newport. The town has been very good to us," LaValley says, "And we've tried to give back to the town."

Gerry was also on the board of the Newport Opera House at the start of



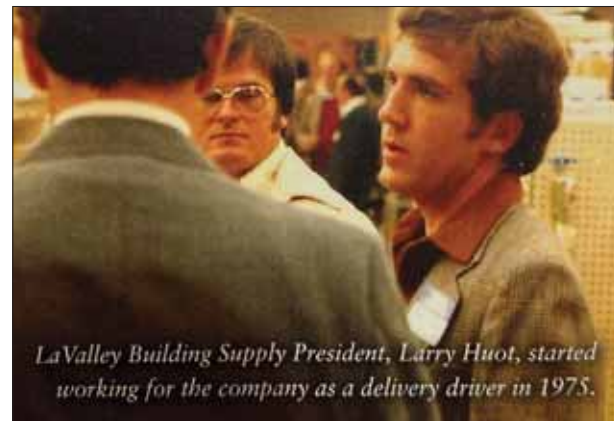
Gerry and Harold on a business trip in the '70s

its restoration efforts beginning in 1974 and has stayed involved with the arts community. The connection to the town continues as the LaValleys' grandson-in-law, John Hooper, works as a town selectman and two of his grandsons, Bryan and Daniel Huot – who also work with the company, reside in Newport.

LaValley Building Supply has always been a family affair. LaValley recalls when the company first began and Gerry did the bookkeeping that – with no plumbing at the location – she had to work from her bedroom with their six-month-old baby by her side. "She had a crib, a little desk, and a bed, and that was her office – in the master bedroom if you could call it that!"

Today, new generations have joined, and LaValley's son-in-law Lawrence (Larry) Huot works as the president of LaValley Building Supply. "He started here in 1978 and we had a hard time convincing him to come work for us as he wanted to make it on his own. He's honest and fair and we don't know what we'd do without him!"

LaValley's son, Steven, now in New London, has also worked with the company, and LaValley's two younger daughters, Lori Barnes and Jodie Miskowicz, now live outside of the New Hampshire area with their families, but were involved with the business over the years. Two of LaValley's nine grandchildren and one grandson-in-law are a part of the team,

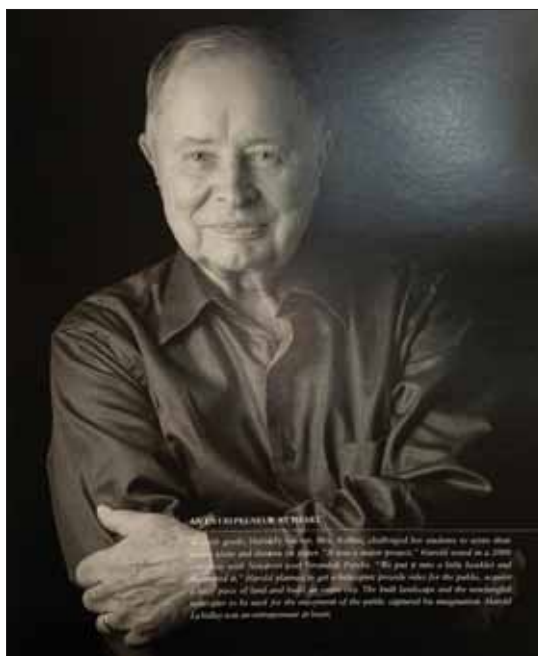


LaValley Building Supply President, Larry Huot, started working for the company as a delivery driver in 1975.

making LaValley's a three-generation family business.

Now one of the 50 largest volume lumber yards in the United States, LaValley Building Supply employs over 600 people. LaValley chalks up their success to their dedicated employees. "We've been so fortunate with our employees, some who have given us 40-plus years. They've worked hard to help us survive and grow and we're thankful for them." The customers, too, are central in LaValley's mind. "I've met a lot of wonderful customers along the way." In thinking about the 60 years of LaValley Building Supply, LaValley says he has "all kinds of wonderful memories."

LaValley, at 94 years old, is still coming in to work every day, most often joined by his wife. LaValley says he misses waiting on customers but "I can do some things to be helpful – I'm lucky they keep me around!" he says with a laugh. With 60 years under their belt, when it comes to what is next for LaValley Building Supply, LaValley says it comes back to the people, "We feel good about the future of the company because of the dependable and hardworking quality of the people. That's what's important." ■



Harold LaValley, an entrepreneur at heart



"We feel good about the future of the company because of the dependable and hardworking quality of the people. That's what's important."



# The Newport Opera House A Brief History: Act 2

On June 4, 1976, the new hall was unveiled with a production of Meredith Willson's *The Music Man* which starred Douglas Barton and Susan Jarvis (Hastings), directed by Charles H. Massey. In addition to the NOHA productions, the facility became the venue for school concerts and plays, movies, voting, dance recitals, lectures, weddings, dances, and high school graduation. In short, it was well on its way to returning to the "golden days" when it really was the center of the community.

The late 1980s were active years featuring plays, concerts, dances, and theater trips to Boston. Community theatrical productions included: *Little Mary Sunshine*, *Plaza Suite*, *You Can't Take it With You*, *...Forum*, *Guys and Dolls*, *The King and I*, *Brigadoon*, and *See How They Run*.

The '90s saw many of the same people leading the community arts organization with Betty Richer at the helm. Many outstanding productions were staged including: *Godspell*, *Carousel*, *The Music Man*, *Harvey*, *Man of LaMancha*, and *The Man Who Came to Dinner*.

Bill Wightman was hired as the next Executive Director for the NOHA. Bill introduced a popular series called "Jazz on a Sunday Afternoon" as well as a youth Shakespeare program. A wide variety of entertainment filled the hall ranging from stand-up comics to dance groups and local jazz artists.

Wightman's cabaret-style atmosphere became a major draw in the old hall. Community theater continued and Wightman convinced Charles H. Massey to return and direct *Oliver!* in 2003.

Eventually, Charles H. Massey returned to the Opera House as the Executive Director and Meg Cowan joined the association as Office Manager. Lori Barnes became the President of the organization in 2005 and continued to encourage new programming as well as building an aggressive semi-annual membership drive. It was under Barnes' leadership that the NOHA joined forces with the Library Arts Center to sponsor the Annual Sunshine Town Social, which became a major fundraiser for both arts organizations. Under Massey's leadership, community theater became a major draw. A third production of *The Music Man* (with a cast of 96) was produced in the spring of 2007. The award-winning Londonderry High School Marching Band was the highlight of the show weekend, marching up Main Street to the Common and playing "76 Trombones" in front of the Opera House.

In June of 2019, former NOHA Office Manager, Meg Cowan came back to her old desk at the Newport Opera House but this time in the role of Executive Director. She carefully steered the organization through the uncharted waters of the Covid-19 pandemic while at the same time addressing the



Londonderry High School  
Marching Band

financial health, systems restructuring and recruitment of members for the Board of Directors. In July of 2020, Meg succeeded in landing a \$181,000 grant from the NH CDFA to fund new stage lights, a sound system and digital projection system. Businesses throughout the state stepped up to purchase tax credits allotted to the NOHA and, as of February, 2022, only \$9,000 in credits was left to sell to reach the goal and receive the full amount of the grant.

