

The Newport Times

Newport's Good News Paper

Serving the Town of Newport, NH

November/December 2023

Est. January 2022

"The greatest friend of truth is Time, her greatest enemy is Prejudice, and her constant companion is Humility."

~Charles Caleb Colton



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The Area Choir: 70 Years of Harmony and Unity

Allison Browning

Since its establishment in 1953, The Area Choir has transformed from a humble choral workshop into a thriving community choir that has touched the lives of countless individuals. This remarkable journey began as a collaborative effort between South Congregational Church in Newport and the Sunapee Methodist Church, with the shared love for music as their guiding force. Over the years, the choir has expanded its reach, extending its warm embrace to members from more than 39 communities in New Hampshire and Vermont. However, what truly sets The Area Choir apart is its remarkable inclusivity – there are no auditions, fees, or religious affiliations required to join – welcoming people from all walks of life to unite in creating beautiful music.

The original idea to create an area choir began with Malcom "Mac" Rowell of South Congregational Church, who envisioned a wider exposure for his choir. At the time, Mr. Rowell was the Director of Music at South Church when he teamed up with Blanche Bailey of the Sunapee Methodist Church to create a series of workshops to give their choirs more experience in choral selections with greater difficulty, and broader access to music. Little did they know that their small endeavor would blossom into an enduring tradition for the region.

The choir's annual free Christmas concerts have become a cherished tradition, not just for the music, but for the sense of community and belonging they foster. One of the most heartwarming aspects of The Area Choir is the way it has brought generations of families together. Many have attended their concerts year after year, while others have had the

Continued on page 2



An RTI team pays a visit to MJ Harrington Jewelers

A Hometown Hero – Margaret Coulter

Mel Reed and Jennifer MacMillen

It would be hard to argue that nothing is more valuable to all Americans than freedom. In some ways, we take our everyday freedoms for granted and actually live on auto pilot. We make our breakfasts, get ourselves and maybe kids ready for the day. We head off to work (or to our home office) and do the work that we are good at/trained to do to help us provide for ourselves and for our families.

Imagine if none of those freedoms were a given. Imagine if we needed a lot of extra training to master the tasks and thought processes just to perform the functions to have a "normal" day.

Margaret Coulter, this issue's Ruger Hometown Hero, is the founder of Road to Independence (RTI), a non-profit organization serving people with differing abilities to receive the training needed to live a productive life as an American citizen. RTI's programs are designed to instill individual self-confidence, self-sufficiency, and self-esteem, all skills necessary to successfully enter the workforce.

Margaret explains: "We see our program as a starting point on the road to independence and a productive life within the community."

Pre-vocational training includes how to: work in a team; follow instructions; deal with workplace

Continued on page 8

privilege of singing alongside their parents, grandparents, and even their children. The choir's reach extends far beyond its core members, as they've welcomed singers from across New Hampshire and Vermont, some journeying up to 100 miles to be part of this close-knit musical family.

Music Beyond Boundaries

Even when faced with the unprecedented challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, The Area Choir refused to be silenced. In 2020, when live concerts were no longer feasible due to safety concerns, the choir found innovative ways to continue serving the community. They received financial support from local businesses and generous individuals who recognized the value of their musical gift to the community. With this support, the choir adapted by presenting televised performances of their past Christmas concerts on their traditional concert weekend. This not only preserved a beloved tradition but also provided a meaningful musical experience to the community during a time when people needed it the most.

In 2021, the choir's commitment and resilience shone brightly. Despite the ongoing pandemic, they found a way to continue sharing their music and spreading joy. They began meeting in the South Church parking lot and singing from their cars, often in the cold and dark, using special headsets and microphones that allowed them to practice together as a choir. This resulted in an outdoor Christmas concert that people could view from their cars while listening on their car radios at Meadow Park in Newport. In 2022, indoor rehearsals and concerts signaled a joyous return to a sense of normalcy, while adhering to certain COVID-19 protocols. The choir's ability to adapt and persevere in the face of challenges is a testament to the profound impact they have on the community and the spirit of unity they embody.

The Area Choir's impact goes beyond the walls of the concert hall, as they have actively demonstrated their commitment to spreading joy through music! One notable example is their collaboration with the Newport Chamber of Commerce's 'Twas Just Before Christmas event, which has become a heartwarming tradition in recent years. During this event, the choir shares holiday favorites with more than 300 children and their families, bringing the magic of the holiday season to the community.

Looking to the Future

As they commemorate their 70th anniversary, The Area Choir looks ahead with hope and enthusiasm. They began 2023 by offering their first "Area Choir Christmas in July Summer Sing," an enjoyable and successful event that was open to all who love to sing, not just its members.

For this year's annual Christmas concerts on December 2 and 3, in celebration of their 70th anniversary, The Area Choir's fifty singers will be joined by a string quartet for a selected group of songs in each of their three concerts, made possible by a generous grant from the Choral Arts Foundation of the Upper Valley in New Hampshire. A special birthday party honoring the history of The Area Choir is being planned for concert weekend.

As they celebrate their 70th anniversary, this remarkable group continues to uplift spirits, bring people together, and remind us of the enduring power of song. From its humble beginnings as a small choral workshop to its current status as a beloved institution in the Lake Sunapee region, the choir's growth reflects not only its commitment to musical excellence, but also its dedication to fostering inclusivity and community spirit. Their annual free Christmas concerts have provided joyous experiences for audiences young and old. The choir continues to flourish because of their dedicated Area Choir family of singers, and the encouragement, creative ideas, and financial support they have received from community organizations, churches, businesses, and individuals.

It is said in our region that, "It is not Christmas until The Area Choir sings." Throughout their history, The Area Choir has brought people together through the power of music. Their legacy serves as a shining testament to the profound impact of shared song and the spirit of a community united under the universal message of peace, hope, and joy. With anticipation and excitement, our town looks forward to many more years of beautiful harmonies and uplifting performances, celebrating the incredible journey of The Area Choir as they continue to inspire and unite through the gift of music. ■

To donate or to learn about joining the choir for next year's concerts, email TheAreaChoir@gmail.com, or write The Area Choir, PO Box 692, Newport NH 03773, or call 603-863-4007. You can also visit The Area Choir on Facebook.



The 2023 Area Choir 70th Anniversary Christmas Concerts

Rehearsals began in October for the 70th anniversary Area Choir Christmas concerts. **The concerts will be presented on December 2 at 7:30 PM and December 3 at 3:30 PM and 7:30 PM at South Congregational Church, 20 Church Street in Newport.** There is no admission charge and a free-will offering will be accepted.

Directed by Susan Cancio-Bello, the choir will be accompanied by Alexander Stewart, pianist, Katie Parker Ames on flute, and Beverly Caldon, organist. Additional selections will be performed by South Congregational Church's Earle Pollard Memorial Bell Choir.

The Sterling String Quartet will join the choir for selected pieces in each concert, made possible by a generous grant from the Choral Arts Foundation of the Upper Valley.

The 50 members of this year's Area Choir are from 14 New Hampshire and Vermont communities including Bradford, Claremont, Croydon, Grantham, Lempster, New London, Newbury, Newport, North Sutton, Springfield, VT; Sunapee, Thetford Center, VT; Unity and West Unity, and Warner. Although it is not required to have a church affiliation, at least 15 churches from eight communities are represented in the choir.

The Area Choir is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt nonprofit organization (TAX ID 22-2511426) managed by a nine-member volunteer Executive Board. The choir offers three annual identical Christmas concerts to the public free of charge. No fee, audition, or religious affiliation is required to join the choir. About two-thirds of the cost of the regular rehearsal and Christmas concert season is funded by business sponsors and individual donors, with about one-third from donations at the concerts. Donations to the choir are gratefully accepted at any time.



Uncovering the Boardwalk

If you recently tried to walk the boardwalk behind the Middle High School sports field you might have had trouble finding it due to the dense overgrowth of vegetation. Invading bush and overhanging limbs had turned the walk into an obstacle course. Recently the discussions at the Newport Conservation Commission centered on who actually is responsible for the path's upkeep.

The stakeholders in the boardwalk upkeep include the Conservation Commission, the Newport Recreation Department and the Newport Middle High School. The history of the boardwalk dates to 1991 when the Conservation Commission secured grant monies and donated materials for the construction of a proposed wetland boardwalk. The original vision was of a walk with several "teaching sites" along the trail. Construction began in 1992 and was completed in 1994. Volunteers from the community, members of the Conservation Commission, high school students in the Conservation Corps and volunteers from the International Workcamp Program comprised the manual labor.

Ongoing maintenance of the boardwalk has more recently landed on the plate of PJ Lovely and the Rec. Dept., and the Sugar River Valley Technical Center's forestry program. Mostly it seemed that all the stakeholders hoped that one of the other groups would take care of business. But, this October, we all convened at the same place and the same time for a joint effort to reclaim the boardwalk.

