

# The Lakeville Journal

Christmas Services, Page A3

lakevillejournal.com

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Covering The News In Connecticut's Northwest Corner And Its Environs Since 1897

## Norfolk backs post office during season of giving

By Jennifer Almquist

NORFOLK — A grassroots campaign has launched in Norfolk to highlight the importance of the town's post office and to recognize the three women who keep it running year-round.

The U.S. Postal Service evaluates post offices in part by the volume of business they generate, making local use of services — such as purchasing stamps, mailing letters and shipping packages — critical to keeping branches staffed, funded and open.

Norfolk Postmaster Michelle C. Veronesi recently underscored that message in a letter to residents.

“With the holiday season right around the corner, it's the perfect time to remind our neighbors that the Norfolk Post Office is here to support your plans — whether that means renewing a passport, managing mail while you're away, or staying on top of incoming or outgoing packages.”

Postal Clerk Jenna Brown, a Norfolk native who is raising her family in town, said the post office's strength lies in its people.

“I love working in the Norfolk Post Office because of the people I



PHOTO BY JENNIFER ALMQUIST

Postal Clerk Kathy Bascetta, left, and her daughter, Postal Clerk Jenna Brown, work at Norfolk Post Office.

serve, as well as the people I work with. We work so well together and I'm grateful for that. I love the people who we serve. Most are loyal customers, and we appreciate them so much.”

Adding to the small-town char-

acter of the branch, Brown works alongside her mother, Kathy Bascetta.

“It's a great place to work and

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PHOTO BY RUTH EPSTEIN

Authors Dean Spears and Michael Geruso, guest speakers at Friday's Salisbury Forum, discuss “Population, Progress and the Case for People.”

## Forum examines 21st century baby bust

By Ruth Epstein

FALLS VILLAGE — Guest speakers Michael Geruso and Dean Spears opened their talk at the Salisbury Forum on Friday, Dec. 12, by asking audience members whether they thought the planet is overpopulated. Responses were roughly evenly split.

The authors of “After the Spike: Population, Progress and the Case for People” argue that depopulation is not the solution to concerns

about overpopulation, and that population stabilization should instead be the goal.

Geruso began by noting that for most of human history, the global population was relatively small. It was not until the 1800s that the population reached 1 billion, and by 1925 it had doubled to 2 billion. Today, the world's population stands at about 8.2 billion. Even so, he said, birth rates are declining.

“We have heard that overpopulation is a challenge to our future,” said Geruso. “But all projections show that within a few decades the population will peak and then start to decline.”

The birth rate in most devel-

See FORUM, Page A12

## Regional waste authority receives grant funding, urges towns to join

By Riley Klein

TORRINGTON — The Northwest Resource Recovery Authority, a public entity formed this year to preserve municipal control over trash and recycling services in northwest Connecticut, has been awarded \$350,000 in grant funds to develop and expand its operations.

The funding comes from the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection via its Sustainable Materials Management grant program. It is intended to help the NRRA establish operations at the Torrington Transfer Station as well as support regional education, transportation, hauler registration and partnerships with other authorities.

Founded by the City of Torrington in May 2025, the NRRA was established to oversee regional municipal solid waste management.

Its creation followed a \$3.25 million offer by USA Waste & Recycling to purchase the Torrington Transfer Station — a sale that would have privatized trash services in the region.

The proposed sale was initially approved by the MIRA Dissolution Authority, the entity responsible for dissolving the state's former Materials Innovation and Recycling Authority, which owned the Transfer Station at the time.

Before the transaction could close, the state intervened and directed that the facility's operating permit be assigned to the NRRA to preserve a publicly controlled alternative.

MIRA has since dissolved, and the Transfer Station is currently operated by the state Department of Administrative Services.

Many towns in northwest Connecticut have expressed interest in joining the NRRA. As of December, Torrington and Goshen were the only two municipalities in the

See NRRA, Page A12



PHOTO BY L. TOMAINO

Jenny Law and Anna Pattison at the first Falls Village Cookie Exchange, held at the David M. Hunt Library Dec. 11.

## Falls Village showcases inaugural Cookie Exchange

By Robin Roraback

FALLS VILLAGE — The First Annual Falls Village Cookie Exchange got underway at Hunt Library on Thursday, Dec. 11.

The event was moved to the library last-minute due to a heating issue at The Center on Main, which co-hosted the event.

Librarians Meg Sher and Anna Pattison soon cleared a table, set up chairs and set out tea, cocoa and popcorn. Holiday music played in the background.

The rules were simple: Bake two dozen cookies of the same kind and be creative. No store-bought cook-

See COOKIES, Page A12

## Selectmen establish cooperative tone in first meeting of new term

By Christian Murray

NORTH CANAAN — About 100 residents attended North Canaan's Board of Selectmen meeting Monday night — with more than 40 joining remotely and roughly 60 filling the meeting room, according to Zoom moderator Christian Allyn — marking Jesse Bunce's first such meeting since being elected first selectman.