The Newport Opera House Association continues to serve the greater Lake Sunapee community through the generous contributions from local businesses and individual citizens. Without this support, the organization would be unable to produce the wide variety of entertainment for the entire community at affordable prices. Help to keep the dream alive – become a member today! ■



A production of State Fair

## NCTV Hires News Reporter

On February 14, I started a job reporting for NCTV in addition to my current internship. The job includes field reporting in the community on town events and issues, along with interviews with local businesses and organizations. Typically, I will be by myself with a camera to record the interviews. Since I still have school during the day, my work hours are after school or during the weekends in-between my other commitments. Even though I am taking on the job portion of working with NCTV, I still have an internship, as well, where I will continue to do my regular shows with NMHS administration and student leaders. All of my future segments can be viewed on the NCTV channel and website, or on *What's Up Newport* on Facebook.

During my time as an intern for NCTV, my main

goal has been informing Newport students not only about the school district but other topics in the community. Whether this is by reporting on town events such as the Winter Carnival or asking Newport High School students about their questions and concerns, I wanted to make NMHS students feel heard and informed so that they can better understand their community and school. When I was offered a job as a reporter for NCTV, I knew it was an opportunity to apply those same aspects to the rest of the community. By working as a reporter, I hope to highlight town organizations and events, along with touching on bigger topics. And of course, all of this is preparing me for my future career in broadcast journalism where I hope to represent not just my community, but our nation, as well. I will be



NCTV News Reporter Bella Osgood

out reporting very soon, I hope everyone enjoys the segments. If you have any topics that you would like to see me discuss or somewhere to visit, you can send suggestions to [bubblesosgood@gmail.com](mailto:bubblesosgood@gmail.com). ■

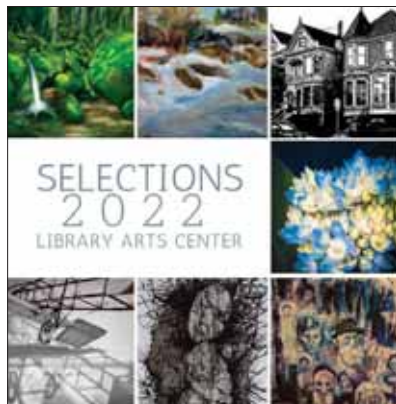
~ Bella Osgood



# Library Arts Center Happenings



Deb Lloyd (left) and Kathy Hanson (right) help to hang the *Selections* Exhibit in the Library Arts Center Gallery.



## In the Gallery

Our gallery is filled with the most gorgeous art exhibit! *Selections Exhibit: Winners from the Juried Regional*, is a show featuring artwork by seven highly talented and diverse artists from the region. This show, sponsored by Sugar River Bank, is open through March 30th. Our gallery hours are Tuesday through Friday, 11- 4, and Saturdays 10-2. The gallery, with its ever-changing community art exhibits, is a great spot to find some inspiration!

Coming in April, there will be an art show including artwork from all art students in the Newport School District in grades K- 12. This show will be in the gallery April 8-May 27. Stop in and see the creative endeavors of our local youth.

There is nothing more fun in town than the Arts Center's annual Peeps Diorama Contest, now in its 11th year! It is coming right up, April 15-22 in the gallery. For this contest, community members create shoebox-sized dioramas using the iconic sugar-coated marshmallow Peeps candies as the characters or (in some cases) building material. Children, families, adults, and businesses alike are encouraged to participate. Typically, there are over



100 dioramas on display, and the results are hilarious. We encourage everyone to join in and make a diorama in the coming weeks. Find all the contest details and entry forms at [libraryartscenter.org/peeps](http://libraryartscenter.org/peeps).

## In the Community

We are thrilled to welcome a new staff member to the Library Arts Center! Heidi Lorenz has joined us as the Center's new Community Arts Engagement Facilitator. Heidi is a professional artist and arts instructor who has been teaching in the Arts Center studio for years. This position will help us continue to develop the

number of programs we can offer the community, both in our facility, and out and around town. Heidi's artwork was seen at the Winter Carnival as she painted the bears that were hidden around town in the bear hunt. You can look forward to more free community art sessions with Heidi on board – both in our gallery, studio, and under our event tent through the summer, as well as at the Newport Farmers' Market and at other community events.

For Winter Carnival, the Library Arts Center brought ice sculptor Tony

have been researching all the imagery depicted in the mural. Nick Scalera is preparing panels and easels for the restoration, and project lead artist Heidi Lorenz is creating a full color sketch of the mural using reference materials to piece together areas of the mural weathered beyond recognition. In the next month, the 36 plywood panels that make up the mural will be removed from the side of the building home to Newport Fitness. In June, the Arts Center will host a big Mural Festival on the town common to get



Perham to the Common to create a piece during the festivities. Tony carved a lumberjack rising out of a wooded mountain from a block of ice – complete with an ax, evergreen trees, and log piles. The Arts Center has brought more artists in residence to Newport in the past year, and is looking forward to bringing more this year. During the Apple Pie Crafts Fair, we hosted sidewalk chalk artist Katie Runde to create a masterpiece on a sidewalk near the common.

The restoration of Newport's historic "Train Mural" is officially underway! The Newport Historical Society and volunteer Pam LaFountain

the painting started. You can expect to see the mural back on the building later this fall. This is a big community undertaking to bring this historical treasure back to its original glory. We are leading a fundraising campaign for the mural's restoration and invite you to consider donating to help with this project. Visit [libraryartscenter.org](http://libraryartscenter.org) for full details on the restoration and fundraising campaign, or feel free to call or visit the office to learn more. ■

*Library Arts Center - Gallery & Studio,  
58 N. Main Street, Newport. 603.863.3040.  
Gallery Hours: Tue-Fri 11 am-4 pm Sat 10 am-2 pm.  
[www.libraryartscenter.org](http://www.libraryartscenter.org)*



Three generations on a Bear Hunt



Bear in the Wild



Ice sculptor Tony Perham



Lumberjack ice sculpture



# Libraries: The Final Frontier

“Libraries, as they exist in the twenty-first century, are the only remaining public domain. In a library, anyone of any walk of life can come and

go as they choose, and so long as they remain respectful of the space, they can remain as long as they wish.” –Linda Stack-Nelson, *The Last Free Space*

The Richards Free Library is the perfect example of the quote from Stack-Nelson’s article in *World Literature Today*. Anyone is welcome to use our space, our technology, our materials, and our staff’s knowledge. No purchase necessary! While COVID-19 has thrown some curveballs in terms of being able to use the library’s physical space, we are very much looking forward to opening up all of our space to the public again this spring.

