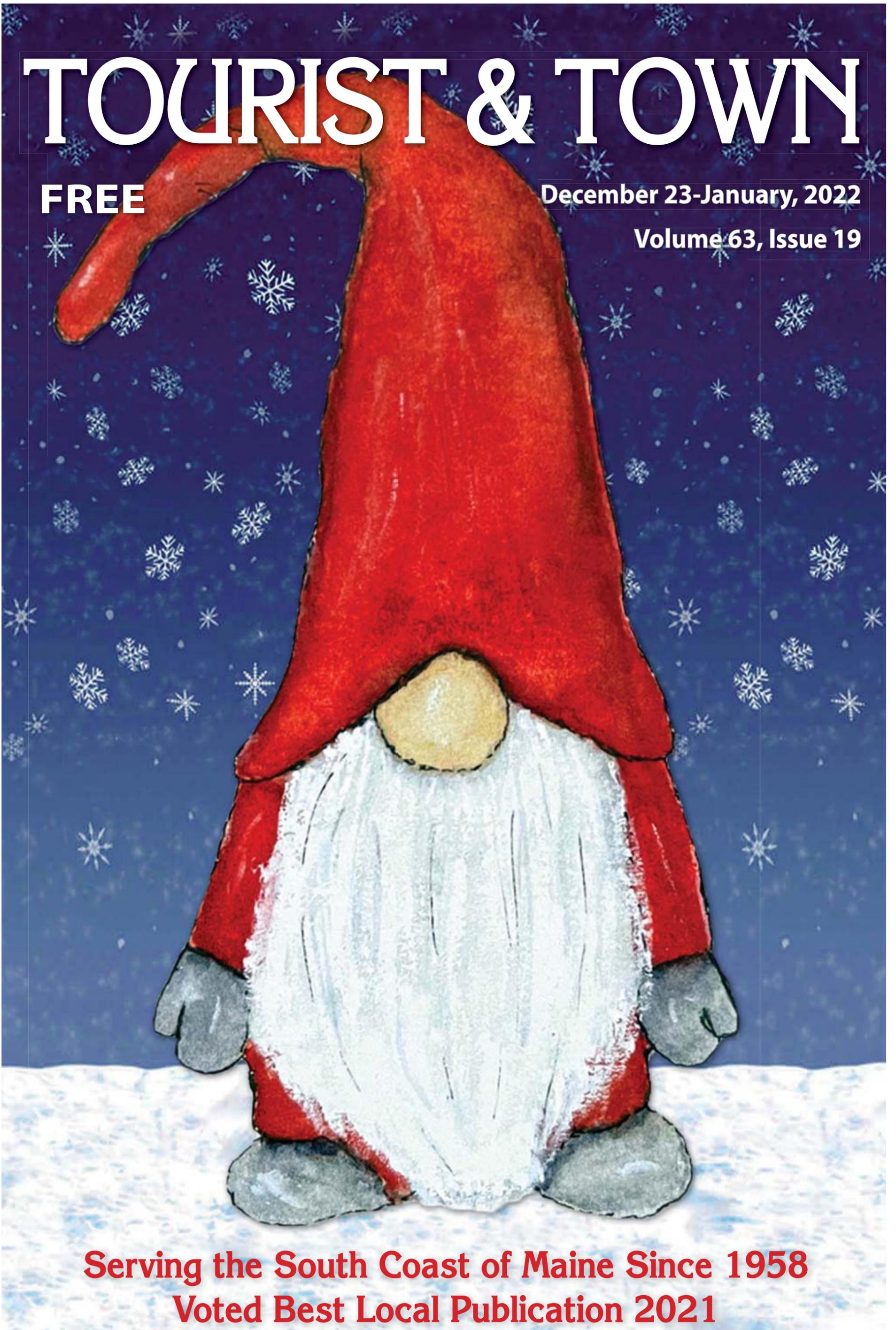


TOURIST & TOWN

FREE

December 23-January, 2022

Volume 63, Issue 19



Serving the South Coast of Maine Since 1958
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Publisher's Note

I'm sure this will come as no surprise to anyone, but these last two years have not been the easiest years to be in the newspaper business.

Because of this, your continued devotion to *Tourist & Town* means the absolute world to me and to our wonderful team. Please know, any challenges we and everyone in print media have faced over the last two years have only strengthened us and further motivated us even to remain fresh, vital and always, always full of optimism.

As you likely noticed, we published a handful of shorter issues in 2021. Some of our readers kindly expressed concern about this fact, and about our welfare as a publication. (Perhaps you too have wondered if the shorter issues were a harbinger of something not-so-good.) Well...

FEAR NOT.

All of this is simply the ebb and flow of the publishing world. It's also about reading the times, being sensitive to our advertisers, knowing when to keep things moderate – and of course knowing when to go BIG. It's a dance we do as newspaper geared to supporting small businesses – and as a small business ourselves!

As I say often, our goal is to be a positive presence in the communities we serve and to infuse each and every publication we put out there with a wealth of information, oodles of entertainment and a heck of a lot of joy. It's a thrill to say we have done so now for yet another year – our 64th, in fact.

We will be back on newsstands in February for our special "February is for Love" issue, followed in early March with our Spring 2022 magazine!

Happy Holidays, everyone, and a very Merry New Year!

Kingsley Gallup, Publisher
Tourist & Town



Faith Gillman *did* in fact decorate before December 20th this year. A little more cheer, a little more holiday sparkle might be just what the doctor ordered. Happy Holidays to all and to all a good night!



Val Marier has already started her long winter's nap. Follow her blog at WanderingwithVal.com.



Steve Hrehovcik's last name is difficult to pronounce. To help remember it, think of a "HERO giving you a CHECK" – or "HERO-CHECK." It's not only a fun memory peg, it's also a good idea. There's more about Steve at www.kennebunkartstudio.com. Come visit.



What a year! This statement can be taken in a number of ways. Hopeful as I am, I am looking forward to 2022.



Dana Pearson is a writer and musician living in Kennebunk and hoping he'll ease up on the baking after the holidays.

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Kennebunkport

Cover Artist Cindy Shaughnessy



"My aunt had a home in Cape Porpoise and I have been coming here with my family most of my life. My husband and I bought a home here 14 years ago and retired here. I have been a crafter my whole life. I love to create. During the pandemic, it was hard to see our family (we have 2 children and 5 grandchildren) and I started painting cards from my home and mailing them to our children and grandkids. I painted things for them that I knew made them smile. I had some wonderful friends who encouraged me to paint note cards. It blossomed from there. I am so grateful for the amazing businesses here who have bought my work or asked me to create for them. It truly has been a gift and painting again has given me a purpose while being able to do something I love. If I made someone smile that is truly all I have hoped for in this endeavor because it makes my heart happy!

My notecards are at Daytrip Society in Kennebunkport, Boulangerie in Kennebunk and Camp Wool in Milbridge, Maine. I have also painted specialty cards for Farm + Table, Dock Square Coffee House and Kennebunk Outfitters.

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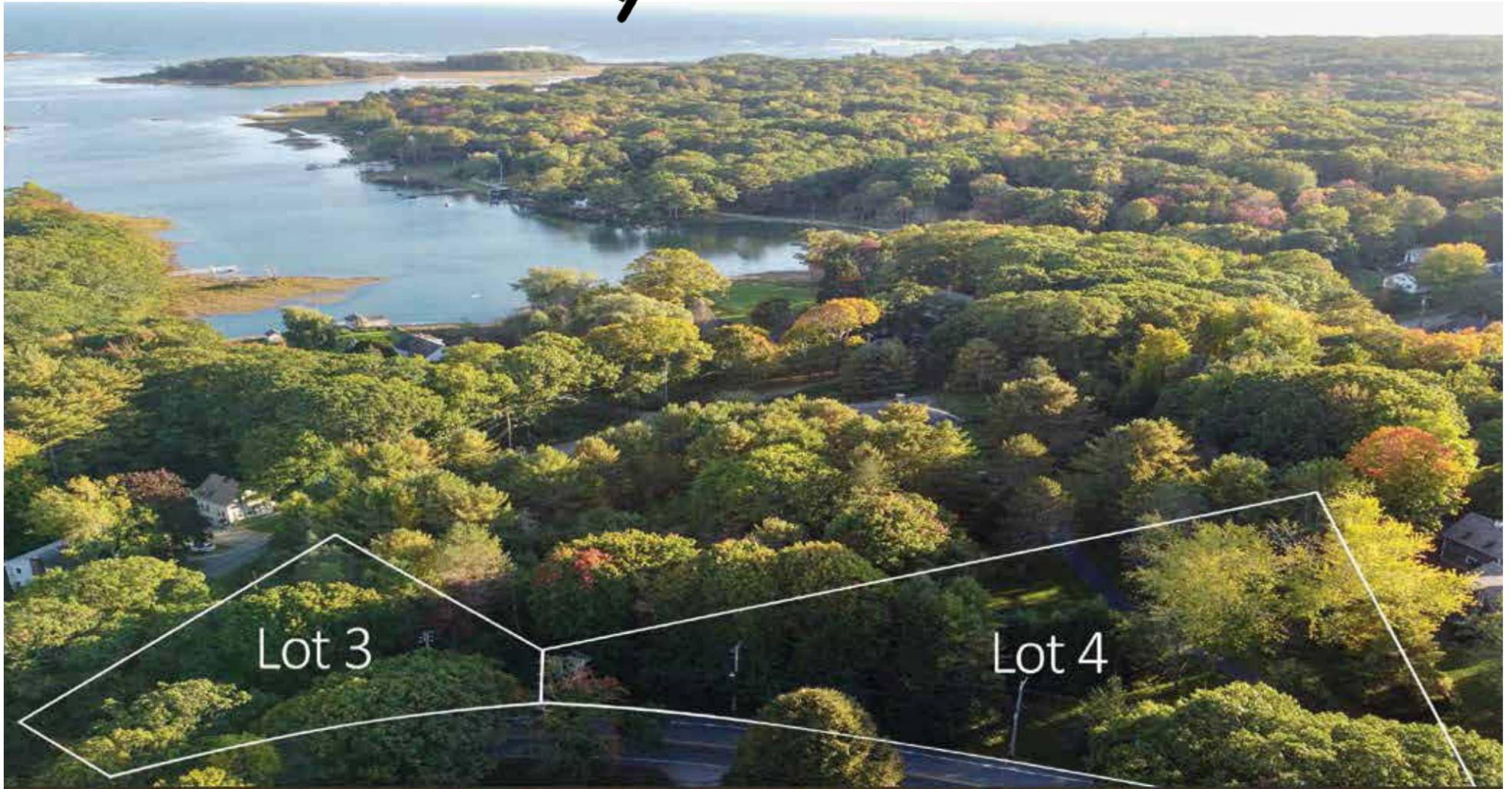
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USABLE SIZE: 20,987 SF |  | AVAILABLE |
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Kennebunk's Town Hall – Heart of the community beating strongly after 100 years



A year after commemorating its bicentennial, the town of Kennebunk marked the centennial of its town hall. Photo by Dana Pearson

by Dana Pearson

The Kennebunk Town Hall didn't need a parade to mark its centennial this year. After all, the classic brick building situated on the wedge of land at the

mouths of Summer and Elm streets has been the site of a slow-moving parade for a century, with a steady stream of people marching in and out of the seat of town government for rea-

sons too numerous to count. "This is where you start to get your answers," said Linda Johnson, Kennebunk's community events coordinator. "It's the heart of the community. Whether

you need information from the code enforcement office or a license for your dog or you want to enroll your kid in the rec department, this is the place. It keeps the town running."