See SELECTMEN, Page A12



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Our Towns

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Online This Week

Motoriot returns before Kent P&Z

Motoriot, the antique car business in Kent, presented a revised plan to Planning and Zoning Dec. 11, but it was incomplete. More at lakevillejournal.com

POLICE BLOTTER: TROOP B

The following information was provided by the Connecticut State Police at Troop B. All suspects are considered innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Deer dodging collision

On Dec. 7, Virginia Gray-Clarke, 60, of Cornwall Bridge was driving east on Route 4 in Sharon in a Subaru Outback when she veered to the side to avoid a deer, striking a rock on the shoulder. The accident disabled the vehicle, though Gray-Clarke suffered no apparent injury. She was ultimately issued a written warning for failure to maintain lane.

Incident at Sharon Market leads to arrest

On the afternoon of Dec. 8, troopers responded to reports of a suspicious incident

at Sharon Market. After investigating, troopers arrested Christian Nirschel, 45, who holds a Salisbury P.O. Box, for three charges: first degree breach of peace, second degree harassment and soliciting sexual acts. He is scheduled to appear at Torrington Superior Court on Dec. 22.

Naugatuck neighbors rear-end accident

On the morning of Dec. 10, Bradley Hayslett, 25, of Naugatuck, Connecticut was driving west on Barnes Road in Falls Village in a Chevrolet Express G2500 when he stopped at a stop sign. Cole Trisko, 24, also of Naugatuck, was following closely behind in a Ford Mustang and rear ended Hayslett's vehicle. No injuries were reported, and both vehicles were able to be driven from the scene. Trisko was issued an infraction for following too closely resulting in an accident.

The Lakeville Journal will publish the outcome of police charges. Send mail to P.O. Box 1688, Lakeville, CT 06039, Attn: Police Blotter, or email editor@lakevillejournal.com



PHOTO BY CHRISTINE BATES

Built in 1870 on 0.3 acres, 10 Dunbar Road was purchased for \$575,000 in 2021 and sold again for \$695,000 in November 2025.

Sharon real estate sales in November

By Christine Bates

SHARON — Median homes prices continued to rise in Sharon to a yearly high of \$680,000, still lower than the historic August 2024 12-month median of \$880,000 for this town.

In Mid-December there were 18 single family homes listed for sale, including two condos. Only one condo and one house were asking below the 12-month median of \$680,000 and 13 were above the million dollar mark.

Transactions

91 Lambert Road — 3 lots on 94 acres sold by Lambert Road LLC to MDB Sharon LLC for \$2,850,000.

156 Millerton Road — 3 bedroom/2.5 bath contemporary home sold by Estate of Keith R. Johnson to Andrew Quale III and Jessica Moore for \$710,000.

152 East Street — 3 bedroom/ 3 bath/3 half bath brick home on 12.48 acres sold by Maureen L. Tesoro to Stone Hill LLC for \$2,230,000.

27 Morey Road — 1.5 acre lot sold by MOS Holdings LLC to 27 Morey LLC for \$320,000.

37 East Street — 3 bedroom/2 bath home sold by Estate of Linda Eurard to Janet Liles and Andre Georges for \$370,000.

1 Holland Drive — 1 bedroom/1 bath cottage built in 1935 on 0.2 acres sold by Todd W. Saxe to Julia Anderson for \$275,000.

10 Dunbar Road — 3 bedroom/2.5 bath home sold by Marguerite B. Merli to Terry Hubbs for \$695,000.

\* Town of Sharon real estate transfers recorded as transferred between Nov. 1 and Nov. 30, 2025, provided by the Sharon Town Clerk. Property details from Sharon tax cards. Transfers without consideration are not included. Current market listings from Smart MLS and market data from Infosparks. Compiled by Christine Bates, Real Estate Salesperson with William Pitt Sotheby's International Realty, Licensed in Connecticut and New York.

Jean Jacquier returns to Town Hall to finish term as town clerk

By Christian Murray

NORTH CANAAN — After months away from Town Hall amid what she described as a “toxic” work environment, North Canaan Town Clerk Jean Jacquier has returned to the clerk’s office to complete the remainder of her term, which by law runs through Jan. 5 following her victory in the 2023 election.

Asked whether she felt comfortable being back, she was clear.

“I certainly am,” Jacquier said. “I have nothing to hide, nothing to be ashamed of.”

She has worked in the town clerk’s office for more than three decades, beginning as assistant town clerk in 1993 before becoming town clerk in 2017.

“I love that job,” Jacquier said. “I know everybody.”

Her return follows an extended period of conflict at Town Hall that began in early 2024, when then-First Selectman Brian Ohler filed a complaint with the state attorney general alleging misconduct. The investigation found evidence of misconduct but did not result in disciplinary action. It did recommend procedural changes.

In February 2025, Jacquier walked out of her office, citing ongoing conflicts with Ohler and an employee in the town’s Building Office. Her departure came within a week after a judge ruled she was not eligible for reimbursement of legal fees accrued in the investigation.