Did you know that while we are partially funded by the town, the Richards Free Library is not a town department or agency? We are our own non-profit corporation and along with our appropriation of town funding, we fund parts of our budget from endowments, grants, and donations.

For every tax dollar invested in the library in

2021, we were able to return \$3.28 in services to the community. From books and movies to public computer and Wi-Fi access, even during a global pandemic (or maybe *especially* during a global pandemic) the community saw value in our offerings and took advantage of them.

As of March 1st, we are open our normal hours, with in-person programs and full access to community spaces including our study rooms and the ballroom. We hope you’ll stop by soon to browse for a book, meet some of our newer staff, attend a story time, or visit with Dexter and Minerva, the library cats! ■

## Library Newsletter Signup

Want to get the latest updates on the library? Don’t want to miss upcoming events? Want to know about emergency closures as soon as we do?

It’s easy! Go to our website at [newport.lib.nh.us](http://newport.lib.nh.us). Scroll down to “subscribe to the newsletter.” Type in your email address and click “Subscribe.” You will receive our monthly newsletter, as well as occasional emails with helpful updates. ■



## RUGER NEWPORT: PROUD TO CALL THIS HOME

### Better Than Yesterday

Decade after decade, Ruger associates keep coming back for more. Robert (Bob) Ash, one of Ruger’s longest standing full time associates, can’t get enough. August 6, 1973 was Mr. Ash’s first day at Ruger, right out of high school, at 18 years of age. He worked in the foundry alongside his father for nearly 15 years. His father had put in a good word for him to get the job which was needed to get in with Ruger at that time. “It was so hot. I almost didn’t make it the first week,” Bob described. “I remember my father telling me, if a little guy like I can do it, a big guy like you ought to be able to do it.” Forty-eight years later, Bob Ash continues to leave a mark at Ruger.

Since then, there have been immense changes in the culture, physical conditions, equipment, and the safety of associates. “Ruger has gotten safer and safer throughout the years,” Bob adds. Standing alongside Bob Ash are 33 other

associates with over 40 years of service with Ruger, and astonishingly one gentleman with over 50 years under his belt. The Ash family roots keep growing deeper with Bob’s wife, Marilyn Ash, who has been with Ruger for 22 years. This is a direct testament to the atmosphere Ruger has, “It’s just a great place to work. It has always been wonderful; the people make it wonderful.”

People become family quick at Ruger. “If you want a place to work all your life, Ruger is the place to be.” Bob Ash does not have a definite date for his retirement; however, he is looking forward to woodworking and using heavy machinery with his free time. Ash is not opposed to coming back part time, like many others, after retirement. “I have absolutely no regrets.” ■

~Riely Skarin, Newport High School Senior and Sturm Ruger & Co. Inc. Work Based Learning Intern



Bob Ash

“If you want a place to work all your life, Ruger is the place to be.”

Bob Ash



We want to know what you think!

Take our Community Survey today!

[www.ruger.com](http://www.ruger.com)



# The Science of Play at Richards School

To the untrained eye it may look like these kindergartners are enjoying a reward or some special free time before the weekend, but under all those bright colors and excitement is the thoughtful and intentional decisions of their teacher Mrs. Kelley Merritt.

In 2018 the state of New Hampshire updated the definition of an adequate education to include “child-directed experiences based upon early childhood best teaching practices and play-based learning”. This move puts NH in line with several top countries throughout the world including Finland, Denmark and Japan who emphasize play-based practices for early learners.

A veteran teacher at Richards School, Mrs. Merritt has always promoted some sort of play within her classroom even before this requirement. What has changed since 2018 is the purposeful support of an outside mentor. This training and mentorship has allowed her to really focus her classroom play to align with the science behind learning.

Children naturally learn through play which builds creative thinking, enhances problem solving, develops social skills and help children find their voice. In the play-based classroom, learning is child-led and enjoyable with experiences guided by the teacher. These skills are even more important in a post-COVID world where students have been restricted from typical childhood play.

“Today I put out a new bin of bottle caps and they were peeking in and checking it out. I wonder if they will gravitate toward it tomorrow,” reflects Mrs. Merritt after one of her guided play sessions. Throughout the room she has different supplies and activities set up, but the instructions are pretty

minimal. There is a bin of colored wooden blocks in one corner next to a pile of stacking sticks on the floor mat. There are lego creations overtop of some of the bookshelves and the other flat tops are covered in Magnatiles and Brain Flakes creations with student names carefully written on an index card resting against them. Students look at what has been put out by Mrs. Merritt, but also know where to find other materials throughout the room to play with if interested. Two girls have brought over construction paper and scissors and are busy figuring out how to make a heart for a card.

And where is Mrs. Merritt during all of this play? With her notebook in hand, she is right there beside them and guiding their play by creating challenges, asking guiding questions, providing feedback, encouraging effort and persistence while documenting and assessing it all. To help students reflect on their past play, Mrs. Merritt shows them pictures of creations and projects they have been working on to encourage critical thinking and creativity.

Fostering this environment takes time and training to do it justice. Knowing the three different types of play helps guide Mrs. Merritt to the best learning pathway for her students.

**Free Play:** Children have all of the control and choice in materials and use. An example of free play is recess.

**Guided Play:** The teacher sets the stage by creating an environment that promotes exploration and discovery. Teachers participate through guided open-ended questions and reflection.