It had been some time since the boardwalk was cleared of vegetation and general repairs and upkeep performed. Dense overgrowth of vegetation, primarily the aggressively invasive glossy buckthorn had slowly been choking off native plants and trees as well as overgrowing the boardwalk. On Friday morning October 13, Guenter Hubert, Don Schagen and yours truly from the Conservation Commission, PJ Lovely, Dana Waterman and Rick Cota representing the Rec. Department and Mr. Sam Nelson and his forestry students brought their implements of destruction to the wetlands. For three hours, brush was cut and cleared and



Sam Nelson and Don Schagen

the boardwalk was leveled in many areas that had settled over the years. The final touch was when PJ cleared leaves and debris from the walk with his leaf blower. There remains some work to fix broken handrails and replace some planks on the walk.

The boardwalk is a great little trail tucked between the wetlands and the ski jump run up area. It is short at perhaps 150 yards but it connects to the lower trails in the Town Forest and is complete with a pull-out area with benches for rest and reflection. The

space has been used as a biology classroom and even Mr. Stewart has been known to bring his music students out to observation area to take advantage of its natural acoustics. This fall there are still some lingering colors to appreciate. In the spring the wetlands will become alive with peepers and migratory birds to entertain you. And now you can walk the trail without a branch whacking you in the face.

~ Larry Schissel

Newport Conservation Commission

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Singing the Praises... It's Time, Newport!

Humility and kindness are the themes that permeate this holiday issue of the Newport Times. After publishing this good-news-only paper for 2 years now (wow, has time flown!), it has been simultaneously easy and extremely difficult to find stories that meet our strict standards of goodness. Let me explain.

Former Town Manager, Hunter Rieseberg, told me from the get-go what an awesome spirit the people of Newport have. Despite some of the hardships individuals and businesses have experienced throughout Newport's history, there is an underlying can-do attitude and unspoken "help thy neighbor" prevailing code of conduct. In this way, my job is made easy. There is an active and engaged body of citizens who work on behalf of the greater good and a foundation of support provided by the many non-profits that serve the community.

What makes my job challenging is trying to find the individuals behind the scenes who go above and beyond for the greater good of Newport.. These individuals are everywhere but choose to remain under the radar. I've never come across a community where humility appears to be such a governing influence. What is it? Old-fashioned Yankee values? Especially strong 'kindness' genes? Something in the water?

Okay, people of Newport, it's time to come out from behind the curtain and let your fellow townspeople read about you and see you in YOUR good-news-only community paper. In order to counter the negative news and negative messages that run rampant on social media, it's time to show your true light and allow the Newport Times to feature you. Reading about your acts of kindness or good deeds will hopefully inspire others to follow suit! As they say, a rising tide lifts all boats.

We are not asking you to become a selfie-maven. We are asking that you let us shine a spotlight on the good example you set so your neighbors and the next generation can be inspired. If you are willing, or you know someone who deserves to be featured, please contact me at publisher@greatergoodmedia.net. I can't wait to meet you!

In the meantime, may you have a happy, prosperous and peace-filled holiday season and new year! ■

~ Jen MacMillen, publisher

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And all of the representatives of the community organizations featured

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and especially all of the contributors in each issue.

To contribute story ideas or submit your organization's content, email publisher@greatergoodmedia.net.

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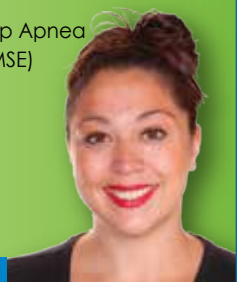
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All Terrain: A Hometown Business's Path to National Success

A hometown company has soared to great heights while staying firmly grounded in its community values

All Terrain® is not just any company; it's the embodiment of the American dream. Although its CEO, David Kulow, may be the visionary behind the company, he acknowledges that any success the company has is primarily due to its main facility and employees being in Newport.

All Terrain sells effective, environmentally-friendly skin protection to help people safely enjoy the vast outdoors. The company now offers a range of products made with natural ingredients, including Herbal Armor® insect repellents, Ditch the Itch® itch relief, topical skin soothing and bandages. These products aim to empower families to be more active and live healthier lives, bolstered by the confidence that All Terrain provides safe, effective skin protection for outdoor activities.

The journey towards success has not been a solitary one; it's been a community affair. The company recognizes its good fortune to be part of the Newport Community and is stepping up to make a difference. David is on the Board of the Newport Chamber of Commerce and is dedicated to helping all businesses in Newport.

David shares a deep commitment to community values, saying, "Over the years, our family has operated multiple businesses in the area. We have been fortunate to have had great employees, particularly at All Terrain. Under the leadership of Barb Howe at All Terrain's Newport facility, people have been dedicated, hard-working, team-oriented and have risen to the challenges that All Terrain has faced. These traits are a testament to the



All Terrain at Natural Products Expo in Anaheim, CA

people in Newport and to the community."

All Terrain's mission goes beyond just profit margins; it is about making a difference, particularly for children who are facing the challenges of a more sedentary lifestyle. All Terrain's products are more than just skin protection; they're a catalyst for change. The hope is that these products will encourage everyone - especially children - to spend more time outdoors and less time in front of screens.

Even before the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, All Terrain was on a mission to change the narrative. Children's recess time had decreased by 40%, and access to "free play areas" had fallen by almost 89%. Disturbingly, children were spending an average of 7.5 hours a day behind screens, contributing to a rise in childhood obesity, diabetes, depression, and ADHD.

In alignment with its values, All Terrain actively supports both local and national organizations dedicated to getting kids active and outdoors. David has served on the Outdoor Industry Association Board of Directors and on the Outdoor Foundation Board, which is dedicated to getting youth to participate in outdoor activities. This dedication to health and wellness is a beacon of hope, offering support where it's needed most.

All Terrain's journey stands as a testament to the belief that success doesn't require compromising one's values. As a hometown company that has achieved national recognition, All Terrain serves as an inspiration for other small businesses. The company's emphasis has been on independent, small, local retailers. Over the years, it has ascended from a small town enterprise to producing



products at various times for major retailers like Whole Foods, Target, CVS, Amazon, and Disney-licensed items to Walmart. This transition demonstrates the heights that can be reached with unwavering determination, community values, and a commitment to making the world a better place.

All Terrain is an example of what is possible when a business is part of a great community and is driven by passion, integrity, and a commitment to the well-being of individuals and that community. Its success story is a testament to the power of entrepreneurship, innovation, and a dedication to core values. In a world where businesses often seek global reach and impact, All Terrain proves that hometown companies can indeed make a difference nationally.

~ Allison Browning
ECON Development Coordinator



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Above All Else: Kindness

To be honest, I wanted to write a story about this sequence of events in order to truly champion the everyday citizens of Newport. For some reason, I've discovered, many people in Newport don't like to be in the spotlight – even for doing good deeds!

In case not everyone knows, there were a half dozen or so acts of vandalism that occurred in Newport and surrounding communities at the end of October. Houses, fences, garages, cars were spray painted with obscenities, some with racial slurs. I learned of this news after having read the article in the Valley News on Thursday 11/2. The writer, John Lippman, did a wonderful job reporting the facts of the event and, more importantly - in my humble opinion, the good deeds that were done and the kind words of support that were said by neighbors and strangers, alike.

Once I read that, my heart lifted and I immediately jumped on the phone with Newport's Chief of Police, Alex Lee, to see if one of the targeted

families would be willing to speak with me further. I, of course, was most interested in the silver lining where the details of "good" can be found in times of crisis.

After getting permission, Chief Lee put me in touch with Kenny Sawyer, the father/husband of one of the families targeted. The Sawyer family is a mixed race family that has lived in Newport since 2010. Until now, they have not had to experience anything out of the ordinary.

Kenny Sawyer and his wife, Jasmine Homer, have two children ages 14 and 16. Their daughter, Kenny's (16) from a previous relationship, is black and their son is white. Kenny and Jasmine met in Las Vegas where they were living and struggling with addiction and homelessness.

"We were able to clean up our lives and wanted to start with a clean slate," said Kenny. Jasmine is from Newport and her family is here so we decided to move here to have a family support network." "We love the community.

Everyone is nice and supportive. We have never had any issues."

"My daughter is a good kid. She's on the honor roll. She used to play sports but has now decided to get a job afterschool." Kenny added, "For now, because of this incident, I am driving her to school and to her job for safety's sake."

As Kenny indicated in the Valley News piece, he received a text message from two different neighbors letting him know about the racially motivated hate messages that were spray painted on his garage, fence and car. With this information, and that the kids head to school in the opposite direction, he felt relieved that he could keep them from seeing the vandalism firsthand.