Jacquier said she attempted to return over the summer

and fall. She arrived to find the locks had been changed and she was ordered out of Town Hall by state troopers.

Jacquier said her return was made possible after newly elected First Selectman Jesse Bunce and the Board of Finance reinstated her pay and asked whether she would like to finish her term. “They reached out to me,” Jacquier said. “They asked me if I would like to finish my term. And I said, absolutely.”

Jacquier is now working alongside Krysti Segalla, who recently began serving as assistant town clerk and will assume the role of town clerk on Jan. 6, following her election victory in November.

Jacquier said the two share a long-standing personal connection and work well together. “I’ve known her since she was a baby,” Jacquier said. “We get along wonderfully. It’s been great.”

During her remaining weeks in office, Jacquier said her focus is on completing the daily work of the clerk’s office and assisting with the transition.

“Whatever comes through that office that needs to be done, between Krysti and I, we do it,” she said. “Hopefully, it’s helping her learn a little bit more about the job. It takes years to learn.”

Jacquier said she is not seeking another town position after her term ends. Asked what she hopes to accomplish in her final weeks in office, Jacquier said her goal is simple. “Nothing, in particular,” she said. “Just finishing my term.”

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Our Towns

Cornwall honors veterans with wreath ceremony

By Ruth Epstein

CORNWALL — In a season devoted to celebrating the living, a hardy group gathered Saturday, Dec. 13, to honor those who served their country and have since passed.

Dozens made their way through the snow-covered Cornwall Cemetery, undeterred by light snowfall, to take part in the town's first Wreaths Across America ceremony, organized by local resident Bill Dinneen. People of all ages attended, many noting that they had family members who served.

Wreaths Across America has a long tradition of placing holiday wreaths on veterans' headstones in cemeteries nationwide. In his remarks, Dinneen said ceremonies are held in all 50 states, U.S. territories and 26 American cemeteries overseas. This year, he said, 7,600 locations are participating.

The ceremony began with a moment of silence for fallen veterans, followed by remarks from Dinneen.

"The freedoms we enjoy today have not come without a price. Lying here before us and in cemeteries throughout this nation are men and women who gave their lives so that we can live in freedom



PHOTO BY RUTH EPSTEIN

Jean Bouteiller raises one of the wreaths as Bill Dinneen looks on during Saturday's Wreaths Across America ceremony in Cornwall. Dinneen organized the event.

and without fear...Today, we show a unified front of gratitude and respect across the United States of America as we remember the fallen, honor those who serve and their families, and teach the next generation the value of freedom."

Dinneen recognized the many veterans in attendance who had answered the call to serve their country, thanking them and saying it was an honor to know them.

Nine ceremonial wreaths were on the ground in front

of Dinneen and he asked individuals to come up and place them each on a stand. They represented the U.S. Army, Marines, Navy, Air Force, Space Force, Coast Guard, merchant marine, first responders and all POWs and MIAs.

Dinneen encouraged those in attendance to go and place a wreath on a veteran's grave, say the name aloud and take a moment to thank them for their service. "It's a small act that goes a long way toward keeping the memory

of our veterans alive," he said.

He had raised enough funds to sponsor 175 wreaths. An additional 85 wreaths were added to the Cornwall Cemetery order and those were placed on Sunday at the North Cornwall Cemetery.

"I have sponsorships coming in already for next year," said Dinneen. "Fantastic! I am so humbled."

The Cornwall Cemetery is home to graves of veterans going as far back as the Revolutionary War.

'Replica firearm' found in Sharon Center School

By Riley Klein

SHARON — A Sharon Center School staff member discovered a "facsimile firearm" behind a file cabinet around 2 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 10, prompting an immediate response from State Police and a same-day notification to parents, according to officials and an email sent to families.

Upon the item's discovery, Melony Brady-Shanley, the Region One superintendent, wrote, "The State Police were immediately notified and responded to the building."

A canine team was brought in to sweep the building and determined that no similar items were present, "and the building has been fully cleared. The State Police consider this

an isolated incident and not criminal in nature," Brady-Shanley stated in the email.

State Police explained, "Troopers from Troop B - North Canaan were dispatched to the Sharon Center School for reports of a firearm located in a closet. The firearm was determined to be a non-firing, replica firearm... There was no threat to the school or the public."

Brady-Shanley emphasized in the email that "the safety and well-being of our students and staff remain our highest priority at all times. We will continue to follow and strengthen our safety protocols to ensure that our schools remain secure, supportive environments for learning."

Ski jump camp for kids returns

The Salisbury Winter Sports Association (SWSA) will host its annual Junior Jump Camp, a two-day introduction to ski jumping, on Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 27 and 28, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Satre Hill in Salisbury.

The camp is open to children ages 7 and up and fo-

cuses on teaching the basics of ski jumping, with an emphasis on safety, balance and control, using SWSA's smallest hill. No prior experience is required.