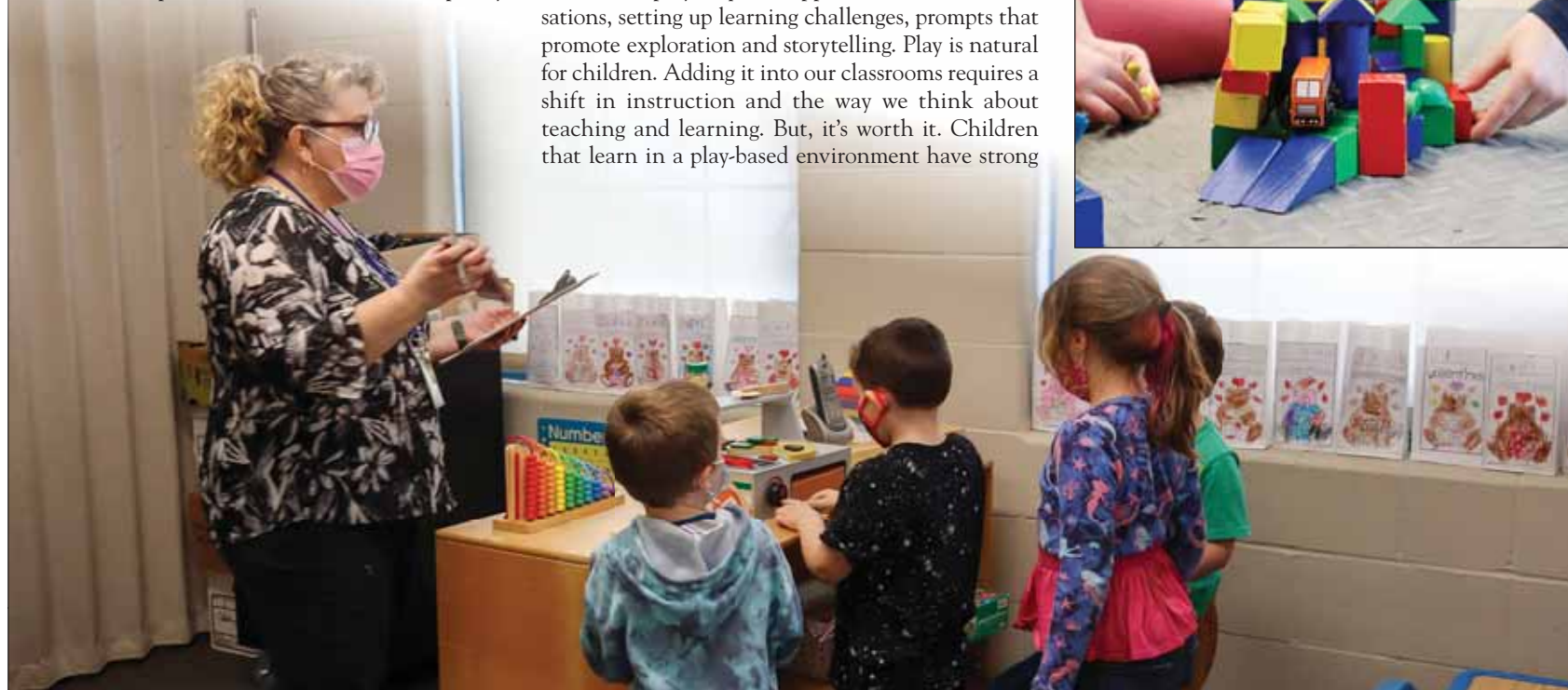
**Teacher Constructed Play:** This is when the students receive set expectations and instructions.

Guided play requires opportunities for conversations, setting up learning challenges, prompts that promote exploration and storytelling. Play is natural for children. Adding it into our classrooms requires a shift in instruction and the way we think about teaching and learning. But, it’s worth it. Children that learn in a play-based environment have strong

collaboration, communication and critical thinking skills. They are connected to their learning, creative and confident. These students also tend to take more initiative and be better motivated to learn.

As we continue our journey in play-based learning at Richards School, we are fortunate to have Mrs. Merritt who is passionate about this practice and able to provide guidance for others going forward. It is her goal, and one that I share as Principal, to see this practice expanded beyond Kindergarten. ■

~ Patrice Glancey Brown,  
Interim Principal Richards School





# Life Skills Take Center Stage

The year 2022 has brought so much excitement to Newport Middle School! We cannot believe we are more than halfway through the year. With a focus of improving reading and math skills the first part of this school year, many of our students have made huge gains in these areas. Some students' skills increased more than two years. Soon, we will be beginning the Tiger Café after school program to provide more direct instruction for students who have been identified as needing additional support. We are also in the process of getting a late bus so students have the option to stay and participate in clubs and organizations when they do not have transportation home.

As of February 2022, the school counselor has had almost five hundred (500) individual student meetings in her office. Eighty-nine percent of those meetings involved social-emotional concerns and 13% involved academics. The breakdown of grade levels is as follows: 41% were 6th graders, 31% were 7th, and 28% were 8th. Miranda Collins is also an essential part of the counseling department. She has worked with 138 students and/or families across all grade levels in the middle school. On average, she meets with approximately 10 kids per day for social-emotional concerns.



Our school also provides lessons in addition to regular classroom instruction. During Semester 1, the school counselor taught 85 lessons on career exploration and 15 lessons specific to bullying prevention. Kerry, from Turning Points Network, visited the school to provide lessons on boundaries and sexual harassment. Rachel Loseby, the NMHS SAP Counselor, provided lessons on vaping

prevention. Weekly community circles have been taking place in 6th grade as well, with positive reports from teachers of its progress. Our Family and Community Liaison, Miranda, has also started community circles in Ms. Burke's 8th grade advisory. During Semester 2, we are hoping to start small group discussions with 6th and 7th graders to help them manage the ever increasing challenges of being an adolescent.

Our Kindness Club is up and running. Our focus has been on how to improve our school climate and create a better school community. One activity we did was to create, and hang, posters around the school with positive messages. We will be celebrated Random Acts of Kindness Week February 14-18 with a spirit week and some special events.

Sullivan County 4H has continued with the Youth Community Club every

other Thursday after school. We have been giving back to the community by making Valentines cards to give to SummerCrest Assisted Living, homemade dog biscuits to give to the Humane Society, and posters for our school with positive messages.

We would also like to thank our amazing community for the support you have provided us. In particular, here is a shout out to the community members who have been supporting our school-wide Tiger Buck's Shop. For those of you who may not know, students who demonstrate our school's core "ROAR" values are rewarded with Tiger Buck's that can be spent in the store. With many donations from our Amazon wishlist, our students are loving the new items.

The Middle School partnered with the High School to provide free winter coats to any student who needed one. Multiple community groups held coat drives this fall and winter. Some were donated to the school district's Clothing Closet. These coats were placed on a rack in the main lobby for students to take if needed. If your child needs a coat please reach out to someone at the school and provide us with their size.

In conclusion, thank you for your support. Without you, facilitating lessons to your students would be much more challenging. If you have any questions for us, please give us a call. ■





## Tigers ROAR

### NH's Statewide College Planning Event Saturday, April 9, 8:30 am - 2 pm

This virtual event is designed to help high school juniors and their families prepare for entry into college. Attendees will have access to a variety of free planning workshops, learn tips about the application process, and attend a college fair. Registration is required. [nhheaf.org/destination-college.asp](http://nhheaf.org/destination-college.asp).

### Music Notes

On Friday, March 25 at 6 pm the NHS Music Department will host its second annual Coffeehouse Concert at the Newport Opera House. Tickets are \$5 and will include snacks and refreshments, and live music by our jazz band and members of the music department. Come out for an enjoyable evening of live music and support our student musicians! Contact Alexander Stewart at [astewart@sau43.org](mailto:astewart@sau43.org).

### Scholarship Opportunities

**New Hampshire Fisher Cats Foundation Scholarship:** There are ten \$2,500 scholarships available for High School senior athletes. The deadline for this scholarship is April 1, 2022. For information to apply go to <https://form.jotform.com/213484737007154>.

**Cheshire Fair Association:** A \$1,000 scholarship for students who will pursue education in horticulture, forestry or agriculture. Application deadline is April 1, 2022. Applications are in the School Counseling Office.

**Grantham Garden Club:** Scholarships available for students pursuing education in horticulture, forestry or agriculture. Application deadline is April 15th. Apply online at [granthamgardenclub.org](http://granthamgardenclub.org).

**New Hampshire Charitable Foundation Scholarship:** They award more than \$6 million in scholarships to New Hampshire students each year. The deadline for this scholarship is April 15. For more information or to apply online go to [nhcf.org/scholarships](http://nhcf.org/scholarships).