"Unfortunately, they did see photos later on social media, but at least they didn't have to see it or experience the negative effects directly," said Kenny.

With all of this said and done, the good deeds and kind words that have surfaced is how everyday people in Newport act more often than not.

"Everything happened so fast. It was a whirlwind of people stopping by to offer their support. Neighbors started a GoFundMe page and a painting company called to say they would like to offer their painting services for free. The police jumped right on it," said Kenny.

I called Dylan Eaton, of Eaton and Sons Interior Exterior painting company to see what prompted him to act. He said, "My wife showed me the post [the social media post that alerted many to the vandalism] and read about the ways neighbors were coming forward to help. I immediately wanted to do something so I offered up my crew to come out and paint for free."

"I don't want any recognition. I just wanted to help," he said.

And, that is what this town is all about. People don't want the spotlight. People don't act from a place other than from the genuine spirit of being a kind citizen and supportive neighbor. That is how Newportonians just are.

~Jennifer MacMillen

Publisher, The Newport Times

People don't act from a place other than from the genuine spirit of being a kind citizen and supportive neighbor.

CELEBRATING THE ARTS

Library Arts: Holiday Season Local Treasures

Gallery of Gifts will be in the gallery November 4- December 23. This show transforms our community gallery into a holiday makers' market featuring handmade holiday gifts of over 100 local and regional artists and craftspeople. This local shopping experience has

become an annual tradition for many in the greater community which helps to keep the money flowing in Newport. Statistics show that money spent locally recirculates and stays within the community an average of 2-4 times, greatly increasing the economic health of our small town. From pottery and woodworking to one-of-a-kind jewelry and handmade soaps, there are just so many beautiful and locally made items available at the Library Arts Center during Gallery of Gifts. Artisans constantly restock their handmade inventory, keeping the gallery well-stocked throughout the season.

In addition to the regular gallery hours of Tuesdays through Fridays, 11am-4pm and Saturdays, 10am-2pm, there are special evening shopping events during this show, too. Ladies' Night, an all-time favorite, will be Friday, December 8, 5-7pm. This drop-in event has prizes for both the most beautifully and outlandishly holiday dressed, as well as chocolate themed refreshment.

A new event we are very excited to announce this year is Gifts on Tap on Thursday, November 30, 5-7pm which is a partnership between the Old Courthouse and Polyculture Brewing. This ticketed event will feature beer brewed by Polyculture and passed appetizers by the Old Courthouse. Purchase tickets online at libraryartscenter.org.



With so much emphasis on handmade gifts at the Library Arts Center during the holiday season, the center is excited to launch its first-ever series of art classes for adults focused on handmade gift creation. This spin-off of the very popular Art Camp for

Grown-Ups program will run late October into November on Thursday evenings. Check out the series online and register for any that interest you as space allows.

There are all sorts of art classes running right now. One wonderfully popular program is the weekly drop-in on Thursday mornings for differently abled adults. Building on the popularity of this group, there is a new spin-off program on the second Friday of each month which is a differently abled adult drop-in workshop themed on monthly holidays and seasons. Visit our website for additional details about this amazing program.

Another wonderfully popular program is our weekly Open Studio for artists held on Wednesday mornings. We've added a monthly adventure outdoor art program where participants meet to make art outdoors in gorgeous locations every month throughout the year. Light hiking will be needed for some locations, all of which would be posted with location information on the website. There are several other art classes running, from basket weaving to master artist classes, to mixed media. Visit libraryartscenter.org for full up-to-date listings.

It is rare for such a small town to have such an active community arts center. Please take advantage of what this organization has to offer! ■

Why Is Education a Top Priority?

Have you ever wondered how the Town Clerk's Office knows how to do all the things we are responsible for? How we keep up with law changes that can sometimes completely change the way we handle things? Election laws, for example, can change each year depending on the State Legislature. The answer is EDUCATION. While working in the Town Clerk's office you have to be a sponge; soaking up everything you can about the job, municipality, NH laws and any other tools that may help better serve the community.

Did you know that you cannot get a college education or even vocational training to become a Town Clerk? The only way we Clerk's learn our jobs to keep up with the constant change is to take every possible training. Many of these opportunities are provided by State Agencies like DMV, Vital Records, and the Elections Division of the Secretary of State's Office. They teach procedures and share law changes as they happen. Our day-to-day transactions for vehicle registration, vital records requests and running elections rely on state trainings. Advanced topics are taught at NH City & Town Clerks Association (NHCTCA) Regional Spring Workshops and Annual Conferences. We attend these trainings in unison each year to ensure we are receiving and processing the information collectively.

That is not all we do. There are many more! For example, dog licensing, municipal budgeting, account reconciliation, record keeping, taking minutes, public

speaking, management theory, and intergovernmental relations, and so on. How do we get a grasp on those topics? This is where training by seasoned Clerks, Finance Directors, Municipal Managers and other professional instruction becomes essential. Fortunately, in New England we have a few different Clerk Associations that have the express purpose of educating clerks to become well-rounded. One of them is right here in NH! The NHCTCA offers a Joint Certification program facilitated by a Committee of Tax Collectors and Town Clerks. This program is a 3-year program for Clerks or Tax Collectors and, for those who hold dual roles, it's a 4-year program. Our deputy clerk Jennifer, and myself, as your elected Clerk, have both completed this program and earned our NH Certified Town Clerk (CTC) designation. We continue to keep this designation by attending recertification every 5 years. Jennifer completed her recertification this past August and our assistant clerk, Suellen, completed her first year of the program.

There are other learning opportunities outside NH with the New England Association of City & Town Clerks (NEACTC) that covers all of the New England States and offers trainings at annual conferences for their members. New England Municipal Clerks Institute & Academy (NEMCI&A) is an International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC) approved program allowing for points to earn



Deputy Clerk Jenn Souliotis, Town Clerk Lee Dufort and Assistant Clerk Suellen Leischer - photo taken at the NH City and Town Clerks Association Conference Banquet at the annual picnic

the prestigious Certified Municipal Clerk designation. NEMCI is a rigorous, 3-year program for clerks that takes more of a deep dive into the topics that all Municipal Clerks face in their jobs regardless of what town, state or country they serve. I completed my 3-year NEMCI program and earned my CMC through IIMC this past July.

The days that we close the office for training are to better serve our Newport residents and we don't take that lightly. As always, thank you for your support and for the friendly faces when you come through the office or when we see you at the polls. ■

~ Liselle Dufort, Newport Town Clerk

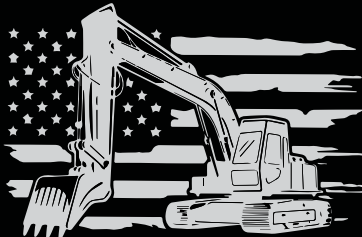


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NEWPORT'S HOMETOWN HERO

ROAD TO INDEPENDENCE FARM - continued from page 1

pressures; and master acceptable social behaviors, language, and dress. Once an individual masters those, they are ready to learn specific job skills, ie: vocational training.

The non-profit has historically offered programs such as running the Aurora Bakery, a non-riding equine program, farm etiquette and live community events.

"When I came up with the bakery idea, they told me I was crazy," Margaret confided. "It was too much work. There were too many grant and funding requirements. We would never break even, much less make a profit." "Well, I made it work for 12 years," said Margaret. Sadly, Aurora Bakery closed its doors for good last month as it never could quite recover from the economic effects of the pandemic. Thankfully, RTI's other programs are going strong!

Who is Margaret and how did RTI evolve?

Before RTI, Margaret held a variety of jobs from snowmaking to retail to waitressing which, perhaps, contributed to her innate knowledge of what is needed to perform successfully in a multitude of roles. Underlying all of these experiences has been a lifelong connection to equines and a strong commitment to the interests and care of her younger brother with differing abilities.

Looking to reconnect with the equine industry after the birth of her daughter, Stella in 2003, she met Penny de Peyer of Goshen, NH. Penny relocated to Goshen in 2000 to breed Cleveland Bay Horses and donkeys. Penny and Margaret's friendship, and a mutual love of donkeys, led to the creation of Road To Independence in 2011. Penny's mantra: "You don't know until you try" has carried Margaret forward on many RTI and donkey adventures despite nay-sayers and doubters.

Margaret oversees all programs for RTI's farm program – connecting and nurturing relationships with schools, elder residences, funding sources, and a wide range of community members and organizations. In addition, with the passing of Penny de Peyer in June of 2021, Margaret assumed the care and management of the RTI donkey herd of 5 as well as the overall direction of RTI.

Road to Independence is Margaret's way of accomplishing one of her life's goals: "I strive to ensure the joy and confidence the Farm Program (especially the donkeys) brings to our community (participants, their families, senior living residents, customers at the Farmers' Market, and the broader community as a whole) continues in a thoughtful and sustainable direction for many years to come."