The cost is \$50 per child and includes instruction and lunch on both days.

skireg.com/swsa-camp

Christmas Services

**CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE**  
7:30 PM DECEMBER 24TH, 2025  
Music by Hudson Pro Musica and guests

**SMITHFIELD CHURCH**  
656 Smithfield Valley Rd., Rte. 83  
Amenia, NY 12501  
thesmithfieldchurch.org

Looking for a spiritual home this Christmas?

Come join us at St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Amenia Union, a community of Radical Hospitality!



Blue Christmas  
December 18 • 5:00 pm

Candlelight  
Christmas Eve Service  
of Lessons & Carols  
December 24 • 5:00 pm

**St. Thomas Episcopal Church**  
40 Leedsville Road, Amenia Union

Home of the Food of Life/Comida de Vida Food Pantry  
845-373-9161 • stthomasamenia.com

**Please Join Us for Christmas**  
with **Rev. Dr. Anna Camphouse**  
serving Lakeville, Sharon, Millerton  
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**Christmas Eve Service - 5 p.m.**  
Service of Lessons, Carols and Candle Lighting  
"A perfect time for families"

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319 Main Street, Lakeville

All are welcome! | "Open Hearts - Open Minds - Open Doors"



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**Trinity Episcopal Church**

**Christmas Eve**  
Wednesday, December 24

**4:30 PM** Choral Prelude with festive Baroque music, and traditional Carols

**5:00 PM** Christmas Eve Eucharist with familiar Carols

**Christmas Day**  
Thursday, December 25

No Service

**Lessons and Carols**  
Sunday, December 28

**10:30 AM** Carols and Traditional texts

**Rev. Marilyn Anderson**  
Preacher & Celebrant

**484 Lime Rock Rd.**  
Lakeville, CT  
Trinitylimerock.org 860-435-2627

**Falls Village Congregational Church**



Come Join Us!!!  
Christmas Eve at  
Falls Village Congregational Church  
16 Beebe Hill Road  
December 24, 7:30 PM

**CHAPEL OF ALL SAINTS**

*Christmas Eve Service*  
with Carols

Rev. Mary Gates officiating

**5:00 pm**

**Trinity Retreat Center**  
Lower River Road, West Cornwall, CT  
www.allsaintscornwall.org

**The Congregational Church of Salisbury**  
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**CHRISTMAS EVE**

Wednesday, December 24th

**5:30pm:**

**Hand Bell Prelude**

**6:00pm:**

**Service of Lessons & Carols**

*Whoever you are, wherever  
you are on life's journey, you  
are welcome here!*



30 Main Street, Salisbury  
salisburyucc.org  
welcome@salisburyucc.org



OBITUARIES

William Paul Corcoran

LAKEVILLE — Paul passed away on Dec. 7, 2025, surrounded by his loving family. Paul was born on Aug. 24, 1940, to the late Gray and Gladys Vandyke. Paul spent most of his life in Lakeville. At an early age, he worked at Community Service in Lakeville along with his father. He then became the lumber yard manager. After leaving the Community Service, he worked



as a custodian at Salisbury Central School. He was predeceased by his four brothers, Tom, Jim, Jerry, and Peter. Survivors are the love of his life, his wife Norma of 34 years, his two stepsons, Glen and Michael Surdam, his grandchildren, Ben, Franchesca, Glynn, Sierra, and Sidney. Paul's wishes were to be cremated and have no service.

Clayton Squire Smith

LAKEVILLE — Lifelong Lakeville resident, Clayton Squire Smith, 90, passed away peacefully on Nov. 24, 2025, at Noble Horizons in Salisbury, enveloped in the love of his attentive, tight-knit family. Born on Dec. 16, 1936, in Sharon Hospital, Clayton was the son of Harold M. and Evelyn K. (Meiklejohn) Smith, both educators, of Lakeville,



life at Noble Horizons. His favorite outings included excursions to restaurants, ice cream parlors, and local historical sites. Back on campus, Clayton looked forward to attending musical and cultural events, participating in still-life painting classes, winning at Bingo, and sharing laughs and daily meals with his dear friends, Martha Eustis, Peter Reyelt, Joe Soper, and Sally Pohlemus.

Clayton is predeceased by his wife Cynthia "Cindy" of 53 years with whom he built a forever home on an idyllic, family-oriented street. He is survived by his son Darren Smith of Salisbury, his incredibly devoted sister Marion Romeo and her husband Fred of Lakeville, niece Susan Romeo of West Cornwall, niece Deanne (Romeo) and husband Jim Lyle of Sharon, niece Lori Romeo and husband Norman Leighty of Goshen, nephew David Romeo and his wife Suzanne of Quincy, Massachusetts, as well as two cousins, four grand nephews, and two grand nieces.

Clayton was admired for his kindness, gentle strength, and unwavering loyalty to those he loved. He was a steady presence to friends, neighbors, and all who knew him. His warm smile and thoughtful conversations will be remembered with great affection.

Our heartfelt appreciation goes to the staff and administration at Noble Horizons for their compassionate and tender care, especially during his final days.

In lieu of flowers, Clayton's family invites you to honor his memory by stepping out of your comfort zone to help someone in need.