**Dartmouth-Hitchcock Healthcare Pre-Apprenticeship:** This includes a healthcare prep course offered at River Valley Community College and paid work experience at Dartmouth Hitchcock. For more information about this program, contact Mary Ann Gaschnig at [mgaschnig@ccsnh.edu](mailto:mgaschnig@ccsnh.edu).

**Center for the Arts Scholarship** for students who are pursuing any form of art. This scholarship is open to students from grades 7-12. The deadline is May 15.

**PB & J Scholarship.** For students entering a two or four year college who have experienced personal challenges that may not have allowed them to perform well. The deadline for this scholarship is May 31.

For more information about any of these opportunities, please come to the School Counseling Office.

### Calling All Artists and Poets!

West Central Behavioral Health and AVA Gallery and Art Center in Lebanon are collaborating to celebrate May as National Mental Health Awareness Month with a month-long art show from April 15 – May 20 that wraps up its final weekend with a poetry reading on Saturday, May 14th afternoon at the AVA Gallery. The art exhibit and poetry reading share the title, *The Thing with Feathers* from Emily Dickinson's *Hope* poem. The theme for both exhibit and reading is: "Hope; what brings you light and lifts you up?"

### Reaching a Student in Crisis

A *Concord Monitor* opinion piece about one of West Central's mobile crisis response team's outreaches at a local high school tells a powerful story about a life saved and a time-consuming, stressful, and costly emergency room visit avoided. There was an outpouring of feedback from the community about this story including:

*"This service was recently utilized for my son... the quick response at the high school and by West Central greatly attributed to the fact that my son is alive today."*

*"Thank you for sharing! I had no idea this existed. I work as a librarian in a middle school... and am happy to see that we are improving our response to mental health crises."*

To those who wrote to us, we sincerely thank you. And to anyone in New Hampshire experiencing a crisis moment, please call the NH Rapid Response Access Point hotline at 833-710-6477, or visit NH988.com to chat online with a trained crisis clinician. Mobile Crisis Response Teams are available 24/7/365 as needed. As the article states, "Call early, call often," please. We're here to help in your time of need. The article can be read by visiting [bit.ly/3ChvysM](http://bit.ly/3ChvysM). ■



### National Honor Society

The National Honor Society at Newport High School is alive and well!! We currently have about 20 members (juniors and seniors) and will induct more members in March or April. Each member must meet standards of scholarship, character, service, and leadership before they are eligible to receive an invitation to apply. A faculty committee reviews the applications and selects from the applicants which students should be admitted to the group based on the four "pillars" or standards. We help out our community each year with different projects including helping students (and their families) who are sick or just need an extra virtual hug! We also honor our veterans on Veterans' Day in November with some sort of ceremony, and this year we even included breakfast!

Thanks to Jenna Darling's generous donation, we also work on a particular fundraising project throughout the entire year. We collect clothes to take to Savers in Manchester 4 times a year. We get bags of clothes donated by individuals and families and some generous thrift stores, go through the bags (to make sure ONLY clothes or soft items like linens and/or towels), and sort the clothes before we store them in a local storage facility. Jenna and her family handed the reins of this fundraiser over to us last year, but, thankfully, they still maintain a storage unit for us. As a non-profit organization, we earn .20 (20 cents) per pound at Savers. It means we don't have to sell anything AND we can take gently used, clean clothes off your hands! It's a WIN/WIN scenario! If you would like to donate to the National Honor Society's used clothes drive, please bring your bags of clothes to the main office at Newport High School where one of the NHS members will take it and add it to our next delivery of used clothes to Savers!

~ Karen Cullison, NHS Adviser

### Art Department

On February 24, Jadyn Flynn and Ashley Cybruch (with their families) attended the award ceremony at the closing of the AVA Gallery "Best of the Upper Valley High School Art Exhibition" in Lebanon, where they had artwork accepted into the show. If you missed the exhibit, you will have another opportunity to view their pieces at the Library Arts Center when the district-wide show opens in April. ■





## Checking in on the Tech Center



Exceptional teachers at Sugar River Valley Regional Technical Center



Sugar River Valley Regional Technical Center Students Show Their TECH Pride



SRVRTC Director  
Jennifer Opalinski

### Director's Note

The Sugar River Valley Regional Technical Center is moving and shaking in 2022! Covid restrictions are lifting, a full renovation is on the horizon and students are loving their experience. Good news all the way around for the sunshine town. Did you know that over 300 students 8th grade through 12th grade, 75% of eligible students in Newport take a class with us? Students in our technical programs find their passion here and absolutely thrive.

Why are CTE: Career & Technical Education programs like ours so successful? First, students explore and then land in programs that they love. Students have a choice. They self assess, do I want to spend time outside in the woods as part of natural resources and forestry or in a lab coat advancing their knowledge of health science? Do I see myself pulling the hood and welding strong metals or being part of the transformation of the automotive industry? There are so many choices. Cosmetology, business, engineering, you name it. Every program we offer is rigorous, relevant and hands-on. The students really appreciate knowing that what their learning will be of direct benefit to them in the future. Our programs really help students build the confidence, knowledge and skills they need to succeed after high school.

The real secret sauce is in the quality of instructors we have at SRVRTC. We are so fortunate to have highly skilled and caring teachers who mentor students in the classroom and then walk them right into the college or career of their choice. Students will

they join our programs. The professional relationships our teachers build with their students is remarkable. Teachers go above and beyond to provide student leadership opportunities, industry recognized credentials, and connections with local employers. The teachers here are exceptional and great teachers make a great school. As a result of everyone's hard work and dedication the Sugar River Tech Center in Newport is proud to say that we have a 96% graduation rate which is considerably higher than many traditional high schools.

~ CTE Director Jennifer Opalinski

### SRVRTC Student Spotlight: Liela Irwin, Animal Plant Science Student and FFA President

Liela Irwin is an awesome senior at Newport High School and is a shining star at the Sugar River Tech Center! Liela found her niche a few years ago in Mrs. Steven's Horticulture class and has risen through the ranks of the FFA to earn her elected position as president. We interviewed Liela before the winter vacation and here's what she had to say. "It may sound cliché but it's true, if you had asked me four years ago if I would be excelling in animal and plant science and be the president of the FFA I would have told you you were crazy. Mrs. Steven's really has shown me the leader inside of me. Look where I am now."



Liela went on to explain that her fall trip to Indianapolis for the FFA national convention was one of the most amazing parts of her high school experience so far. The FFA has opened Liela's eyes to the endless possibilities in front of her. Mrs. Stevens and Mr. Nelson her FFA Advisors and CTE Director Opalinski celebrate Liela for the endless hours she puts in at the tech center. She is a hands-on leader, always there to plan, support and execute all the great things the FFA group wants to accomplish. From plant sales to community classes and SRVRTC events Liela is there. Promoting FFA, and organizing fundraisers and spirit week, Liela is there. She works round the clock and is reliably and dependably there. Thank you Liela for all you do for SRVRTC, for Mrs. Stevens and Mr. Nelson and the FFA. We really appreciate you.