RTI programs provide meaningful community involvement for participants, particularly those who have aged-out of school-based services.

The Farm Program

Margaret started the Farm Program under the guidance of her mentor, Penny DePeyer. It offers two types of learning activities: "Non-Riding Equine" skills acquisition and "On the Road" community events.

"Non-Riding Equine" activities teach participants to: halter, lead, and care for the donkeys. Managing these tasks builds critical life skills, including communication, teamwork, and the ability to follow directions.

"On the Road" events provide opportunities for participants to take part in community events and interactions. These include parades (often taking home "Best Costume" trophies), visiting eldercare centers, attending the Farmers' Market in Newport and other outings.

As Margaret points out: "There are limited

opportunities for individuals with differing abilities to participate on an equal footing with their able-bodied community members. These events make it happen."

About Donkeys

Margaret explains the impact of the "On the Road" part of the program: "For many participants, involvement with the Road to Independence donkeys may be the first time they've had the opportunity to oversee anything.

Donkeys are known for being cautious and having a well-developed sense of self preservation. Where horses might run when startled by strange vocalizations or awkward movements, donkeys are more apt to just stand still and consider next steps. While this reaction is undoubtedly the source of their reputation for being 'stubborn,' it also makes them safe for individuals with differing abilities.

To work with donkeys, participants must establish a relationship based on trust. It may appear that the



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.



Margaret with Leonard the mule

participant is just 'visiting' with the donkey but, in reality, the individual is controlling the situation – telling the donkey what to do and where to go – acting as a leader, not a participant. These seemingly simple interactions can be life changing. Sullen individuals radiate joy after mastering new skills. Timid individuals confidently walk a donkey through obstacle courses. Individuals with low self-esteem proudly teach an elderly resident how to brush and pet the donkey.

For individuals with limited job and volunteer opportunities, farm and animal handling programs provide new situations for participants to learn and reinforce everyday life skills and blossom as individuals.

Program Goals

Participants in RTI programs are expected to – and DO – have fun. And from the outside-in, it might appear the programs are just fun activities thrown together by well-meaning folks. Nothing could be further from the truth.

All activities are designed to accomplish established therapeutic goals and teach clearly defined educational skills. For example, the Non-Riding Equine Program includes the following list of Therapeutic Goals:

- Balance
- Endurance
- Fine and Gross Motor Skills
- Memory and Cognition
- Problem Solving
- Range of Motion
- Self-Esteem
- Sensory Stimulation
- Speech
- Strength

It is very clear, just from seeing the accompanying photos, that RTI is a huge success in helping those with differing abilities master key life skills that allows them to move into a level of life's freedoms that many others take for granted. And guiding the program along every step of the way is Margaret Coulter, the quintessential "mover and shaker" and the very definition of a "Hometown Hero. ■

** The term "we" refers to those people on the "average" or middle of the spectrum of abilities, understanding that there are varying degrees of abilities in multiple domains.*



GOOD PEOPLE • GOOD PLACES • GOOD THINGS HAPPENING

The Newport Community Trust Where Compassion Meets Action

The Newport Community Trust, established in 2013, is a benevolent organization funded by an anonymous gift from a generous Newport citizen, and has been quietly working behind the scenes to provide invaluable support to those in need. With over \$800,000 in disbursements to date, the trust has become a significant contributor for community needs and individual financial assistance.

The Newport Community Trust disburses income annually to the Town of Newport, the Newport Unit of the Salvation Army, and the Church of the Epiphany, affectionately known as "The Stone Church." These 3 organizations work hand-in-hand to fund scholarships and create programs that assist Newport residents in times of financial hardship. Examples of the scholarships and programs the Trust supports are as follows:

- Scholarships to Camp Coniston
- Scholarships for graduating Newport Middle High School Seniors
- Program for Emergency Church Assistance in Newport (PECAN)
- Scholarships to River Valley Community College
- Newport Sunshine Diner
- Emergency Homeowner Assistance
- Salvation Army's Newport unit
- Newport's summer recreation camp

Each of these programs has touched the lives of many Newport residents, making a positive impact on those who need it most.

In 2022, the Newport Community Trust continued its mission of support by generously providing funding to various initiatives. Among them:

- \$40,000 was allocated for Camp Coniston scholarships
- \$20,000 to PECAN

- \$16,000 to NMHS scholarships
- \$21,500 for Emergency Homeowner Assistance
- \$25,000 pledge toward the Newport Community Center project (with a substantial
- \$50,000 pledged to support future funding needs of the project at the latest annual meeting)

Additionally, \$12,500 was earmarked for adult continuing education, \$1,650 was allocated to the "Got Lunch" Food Assistance Program, \$2,000 to the SRVTC, and \$4,000 was dedicated to the Summer Recreation Program.

The positive local impact of the Newport Community Trust has been significant. Through its ongoing financial support and collaborative efforts with key stakeholders in Newport, this trust has made a tangible difference in the lives of countless individuals. By prioritizing programs and scholarships that focus on Newport residents requiring financial assistance, it has maintained its mission to empower and uplift the community.

What truly sets the Newport Community Trust apart is its commitment to ensuring that the assets it manages continue to benefit Newport residents for generations to come. The Newport Community Trust's assets are professionally managed, with an annual disbursement approach designed to preserve and potentially grow the trust's initial principal. This ensures that the trust remains a dependable source of aid for Newport citizens well into the future.

Residents who are interested in learning more about how they can benefit from or contribute to this valuable resource can email newportcommunitytrust@gmail.com for additional information. The Newport Community Trust shines as a testament to unity, support, and the unshakable belief that, together, we can build a brighter tomorrow for Newport and its cherished residents. ■

Holiday Magic and More at the Newport Senior Center

The air is brisk and the crisp leaves of red, orange, and yellow are beneath your feet as you walk. As the temperature continues to drop with each passing day, it is important to have a plan in place to help you stay healthy and involved with your community.

Despite an outside clogged drain pipe, discovered by the town water department, that caused water to flow back into the center, the Newport Senior Center has a jammed-packed activity schedule planned to help you avoid the winter blues.

At the time of this writing, it is anticipated the indoor walking track will be completed and ready for use once again before the 'you-know-what' begins to fall from the sky. The walking path will be darker than it was five years ago, but the path outline will remain the same.

The walking path will be open Monday through Friday from 8 am – 3 pm. The path will be easy on the joints, the elements of the weather will be no excuse not to exercise, a bathroom is readily available and most importantly, this is another FREE service provided by the Newport Senior Center.

In addition to the walking path, Liliyan's Legacy Exercise program is available each Tuesday and Thursday, from 9:30 am – 10:30 am. This low impact exercise program is designed to fit your exercise level. Join us for an exercise program that is so much fun that you will not know you are exercising.

On November 4, the center is proud to be able to provide space for artists to show off their creativity at our Annual Holiday Craft & Bake Sale. Find that unique gift for someone special that cannot be purchased in a store.

Socialization is very important to your health. There is no better way to socialize than traveling and eating with friends. Sit back, relax, and enjoy the scenery as we travel with Premier Buses to Hart's Turkey Farm for a scrumptious meal together. Transportation is priced right at \$20. You would be a "turkey" to pass this trip up!



Holidays are the most magical time of the year, and nothing says magic like lights that come to life, and shopping. Hop on one of the new Premier Buses and roll on into Yankee Candle Village, where you can arouse your senses with more scents than you can imagine in one place, make your own candle or shop for that someone special in your life.

From Yankee Candle, the bus will continue to roll on down to Bright Nights at Forest Park. Here you will ride through, in comfort, the park where reindeer fly, lights glide down the mountain and a ride through the tunnel of lights. The light show at Bright Nights is a sight you will never forget.

Transportation for this trip and entrance into the park is only \$25 per person. If you would like to reserve your seat for any or all these fabulous trips, be sure to visit us at the before it is too late.

Do not forget our well-known, stimulating form of entertainment at the center... B-I-N-G-O! Bingo is a cash prize game played every Friday, beginning at 12:30 pm. Due to high demand, bingo is also played the second Sunday of each month.

Another great way to win some extra cash during the holidays is our 12 Days of Christmas Raffle to benefit Sullivan County Meals-on-Wheels, congregate meals, and transportation programs. Local

businesses and private donors sponsor \$100-\$500 each day for 12 working days in December. Stop by the center Monday-Friday from 8 am – 3 pm to purchase your tickets for only \$5 each. You can't win if you do not play. Proceeds benefit Meals-on-Wheels, congregate meals and transportation services offered to older adults.