A celebration of Clayton's life will be held in the new year at the Noble Horizon chapel. Ryan Funeral Home in Lakeville is in care of the arrangements. To offer an online condolence, please visit ryanfhct.com

For more obituaries, see page A11

Jai Nathan Thomas Marshall

SHARON — Jai Nathan Thomas Marshall, 31, originally from Sharon, Connecticut, passed away unexpectedly on Dec. 4, 2025. Born in Torrington, on April 4, 1994, he leaves behind his adoptive parents, Tom and Linda Marshall, a daughter, Mylieonah Jai Lynae Marshall, four sisters, Chauntine Donovan, Quinlin Marshall, Salirae "Ping" Marshall and Celie Besmer; two nieces, Zendaya Marshall and Inara Donovan and many cousins. Jai also leaves behind his mom, Kathleen V. Ambery, his uncle, Noel F. Ambery II and was predeceased by his



grandparents, Noel "Frank" Ambery Sr. and Marie (nee) Barrow of Falls Village. As a boy, Jai traveled across the world with his family and touched many lives. He had a wonderful sense of humor and a kind and gentle spirit. He gave us many years of joy until mental illness struck him in his prime. Jai loved his family and will be forever in our hearts. Rest in peace, our beautiful soul. To honor his memory, please say a prayer for all those who suffer endlessly and are misunderstood in our society. A private gathering will be held to celebrate Jai.

Bernie Galek

WASSAIC — It is with profound sadness that we announce the unexpected passing of Leola 'Bernice' (Decker) Galek, on Nov. 14, 2025, aged 92, at home while on hospice, in Wassaic, where she was surrounded by the love of family and friends. Born on April 7, 1933 in the Town of Huron, New York, to Leola F. Decker and Luther Decker, Bernie lived a life marked by hard-work, compassion, and quiet strength.



Philip and wife, Laura Galek, grandson Phil Galek, great grandchildren, Gianna and Gavin Galek of Wolcott, New York; her daughter, Colleen and husband, Leon Meunier; grandsons, Chad and wife, Bambi Meunier and Justin Meunier, and granddaughter, Keirstin Meunier of Wassaic. Family and friends were the center of Bernie's life. She delighted in watching her grandchildren grow and was known for taking them out of school to go to Four Brothers or Round to-it for lunch. Her favorite shows were Gunsmoke and Roy Rogers. Favorite artists included Charley Pride, Freddy Fender and Eddy Albert.

Bernie will be remembered for her devotion to her lifelong faith as one of Jehovah's Witnesses, where she viewed the resurrection hope in John 5:28, 29, as a source of comfort and light. She longed for the day when she will be reunited with the love of her life, Stanley.

"Happy Trails to you, Mom and Grandma, until we meet again." - Roy Rogers and the Sons of the Pioneers. Everyone who knew her is welcome to join us in a celebration of her life on Saturday, Dec. 27, 2025 at the Kingdom Hall on the corner of 101 East Duncan Hill Road and Route 22, Dover Plains, NY at 2:00 p.m. Light refreshments will be served after.

ZOOM INVITE: For Saturday, December 27, 2025 Invite: 755 086 9766 Passcode: 51764 Messages of condolence, fond memories or any photos would be greatly appreciated. All are welcome to sign Bernie's online obituary book/ memorial wall at https://hufcutfuneralhome.com/book-of-memories/5663406/Galek-Bernie/index.php May also use this Email to send messages: Leb-Galek2025@gmail.com.

John Carroll

AMENIA — John Carroll, 94, a lifelong resident of Amenia, passed away on Monday, Dec. 8, 2025, at Noble Horizons in Salisbury. Mr. Carroll was the business account manager at Audia Motor Sales in Millbrook, for 41 years, retiring in 2016.



Born on Oct. 1, 1931, in Sharon, he was the son of the late John J. and Florence (Brunese) Carroll. He was a graduate of Amenia High School class of 1950. Mr. Carroll later graduated from the GM Service Technical College in New York, New York. Mr. Carroll was a former Vice President and President of the Parish Council at Immaculate Conception Church in Amenia and St. Bernard's Church in Sharon and a former member of the finance council at St. Charles Borromeo Church in Dover Plains. He was a lifelong parishioner of Immaculate Conception Church in Amenia.

Mr. Carroll is survived by a brother, Philip T. Carroll of Amenia, and several nieces and nephews. Besides his parents, he was predeceased by five brothers, Joseph, Richard J., Thomas, Alan and William Carroll and two sisters, Marion Ursula Robertson and Jean Leggett.