### SRVRTC Wins in the Float Parade

SRVRTC wins first place in the winter carnival float competition thanks to the hard work of all the student leadership groups at the tech center. Every program at the tech center was represented. Automotive, cosmetology, engineering, animal and plant science, natural resources, welding, business, and health science. Deb Stevens, CTE Department Head and Admin Assistant Kristie Howe had a vision for the float from the



very beginning. CTE Director Jennifer Opalinski, Lynn Wharton (Olof), Bridget (Elsa), Shannon Howe and hardworking students brought the vision to life. The results were very impressive. A special thank you to the winter carnival committee who gave SRVRTC \$150 along with the big blue ribbon.

FFA: Future Farmers of America and SKILLS USA students, FBLA and HOSA ran activities and held fundraisers on the Newport Town Common for fun winter carnival events. The "Out of the Woods" theme was a perfect match for our tech center especially the natural resources and agricultural offerings we provide. Sam Nelson, natural resources and forestry teacher, brought an energetic group of students who led bow saw, pole toss, cross cut and chainsaw events for all. Children as young as four years old and SRVRTC alumni were giving the saw competitions a try.

### Increasing Industry Recognized Credentials

For the first time in nearly a decade OSHA-10 training and first aid and CPR training were rolled out for all our first and second year students. Over 100 students will earn one or both of these industry recognized credentials this year thanks to Heather Wells, Welding and OSHA trainer and Eric Perry our EMT and Health Science instructor. We're very proud of our team who worked so well together to make these certifications a reality. Credentials set tech students apart and get them noticed when they go for their first real job interview. Industry recognized credentials like OSHA training, EMT and LNA licenses, ASE and AWS certificates catch the eye of local employers and earn our students



# The Sugar River, and Commerce, Flow On By

## North Newport and the Passage of The Draper Mill

Just after a February dawn in North Newport, bundled in a chair on the porch, cat in lap, the roar and occasional cracking and crashing sounds of the Sugar River flowing around and over the broken ice fill the air. It is the morning after an unseasonable thaw, even with rain, and the river's power is waxing strong.

This is the strength of this river: a flow of water and energy which continued all through the winters, power which enabled the great mills to be built along its course, and this town to flourish. Only a thousand feet from where I sit, just on the other side of the Oak Street bridge, at what is now a small park, that energy was the force which was the heartbeat of a towering mill, more than five stories tall, consuming constantly renewed log piles of maple and birch more than three stories tall, turning them into technologically cutting-edge bobbins to feed the textile mills of New England, churning them out by boxcar loads.

Just over a century ago, North Newport was far from a sleepy little hamlet. The Draper Company bobbin mill situated here, along with the men harvesting the hardwood trees to feed it, surely employed over 100 people, along with those working in the Sibley Scythe shop, Storey's Store, one or two sawmills, and the railroad depot and freight operations.

This time of morning in around 1910 would have found the area of the current small park alive with the dozens of people employed in those operations. Looking across that barren area now, with only the brick ruins of what was the powerhouse of later operations barely visible behind the brush, it is difficult to imagine the scale of the buildings which once were there.

The photograph taken in 1908 (Photo #1), taken from the vantage of Oak Street looking down Greenwood Road, was after a fire which had destroyed the original bobbin mill, the remains of which can be seen to the left, and Storey's Store and Post Office is seen to the right. One 1915 photo, taken from almost the same viewpoint (Photo #2), shows the rebuilt mill. The other photograph from 1915 (Photo #3), taken from across Greenwood Road (Oak Street is to the far left) shows the enormous scale of the operation, with log piles as high as the third story windows of the mill and dwarfing the boxcars.



Photo #2: Draper Mill 1915



Photo #1: Ruins of Bobbin Mill, after the fire, 1908



Photo #3: Draper Mill and log pile



Photo #5: Draperville in Grantham, circa 1918



Photo #4: Draper Mill and Pillsbury bridge, circa 1916

Look at those log piles! Imagine the force required to handle those logs. Clearly, there was no crane, but some photographs show tall poles with cables attached which were apparently used to yard the logs. Seeing this

gigantic building and envisioning it being alive with the saws, lathes, and finishing operations required to manufacture those bobbins gives an idea of the power of the Sugar River, delivered by a canal from the dam which was once just upstream of the Oak Street bridge. Photo #3 shows a continuation of that canal beneath the railroad tracks to feed a long-gone sawmill.

Photo #4 is a view toward Oak Street along the railroad tracks. Storey's Store can be seen directly up the tracks, and a smokestack can be seen close to the river on the right, as apparently by that time a steam boiler had been installed, probably fueled by the scrap wood.

What happened to all of this? By 1920 the supply of the needed hardwood trees in the Newport area was exhausted and the entire mill operation was moved to Grantham – apparently the mill and outbuildings in North Newport were dismantled. Even Storey's Store is now gone. All that remains of what is seen in Photo #4 is the steel bridge, the smokestack, and the ruins of the brick building beside it.

The entire operation was rebuilt in Grantham. The mill village and mill there, built around Eastman Pond, were called "Draperville." As in Newport, it was an enormous operation. Reportedly the horse barn for the mill stabled 60 head, and the one-room North Grantham schoolhouse held up to 60 children. The 1918 photograph (Photo #5) shows worker's cottages of Draperville.

However, like the river, time and commerce flow on. Just as the timber around North Newport was exhausted, the area around Grantham was similarly depleted, and by 1925 Draperville in Grantham was abandoned, the Draper operations moved to Campton. What was once a busy mill and village is now the lake and homes of Eastman.

~ Arthur W. Walsh



One of the possible sources for relief to such immediate need, is the Newport Community Trust.

The Newport Community Trust (NCT), originally designated as the Newport Charity Trust, distributes financial assistance to Newport citizens under the auspices of three community organizations: the Town of Newport, the Newport Unit of The Salvation Army, and programs and initiatives sponsored by the Epiphany Episcopal Church (Stone Church). The trust is administered by two Co-Trustees: Attorneys Susan Leahy and Peter Burger.

### One Good Person Acts

"The story of the creation of the Trust reads like a story book," says Leahy.

In 2013, an elderly woman who called Newport home, died. Though her life had been full, she had never thought of herself as someone of great importance or influence. She had married, gone to church on Sundays, worked and raised a family. She had lived a quiet, simple, frugal, and responsible life in Newport. Though life had not always been easy for her, she thought of herself as someone who had been blessed with good fortune.

This Newport lady was aware that not all her neighbors and friends were living lives as secure as hers. As she approached the end of her life, she searched for a way to give thanks for her own blessings and to "pay forward" to the people of Newport. Newport Community Trust came into being because of this good woman's foresight in setting aside half of her estate for the people of Newport.