As it has since 1921, when construction on Kennebunk's third town hall wrapped up. Indeed, it seems the third time was the charm, as the first two structures (No. 1 lasting from 1805 to 1866, and No. 2—made of brick—making it to 1920) both burned down. For the current town hall, reliable local philanthropist Henry Parsons donated the plot of land, thereby moving the center of Kennebunk's operations from today's Washington Park to the other side of Summer Street. Contractor Frank Fleming of Portland oversaw construction of the third town hall, during which a cornerstone ceremony was held Oct. 29, 1921. Under blue skies on a warm Saturday afternoon, a derrick hoisted a 250-pound piece of limestone into the air above the nearly completed foundation of the new town hall. Seven hundred townspeople, including 125 schoolchildren, gathered on the lawn across the street, and observed the ceremo-

nial laying of the cornerstone, which was preceded by an 18-minute speech from the Reverend Robert P. Doremus and the placing of a copper time capsule by Elmer M. Roberts, chairman of the board of selectmen. Despite efforts made in 2020, that time capsule has yet to be found.

In 1923, the editor of the Kennebunk Star praised the new building, describing it as "an artistic and becoming and thoroughly beautiful town hall," yet passed along "a suggestion that has been made a number of times that I wish to repeat in the desire that our town hall may be the best in all senses of the word."

That suggestion led to improvements to the auditorium stage, which had been deemed "impracticable for the production of a play." Further major improvements were made in 1985, when the rear addition was built, and again around 20 years ago when

— continued on next page

This is Tourist & Town's final issue of 2021. We will return in February, 2022 with our "February is for Love" issue!

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Kennebunk Town Hall under construction in 1921. Photo courtesy Kathy Ostrander Roberts, Kennebunk Free Library, Brick Store Museum

renovations were made to the auditorium.

Though formerly the site of the Kennebunk-Kennebunkport alumni association's annual talent show and an annual Christmas concert featuring members of the Portland Symphony Orchestra, the auditorium has continued to serve most notably as the place for elections.

"The auditorium couldn't be a more beautiful place to cast a vote," said Johnson.

She's not alone in her opinion. Town Clerk Merton Brown said that when he sent to hundreds of his

colleagues throughout the state a photo of the auditorium at election time with a mind to selling some of the voting booths, "They kept saying how beautiful the room was. We're the envy of Maine."

"The people who come in to vote will sometimes say there's no decent parking," he continued, "but people love coming here."

Johnson said, "The elections at Town Hall give people a feeling of being a part of something, that they matter, that it's taken seriously."

Most town departments operate out of Town Hall,

and most hold their meetings there. Brown said nearly two dozen town employees work in the building.

"The church was originally the governing center of the town," said Town Historian Kathy Ostrander Roberts, "but that all changed with the construction of the first town hall." It was Roberts who, with Administrative Assistant Kathy Nolette, put together the historical information about Town Hall found in Kennebunk's 2020 Annual Report.

Dana Pearson can be reached at dana@touristand-town.com

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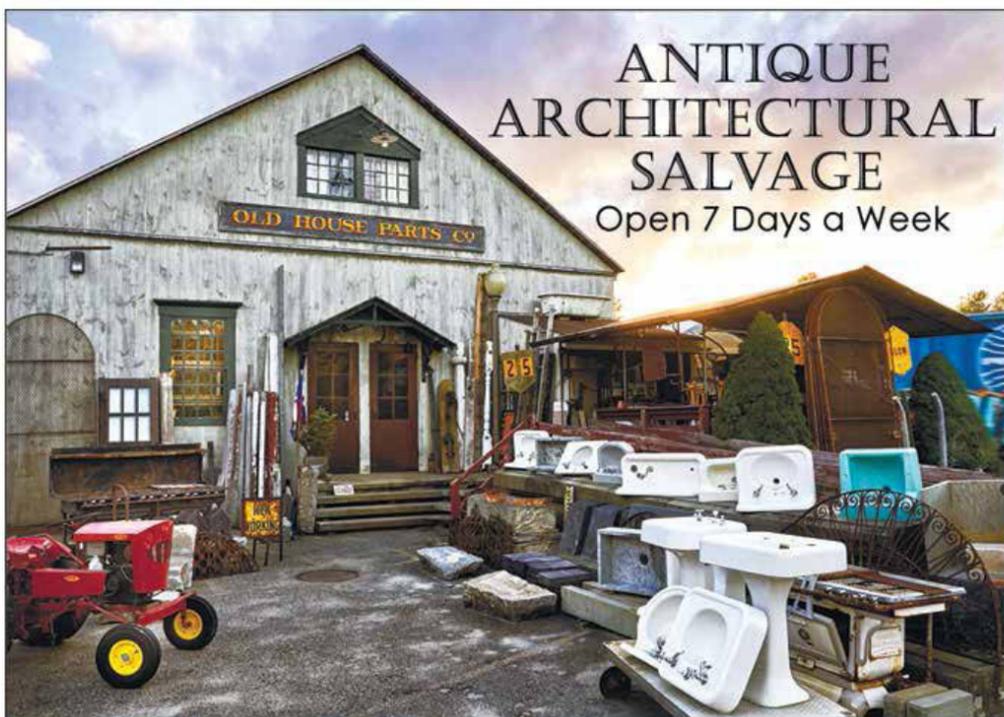


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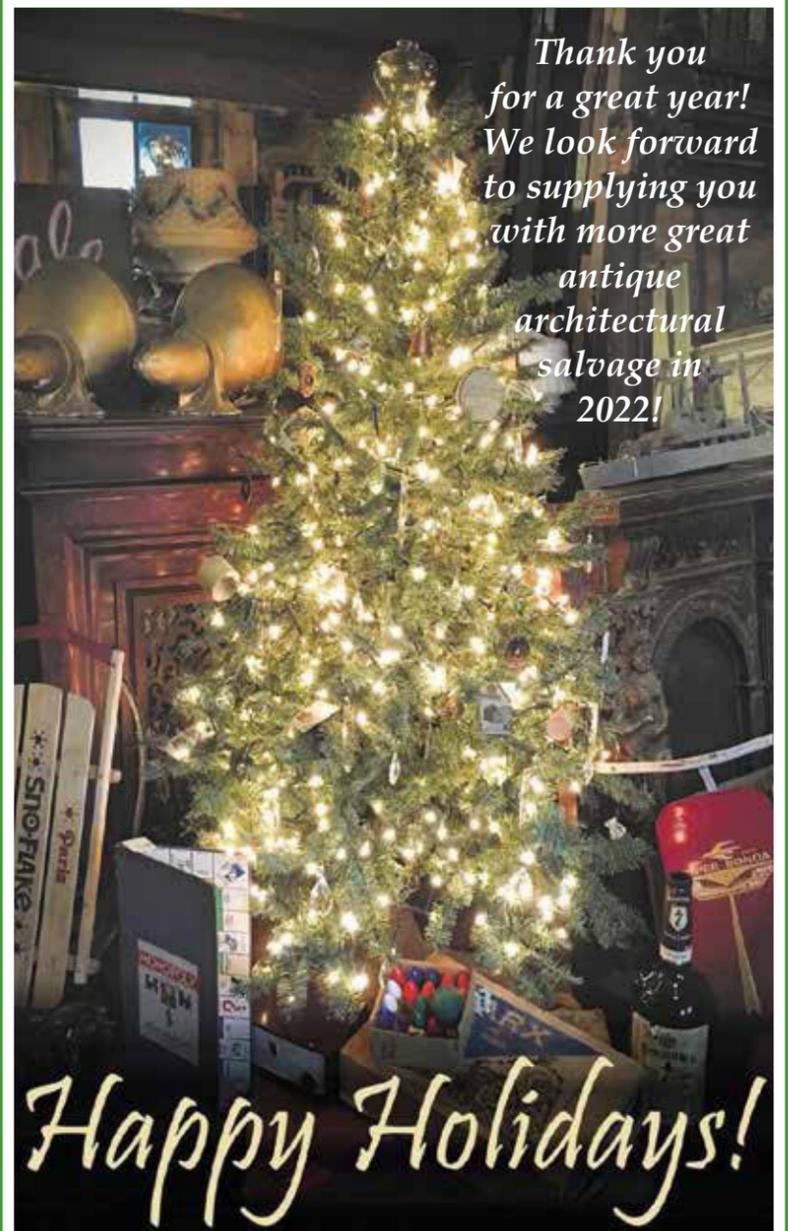


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There is a history of echoes under this roof – and First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church needs a new one

by Valerie Marier

Among the venerable buildings adding luster to the history of Kennebunk, few notch as many precedents as First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church. Over the centuries, this majestic white building served as Kennebunk's first house of worship, first town hall and first library.

The church opened its doors in the mid-1700s. The original and simple wooden meetinghouse was set in the ship-building area known as the Landing along the Kennebunk River. Within two decades, however, the growing congregation recognized that they needed a

larger building. They also decided to move their new church closer to the center of the burgeoning village.

Using the original doors, windows, pews and other fittings, a basic meetinghouse, measuring 56 feet long by 44 feet wide, was built on the site of the church's current location. Amazingly, it has stood at the corner of Routes One and 35 (Portland Road and Summer Street) ever since.

As Kennebunk's population continued to increase during those early Colonial years, First Parish UU Church grew with it. By the early 1800s additional sections had been added to

the rudimentary meetinghouse, including a steeple and bell tower. Hanging inside that new belfry was the pride of the parishioners — a 1017-pound bell cast in Paul Revere's factory. It cost \$452.

Initially, First Parish UU had been painted yellow but, after the 1803 expansion, it was repainted and has remained "the white church on the busy corner" to this day. The massive building is considered one of the finest examples of Federal period architecture in Kennebunk and treasured throughout the community.