Calling hours were held from 4 to 6 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 11, 2025 at the Hufcut Funeral Home, 3159 Route 22, Dover Plains, NY. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at 9:30 a.m. on Friday, Dec. 12, 2025 at Immaculate Conception Church, 4 Lavelle Road, Amenia, with Rev. Andrew O'Connor officiating. Burial followed at St. Patrick's Cemetery in Millerton, NY. Contributions in memory of Mr. Carroll should be made to the Immaculate Conception Church, 4 Lavelle Road, Amenia, NY 12501. For directions or to send a condolence, visit www.hufcutfuneralhome.com

Send obituaries  
to [obituaries@lakevillejournal.com](mailto:obituaries@lakevillejournal.com)



Worship Services

Week of December 21, 2025


<div><b>Christ Church Episcopal in Sharon</b> 9 South Main, Sharon CT Sunday Holy Eucharist at 9:00 A.M. Transitioning through prayer All welcome to join us 860-364-5260 <a href="http://www.christchurchsharon.org">www.christchurchsharon.org</a></div>	<div><b>The Congregational Church of Salisbury, U.C.C.</b> 30 Main Street, Salisbury, CT Whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here! Worship, Sundays at 10 am, in-person and streaming <a href="http://www.salisburyucc.org">www.salisburyucc.org</a> Sharing God's shalom: Wholeness, harmony, justice, and joy! (860) 435-2442</div>
<div><b>Trinity Episcopal Church</b> 484 Lime Rock Rd. Lakeville Offering companionship along the Way Sundays at 8 and 10:30 a.m. Livestream at 10:30 found at <a href="http://www.trinitylimerock.org">www.trinitylimerock.org</a> <a href="mailto:trinity@trinitylimerock.org">trinity@trinitylimerock.org</a> (860) 435-2627</div>	<div><b>St. John's Episcopal Church</b> 12 Main Street, Salisbury, CT SUNDAY SERVICE 10:00 a.m. Eucharist with music (Rite II) Rev. Dr. Johan Johnson, Priest-in-Charge In-Person and on YouTube <a href="http://www.stjohnssalisbury.org">www.stjohnssalisbury.org</a></div>
<div><b>North Canaan Congregational Church, UCC</b> Joyfully opening our hearts and doors to all God's people 172 Lower Rd./Rt. 44, East Canaan CT Worship services Sundays at 10 am <a href="http://www.Facebook.com/northcanaancongregational">www.Facebook.com/northcanaancongregational</a> 860-824-7232 FISHES &amp; LOAVES FOOD PANTRY, A MISSION OF OUR CHURCH is at Pilgrim House, 30 Granite Ave., Canaan Tuesday 4-6 pm &amp; Thursday 12-2 pm <a href="http://www.fishesandloavesnorthcanaan.org">www.fishesandloavesnorthcanaan.org</a></div>	<div><b>Unitarian Fellowship of New CT</b> Cobble Living Room, Noble Horizons Sunday, January 11 at 10:30 a.m. For information, contact Jo Loi at <a href="mailto:jokialoi@gmail.com">jokialoi@gmail.com</a> All Are Welcome</div>
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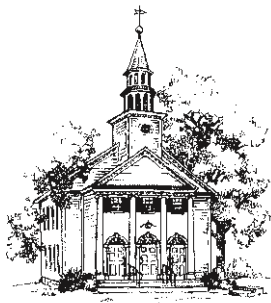
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DECEMBER 2025  
Volume 3 • No. 1



PHOTO BY ANNA GILLETTE

The Community Closet at HVRHS is open for students to take clothes for any reason during the school day.

# In-school ‘community closet’ offers clothes for anyone free of charge

By Anna Gillette

What started with one unexpected donation of clothes has grown into a quietly impactful resource for all students at HVRHS: the Community Closet. Now located in a spacious area above the cafeteria, the closet offers free clothing to any student for any reason.

The idea began a few years ago when a community member reached out to the former superintendent wondering if anyone at the school could benefit from used clothing that would otherwise go to waste. The superintendent then got in contact with Rachel Novak, the school social worker. “Once I had all those bags of clothes in my room, I was like, ‘I should put this in a space,’” Novak said. Her simple idea eventually became a full-sized closet accessible to all students.

From the beginning, Novak envisioned the closet as an inclusive space. “It’s open to anybody, it’s not just based on economic needs,” she said. Sustainability also plays a role. “Thinking about the environment, some students like to thrift and just get clothes that way,” Novak said.

After the initial donation, contributions continued to grow. “I reached out to our staff members

and faculty,” Novak said. The most consistent donations come from the faculty at HVRHS and a few community members who learned about the closet. Finding teenage-appropriate clothes has been a challenge. “I get a lot of donations that are nice, but I don’t think teenagers would want to wear them,” Novak said.

Another ongoing obstacle has been awareness. Many students don’t know the closet exists at all. “That’s been the hard part,” Novak said. “Getting it out to the wider community of the school.” Novak is looking for students and staff to spread the word. “It helps because our school nurse knows and other faculty members,” she said. “When they know a student needs something, they just bring them up.”

Looking ahead, she hopes to promote the space more actively. “When we come back from this break, I do plan to ... get fliers and all that up and going,” Novak said. There may even be an upcoming expansion — she has discussed the possibility of turning part of the area into a food pantry. “That would be more of a need-based system for students,” she said. “But right now, promoting it is where I’m at.”