Leahy speaks with great fondness about this woman: "She understood misfortune and was able to recover from her own. She learned perseverance and how valuable a sense of community can be in trying times. She hoped that her legacy to Newport would help others in times of adversity."

The woman who provided the funding for the trust chose to, and remains, anonymous.

### The Trust

The Trust states in part:

*(a) The Trustee, in the Trustee's sole discretion, shall distribute annually in the aggregate up to five percent (5%) of the fair market value of The Newport Charity Trust, valued as of close of the preceding year to all or any of the following organizations provided that each distribute is at the time of each distribution an exempt organization described in section 170(c) of the Code: The Episcopal Church of the Epiphany, of Newport, New Hampshire; the Town of Newport, New*

### Programs

NCT distributes financial aid to Newport residents through existing programs offered by organizations that support Newport residents facing financial need or promote community wellness. These include:

**Camp Coniston:** Scholarships to camp. Thirty scholarships were awarded in 2021.

**Emergency Homeowner Assistance:** Helping people keep their homes.

**Epiphany Youth Programs:** After-school and summer outdoor nature programs.

**Newport Middle High School:** Scholarships for graduating seniors.

**PECAN:** Program for Emergency Church Assistance in partnership with the Newport Area Association of Churches.

**River Valley Community College:** Scholarships to assist residents looking to pursue better employment opportunities.

**The Salvation Army:** Requests for emergency help with daily necessities.

**Sunshine Diner:** Free Monthly dinner open to everyone.

### The Real Impact

In 2021, NCT provided the following funding:

Camp Coniston Scholarships:	\$30,000
Emergency Church Assistance:	\$22,500
Middle High School Scholarships:	\$14,000
Emergency Homeowner Assistance:	\$23,781
Maple/Laurel Playground Funding:	\$12,500
Adult Continuing Education:	\$9,500
Newport Food Pantry:	\$3,540

Total: \$115,821

These are real dollars that helped real people.



Newport Community Trust

Hampshire; and The Salvation Army, Newport NH Service Unit.

Since 2013, the Newport Community Fund has provided assistance to hundreds of Newport residents for a total of over \$700,000.

Representatives from each of the three beneficiary organizations and the two co-trustees meet once a year to select which requests will be funded. Funds are awarded to organizations that support the needy in Newport which then distribute funds to individuals as needed.

"My Co-Trustee and I," explains Leahy, "make the final decisions. But we rely heavily on representatives from those beneficiary organizations. They live and work in Newport and know more about the realities faced by its citizens."

"For example," Leahy points out,

"while the Trust is not in the business of paying peoples' mortgages or heating costs on an ongoing basis, it does provide one-time bill payment support to get people back on their feet financially. And it supports community initiatives that benefit the community at large."

The donor was adamant that the fund be managed to maintain ongoing availability of funds. Today, awards are limited to no more than 5% of the total fund. "In that way," explains the Newport Town Manager, "availability of funds from the trust is guaranteed into the foreseeable future."

### The Local Board

Hunter Rieseberg, the Town Manager, represents the Town of Newport. He calls the Trust a "hidden gem" that he can call on. "We are

blessed," says Rieseberg, "to be able to help people who otherwise would not have any support at all."

In addition to financial assistance, the Trust allows the town to 'dream' by supporting programs that benefit all of Newport. This year, for example, the trust will commit \$50,000 towards a new Community Center.

Bunny Perry, a lifetime resident represents The Salvation Army. Just eighty years young, she is a firebrand. "The Newport Community Trust has been wonderful for us – just wonderful," Perry exclaims.

The Newport Unit of The Salvation Army does not have a lot of cash funding. "We offer help through a voucher system," Perry says. The Trust helps residents pay for things like groceries, gas, car repairs, heating oil, and other miscellaneous bills.

People in need apply for help, then vouchers are issued for specified work. When the work is completed, a voucher is sent to Sugar River Bank, which in turn approves the voucher and sends payment to the provider. "The providing business has to be willing to wait for their payment," Perry cautions. "But we have been very lucky. I have found landlords, garages, grocery stores, and many other businesses willing to work with us."

Lay Vicar Aaron Jenkyn and several individual program leaders represent The Epiphany Episcopal Church. "Epiphany Church handles the administration and distribution of the funds to organizations and projects as directed by the Trustees. In recent years, in addition to serving as the fiduciary agency for the Newport Community Trust, Epiphany Church has itself received some funding for its youth enrichment programs and its free community meal, The Sunshine Diner. Funding from the trust enables Epiphany Church to offer programming free of charge, so that money is not a barrier to participation in community events and enrichment programs," says Jenkyn. Jenkyn adds that qualification for these activities is not denominational. All are welcome.

In partnership with the Newport Area Association of Churches, the trust also funds PECAN, a program that provides area church ministers access to crisis relief funds. The program has helped many Newport residents stay in their homes during hard times. "We have been able to help residents keep the lights on, fix a car needed to get to work, get clothes for a new job, or buy much-needed medications," Jenkyn explains. ■

For additional information, any Newport citizen may email [NewportCommunityTrust@gmail.com](mailto:NewportCommunityTrust@gmail.com).



# Tuesday Morning Playgroup



What had started out as a group of Butler parents getting together with their younger kids has turned into an energetic Tuesday morning playgroup that meets every Tuesday morning from 9 to 10:30. In the winter we meet at the Rec Center, and in good weather we meet at different parks in town. If you are an adult with kids 5 or younger, please join us for our free Tuesday AM group.

For more information, please contact Stacey Hammerlind at 802-222-0865 or SHammerlind@sau43.org. For information about the Rec Center Friday playgroups, please contact the Rec Center at 603-863-1332. ■



## GOOD COOKING

**At The Old Courthouse, we often hear "Can we have more rolls?" Our rolls are delicious and easy to make...**

### OLD COURTHOUSE ROLLS

In a large bowl:

3/4 cup vegetable oil

3/4 cup sugar

1 1/2 packets instant yeast (1 T + 1/2 t)

3 eggs

1 teaspoon salt

1 2/3 cup warm water

Add flour, a little at a time, typically 5 1/4 - 5 1/2 cups

Knead for approximately 4-6 minutes

Let rise in a greased bowl or put in refrigerator in a plastic bag (for up to 2 days)

Grease three round layer cake pans. Place dough on

floured counter. Make golf-ball sized balls of dough and place dozen in each pan. Let rise in warm place. (1-2 hours) Bake at 375 until golden. Depending on oven, 8-15 minutes. These freeze well.

Note: If using refrigerated dough, let it rest on counter for 30 minutes before making dough balls.

### Old Courthouse





## Introducing the Conservation Commission

Of the 234 towns and cities in New Hampshire, 216 have conservation commissions as part of their local governments, and all New England states have conservation commissions. While the specific focus and activities of these Commissions varies somewhat, all share common goals and boundaries.

Tasked with looking out for the well-being of New Hampshire's open space and natural resources, conservation commissions are the only local bodies specifically charged with advising other groups on the thoughtful and appropriate use of the water resources, wetlands, forests and agricultural lands within their respective communities.