But like many beloved dowagers, this centuries-old building has needed numerous tweaks, reconditionings and financial injections to retain its glorious facade.

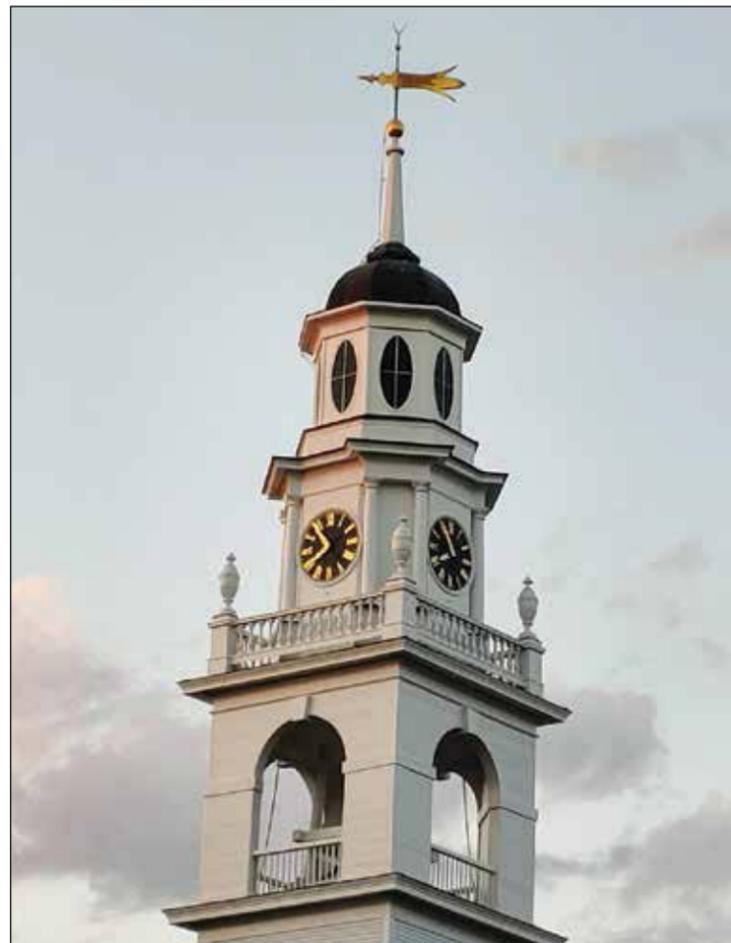
"First Parish has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars over the last several years upgrading and preserving our historic church," says Kevin Flynn, treasurer of the First Parish Preservation Foundation. The Foundation is a non-profit corporation whose board of directors includes both church members and interested members of the community. Their key mission is to help fund the historic preservation of the church building.

Currently, the Foundation is seeking donations to underwrite a new roof. Flynn says, "The old shingled roof has been on the building since the summer of 2000 and we thought

we could make it through a few more years, but by this past August we noticed that the shingles were looking pretty bad. Then on a windy and rainy day in October, our minister, the Reverend Lara Campbell, was meeting with someone in the church sanctuary when she felt a drop of water on her head."

A quick inspection revealed not only the small leak that dripped on the minister but several other places where water was seeping steadily through the shingles. Flynn adds, "There was no damage to the valuable trompe l'oeil painted ceiling but we recognized that we needed to get moving on the new roof ASAP."

Although the church had been saving for a new roof, the unexpected early failure, says Flynn, "caught us all by surprise, as did the \$50,000 estimated expense." This past summer, Flynn adds, "We had repaired some water leaks in the newer part of the building, painted the exterior of the building and took care of a number of other projects. We hoped the roof could



History echoes through the rooms of Kennebunk's first church, town hall and library. Today the 250-year-old grand dowager at the corner of Routes 1 and 35 needs a new roof. Its parishioners hope the community will consider donating to the roofing project. Photo by Joshua Hrehovcik

wait until next year."

Sitting atop the steeple of First Parish UYU is an iconic weathervane depicting an ear of corn. Generally recognized as representing "unity," an ear of corn is also believed to be a symbol of "rebirth," something the church has experienced many times in its nearly 250 year history. So it is again in 2021.

"It's tough financially to have to start the project now but it had to be done," Flynn says. "That's the way it is with old buildings."

The First Parish Preservation Foundation welcomes donations of any amount to help fund the roofing project. Send to First Parish Preservation Foundation at PO Box 235, Kennebunk, Maine 04043.

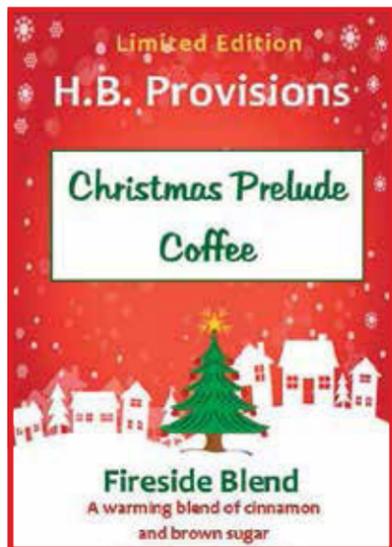
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We all know the past 2 yrs has been so much about change – some challenging, some needed. As we say goodbye to 2021, we want to take time to thank, not just our community for supporting us, but more importantly, our superior staff. We truly couldn't have done it without each and every one of you.

Here is our team:

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| David G | summer |
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| Racquel P | Alex R J |
| Debbie C | John W |
| Joe D | Jack A |
| Adam H | Jack C |

We are truly blessed to have everyone here on our HB team. Thank you. We give you our heartfelt appreciation for showing up and giving your endearing support for each other. So next time you come in please reach out and thank them too. To all, a Very Merry Christmas and Healthy Happy 2022. Helen & Bonnie.



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The Christmas PJ Challenge

by Faith Gillman

Christmas traditions are wonderful. Challenging at times but delightful. Challenging, you may say, how so? Enter 'Christmas Pajamas, version 2021,' which in future reminiscences may be dubbed "the year of the hat."

Christmas pajamas are a tradition in my family. As a child, I looked forward to putting on a brand-new pair of pajamas on Christmas Eve. It made everything more special. I wanted to share that feeling with my daughters, so the tradition continued. It continues to this day and has now extended to significant others and grandkids. I frequently ask if the tradition should be laid to rest but am assured it should not. After all, it's a tradition...so in late fall I begin the hunt for pajamas.

Some years it's a family PJ theme, other years goofy, or warm and fuzzy and on and on. This year was no different, with one exception. My eldest suggested pjs that would be perfect for her significant other, who I refer to as my "honorary son-in-law."

She did advise that they were a bit "spendy" but he would absolutely love them. As we don't get to see him often but want him to know how much we love him, it seemed the perfect gift. Enter the challenge.

I ordered them online. They were a bit "spendy" but very nice, organic cotton and all. Sadly, between the time I conferred with my daughter and ordered,

the price had jumped. I decided to order just the shirt (pants sold separately) and secure more modestly priced bottoms. I placed the order and was assured it would be sent in a few days.

Several weeks later the shirt had not shipped. In the company's defense, they did alert me to shipping issues almost daily. Eventually I received shipping confirmation and thought I was home free. Not so fast. The shirt was in transit for several days, when it suddenly hung a left from Connecticut and went back to some remote destination in the Midwest. It had a nice stay with the folks out there before deciding to move on, zigging and zagging its way across the US. It made it to Maine but remained in the 'out for delivery' mode for several more days.

At last! Notification that it would be delivered! I was so excited; the prized PJ shirt would soon be here. All the other PJs had arrived, been laundered and awaited Christmas Eve. One last piece to the PJ puzzle remained.

Delivery day came. After a busy day at work, I raced home to retrieve it. As soon as I picked the package up off my porch, I knew it was not what I ordered. There's no way a man's shirt would be this light. I brought the package in and laid it on the table, took a deep breath and opened it. Yup, it was a red and white reindeer toddler hat.

I screamed, at no one in particular "are you freakin' kidding me?" Don't get me wrong, it's a lovely hat but no way could it double for a PJ shirt. The packing list in the bag said that it was a PJ shirt, except it listed it as a "child's" not the adult size ordered. It also listed a 'questions about your order' 800 number, which I promptly dialed.

After nine prompts and several times circling back to the main menu I found myself in the returns queue. Five minutes, 10 minutes, 15...all while the same music - a short 3 bar piece telling me to relax - played over and over and over. "Are you freakin' kidding me?" I screamed again. I knew I was losing it when I started to sing the hold song. After 27 minutes a lovely human voice greeted me.

"How can I help?" Michelle inquired.

After explaining the situation, and re-explaining (Michelle was very nice but seemed confused) I requested a return label and refund. As it was now almost December, I didn't want to chance re-ordering.

"The label will take several weeks," she said. What? You can't email it? Evidently not. After another five minutes on the subject Michelle brightened and said "you don't have to return it, you can keep or donate the hat. Your money will be refunded either way, which should take two to three weeks."

It's now mid-December. There's no refund yet but I am hopeful. Fortunately, I was able to find another PJ shirt, not quite the same as the other but I think he will like it. It goes well with the hat.



Does this look like an adult pajama top? I didn't think so. (Bear sold separately...) Photo by Faith Gillman

Mid-Week Music presents a fab winter series

– Kicking off the new year with a mini-series of Beatles-related music –

Kennebunk musicians and avowed Beatles freaks Dana Pearson and Andy MacLeod will perform six concerts between January 12 and February 27, with shows featuring exclusively music sung either by Paul McCartney, John Lennon, or George Harrison while in the Beatles or during their solo careers. And yes, there will be a few Ringo tunes thrown into the mix.

The series starts Wednesday, January 12 with a 7 PM show of McCartney songs, followed by an encore matinee on Sunday, January 16 at 1 PM. The Lennon shows are Wednesday, February 2 at 7 PM and Sunday, February 6 at 1 PM, and the Harrison shows are Wednesday, February 23 at 7 PM and Sunday, February 27 at 1 PM.



Dana Pearson (left) and Andy MacLeod will perform six Beatles-themed shows at the Kennebunkport Historical Society's Town House School this winter as part of the Mid-Week Music concert series.

A portion of the proceeds benefit the Kennebunkport Historical Society. Tickets are \$15 for KHS members and \$18 for non-members. For more information and tickets, go to kporths.com/buy-tickets, email info@kporths.com, or call 967-2751.