The Community Closet is well-stocked currently. “Just because

of the amount of clothes I have, I’m not accepting any more donations until I clear some stuff out,” Novak said. She is still willing to make room for more fashionable, teen-friendly items donated by students. “That way I’ll have more teenager approved clothes.”

Above all, she wants students to know that no one is limited to using the space. “Sometimes there’s a stigma around it ... like, ‘I don’t need help. I don’t want to take away from anybody else that may need it,’” Novak said. Due to the amount of clothes, students should feel welcome to use the closet for any reason. Some students even grab items last minute for sports and activities. “It’s important for kids to know it’s for everyone.”

Whether a student wants to thrift clothes sustainably, forgot to pack clothes for an after-school practice, or is in need of a new outfit, the Community Closet is a resource for all.

# Indoor track team fizzles from low participation

By Peter Austin

As the bright leaves fall off the trees and Housatonic’s exciting fall sports seasons come to a close, winter sports are ramping up with some big changes ahead for HVRHS’s indoor track, swim, and boys basketball teams.

The first and most notable change for many HVRHS students interested in running is the absence of the recently established indoor track and field team. While indoor track had been offered somewhat inconsistently by the school in past years, Housatonic alumni Kyle McCarron and Patrick Money decided to try and start it up again in their senior year in the winter of 2024.

McCarron and Money were both Berkshire League champions across many events, and McCarron would go on to run D1 for Quinnipiac University, so it was only natural that the pair would want to continue to run during the winter season.

With the help of athletic director Anne Macneil, Housatonic’s winter track and field team was brought back last year, and a team led mostly by seniors competed at meets across the Berkshire League.

But only four people signed up before the Dec. 1 deadline this year,

# A peek behind the curtain: 28 students join cast of ‘Guys and Dolls’

By Mia DiRocco

Housatonic’s Musical Theatre program is bringing “Guys and Dolls” to life this year, and the process is well underway. Auditions took place at the end of November, marking the beginning of the journey from casting to performing the musical this spring.

But with 28 students auditioning, the casting environment was competitive.

“It’s trying to fit different types of people that we have into the spot where the students are going to learn the most,” said music director Thomas Krupa. “I think that’s the fundamental thing. When you think about professional theater, it’s always who is absolutely the best possible puzzle piece.”

The process encouraged actors to lean into not only their dramatic skills, but comedic ones as well. Students had to showcase dance abilities, musical talents and chemistry with their costars.

Senior Richie Crane has participated in Housatonic musicals since his freshman year. He recalled the difficulty of auditioning. “I’ve been in over twenty five productions, and every time I audition I’m just as nervous,” Crane said. “In your initial audition, you are auditioning not only for the role you want, but the one that showcases the best of your skill sets and abilities. The nerves don’t go away, but they can help you succeed.”

Of the five leading roles being cast, eight students were offered callbacks. “Guys and Dolls” will be a predominantly senior leading cast, as well as an opportunity for those seniors to take one final bow on the Housatonic stage.

“It’s been wonderful to see

“  
**Theater is sometimes just a way to be diverted, to escape from the real world. This is a good escape.**  
*Mr. Krupa, director*

the seniors grow,” said director Christiane Olson. “They all have a lot of experience now, so it’s wonderful to see them go from a little bit more timid and unsure to much more confident performers.”

Experience is usually crucial to the success of the production, but it’s the overall number of participants that sets Housatonic apart. For a small school, Housatonic didn’t have trouble attracting the right number of students to bring the show to life.

“If you have a show with just leads, you don’t have a world. The world of ‘Guys and Dolls’ is the hustle and bustle of New York City,” Krupa said. “If we have one actor in the show, we’re not going to have that hustle and bustle. So we need every single one of the 28 kids that auditioned.”

This year’s production is filled with comedic and dramatic talent. For the next few months, the cast will be preparing to bring the vibrant musical to the stage in the spring. And just a few weeks into rehearsals, it’s clear this is a show you wouldn’t want to miss.

“It’s a really fun, timeless show. It’s very funny, and there’s great music,” Krupa said. “Theater is sometimes just a way to be diverted, to escape from the real world. This is a good escape.”

# For now, Housatonic indoor track faded when last year’s seniors graduated, but all it takes are enough students with a passion for running and the team could easily be revived.

meaning there weren’t enough people to run a team. Track and field and former winter track coach Alan Lovejoy explained what’s changed.

“Last year, we were real senior heavy,” Lovejoy said. “I just think we have smaller numbers ... I talked to a few kids and they just don’t like running in the cold.”

However, this isn’t the last Housatonic will hear about winter track. Senior Silas Tripp continues to represent HVRHS at indoor meets, while continuing to practice with the Lakeview indoor track team. For now, Housatonic indoor track faded when last year’s seniors graduated, but all it takes are enough students with a passion for running and the team could easily be revived.

An intriguing development for Housatonic’s swim team comes with the many underclassmen joining the team. In past years, the team has flown well under the radar, leading to many students being unaware that the school even hosted a swim team at all.