The Newport Senior Center is here to assist you with living happy, independent lives. This is your center, if we do not have what you are looking for, let us know and we will see what we can do to help. ■

~ Brenda Burns, Executive Director
Sullivan County Nutrition Services and the Newport Senior Center

ANIMALS RULE

Wags and Wiggles Ark Is Coming Along Nicely

Due to our ongoing partnership with Dog is my Co Pilot, a non-profit organization that flies animals from overcrowded shelters to safety, we were able to bring Ark to Wags and Wiggles Rescue. At 6 months of age, he was on a euthanasia list for space, a common practice in overcrowding situations, and we saw potential!

Upon arrival we realized that Ark lacked the skills that would be expected of a 6-month-old puppy who had experienced obedience training. What we found is a dog that experienced outbursts, lacked confidence in many settings, and simply didn't know how to be a dog. With the support of Paws in Motion and Consulting with Radford K9, Ark has begun to thrive with direction.

Beyond the basic commands, Ark is learning that he doesn't have



to be involved in everything, he can walk away from situations instead of adding stress to them, and is learning that strangers are not immediate threats. He is currently available for adoption but we taking our time; quality over quantity adoptions reduce return rates significantly.

By taking a slower approach to placement and emphasizing training, we are setting the building blocks of success for Ark and his family.

Please visit our website to learn more about Ark and his friends at www.wagsnwiggles.org. ■

~ Christiane Dionne, MBA; Executive Director
Wags and Wiggles Rescue

A Fabulous Winter Lineup at the Newport Opera House

How wonderful it's been to be welcoming audiences back into the Newport Opera House! We've had a busy fall and have a number of exciting events coming up in November and December that you won't want to miss!

A Christmas Carol: November 11-12

The timeless holiday classic *A Christmas Carol*, an



adaptation by John Jakes, will be brought to life by the Mount Royal Academy Knight's Theater, in partnership with the Newport Opera House Association, on Sat., Nov. 11 at 7pm and Sun., Nov. 12 at 2pm.

Charles Dickens himself will act as your guide as he leads the audience through the story of Ebenezer Scrooge on that fateful and blessed night that changed the course of Scrooge's life as he is visited by three spirits – the ghosts of Christmas Past, Christmas Present and Christmas Future – who set out to show Scrooge the error of his ways. Perfect for the entire family, join Dickens as he takes you on Scrooge's ghostly journey to redemption!

The World Famous Glenn Miller Orchestra: December 1

What better way is there to get "In the Mood" for the holiday season than by coming

to see The World Famous Glenn Miller Orchestra, the most popular and sought-after big band of all time, as it performs for one night only on Fri., Dec. 1, 2023.

The World Famous Glenn



Miller Orchestra will delight you as they perform their greatest hits and timeless classics, including "In the Mood," Chattanooga Choo Choo," Pennsylvania 6-5000," "String of Pearls" and their theme song "Moonlight Serenade," as they continue their national tour. In addition to all of Glenn Miller's biggest hits, this special holiday show will include a program of Christmas classics and songs of the holiday season.

Over 18 musicians and

singers will bring the unforgettable Glenn Miller sound to life as they perform those songs that everyone remembers. Touring continuously since 1956, the Glenn Miller Orchestra travels over 100,000 miles each year, playing nearly 300 dates.

The Newport Opera House is the perfect venue for this concert and if you feel "In the Mood," dancing will be available! This is a must-see show for fans of big band music, jazz and swing. Tickets are selling quickly, so purchase yours today!

Winter in Arendelle: December 16

NOHA is partnering with Dance Arts Academy to present their 8th Annual Winter Extravaganza – *Winter in Arendelle*! Inspired by the hit sensations *Frozen* and *Frozen II*, the audience will be taken on the journey of two sisters as they make many new



friends while encountering challenges and obstacles to learn all about the true love and power of sisterhood.

With magical costumes, scenery, props and some favorite winter songs, our cast of 60 dancers will put smiles on your faces telling this incredible story through dance and movement. We hope you will join us for this production set to a beautiful winter wonderland! For more information, please visit DanceArtsAcademyNH.com; to purchase tickets please visit NewportOperaHouse.com or call the Box Office at 603.863.2412.

We appreciate your support and look forward to welcoming you to the historic Newport Opera House! ■



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MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR: SENIOR CENTER

Welcome to the Newport Senior Center, where you'll find a vibrant community of warm-hearted staff and members. Get acquainted with some of the fantastic individuals who make this center a welcoming and engaging place to connect, learn, and enjoy life to the fullest!



**June
Pera**

What fictional place would you like to visit?

Rabbit Hole

Which "real" place would you like to visit?

Finland

What skill would you like to master?

A foreign language

What would be your first question after waking up from a 100-year sleep?

"Does this mean I'm one-year-old now?"

What is your ideal way to spend a weekend in Newport?

Exploring nature/woods

What is the best way to start the day?

With gratitude

To which organization or person/group do you donate your time or other resources regularly?

Richards Free Library

What's the last book you read? Did you like it, love it, or were you just happy to be done with it?

Identity by Nora Roberts, Liked it

If someone gave you \$1,000 right now, what would you spend it on?

Groceries

If you could save or protect one animal, plant or part of our earth, which would it be?

The environment as a whole

If you could only eat at (or takeout from) one local restaurant for the rest of your life, which one would it be?

The Old Courthouse Restaurant

If you could have one super human power, what would it be?

The power of healing

If you could have dinner with any famous person (alive or dead) who would it be?

Lucille Ball

In general, do you follow or break the rules?

Rule-follower

What's your biggest fear/phobia?

Heights



**Gloria
Johnson**

What fictional place would you like to visit?

Fairy Garden

Which "real" place would you like to visit?

Myrtle Beach, SC

What skill would you

like to master?

Computer/Technology savvy

What would be your first question after waking up from a 100-year sleep?

"Is this real?"

What is your ideal way to spend a weekend in Newport?

Sitting by Corbin Covered Bridge, watching the river

What is the best way to start the day?

Talking with my daughter, Lynn, on the phone

To which organization or person/group do you donate your time or other resources regularly?

Newport Senior Center Gift Shop, Croydon
Woman's Auxiliary, Board of Directors of COVER
Home Repair, Inc.

What's the last book you read? Did you like it, love it, or were you just happy to be done with it?

"The Cat Who..." series by Lilian Jackson Braun

If someone gave you \$1,000 right now, what would you spend it on?

Disburse it to charity

If you could save or protect one animal, plant or part of our earth, which would it be?

Bees and butterflies

If you could only eat at (or takeout from) one local restaurant for the rest of your life, which one would it be?

Salt Hill Pub

If you could have one super human power, what would it be?

"Justice Vision"

If you could have dinner with any famous person (alive or dead) who would it be?

Elizabeth Taylor

In general, do you follow or break the rules?

Follow the Rules

What's your biggest fear/phobia?

Fear of accidents or being in a dangerous situation caused by the actions of others.



**Judy
Wilson**

What fictional place would you like to visit?

"Unicorn realm"

Which "real" place would you like to visit?

Scotland

What skill would you

like to master?

Calligraphy

What would be your first question after waking up from a 100-year sleep?

"Does Earth still exist?!"

What is your ideal way to spend a weekend in Newport?

Gardening

What is the best way to start the day?

With a smile ;)

To which organization or person/group do you donate your time or other resources regularly?

The Newport Senior Center

What's the last book you read? Did you like it, love it, or were you just happy to be done with it?

A western novel; liked it.

If someone gave you \$1,000 right now, what would you spend it on?

Fuel

If you could save or protect one animal, plant or part of our earth, which would it be?

Dogs

If you could only eat at (or takeout from) one local restaurant for the rest of your life, which one would it be?

The Old Courthouse Restaurant

If you could have one super human power, what would it be?

The power of healing

If you could have dinner with any famous person (alive or dead) who would it be?

Dick Van Dyke

In general, do you follow or break the rules?

Follow the rules

What's your biggest fear/phobia?

Snakes

The People of Newport Showed Up Anyway

"Life's not about waiting for the storm to pass...It's about learning to dance in the rain." ~ Vivian Greene

Rain rain go away, come again some other day. That was the song we all sung this summer as 16 out of 19 weekends saw some form of rain. We first experienced the wet weather during our Nano Brewfest, which turned into the first of many rain affected events. We at the Chamber cannot thank the Newport Golf Club enough for their generous offer of help, as they opened the doors to their pavilion and allowed us to move the event up the road. In the end, this year's Brewfest was another giant success.

We tried the next week to hold our annual Wings and Wheels Car Show, with our partners at the Parlin Field Airport. Sadly, Mother Nature didn't cooperate so we rescheduled. When the time came for our new date, the runway was in no shape to hold 200-300 classic cars, trucks, hot rods and airplanes. It was with much regret that we had to cancel this event in 2023. Fingers crossed for next year!