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On Monday, December 13, members of the Seacoast Garden Club of Kennebunkport gathered for their annual tradition of making and decorating nearly 100 miniature boxwood Christmas trees. The trees were then delivered to local health facilities, homebound residents and libraries throughout the Kennebunks. One recipient described receiving her tree as a "heartfelt gift of Christmas joy."

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Of chicken innards and feasible resolutions



Before I get to the meat of this column, I'd like to say a few words about giblets.

First of all, my 1967 Webster's *New World Dictionary* defines a giblet as "any of the edible internal parts of a fowl, as the gizzard," which naturally led me to "gizzard" on the next page, where I learn that a gizzard is "the second stomach of a bird: it has thick muscular walls and a tough lining for grinding food." I doubt that the anatomy of a chicken has evolved so significantly over the past 54 years that the giblet has become any less disgusting.

In our house, the colder months comprise Roaster Season, a truly celebratory stretch of the calendar in which the house often smells gloriously of roast chicken. Without the giblets. You see, it is my opinion that the little bag of chicken innards found stuffed in the poultry's body cavity ought to be immediately removed and composted. I suppose if

one is into haggis or tripe or beets, one might enjoy a giblet, but not me.

So you can imagine my confusion when our latest roaster came with a label informing us that "parts of the giblets may be missing." Wherever did they go? Who would take them? For what purpose exactly? Or did someone on the chicken assembly line accidentally drop some on the factory floor? Perhaps there's a giblet black market I've been hitherto unaware of, and there's been some giblet-embezzling going on?

But since I don't eat giblets and find them so repulsive that I usually insist that my wife remove them from the carcass (she has a much stronger gizzard than I), I suppose I oughtn't care that some of them may be missing. Fact is, I'd rather they all go missing.

And now onto the column proper:

I love this time of year. I get to sit in my chair by the fire and fall asleep while reading a good book, or fall asleep while watching a Christmas movie (which, by the way, includes *Die Hard*,

or fall asleep while sipping a glass of wine and contemplating the past year. I think I fall asleep way too easily this time of year.

At any rate, it's the traditional time to take stock of one's life and to look ahead with hope and a strengthened resolve to improve it. Oh yeah, I'm talking about New Year's Resolutions, which, for the bulk of my life (meaning up to last month) I considered a colossal waste of time, a feeble exercise in self-improvement, the classic Lucy/Charlie Brown/football scenario played out year after year, perhaps the clearest illustration of mass self-delusion known to mankind, as well as the impetus for countless short-lived gym memberships.

That being said, did I ever buy into New Year's Resolutions? Of course I did. Everyone else did, so why shouldn't I? (said the lemming). But this year will be different. And by "different," I don't mean I'm going to resolve to improve my French rather than learn Italian. Oh no. By "different," I mean I've

finally cracked the whole New Year's Resolutions quandary that's been plaguing humanity for centuries. Watch and learn, people, watch and learn.

Herein I set forth my New Year's Resolutions for 2022, to which I shall adhere with utmost dedication and sense of purpose:

I resolve to gain 15 pounds, so that I will have just cause for purchasing a new wardrobe;

I resolve to scale back my daily walks from 45

to 30 minutes each, so that I'll have more time to fall asleep by the fire;

I resolve to become more judgmental, such that I may improve my powers of judgment;

I resolve to communicate less frequently with my friends and family, in order that they may come to appreciate how com-municative I have been to this point;

I resolve to watch more TV and read fewer books, in order to give my imagi-

nation a breather;

I resolve to cut back on fruit and vegetables, generously and thoughtfully leaving more for others;

I resolve to not learn any foreign languages, if only because I don't see myself traveling anywhere anytime soon;

And finally, I resolve to make these the last resolutions of my life.

Nailed it.
Dana Pearson can be reached at dana@touristand-town.com

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

**Going on Now**

Hidden Kennebunkport Exhibit, Graves Memorial Public Library, 18 Maine Street, Kennebunkport. Please visit the Business Center in the Mothers Wing. See secret places right in our backyard through Roscoe's keen eye. Simply breathtaking. Going on through spring.

Food Drive for Community Outreach Services, Graves Memorial Public Library, 18 Maine Street, Kennebunkport. Drop off during Library hours - canned vegetables, soups, stews, starches, breakfast, boxed pasta, desserts, and condiments. COS also accepts donations of cash (P.O. Box 1175, Kennebunk) or directly through Paypal on their website. This drive runs through Dec 31.

Wednesday, December 22

Portside Readers, Graves Memorial Public Library, 18 Maine Street, Kennebunkport, 7 PM. Listen to stories, poems, tales, essays, drama, songs and more by the Portside Readers. Tune in on the Louis T. Graves Memorial Public Library's Facebook page or YouTube channel or watch on the Town of Kennebunkport's cable channel 1301. FMI call 967-2778.

Friday, December 24

Christmas Eve Pageant, St. David's Episcopal Church, 138 York Street, Kennebunk, 3 PM. Gather for a special reading of the Christmas Story and sing some favorite hymns. For more information visit www.stdavidskennebunk.org or call 985-3073.

Christmas Eve Holy Communion Service, St. David's Episcopal Church, 138 York Street, Kennebunk, 5:30 PM. For more information visit us at www.stdavidskennebunk.org or call 985-3073.

Kids Holiday Party, Animal Welfare Society, 46 Holland Rd. Kennebunk, 10 AM-12 PM. Spend the morning of Christmas Eve with the animals. Movies, snacks, crafts, gift bags and lots of holiday fun with the AWS dogs and cats. Expect a special appearance from the Frozen Sisters and Olaf! FMI call (207) 985-3244 or Email: info@animalwelfaresociety.org

Christmas Eve Dinner, Front Porch Piano Bar & Restaurant, 9 Shore Rd, Ogunquit. Doors open at 4 PM. Call for reservations: (207) 646-4005

Saturday, December 25

Holy Communion Christmas Service, St. David's Episcopal Church, 138 York Street, Kennebunk, 11 AM. For more information visit www.stdavidskennebunk.org or call 985-3073.

Monday, December 27

What's Your Story? Graves Memorial Public Library, 18 Maine Street, Kennebunkport, 7 PM. Each week, our library director Mary-Lou Boucouvalas sits down with a community member and talks to them about where they came from, what they do, their interests, etc. Tune in on the Louis T. Graves Memorial Public Library's Facebook page or YouTube channel, or watch on the Town of Kennebunkport's cable channel 1301. FMI call 967-2778.

Wednesday, December 29

Portside Readers, Graves Memorial Public Library, 18 Maine Street, Kennebunkport, 7 PM. Listen to stories, poems, tales, essays, drama, songs and more by the Portside Readers. Tune in on the Louis T. Graves Memorial Public Library's Facebook page or YouTube channel or watch on the Town of Kennebunkport's cable channel 1301. FMI call 967-2778.

Friday, December 31

Last Blast New Year's Eve Beach Party, hosted by OOB365, 1 Old Orchard Street, Old Orchard Beach, 4:30-7:30 PM. Head to the beach for a bonfire and fireworks. Bring your Christmas Tree to add to the bonfire. FMI: email info@oob365.com

New Year's Eve Party, Bentley's Saloon, 1601 Portland

Road, Arundel, 7 PM-12 AM. Party into the new year at Bentley's Saloon with the Eric Grant Band.

New Year's Eve Masquerade Party with Radio Revival, Mill Towne Tavern, 898 Main Street, Sanford, 7 PM. Bring your masquerade masks and enjoy a night of live music from Radio Revival \$20pp includes hors d'oeuvres and a champagne toast. FMI/Tickets: www.eventbrite.com/e/220104928767

New Year's Eve Prom, Duffy's Tavern & Grill, 168 Saco Avenue, Old Orchard Beach, 8 PM. Dress up in your finest prom attire and head to Duffy's. Enjoy live music, a champagne toast, and appetizers served throughout the night. \$60 per person. FMI: call (207) 937-5100 or email oob@duffysmaine.com

Rock the Boat: New Year's Eve at the Boathouse, with DJ Haylstorm, The Boathouse, 21 Ocean Avenue, Kennebunkport, 9 PM-12 AM. Say goodbye to 2021 and hello to 2022 with DJ Haylstorm, dancing, a Magic Mirror selfie station, midnight toast, and dancing all night long. For Tickets visit eventbrite.com FMI: Call (207) 967-8225

Sunday, January 2

Ogunquit Performing Arts Classic Film Series, The S. Judson Dunaway Center, 23 School Street, Ogunquit, 2 PM. With films playing every week, this week the Ogunquit Performing Arts will be showing *The Enemy Below*. FMI: opa@ogunquitperformingarts.org

Monday, January 3

"Through the Mind's Eye" Exhibit, Kennebunk Free Library, 112 Main Street, Kennebunk. The Kennebunk Free Library invites the public to view John Forssen's oil painting exhibit in the library's Speers Gallery from January 3-31. Paintings feature a mix of land and seascapes, all painted by local artist John Forssen. FMI: Contact Sarah Thompson at sthompson@kennbunklibrary.org or call 207-985-2173 ext. 100

What's Your Story? Graves Memorial Public Library, 18 Maine Street, Kennebunkport, 7 PM. Each week, our library director Mary-Lou Boucouvalas sits down with a community member and talks to them about where they came from, what they do, their interests, etc. Tune in on the Louis T. Graves Memorial Public Library's Facebook page or YouTube channel, or watch on the Town of Kennebunkport's cable channel 1301. FMI call 967-2778.

Wednesday, January 5

Nonfiction Book Group, Wells Public Library, 1434 Post Road, Wells, 4:30 PM. The nonfiction book group will meet in person - all are welcome! The pick for this month is *Lights Out* by Ted Koppel. FMI: please contact Cindy Appleby at cappleby@wellstown.org or call 207-646-8181

Portside Readers, Graves Memorial Public Library, 18 Maine Street, Kennebunkport, 7 PM. Listen to stories, poems, tales, essays, drama, songs and more by the Portside Readers. Tune in on the Louis T. Graves Memorial Public Library's Facebook page or YouTube channel or watch on the Town of Kennebunkport's cable channel 1301. FMI call 967-2778.