In 1963, the State of New Hampshire General Court passed the Conservation Commission Enabling Act, providing the framework and requirements guiding all New Hampshire conservation commissions. The motivation for this undertaking was similar to others States; the apparent, accelerating loss of open space, especially wetlands. While the rate of loss varies from year to year, Steven Roberge, UNH Forest Services Specialist, was recently quoted in the Valley News as stating that New Hampshire loses (on average) 5,000 acres of forest and agricultural land per year to development. Or stated differently, the equivalent of



Newport Conservation Commission Members: Herb Tellor, Guenter Hubert, Ken Dennis, Don Schagen, Linda Dennis

one small New Hampshire community falls to development each year, threatening the gradual loss of our State's rural character.

Newport's Conservation Commission is made up of volunteers from the community, each of which is appointed by the Newport Select Board for 3-year terms. The group includes seven members with two alternates, with one of the regular members also being a member of the Town Select Board. These concerned volunteers study the Town's natural resources and develop long-term plans for the protection of those deemed critical.

The Newport Conservation Commission's primary activities include:

- Participating in the management of the Town Forest in conjunction with the Recreation Dept.

- Monitoring the Town's conservation properties (Newport has four such properties, protected by conservation easements)
- Participating in the management of the trees on the Town Common
- Supporting and advising the Select Board, Planning Board, and the Zoning Board of Adjustment regarding conservation issues
- Looking for opportunities to preserve Newport's special open spaces, possibly through the purchase of conservation easements
- Promoting natural resource preservation and open space protection within Newport for the benefit of present and future residents
- Assisting the NH Department of Environmental Services by providing preliminary review of proposed developments in areas potentially affecting lakes, ponds, rivers/streams and wetlands

The Conservation Commission meets monthly on the third Wednesday of the month at 6:30 pm. Meetings are open to the public.

The Commission is in need of new members! If you have an interest in protecting Newport's natural resources, join the Commission! Contact the Town Clerk at 603-863-2224 or any of the Commission members for more information. ■

## GOOD UPDATES

## Newport Montessori School

### Scholarships Available

Families often ask if our school has scholarships available. The answer is, yes! Our school's Board of Directors established a Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) in the first years of the school's operation. That program has helped many families over the past decade to afford the out-of-pocket expense of a non-public school tuition. On average, our TAP awards between 10-12% of the total cost of the tuition in scholarships to qualifying families. Families interested in learning more about our TAP program can request an application to accompany the enrollment packet.



There are two other programs that operate at the state level to assist qualifying families with the costs of private school tuition. The Children's Scholarship Fund (CSF) is a national organization with a network of partner programs each providing scholarships that empower parents to choose schools they otherwise could not afford. Since its inception in 1998, CSF has awarded more than \$934 million in scholarships to the families of 191,500 low-income children.



In June, 2021, the New Hampshire legislature passed the Education Freedom Accounts (EFA) program, and Governor Sununu signed it into law as part of the new state budget. The EFA program allows families with incomes up to 300 percent of the poverty level to direct a portion of the funds spent by the state for their child's education to private school tuition, online learning programs, and other educational expenses as they choose. ■

To learn more about CSF and EFA visit [nh.scholarshipfund.org](http://nh.scholarshipfund.org). To learn more about enrollment at the Newport Montessori School visit [newportmontessori.org](http://newportmontessori.org).

## DANCING WITH THE STARS: NEW DATE!

**April 15-16** Friday & Saturday, 7 pm  
**Dancing with the Newport Stars**  
 @ The Newport Opera House

Presented by the Newport Area Chamber of Commerce  
 Vote for your favorite couple in adult and junior divisions.  
 Tickets: [app.arts-people.com/index.php?show=132095](http://app.arts-people.com/index.php?show=132095)





# Greetings from the Chamber Office!



Executive Director Shannon MacMichael



Mac-and-cheese winners

Congratulations to all on the successful launch of the *Newport Times*! We are overjoyed to hear about Newport's good news.

Speaking of good news, how about the 106th Newport Winter Carnival? Kudos to the community members, business members and participants who made the weekend a huge success! The Chamber hosted the Mac and Cheese Cook-Off for the second time this year and it was a well-attended event. We had thirteen people enter their macaroni and cheese dishes and we had one hundred forty-two people pay to judge. The Chamber Board voted to use the money raised to purchase new Winter Carnival banners for next year. Thank you to all involved!

Our Annual Meeting was held on February 18,

2022 and looked a bit different this year. We voted on Board Members and voted on our 2022 Slate of Officers, which include Brandy Waterman of the O'Halloran Group as President, Steve Smith of Main Street Radio LLC as Vice President, Paul Brown of the Town of Newport as Second Vice, Jeaninne Everitt of Sugar River Bank as Treasurer, and Kathy Campbell of the Insurance Center as Secretary. The Board decided to hold our Annual Awards Ceremony

in the spring so we can safely gather to announce the Citizen, Non-Profit and Business of the Year, so stay tuned.

Since our last edition, Dancing with the Newport Stars has been postponed until April 15th and 16th at 7 pm at the Newport Opera House. For more information on membership and events, please visit our website [newportnhchamber.org](http://newportnhchamber.org) or call 603-863-1510. ■

~ Shannon MacMichael  
Exec. Dir, Newport Area  
Chamber of Commerce



Winter Carnival Torch Lighting

## New Executive Director to Carry the Torch

The Newport Area Chamber of Commerce is excited to announce its new Executive Director, Shannon MacMichael. Shannon was the President of the Newport Area Chamber of Commerce last year, a past Vice President, and has been on the Board of Directors of the Chamber for many years. As our long-time former Executive Director, Ella Casey, entered retirement, Shannon's duties as President mirrored those of the Executive Director.

Her energy and excitement for our community is contagious. She is dedicated to the Chamber, and truly believes in its mission to promote the growth and prosperity of the area served by Newport; to promote its general welfare, and to foster commerce and trade. She has worked as a vital team member to carry on the tradition of 'Twas Just Before Christmas, helped create and execute the annual Fireworks Show at the Parlin Field Airport, and helped launch the wildly successful Car Show last June. She understands events such as these bring visitors, enhance our community, and spark organic commerce.

Shannon has a strong business background. Since 2005, she has been the President of Rockingham Fireworks Mfg. & Display, dba Noise "R" Us Fireworks in Newport, and the owner/operator of Feelin' PHAT Fitness in Newbury. Her local ties are important; as a 2002 graduate of Kearsarge Regional High School, she returned to the area after graduating from Champlain College in Burlington with a bachelor's in Professional Studies – Paralegal Program. She lives in her hometown of Newbury, raising two amazing young men, Levi (8) and Owen (4).

Ella Casey's shoes are giant ones to fill. She headed the Chamber and had been dedicated to the community for decades. The Newport Area Chamber of Commerce is fortunate to have selected one of its own who understands the needs of the Chamber and business community, will help continue to grow the Chamber, and has tireless positive energy! ■





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