Once again, rain interfered with another of our newer town events... Block Party. We rescheduled for the fall and rebranded it as the Homecoming Block Party. We love the idea of having the Block Party become a fixture to a rejuvenated Homecoming Weekend for Newport. Excitement was high. We had a variety of vendors, food trucks, games and live music all lined up for all to enjoy. And then....it rained. Again. This time, we pulled an audible and

had to move the majority of the event into the Newport Recreation Department. Though not the event we had intended, we made the best that we could. As the Rec Center was packed inside and out with patrons, the Brooks Hubbard Band was playing inside, the food trucks were lined outside, and all braved the rain, meanwhile more live music was heard at Salt Hill Pub to enjoy. It wasn't what we planned, but we did the best that we could and are proud of how Newporters rally to make things happen. The parade was fantastic; the sporting events were exciting; and many different classes held their class reunion.

Concerts on the Common held another successful season. It was wonderful to see all the families and friends gather Sunday nights to enjoy live music. Thank you, as always, to the generous businesses who sponsored our weekly events and brought great entertainment to our community.

For the most part, Car Nutz Cruise Nights happened without a hitch. Only a couple got rained out this year, and every other night would see 50, 60, 70, 80+ hot rods, classic cars and trucks converge in Newport on a Monday night. We were so proud, once again, to sponsor this community event series that have already committed to sponsor it again in 2024.

Now we find ourselves watching the leaves continue to fall, as the days get darker, and air gets crisper; we can't help but turn our attention to the fall and winter. The Newport Area Chamber of

Commerce will be holding our annual Fall Breakfast at the Old Courthouse on Thursday November 9th. This is a great opportunity to meet with other business leaders in town, hear from a great featured speaker, and celebrate the Newport business community.

'Twas Just Before Christmas returns Saturday December 9th, in conjunction with the Newport Rec Department's Chili Walk. This is a very fun annual tradition as you sample some delicious chili, stroll our lovely Main Street, visit our local businesses, drink some hot cocoa, get your children's photos with Santa, and maybe even get an ice pop (in the freezing cold) from Dave Lantz at MJ Harrington and Company. As we get closer to December, make sure you visit our webpage or Facebook page for more details.

As 2023 comes to a close, we cannot thank the Newport community enough for their resilience and perseverance through the rain and floods, and ups and downs. We look forward to 2024 and will kick off the New Year with the All Star edition of Dancing With The Newport Stars in January, our Annual Dinner / Citizen Of The Year night in February and a Woodstock music- and fashion-inspired 108th Newport Winter Carnival. There is always something on the horizon in Newport, and we are thankful to have our business community and strong, civically-engaged residents with us every step of the way. ■

*~ Steve Smith, Vice President
Newport Area Chamber of Commerce*

RUGER NEWPORT: PROUD TO CALL THIS HOME

Ruger Fall & Winter Festivities

Ruger in Newport, NH knows how to celebrate the change in seasons – from summer flip-flops to sweater weather – in style! Every year, Ruger strives to give its associates fun, festive events to welcome the changing foliage or the first few snowflakes that fall.

For the past two years, Ruger has arranged seasonal and holiday photo shoots for employees. This is a great opportunity to bring the family (kiddos and four-legged companions) to take some quality, holiday photo card-worthy pictures! There have been backdrops and props to depict both fall and winter scenery.

Ruger has also sponsored employees to take hunter safety and has sent many associates on pheasant hunts at local preserves. This has been a great way to support our associates experiencing both the shooting sports and hunting.

Among the most exciting of these events are our Thanksgiving turkey handouts and holiday ham handouts. Senior leadership hands out a turkey and a ham to each employee, sometimes sporting very festive outfits! That means around 800 turkeys and 800 hams are given out each year (not counting Easter ham handouts!). Any extras are donated to Claremont Soup Kitchen, the Moose Lodge and local churches.

From all of us here at Ruger, may your fall be filled with gratitude and may warm holiday wishes brighten the cold winter days!

~ Elise Letizia



www.ruger.com

Richards Free Library

Where Are the Books?

It was recently brought to our attention that we have made quite a few changes in the collection in the past 2 years and some patrons were confused about what exactly we had changed and why. We have been trying to include these changes in our monthly newsletters, but may have missed a few along the way.

Weeding the collections: We completed a huge weeding project in the summer of 2022 of our entire collection. We are not sure when this had been done last, or even if it had ever been done in totality. We weeded again this summer and will continue to do so annually. When weeding (something that all libraries do), we remove outdated materials, materials that are no longer circulating well, and materials that are in poor condition. If an item is in poor condition but still current and circulating well, we attempt to replace it, but sometimes we cannot do so if it is no longer in print. Weeding keeps our collection current, circulating, and in good condition, and allows room for us to add new materials to the collection.

Re-barcoding: We began another huge project in 2022 to re-barcode all of the materials in the collection, upgrading to a standard 14-digit barcode in line with the NH State Library recommendations. These 14-digit barcodes contain a unique set of numbers assigned to each library in NH so that we can identify items that go astray and prevent us from accidentally checking in another library's materials.

New spine labels: This summer, we began yet another huge project to replace the spine labels on all of the materials in the collection. We identified various reasons for doing this, including: handwritten spine labels, spine labels with old collection codes, incomplete spine labels. The Teen Room collection has been completed, along with the Chapter Book Room collection. We are currently working on the Harwick Room picture book collection. We hope to complete this process for all circulating collections by next summer.

Library of Things: The Library of Things, which moved behind the scenes during the pandemic, is now back out on shelves in the front room, across from the reference desk.

Music CDs: Our adult music CD collection now has a dedicated rack so that the cases are front-facing and it is easier to browse the collection. The lower shelves on this rack are movable so that you can pull them out to easily peruse the collection.

Board games: Last year we received a sizable grant to purchase board games and related equipment. This allowed us to purchase a multitude of games, along with a gaming table which resides in the Oval Room.



This year's favorite reads of the RFL staff (from left to right): Janice Brehio (Literary New Hampshire), Karen Coutu (Fairy Tale), Justine Fafara (Georgie, All Along), Sally Bernier (The Once and Future Wishes), Alison Wood (The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo), Mo Churchill-Calkins (Cemetery Boys), Molly DiPadova (Warrior Girl Unearthed).

The board games themselves were originally located on shelves across from the reference desk, but are now located in the Mansion Hallway as the collection needed room to expand.

YANF (Young Adult NonFiction) collection: The YANF collection is a new collection that resides in the Teen Room. We created this collection by moving some of the materials in the Children's NonFiction collection with an older target audience and with some grant money.

YAF (Young Adult Fiction) collection: The YAF collection has recently been genre-fied. This means that this collection, located in the Teen Room, is arranged in sections by genre subjects as typically,

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Dartmouth Health

**New London Hospital
EXPRESS CARE**

that is the way the teenagers prefer to browse. Looking for a romance or a thriller? We can now point the teens to specific shelves!

Collections that have moved:

Biographies for adults: moved from the room off the Mansion Hallway to between the adult fiction and nonfiction collections in the Ruger Wing so that they reside in the adult collections section of the library.

Books on CD for adults: moved from the Mansion Hallway to the old Biography Room while the hallway was being painted. Then moved to shelves across from the reference desk when they became available, so that audiobooks for adults are located in the adult collections section of the library.

Graphic novels for children and teens: moved to the old Biography Room/Audiobooks Room so that they have room to expand as this collection is very popular and growing quickly.

Video games: moved from the shelving unit next to the bathroom to the Teen Room as this collection is used heavily by the teenagers and, due to its popularity, needed room to grow.

DVDs for families/adults: in the Ruger Wing expanded onto a half-height shelving unit to make room for family DVDs that were moved from the Youth NonFiction Room. (Children's DVDs are still located in the Youth NonFiction Room.)

Law books and Reference books: moved into the Oval Room to free up the shelving unit which we then used for the DVD collection expansion.

If you have any questions about where items are located in the library, please stop by the front desk and ask! We're always happy to point you in the right direction, grab a specific book for you, or give you a tour of the library.

Keep Newport Warm

On October 24th we will begin our celebration of Sarah Josepha Hale's 235th birthday with the "Keep Newport Warm" project.

This year there are two ways to get involved: As we did last year, community members can help to make a scarf for the SJH statue displayed in front of the library. **Just bring a piece of work measuring 8 inches on one side to the front desk of the library.** Contributions will be joined together by a volunteer. The scarf will go around the Sarah Josepha Hale statue on Wednesday, the 22nd of November, in time to honor her for Thanksgiving. A volunteer will place it up in the evening with a sign explaining the project. The scarf will stay up until snow flies, and be down before the new year.