Saturday, January 8

Whiskey & Rye, a Relationship on the Rocks, The Burleigh, 1 Dock Square, Kennebunk, 3-4 PM. Learn to make two of the Burleigh's Whiskey and Rye cocktails. Price includes two sample drinks, recipe cards, and light snacks. \$25 per person, FMI: info@thekennebunkportinn.com

Sunday, January 9

Whiskey & Rye, a Relationship on the Rocks, The Burleigh, 1 Dock Square, Kennebunkport, 3-4 PM. Learn to make two of the Burleigh's Whiskey and Rye cocktails. Price includes two sample drinks, recipe cards, and light snacks. \$25 per person, FMI: info@thekennebunkportinn.com or purchase tickets through eventbrite.com

DECEMBER 23 - JANUARY 31, 2022

Ogunquit Performing Arts Classic Film Series, The S. Judson Dunaway Center, 23 School Street, Ogunquit, 2 PM. With films playing every week, this week the Ogunquit Performing Arts will be showing *Heaven Knows, Mr. Allison*. FMI: opa@ogunquitperformingarts.org

Berwick Farmers Market, Berwick Town Hall, 11 Sullivan Street, Berwick, 10 AM. Listen to live music and check out the farmers market. FMI: (207) 698- 1174

Monday, January 10

What's Your Story? Graves Memorial Public Library, 18 Maine Street, Kennebunkport, 7 PM. Each week, our library director Mary-Lou Boucouvalas sits down with a community member and talks to them about where they came from, what they do, their interests, etc. Tune in on the Louis T. Graves Memorial Public Library's Facebook page or YouTube channel, or watch on the Town of Kennebunkport's cable channel 1301. FMI call 967-2778.

Wednesday, January 12

Mid-Week Music with Dana Pearson and Andy MacLeod, 7 PM. This series, which kicks off January 12, will feature music sung either by Paul McCartney, John Lennon, or George Harrison while in the Beatles or during their solo careers. And yes, there will be a few Ringo tunes thrown into the mix. An encore matinee will be held on Sunday, January 16 at 1 PM. The Lennon shows are Wednesday, February 2 at 7 PM and Sunday, February 6 at 1 PM, and the Harrison shows are Wednesday, February 23 at 7 PM and Sunday, February 27 at 1 PM.

Portside Readers, Graves Memorial Public Library, 18 Maine Street, Kennebunkport, 7 PM. Listen to stories, poems, tales, essays, drama, songs and more by the Portside Readers. Tune in on the Louis T. Graves Memorial Public Library's Facebook page or YouTube channel or watch on the Town of Kennebunkport's cable channel 1301. FMI call 967-2778.

Saturday, January 15

Spiked Coffee & Cocoa, The Burleigh, 1 Dock Square, Kennebunkport, 3-4 PM. Learn to make two of our favorite hot coffee and cocoa cocktails. Includes 2 sample drinks, recipe cards, and light snacks. 21+ event, \$25 per person. FMI: info@thekennebunkportinn.com or purchase tickets through Eventbrite.co

Sunday January 16

Ogunquit Performing Arts Classic Film Series, The S. Judson Dunaway Center, 23 School Street, Ogunquit, 2 PM. With films playing every week, this week the Ogunquit Performing Arts will be showing *El Dorado*. FMI: opa@ogunquitperformingarts.org

Spiked Coffee & Cocoa, The Burleigh, 1 Dock Square, Kennebunkport, 3-4 PM. Learn to make two of our favorite hot coffee and cocoa cocktails. Includes 2 sample drinks, recipe cards, and light snacks. 21+ event, \$25 per person. FMI: info@thekennebunkportinn.com or purchase tickets through Eventbrite.com

Vision Board Workshop, The Daily Sweat, 65 Portland Road, Kennebunk, 2-4 PM. Begin the year by creating a new vision of the year ahead. This workshop will be fun, engaging and powerful as you tune into your intentions of your best self. The workshop begins with a sweat + flow / restorative yoga class as well as a guided meditation. Then we will get down to the business of manifestation through vision boarding. No yoga or crafting experience needed... this workshop is for everyone. FMI: (207) 569-0999 or email thedailywheat-kennebunk@gmail.com

Monday, January 17

What's Your Story? Graves Memorial Public Library, 18 Maine Street, Kennebunkport, 7 PM. Each week, our library director Mary-Lou Boucouvalas sits down with a community member and talks to them about where they came from, what they do, their interests, etc. Tune in on the Louis T. Graves Memorial Public

Library's Facebook page or YouTube channel, or watch on the Town of Kennebunkport's cable channel 1301. FMI call 967-2778.

Wednesday, January 19

Portside Readers, Graves Memorial Public Library, 18 Maine Street, Kennebunkport, 7 PM. Listen to stories, poems, tales, essays, drama, songs and more by the Portside Readers. Tune in on the Louis T. Graves Memorial Public Library's Facebook page or YouTube channel or watch on the Town of Kennebunkport's cable channel 1301. FMI call 967-2778.

Saturday, January 22

But First, Tequila, The Burleigh, 1 Dock Square, Kennebunkport, 3-4 PM. Learn to make two of our favorite tequila cocktails. Includes 2 sample drinks, recipe cards, and light snacks. 21+ event, \$25 per person. FMI: info@thekennebunkportinn.com or purchase tickets through Eventbrite.com

Sunday, January 23

Ogunquit Performing Arts Classic Film Series, The S. Judson Dunaway Center, 23 School Street, Ogunquit, 2 PM. With films playing every week, this week the Ogunquit Performing Arts will be showing *The Big Sleep*. FMI: opa@ogunquitperformingarts.org

But First, Tequila, The Burleigh, 1 Dock Square, Kennebunkport, 3-4 PM. Learn to make two of our favorite tequila cocktails. Includes 2 sample drinks, recipe cards, and light snacks. 21+ event, \$25 per person. FMI: info@thekennebunkportinn.com or purchase tickets through Eventbrite.com

Monday, January 24

What's Your Story? Graves Memorial Public Library, 18 Maine Street, Kennebunkport, 7 PM. Each week, our library director Mary-Lou Boucouvalas sits down with a community member and talks to them about where they came from, what they do, their interests, etc. Tune in on the Louis T. Graves Memorial Public Library's Facebook page or YouTube channel, or watch on the Town of Kennebunkport's cable channel 1301. FMI call 967-2778.

Wednesday, January 26

Portside Readers, Graves Memorial Public Library, 18 Maine Street, Kennebunkport, 7 PM. Listen to stories, poems, tales, essays, drama, songs and more by the Portside Readers. Tune in on the Louis T. Graves Memorial Public Library's Facebook page or YouTube channel or watch on the Town of Kennebunkport's cable channel 1301. FMI call 967-2778.

Sunday, January 30

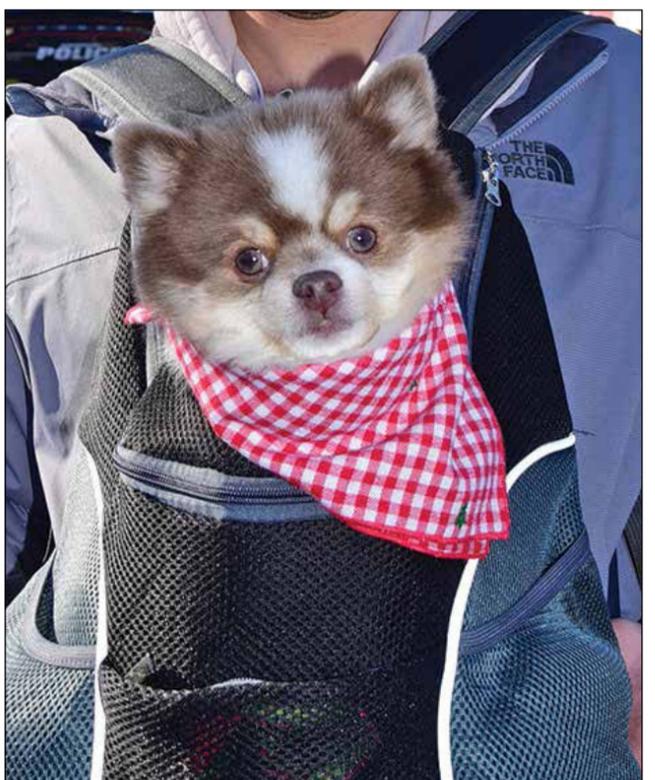
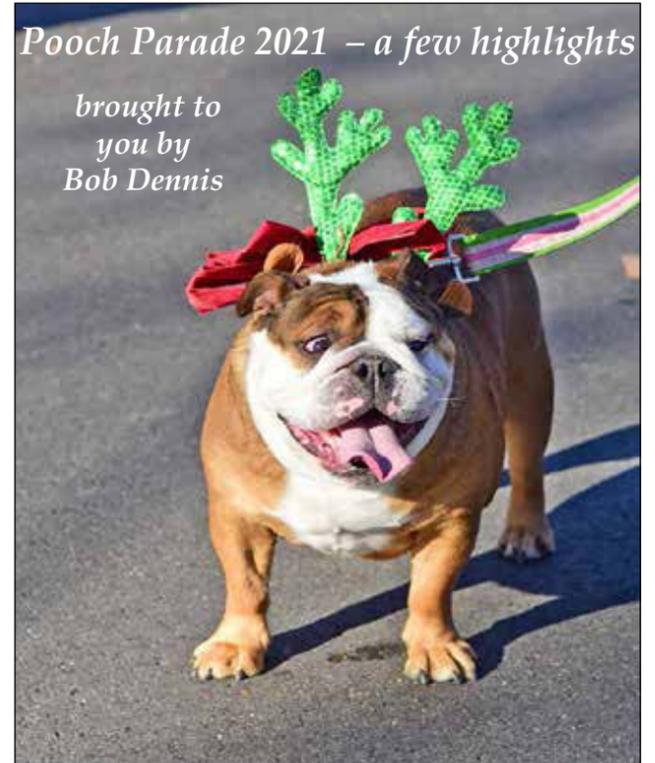
Ogunquit Performing Arts Classic Film Series, The S. Judson Dunaway Center, 23 School Street, Ogunquit, 2 PM. With films playing every week, this week the Ogunquit Performing Arts will be showing *The Sundowners*. FMI: opa@ogunquitperformingarts.org

Monday, January 31

What's Your Story? Graves Memorial Public Library, 18 Maine Street, Kennebunkport, 7 PM. Each week, our library director Mary-Lou Boucouvalas sits down with a community member and talks to them about where they came from, what they do, their interests, etc. Tune in on the Louis T. Graves Memorial Public Library's Facebook page or YouTube channel, or watch on the Town of Kennebunkport's cable channel 1301. FMI call 967-2778.

And in February....

Tourist & Town is back after its January hiatus with a special "February is for Love" edition!



Pooch Parade 2021 – a few highlights

brought to you by Bob Dennis

Holiday Histories

by Jo O'Connor

So you think you know your holidays? Take a historical look at these special holidays that will soon be upon us.