New this year is an opportunity to honor Sarah by giving back. The Library will be collecting handmade woolens to be donated to the food pantry in Newport. So, calling all knitters, weavers, and crochet artists! **If you have handmade hats, mittens, scarves, or other winter woolens that you would like to contribute, you can bring them to the library to make sure that they get into the hands of those in need.**

Need some yarn to get started? Check at the library for a free skein donated by a generous crafts-person.

When community members contribute, they will be asked to fill out a card with their contact information, and given the option to sign up for the library newsletter, or to be contacted for more information about the knitting group.

Meeting Spaces at the RFL

On the first floor, next to the copier, is the door to the Newport Room. This study/meeting room seats

up to 4 people and also houses a public computer, but be aware that the computer is not print-capable.

Up on the second floor, there are 3 more study/meeting rooms: the Hale Room, the Andler Room, and the Yeoman's Room. Hale seats 8 people, Yeoman's seats 6 people, and Andler seats 2 people. Any of these 4 rooms are available for free to anyone who is not conducting a for-profit gathering. If you are in need of a space to conduct a for-profit gathering, each of these rooms may be reserved for a \$25.00 dollar per day fee.


On the third floor, our ballroom (yes, you read that correctly) can accommodate a crowd of up to 50 people. We charge \$50.00 per day for use of the ballroom, unless you are a registered non-profit organization, in which case, you may use it for free. All rooms may be reserved for a time frame within the range of 1/2 hour after opening to 1/2 hour before closing. If you need a room for study or for a small meeting, or if you need a place to have a larger meeting or event, please call Richards Free Library at 603-863-3430 to reserve one of these rooms.

Giving Tree at the RFL

Starting the week after Thanksgiving and continuing through the end of the year, you'll find a Library Giving Tree near the front desk of the library. Attached will be paper ornaments with items we need here at the library. Take an ornament, purchase the item, and bring it in (no need to wrap it) as a helpful way to donate to the library! Items will include cat food, children's books, craft supplies, and more! As always, we thank you for your support of the Richards Free Library. We couldn't do all of the great things we do for the community without your generosity.

Cat Calendar Coming soon! ■

*On behalf of the whole team at Eichenauer,
we wish you a very Merry Christmas
and a Healthy and Prosperous New Year!*



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Another year comes to an end, and all of us at Eichenauer Inc. want to express our gratitude to our employees, our partners, and our communities for their hard work, support, and patronage throughout the year.

We have experienced a lot of changes throughout 2023, and we know that they will make us even stronger and more prosperous in 2024.

Contact us at hr@eichenauerusa.com to learn about our company and the opportunities we have available.

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www.eichenauerusa.com

HR	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
12:00 AM	YANKEE CABLE NETWORK (YCN) Yankee Chronicle Current Events in the Sunapee Region						
1:00	YCN Game of the Week / Tiger High School Sports						
2:00	MOVIE Special	MOVIE Special	MOVIE Mystery	MOVIE Sci Fi	MOVIE Thriller	MOVIE Comedy	MOVIE Drama
3:30	CLASSIC ARTS SHOWCASE - Music, Dance, Film, Animation & other clips from historic archives						
4:00	FAITH South Church Newport, Grace River Claremont, Life Fellowship (Remix) Charlestown & Good Shepherd Newport						
5:00	COOKING Spices, styles, Ethnic meals and desserts	HEALTH Issues facing us	HISTORY Local, Regional, American and World	OUTDOORS NH & VT	SCIENCE Astronomy to Zoology	ARTS & CHAT Local & Regional	MUSIC Concert on the Common
5:30		MUSIC: Concert					
6:00		MUSIC:Musical Beast					
7:00	YCN - Yankee Chronicle Current Events in the Sunapee Region						
8:00	Kids Programs & Cartoons						
8:30	Sunday: Grace River Church Service (8:30)						
9:30	Cartooning	CLASSIC ARTS SHOWCASE - Music, Dance, Film, Animation & other clips from historic archives					
10:00	Vintage TV Shows	FAITH Life Fellowship	FAITH - Local Church Services (10:00)				
11:00	RADIO HOUR Weeknd Short Stories & Comedy		RADIO HOUR - Audio narration of classic books and stories				
11:30			COOKING				
12:00 PM	YCN - Yankee Chronicle Current Events in the Sunapee Region						
1:00	YCN - Game of the Week Regional High School Sports						
2:00	MOVIE Special	MOVIE Special	MOVIE Mystery	MOVIE Sci Fi	MOVIE Thriller	MOVIE Comedy	MOVIE Drama
3:30	CLASSIC ARTS SHOWCASE - Music, Dance, Film, Animation & other clips from historic archives						
4:00	FAITH - South Church Newport, Grace River Claremont, Life Fellowship Charlestown & Good Shepherd Newport		Kid: Miss Mo @ RFL Cartoons	KIDS Lunenburg Stories Cartoons	KIDS: Small Factory Cartoons	KIDS: Newport Content Cartoons	KIDS: Learn Cartooning Cartoons
5:00	COOKING Spices, styles, Ethnic meals and desserts	HEALTH Issues facing us	HISTORY Local, Regional, American and World	OUTDOORS NH & VT	SCIENCE Astronomy to Zoology	ARTS & CHAT Local & Regional	MUSIC: Concert on the Common
5:30		MUSIC: Concert					
6:00	MUSIC:Musical Beast		MUSIC: Two Tones	MUSIC: Jazz	MUSIC: Havana	MUSIC: Sessions	
7:00	YCN - Yankee Chronicle Current Events in the Sunapee Region						
8:00	MOVIE Special	MOVIE Special	MOVIE Mystery	MOVIE Sci Fi	MOVIE Thriller	MOVIE Comedy	MOVIE Drama
9:30	CLASSIC ARTS SHOWCASE - Music, Dance, Film, Animation & other clips from historic archives						
10:00	Vintage TV Shows	FAITH - Local Church Services					
11:00	RADIO HOUR WEEKEND		RADIO HOUR Audio narration of classic books and stories				

HR	SUNDAY - FRIDAY	SAT
12:00 AM	NEWPORT GOVERNMENT Pre-recorded Town & School meetings	S A T U R D A Y ~ W E E K I N R E V I E W
	BULLETIN BOARD	
2:00	NH STATE HOUSE State Government & Politics	
	BULLETIN BOARD	
3:30	NMHS SPORTS Pre-recorded Tiger Team Sports. Football, soccer, field hockey, basketball, etc.	
	BULLETIN BOARD	
5:30	NEWPORT LIFE Locally made programs from NCTV. School, town, talks, music, events, etc.	
	BULLETIN BOARD	
6:30	C-SPAN - Washington Journal News, Call-ins, Interviews with various officials on current affairs.	
8:00	NEWPORT GOVERNMENT Pre-recorded Town & School meetings	
	BULLETIN BOARD	
10:00	NEWPORT LIFE Locally Made Programs from NCTV. School, town, talks, music, events, etc. (South Church on Sun @ 10:00)	W E E K I N R E V I E W
	BULLETIN BOARD	
12:00 PM	US GOVERNMENT Congress, White House & Current News/Events	
1:00	NH STATE HOUSE State Government & Politics	
	BULLETIN BOARD	
3:00	NEWPORT LIFE Locally Made Programs from NCTV. School, town, talks, music, events, etc.	
4:00	NMHS SPORTS Live and pre-recorded Tiger Team Sports. Football, soccer, field hockey, basketball, etc.	
	BULLETIN BOARD	
6:00	NEWPORT GOVERNMENT Live and Pre-recorded Town & School meetings	
	BULLETIN BOARD	
9:00	SPECIAL Movie, local event, music, etc.	
	BULLETIN BOARD	
11:00	POLITICS Fed - NH - Local	

Mixed Martial Arts Good For Mind, Body and Soul

Noel Beauchaine

I first discovered Newport Mixed Martial Arts in June of 2022. At a crucial stage in my development, my mind, body, and life were all going through a plethora of intense changes. Like any other fourteen-year-old, I had to navigate through these changes, and it wasn't always easy.

I started taking jiu jitsu classes at the MMA gym. While taking these classes, I realized that I wasn't alone. There were so many people in one room that were going through the exact same thing as me. I didn't have to worry about the changes in my life, or the hard time I was having at school. Instead, I could focus on learning jiu jitsu. Upon going to more classes, I learned that jiu jitsu is similar to art; artists make their art with so much effort and care. Similarly, that is what it felt like to do jiu jitsu.

Since the opening of Newport Mixed Martial Arts, there have been some obstacles, but those have been overcome by the owners, Daniel and Sarah Pitta, as well as the coaches. Sarah, Dan, and the coaches are truly dedicated to their work. They truly value the benefits of jiu jitsu, the impact they're making on the community, and the number of people they bring together.