Hanukkah

This year, Hanukkah began Thursday evening, November 28 and ended with nightfall December 6. It is a Jewish, eight-day, wintertime "festival of lights," celebrated with a nightly menorah lighting, religious prayers and traditional foods. This historical, nationalist holiday commemorates the successful rebellion, in the second century BC, of a clan of Jewish freedom fighters called the Maccabees, who had risen up against their Greek-Syrian oppressors. Hanukkah celebrates the miracle that occurred when the Maccabees reclaimed the Temple. The sanctuary was decimated, torn apart by the Hellenic forces. The Maccabee fighters found only enough oil to light a lantern for one day by which to read the Torah. But the lantern blazed for eight full days. When Jews light the eight candles of the menorah on the eight nights of Hanukkah, they recite a prayer extolling God who "performed miracles for our ancestors in days of old."

Festivus

This more-modern holiday was the creation of TV writer Daniel O'Keefe, who wrote about this secular, non-commercial December 23 holiday for a 1997 *Seinfeld* episode as an alternative to the pressures and commercialism of the Christmas season. It is characterized by the raising of an unadorned aluminum pole, the serving of a dinner, the airing of grievances (which is an opportunity to tell others how they have disappointed you in the past year) and the demonstration of feats of strength (where the host needs to be pinned). The slogan, "A Festivus for the rest of us!" is the mantra of people inspired by this zany, offbeat *Seinfeld* holiday and now celebrate Festivus as any other holiday. Something good to know? Festivus is now 100% tinsel-free, as recently announced on Festivusweb.com.

Christmas

Christmas, celebrated on December 25, is both a sacred religious holiday of Christians and a worldwide cultural and commercial phenomenon. For two millennia, people around the world have been observing traditions and practices on this day that are both religious and secular in nature. Christmas Day is considered the anniversary of the birth of Jesus of Nazareth, a spiritual leader whose teachings form the basis of their Bible. Customs include exchanging gifts, decorating Christmas trees, sending annual cards, attending church, sharing meals with family and friends, and tracking Santa Claus on NORAD so you know exactly when he'll be delivering presents down the chimney – even if you don't have one.

–continued on next page

The Christmas Menorah – the ideal story for the holidays

by Steve Hrehovcik

"This is a Christmas story. And a Hanukkah story. It's a true story. It began with a gift which sprang from love. And there's no telling how far a gift of love will go." This is how Valerie Reid begins the story she wrote called *The Christmas Menorah*.

In her story, Reid recounts how her older brother, Brent, age ten in 1959, searched for the perfect Christmas gift for their Swedish, Lutheran mother. Using money he saved, he visited a local gift shop and found a sleek bronze candelabrum, studded with

turquoise stones and room for nine candles.

He was unaware the beautiful gift he selected was a Menorah, a sacred centerpiece of the Hanukkah celebration. He also had no knowledge the eight candles represented the eight days the lantern stayed miraculously lit in the Temple in ancient Jerusalem. The ninth center candle, the shamash, is used to light the other candles on each day of the holiday.

When their mother opened Brent's present and looked at the candelabrum, Reid writes in her

story, "She loved it! From that day forward, all year-round, Brent's 'blue menorah' was proudly displayed on the bookshelf of our Protestant living room."

As years passed, the Menorah became one of Reid's proud possessions. She brought it with her when she moved from Clarendon Hills, Illinois, where she was born and grew up. She earned degrees in Elementary Education and Theater from the University of Minnesota in 1976 and visited Kennebunkport, in search of a teaching posi-

–continued on next page



The Menorah that Valerie Reid's ten-year old brother, Brent, gave their mother as a Christmas present. Courtesy photo

An eclectic array of holiday blooms, decorations, jewelry, clothing, candles and bath and body products for everyone on your list



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tion. Her childhood visits to Nantucket convinced her she wanted to live near the ocean.

She started as the librarian at the Park Street School in Kennebunk, then taught second grade at Consolidated School in Kennebunkport. All the while the Menorah remained with Reid as she got married, raised three children, then returned to teaching at Kennebunk High School.

Reid said, "I was hired to run the new theater program, which started with one class. Over a period of 20 years, I built a full-fledged theater department with core classes and electives. I also directed 40 plays and musicals, as well as teaching English."

She had loved writing since the time she learned to read, and envisioned becoming an author now that she retired from teaching and directing. The unfolding story of Brent's gift inspired her to write *The Christmas Menorah* after she read *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak. Reid echoes Zurak's distinctive narrative's voice to tell the true story of how the Menorah influenced her family.

But her story takes a curious turn. Flash back to 1996, while teaching theater, one of her favorite students was Jenna Golub. When Jenna graduated high school, her dad, Andrew, gave her a party.

Reid said, "I was honored with the invitation and wondered what to bring as a gift. After considering several options I noticed

the Menorah on my bookshelf. I struggled with the idea of parting with this time-honored family tradition. But, this would be for Jenna, who I so admired and whose mother, Maureen Oppenheim, had just passed away. I picked up the Menorah and for the first time I turned it over. On the bottom, I saw in bold letters the name of the artist who created the Menorah. The name: "OPPENHEIM," the same name as Jenna's mother.

It seemed only proper to present Jenna with the Menorah, the Christmas gift Valerie's ten-year old brother gave to their mother so many years ago. As Reid says in her story, "there's no telling how far a gift of love will go."

But the wonder of her story doesn't end there. Now it's 2006. Two weeks before Christmas. Reid joins in the Prelude festivities that brings visitors from around the country, and beyond, to Kennebunkport.

As she trudges through the soft falling snow, she passes a shop decorated with colorful wreaths, bright lights and shiny glass ornaments. One of the ornaments seems unusual and catches her eyes. She stops and takes a closer look.

Can it be? Is it what she thinks it is? Yes.

It's a Menorah. But, not any Me-

norah. It's Brent's Menorah.

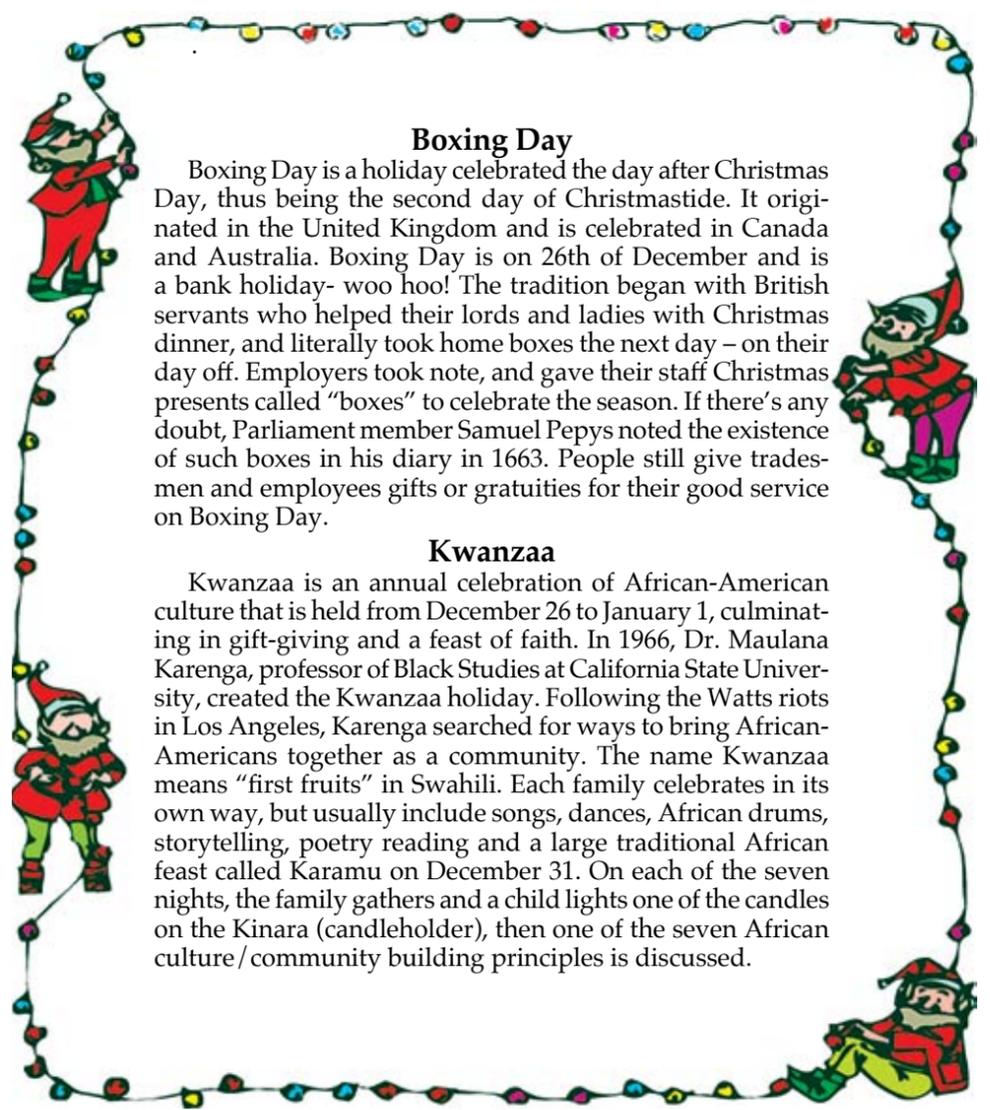
How could it be? The answer: the previous summer, Reid's former student, Jenna, bought the shop and decorated the window with the Menorah. The surprise Menorah gift traveled five decades and a thousand miles to rekindle Reid's family tradition. She ends her story with, "there's no telling how far a gift of love will go. Forever, I think."

Reid intends to self-publish her book this year. "I see it as a perfect holiday gift book," she said. "It illustrates the eternal spirit of giving, transcends the boundaries of religion and celebrates our eternal unity."

Reid will be reading *The Christmas Menorah* on the Louis Graves Library in Kennebunkport's website on Wednesday, December 29 at 7 PM, after which it will be available for streaming at www.graveslibrary.org. FMI call 207 967-2778.



Valerie Reid will read her family holiday book *The Christmas Menorah* on the Louis Graves Library website, available beginning Wednesday December 29 at 7 PM. Courtesy photo



Boxing Day

Boxing Day is a holiday celebrated the day after Christmas Day, thus being the second day of Christmastide. It originated in the United Kingdom and is celebrated in Canada and Australia. Boxing Day is on 26th of December and is a bank holiday- woo hoo! The tradition began with British servants who helped their lords and ladies with Christmas dinner, and literally took home boxes the next day – on their day off. Employers took note, and gave their staff Christmas presents called "boxes" to celebrate the season. If there's any doubt, Parliament member Samuel Pepys noted the existence of such boxes in his diary in 1663. People still give tradesmen and employees gifts or gratuities for their good service on Boxing Day.

Kwanzaa

Kwanzaa is an annual celebration of African-American culture that is held from December 26 to January 1, culminating in gift-giving and a feast of faith. In 1966, Dr. Maulana Karenga, professor of Black Studies at California State University, created the Kwanzaa holiday. Following the Watts riots in Los Angeles, Karenga searched for ways to bring African-Americans together as a community. The name Kwanzaa means "first fruits" in Swahili. Each family celebrates in its own way, but usually include songs, dances, African drums, storytelling, poetry reading and a large traditional African feast called Karamu on December 31. On each of the seven nights, the family gathers and a child lights one of the candles on the Kinara (candleholder), then one of the seven African culture/community building principles is discussed.

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Connecting with Nature – Rachel Carson has a new pedestrian trail

Residents and visitors to Wells are enjoying a recently finished nature trail that passes through Rachel

Carson National Wildlife Refuge.

The mile-long pedestrian trail, supported by

funding from a Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) grant, starts east of U.S. Route 1 in downtown

Wells, Maine and proceeds through a residential neighborhood before continuing along Harbor Road on one side and the refuge-managed Webhannet River Salt Marsh on the other. The trail links downtown Wells to Wells Harbor and a popular beach area, as well as an existing trail network created by the town and the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve.

Refuge staff worked with the town and Wright Pierce Engineering to design the project in such a way that pedestrian access, public safety, resource conservation, and wildlife observation opportunities were maximized at the Lower Wells Division of the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge. Construction of the trail was implemented by Foglio, a Waterboro, Maine-based construction firm.

Prior to the trail's construction, pedestrian access to this area of the refuge was limited, apart from walking alongside the heavily trafficked road without a guardrail.



Photos courtesy of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Now, residents will have a safe and eco-friendly alternative for traveling along Harbor Road and improved opportunities for plant and wildlife viewing within the Refuge. Interpretative signage installed along the trail provides walkers a chance to learn more about the ecology within the refuge. Also included on the path is a newly constructed observation deck of the marsh.

"We at the refuge are excited about the new pedestrian trail at Harbor Road in Wells," says Karl Stromayer, Refuge Manager at the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge. "It's going to be a huge asset in helping us connect people to nature and helps meet the Town's objectives for active transit and reducing traffic volume on town roads during the busy spring and summer (vacation) seasons."

This trail complements other planned improvements under the town's Updated Harbor Management Plan. The plan is aimed at designing and constructing sidewalks, bike lanes, streetscape improvements, and providing pedestrian amenities along Harbor Road and within Harbor Park, while minimizing the need to widen impervious surfaces and the existing roadway.

The Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) was established by the Federal Highway Administration to improve transportation facilities that provide access to, are adjacent to, or are located within U.S. Federal lands. FLAP grants benefit the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service by improving access to facilities through constructing or repaving roads, multi-purpose trails, bicycle paths, and boat ramps. The Program can also be used to purchase buses, trams, bicycles, and kayaks for people to access public lands.

The Harbor Road pedestrian trail was completed with 20% funds from the Wells community and 80% from FLAP. With the recently passed Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the FLAP will now be able to provide up to 100% of funding for projects – an advantage for communities unable to provide the 20% match originally required by the Program. Additionally, many states in the North Atlantic-Appalachian Region are set to become eligible for FLAP in Fiscal Year 2022. For these reasons, the Service is optimistic that the Program will continue to provide safe access for communities to connect to natural places.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. FMI visit www.fws.gov.

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Kennebunk Free Library's Speers Gallery announces "Through the Mind's Eye"

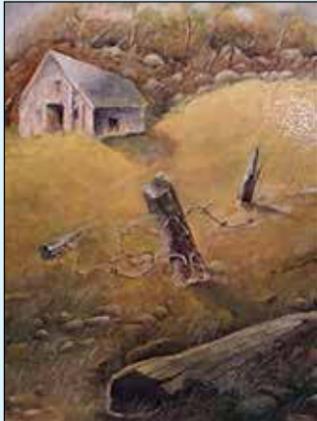
John Forssen's oil paintings of land and seascapes, many featuring a variety of birds, will be on display beginning January 3 at the Kennebunk Free Library's Speers Gallery at 112 Main Street in Kennebunk. The show will run through January 31.

John is a Kennebunk artist and frame-maker who has been engaged in some form of art for over 70 years. Following his retirement from teaching in 2008, he began drawing seriously and eventually painting with oils.

His work is inspired by what he sees in the natural world around him. While he admires "plein air" painting, he begins in his studio, rummaging through his memory for possibilities and then bringing them to life on canvas, layer by layer. He likes to begin his work days at 4:30 AM because, as he says, "that's when the muse is waiting for me."

John's drawings have brought several best-in-category awards in Art Guild-of-the-Kennebunk shows, and he has exhibited at the Kennebunk Free Library, the former Whitney Gallery, River Tree Arts, The Brick Store Museum, Artists-by-the-Sea in Biddeford Pool and the Gallery at York Hospital. He prices his paintings, along with his custom frames, to remain accessible to a wide audience.

FMI www.kennebunklibrary.org.



Tie a white ribbon to support hardworking healthcare workers

The idea started last year: a white ribbon campaign to honor EMTs, paramedics, fire-fighters, dispatchers and frontline healthcare workers who've given their all during the Covid-19 pandemic and quarantine.

White ribbons are reminders of "white coat ceremonies" and the practice of wearing of white coats in the medical field. The color can also be a ray of light during these gloomy times.

Communities here in Maine and across the country are displaying these "ribbons of hope" on their mailboxes and front doors, on their company signs and outdoor shrubbery. One participant said, "It shows how much we care about and support our area medical workers, and that's important."

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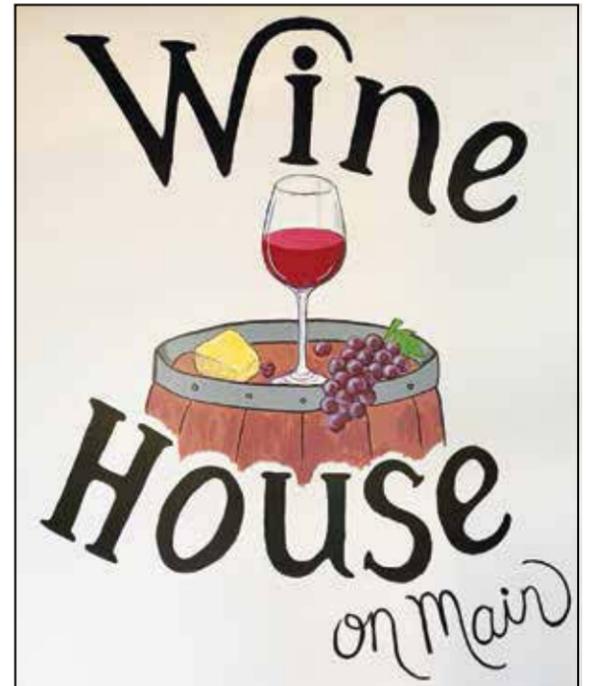


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Brett Williams has "dream come true" at Sanford Performing Arts Center

by Steve Hrehovcik

When the citizens of Sanford built a new Sanford High School and Regional Technical Center, which had its opening in 2018, they decided to include a theater as an essential part of the modern structure. With help from a \$10 million bond, the school designed an 860-seat auditorium with state-of-the-art theatrical equipment, called the Sanford Performing Arts Center.

The center features an expansive backstage area with space above the stage for multiple set changes, plus an elaborate lighting

and sound system that would rival a professional Broadway theater. Also part of the bond was funds to construct the Alumni Football Stadium.

When it came time to select someone to serve as director for SPAC, a national search committee was formed to find the ideal candidate. After interviewing a number of prospects, the committee selected Brett Williams, a Sanford High School graduate from the class of 1996.

Williams comes with excellent credentials for the job. Not only is he an

established member of the community – his ancestors go back five generations living in Sanford. They emigrated from England and entered the United States through Ellis Island in the early 1900s. Growing up in Sanford, Williams knows the history and culture of his hometown. He participated in school plays and went on to earn a degree in Communications and Theater Art from Elon University in North Carolina. He worked in marketing at Portland Ovations and became an on-air personality for station WHOM.

During the planning of the art center, which started in 2013, Williams' enthusiasm for the performing arts inspired him to get involved with the project. He volunteered on a variety of committees and contributed to the design and scope of the new theater. Williams said, "It is a great honor for me to serve as director of the Sanford Performing Arts Center. I'm excited about what we have accomplished by providing local and professional performers with a magnificent stage to entertain our audiences."

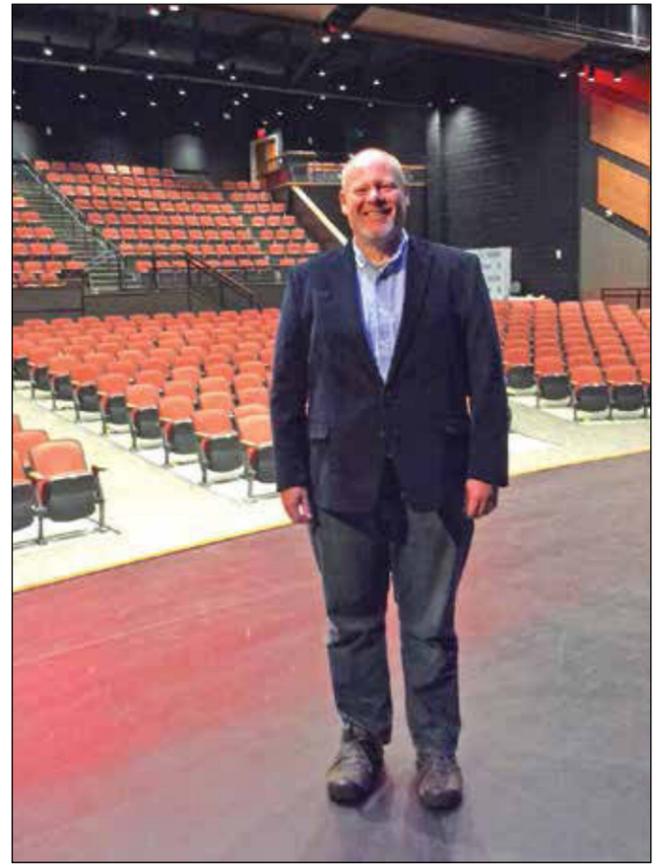
SPAC is a public facility, owned by the city of Sanford and operated by the Sanford School Department. Steve Buck, the Sanford City Manager, said, "The Sanford Performing Arts Center is a gem in our community that brings Sanford's citizens together, enriches their lives and helps them connect and celebrate through music,

dance, and theatre productions. We are fortunate to have this incredible resource for our youth and residents of all ages, and to attract visitors to our community."