Matt Gordon, a coach at the gym, is a perfect example. "I moved to Newbury in 2019, and I was traveling an hour a couple times a week to train at my old school in Manchester. Then COVID hit and everything shut down. Then I tore my achilles and missed another 6 months. By the time I was healthy again, it had been almost 2 years since I stepped on the mat. When the gym opened last May, I was there for the grand opening and, after my first roll, I realized how much I missed BJJ/ MMA. I couldn't be more grateful to Dan and Sarah for opening the gym and giving me a place close to home to continue my Martial Arts journey. It's also been really rewarding to watch how the gym has grown, and be able to share my knowledge with my community and the next generation of martial artists." ■



Mentoring: A Mutual Gift of a Lifetime

Larry Schissel

Mentoring is as old as ancient Greek mythology and as current as organizations such as Windsor County Mentors. From the Greek language the word mentor is rooted in the terms “steadfast” and “enduring.” This very simply explains key elements of mentoring: steadfast and enduring relationships with kids.

Windsor County Mentors has been in existence for nearly 50 years in Windsor County, VT. WCM has matched mentors and mentees in both school-based and community relationships. They operate in nearly all the communities and schools in the county. Recently, WCM was invited to the east side of the Connecticut River by the Kearsarge Regional School District. Recognizing the potential benefit of a school-based mentoring program, WCM was asked to develop a program similar to those they oversee in Vermont. On September 29, about ten volunteers completed the 2-hour training session and will soon be partnered with students between the ages of 5 to 12 years for weekly visits at the school. These visits are solely focused on doing school work, but may include playing games, recreation and, most importantly, companionship.

A few years back, a similar invitation was extended to WCM to develop mentoring in Newport and Claremont. Local civic groups, schools and healthcare organizations saw the need for these community-based programs. Unfortunately, the lack of sufficient organizational infrastructure and an

insufficient number of mentor volunteers lead to this effort getting off to a much slower start than anticipated. The need in Newport remains and now the organizational structure will be able to support a new effort to develop a robust mentorship program.

Social sciences suggest that youth with mentors are much less likely to initiate drug and alcohol use, skip school or resort to physical aggression. Mentees also may achieve improved grades, better relationships with peers, parents and guardians, are more likely to graduate and expressed greater hope for their own futures. The benefits are not limited to the mentees. Mentors experience the satisfaction that comes from developing a meaningful relationship with a kid in need.

If you have ever considered being a mentor, if you would like to have a meaningful impact on the life of a child as well as the fabric of our community, you are invited to reach out to Windsor County Mentors. Mentors can be older high school students, working adults and the retired. Mentors come from all walks of life but share a common goal of wanting to create a strong relationship with a child. If you have a few hours a week to spare and can commit to a year of service, you are invited to reach out to Windsor County Mentors for more information. WCM is available on the web at Windsor County Mentors (wcmentors.org). Matthew Garcia, Executive Director matthew@wcmentors.org and Barbara Slaton, Program Support Coordinator barb@wcmentors.org will return your email inquiries or call 802-674-5101 with your questions and interest. ■



Mentoring: My Story

I participated in the group training session provided by Windsor County Mentors this September. The prospective mentors also had an interview and background check as part of the vetting process. Now we await assignment of a mentee in either the school based or community mentorship programs.

My personal reasons for pursuing a mentoring relationship include, most notably, that a key relationship in a child's life can have an impact on the trajectory of that life. Research strongly suggests this. This is what teachers, recreation department staff, scout leaders and so many more adults do as a matter of daily routine.

I believe that the one-on-one mentor relationship can be an especially important one. Mentorship offers a way to be a companion without having to be a disciplinarian, a tutor or a surrogate parent. These kids have parents and these parents are already doing the tough work of raising kids. But home life is demanding enough just keeping up with jobs, bills, schedules in addition to child rearing.

A mentor is meant to be that added relationship that can relieve some of the pressures parents face. Mary and I already raised 4 children. I'm no longer in the parenting business. I am simply looking to be a kid's companion for a couple hours a week. I hope ultimately this will strengthen our community of Newport one relationship at a time. ■

~ Larry Schissel



Pat (Board Member) and mentees at the annual picnic



Mentor and mentee at High Horses in Sharon, VT

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2023 Lilyan Wright Volunteer of the Year Award



Dorianne Lescord

Earlier this fall, the Newport Recreation Department presented Dorianne Lescord with the 2023 Lilyan Wright Volunteer of the Year Award. You may not know Dorianne because, as with most of our volunteers, she does all her work

behind the scenes. On Wednesday evenings from 6-8, she can be found at the Rec teaching line dancing classes to beginners and intermediates. What you don't see is the hours of prep time it takes

to conduct a two-hour line-dancing class. Perfectly arranging dance moves with music is no easy task, but putting the two things together as well as teaching the dance moves to 20+ people each week deserves a round of applause.

Dorianne, who lives in Ascutney, VT with her husband, is a beautician by trade. She works at Ascutney Country Hair Salon and has many other talents. She makes beautiful quilts which she has donated to many local raffles as well as quilted handbags and other hand-crafted items. She also finds time to participate in many local 5K events, including the Newport Sunshine 5K and The Chicken Farmer 5K in Newbury, NH. Unlike many folks who come from other places to enjoy what our

town has to offer, Dorianne chooses to volunteer her time to contribute to our town events. She has made chili for the 'Twas Just Before Christmas Chili Walk, held Line Dancing Demos on the gazebo during Winter Carnival, and has also been in our town parades. Dorianne came to us in 2019 looking for a venue to conduct her line dancing classes and has stayed (even through COVID-19) ever since, and we are lucky to have her. A true champion for the health and wellness of others, we could not think of anyone more deserving of the award.

Thank you, Dorianne, for all of your hard work and dedication to the Newport Recreation Department and the Town of Newport. ■

~ Rebecca Merrow, Newport Recreation Dept.

Hidden Gems Youth Wrestling Program

The Newport Recreation Department has been providing wrestling for its youth for 14 years. This program started on a whim in 2009 when Unity resident, Rick Sharron, called out of the blue to inquire about wrestling programs locally. The Newport Rec Center had operated a middle school team off and on for about 6-7 years, but never went "all in" until Rick not only called but offered his services to spearhead the campaign for youth wrestling in town. He found a slew of volunteers, and wrestling moms to create a well-established youth program.

Over the years, the Newport wrestling program has had some huge successes. Initially in the program's infancy, we had almost 100 kids enrolled from grades K-8. We were able to raise over \$10,000 dollars to buy new wrestling mats for the program, as well as singlets for all the kids. The initial excitement and huge numbers have died down, but there are kids still excelling and participating in the program in solid numbers.

A huge thanks goes out to Rick for getting this program off the ground. We have had a good crop of coaches helping out over the years as well: Brad Palmer, Nate Ploss, Chris Bahara, Mike Ritondo, Zach Sharron, Patty Nix, John Widman, Mike Gray and Colin Shaughnessy, just to name a few. As always, in order to survive, programs at the recreational level need volunteers and positive, active parents, and we thank them for their time and effort.

The success of a wrestling program is measured by the confidence the boys and girls have in life after participating on the mat. They have the courage to stand up for themselves when they face adversity. Without adversity there is no growth, and the program encourages kids to believe in themselves and to be able to tackle anything life throws their way.

The Tigers and local area high schools have had success on the mat as well. These following kids were NH High School State Champions after being involved in the Newport Youth Wrestling Program: Lucas Beltz, Corbin Ferland, Nick Widman, Stephan Nix, Ben Widman, Tyler Sharron, Gavin Lovely, Evan Lombard, Anson Ritondo, Josh Sharron, Marius Edwards, Colby Shepard. These boys were part of the youth program growing up under Sharron's direction. A great tribute to him and his coaching staff.

The youth program has also had its fair share of state champions. Since 2009, Newport youth wrestling has been competing for state titles at the end of the season, and we have had huge successes for the kids there, as well. State titles were earned by the following kids over the years: Josh Sharron (6), Ryder Lovely (3), Anson Ritondo (3), Stephan Nix (3), Anthony Lacaille (2), Aaron Fellows (2), Brycen Flewelling (2), Colby Shepard (2), Evan Lombard (2), Joe Gosselin (2), MacKaiden Decato, Cayden Decato, Jaxson Lord, Evan Ray, Karter Pollari, Shane Goodreau, Jacob Dow, Sam Carl, Corbin Ferland, Jacob Goulette, Riley Clayton, Tyler Sharron, Zach Bundy and Logan Ash.

Wrestling is certainly alive and well in Newport and having the new community center will help the program continue for years to come. With more space, including a multi-purpose room that will be large enough to house a wrestling practice area for the kids, practice times will be able to be offered at normal hours since the wrestling program won't have to share gym space with the basketball programs. A win for all! ■

~ PJ Lovely, Executive Director; Newport Recreation Department



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