Williams pointed out the three major ways SPAC can be used. First, as a venue for school performances, including theatrical productions, music concerts, and school events such as graduations and awards presentations and a speaker series. Jane Kirton, Choral Director at Sanford High School, who takes an active part in musical programs at the center said, "This space is a true treasure for the town of Sanford and her people. It has already inspired many students to pursue their passion in music and the arts. Countless students have experienced the performing arts for the very first time in this room. That's a legacy I'm proud of."

Upcoming school musical programs to take place in the center are the High School Winter Concert on Wednesday, December 8, and the Middle School Grades 7 and 8 Winter Concert on Thursday, December 16.

The second important use of the center is it serves as a facility for rental opportunities. This helps raise funds for its operation. Among groups who have rented the center are the York County Community College for its commencement ceremonies, the York County Dance Group and dance competi-



Brett Williams, Director of the Sanford Performing Arts Center on the stage of the 860 seat theater located on the campus of Sanford High School and the Regional Technical Center. Photo Credit: Steve Hrehovcik

tion judging. Daily rental fees range from \$500 for local non-profit organizations to \$2,000 for professional groups.

The third popular use of the center is the Spotlight Series, which brings professional touring shows to Sanford. Williams coordinates the visiting shows with the Association of Performing Arts Professionals, which has 1,600 organizations and individual members. They provide productions that travel across the country.

Recent shows at the cen-

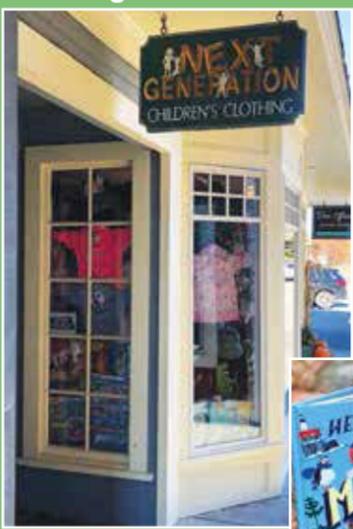
ter were *Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story*, *Tapestry – The Carole King Songbook*, *Holiday Pops – Strafford Wind Symphony*, *A Victorian Nutcracker – Portland Ballet* and *Sing We Noel – Classical Uprising*. Coming up is *Classic Rock Orchestra* on Friday, December 31. Additional shows are scheduled through 2022.

Williams added, "The performing arts center is transforming York County's cultural landscape. I like to watch guests walk into our theater for the first time. They're easy to spot, with wide eyes and their mouth open. They can't believe this venue is in Sanford. People have called the SPAC the 'crown jewel of Sanford.' I think it's also the crown jewel of York County."

SPAC has proven it has lived up to its mission "to provide educational and cultural enrichment opportunities to foster the development, understanding and enjoyment of the performing arts in our community." The operation of the SPAC is overseen by a volunteer advisory board that reports to the Sanford School Committee. Feeling the pride of SPAC's accomplishments, Williams said, "When a crowd is on their feet at the end of a show, giving performers an ovation – that's the best feeling. Those are the moments I live for!" SPAC is located at 100 Alumni Boulevard on the campus of Sanford High School and Regional Technical Center. FMI and tickets, visit www.sanfordpac.org or call 207-206-1712.



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It's a Wonderful Life celebrates 75 years – Ring in the holidays with this beloved classic –

by Jo O'Connor

Is there a more classic holiday flick than *It's a Wonderful Life*? It's an ode to a small-town American life featuring George Bailey, the village good guy who never rises in the world because he's too busy giving a boost to everyone else he knows.

Admittedly, I am one of those geeks that know some of these classic lines from 1946 movie:

"Teacher says, Every time a bell rings, an angel gets his wings."

"Merry Christmas, you wonderful old Building and Loan!"

"What is it you want, Mary? What do you want? You want the moon? Just say the word and I'll throw a lasso around it and pull it down."

"To my big brother George, the richest man in town!"

It's a Wonderful Life is a holiday institution saturated with yuletide sentiment, but it was not intended as a Christmas release. By now, everyone thinks they know everything about the movie – well did you know...?

Cary Grant was set to star in the movie.

When RKO purchased the rights, they did so with the plan of having Hollywood hunk Cary Grant playing the lead. As happens, the project went through some ups and downs and numerous rewrites in the development process. In 1945, RKO sold the movie rights to director Frank Capra, who quickly recruited Jimmy Stewart to play George Bailey.

Capra didn't do a great job pitching the movie to Jimmy Stewart.

According to MentalFloss.com, "After laying out the plot line of the film for Jimmy Stewart in a meeting, Capra realized

that, 'This really doesn't sound so good, does it?' Stewart recalled in an interview. . . 'Frank, if you want me to be in a picture about a guy that wants to kill himself and an angel comes down named Clarence, who can't swim and I save him, when do we start?'"

Actress Beulah Bondi was a pro at playing Stewart's mom in the movies.

Bondi, who plays Mrs. Bailey, didn't need a lot of rehearsal to play Stewart's mom. She had done it three times previously in *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*, *Of Human Hearts* and *Vivacious Lady*.

Capra, Stewart and Donna Reed have all call the film their favorite movie.

"I thought it was the greatest film I ever made," wrote Capra in his autobiography. "Better yet, I thought it was the greatest film anybody ever made."

The movie bombed at the box office.

Though it has become a quintessential American favorite, the film was not an immediate hit with audiences. According to tropiccinema.com, this was the first and last time Frank Capra produced, financed, directed and co-wrote one of his films. Losing \$525,000 on the film, it left him scrambling to finance his production company's next picture, *State of the Union*.

A copyright lapse boosted its popularity.

Since the movie tanked at the box office, the movie found a whole new life on television. This was especially so when its copyright lapsed in 1974, making it available royalty-free to anyone who wanted to show it for the next 20 years. This explains why it was on all the time during the holidays. The free-for-

all showings came to an end in 1994.

The rock that broke the Granville House was all real.

According to Cinemablend.com, during the scene where Mary and George walk past the abandoned Granville House and start throwing stones, there was a marksman hired by Capra to knock a window out on cue in case the actress wasn't able to reach the glass. That wasn't necessary as Reed was able to knock the window out on her first try. She played baseball in high school, which likely helped her throwing arm.

The Bedford Fall set was amazing.

It's a Wonderful Life had a big budget for the time (\$3.7 million), so it's no wonder that the crew put a lot of time and effort into constructing the idealist town of Bedford Falls. Stretching out over four acres in Encino, CA, the set took two months to build and included 75 buildings.

Practically like a snow-globe come to life, it was considered to be one of the longest sets ever made for a movie.

Seneca Falls, New York claims to be the "real Bedford Falls."

Though Bedford Falls is a fictitious place, the town of Seneca Falls, New York swears that it's the real-life inspiration for George Bailey's charming hometown. And each year, that town puts on a full lineup of holiday-themed events to put locals and visitors into the yuletide spirit. Seneca Falls even has a website, TheRealBedfordfalls.com. Still, there are others that swear that "Bedford Falls" was named after combination of Fall River and New Bedford in Massachusetts.

The movie's gym floor-turned-swimming pool was real.



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While the bulk of the movie was filmed on pre-built sets, the dance at the gym with the pool scene was filmed on location at Beverly Hills High School. The area is better known as the "Swim Gym."

Alfalfa is the teenager behind the movie's swimming pool prank.

Though he's uncredited

in the part, actor Carl Switzer played the prankster character who pushes the button that opens the gym floor to reveal the pool. If he looks familiar, that's because he is played Alfalfa in *The Little Rascals*.

Movie characters Bert and Ernie have no relation to Sesame Street.

Yes, the cop and cab driv-

er in *It's a Wonderful Life* are named Bert and Ernie. But the widely circulated myth is now debunked: It is by sheer coincidence only that they share their names with Sesame Street's striped-shirted buds.

Sources: countryliving.com, mentalfloss.com, seatletimes.com, cinemablend, tropiccinema.com



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A: There are lots of options and different ways to approach this process. I would recommend contacting Efficiency Maine and having a discussion with them. They can help you understand the venue that you are stepping into and can also recommend quality contractors and specialists to do the work for you. Yes, it is something that can truly improve your quality of life as you continue to live in your home and add value and appeal to the house when you are ready to sell it.

Q: We are going to be buying a new home during the next year. I have been reading lots about what to do as we start looking. A question that I have is how important is my credit score and what does it need to be? In my research it seems like it can make a tremendous difference in my ability to get a mortgage. Just need some insight. Anthony

A: Yes, you are correct, Your credit score has an important impact on your ability to get your loan. Over the years I have heard that a score can be no lower than 650 to get a favorable mortgage. That said, you are best served by meeting with a knowledgeable and experienced lender and having them lay out what you need as you begin the process. If your score is currently lower than needed you can inquire as to what the issues are and how you can improve your score. Having this information before you begin your search is the smarter way to proceed.

Q: Our kids are looking to buy a home. Over the years we have purchased many houses and have a fair amount of experience as buyers. They are searching in a very competitive market where there are lots of buyers and not much inventory. One thing that they are doing that I am concerned about is they are making offers on places and not including a home inspection in their contract. This seems costly and dangerous to me as this decision has them stepping into an investment that could have lots of problems and cost them a great deal more than they are offering to buy it. Am I being over-protective? Thank you, Steve

A: I totally agree with you. Unfortunately, due to market conditions and how competitive the market can be, many buyers feel forced to make this same decision to improve the appeal of their offer. I understand the pressure during this time but there are other ways that offers can be made more appealing as to sales price and conditions in the offer based on the needs of the seller. It is a challenging marketplace for buyers but I feel it is important to be better safe than sorry. Everyone looks at this issue their own way.

Randal Simon has been a real estate broker for over 30 years. His column was in the Portland Press Herald for many years; he is now pleased to be participating locally in Tourist & Town. Along with his own television show he has been a contributor to The Wall Street Journal, Unique Homes and The New York Times. Please send your questions to rsimon@legacysir.com

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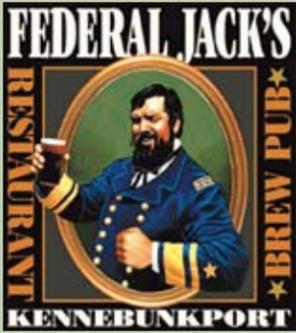
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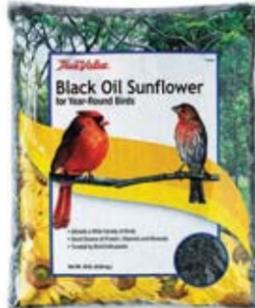
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