“[The swim team] was always

really small ... and almost always girls, like last year there were only two boys,” senior Anna Gillette said.

While the team has suffered from a lack of people in the past, the future of the team is looking brighter with the high number of underclassmen. Four freshmen and three sophomores are new to the swim team.

Freshman Phoebe Conklin is one such swimmer, having swam and competed for various club teams since she was three years old. “I’ve heard that it’s just ... not a very competitive program at the moment,” Conklin said. “But I think [the underclassmen] are gonna improve it ... I’m excited.”

Another notable change comes to one of Housatonic’s most popular sports, the boys basketball team, as former coach Kurt Johnson hands over the leads of a commanding team of seniors to Bobby Chatfield.

Johnson teaches Chemistry at

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HVRHS *today*  
www.lakevillejournal.com/hvrhs-today

Mia DiRocco, Cornwall  
Shanaya Duprey, North Canaan  
Anna Gillette, Lakeville  
Maddy Johnson, North Canaan  
Ibby Sadeh, Falls Village  
Peter Austin, Kent

Nathan Miller, Lakeville Journal Program Lead  
Caitlin Hanlon, Lakeville Journal Production  
**The HVRHS Journalism Program**  
Last spring, The Lakeville Journal launched a journalism initiative at Housatonic Valley Regional High School. Through this program, students work with Lakeville Journal editors throughout the school year to report on what’s important and interesting to them and their community.

For more information about the program, please contact Lakeville Journal Publisher, James Clark, at publisher@lakevillejournal.com.

The Lakeville Journal

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# Housy Shack as popular as ever despite price increases and sales limits

By Ibbby Sadeh & Anna Gillette

Now in its second year, the Housy Shack is a hit among students. The special education department-run store that sells warm cookies, drinks and other snacks to students and teachers draws people to a room in the back hallway every time it's open.

The smell of warm cookies welcomes visitors to the store with snacks, drinks and even Housy merchandise for sale. The cookies are definitely the favorite, sometimes lines go out the door to get one before they sell out.

The cookies are so popular that the store had to increase prices from 50 cents to a dollar and implement a four cookie per person maximum. The Shack sells about 40-100 cookies per day and has about 20-60 HVRHS customers visiting per day.

Julie Browning and Heather Strid, two of the HVRHS faculty members that help run the Shack, said their goal was to create real-world job experiences as well as real-world shopping experiences for students at HVRHS. "Learning the skills to work in the world can be taught in a classroom, but the



Left, the Housy Shack open sign, welcoming customers in for cookies. Right, sophomore Eliana Lang enjoys her Housy Shack cookie.



PHOTOS BY IBBY SADEH AND ANNA GILLETTE

lessons are more meaningful and valuable when they are applied in real work situations, which is what we create through the school store," Browning said.

The original purpose for the store seems to be working, as several students are learning important skills. Students said the store taught them skills like counting

money, checking inventory and cleanliness along with social skills and customer service that could help in the professional world after high school.

As the store quickly became a hit, organizers were faced with the challenge of finding funding. "When we started planning to start the school store two years

ago we needed money to buy equipment, supplies and food to start it up but were not sure how to get it," Browning said. "Mrs. Strid came up with the idea of applying for a grant from the 21st Century Fund to help us get started and they were so generous." That grant has been crucial to the success and growth of the school store.

Not only does the Housy Shack benefit the special education department, students said it fosters a sense of community throughout the school. "School store cookies are my favorite thing ever. They

brighten up my day," said Eliana Lang, a sophomore at HVRHS. Dayana, one of the student staffers at the Housy Shack, said her favorite part of working in the school store is when students come in to make purchases. She enjoys talking to them and ringing up their orders on the cash register. The Housy Shack brings people together and offers the opportunity for students to connect with each other.

As the school year continues, the members of the school store look forward to expanding their inventory by creating and selling a variety of Housy merchandise — t-shirts, sweatshirts, water bottles, and more. "I have had several students put in requests for certain hats, key chains, etc. ... so there will be more of that to come," Browning said. Last school year, profits were all invested back into the school store. "This year we are hoping to make more of a profit and will look to use the money that we make for field trips, outings as well as opportunities to donate and give back to the community," Browning said. They also would like to use the school store to fundraise for other causes. "Right now we are collecting donations for The Little Guild Animal Shelter, so if anyone has pet supplies they would like to donate please drop them off in exchange for a cookie," Browning said.

## Housy FFA's Holiday Store up and running once again

By Shanaya Duprey

At the back of HVRHS sits the ag-ed wing, where chocolate milk sells and holiday spirit flourishes every year thanks to the FFA's Holiday Store.

The greenhouse transforms into a storefront selling over a dozen products, some locally sourced. Notable among the selection are the blue spruce and fir trees from Canada, poinsettias, Cabot dairy products — including cheese, eggs and the popular chocolate milk — and homemade wreaths.

"The Holiday Store has been around since the 1940s," said David Moran, one of the ag-ed teachers and coordinators for the event. "It was created to align with common standards that students need, that they're able to practice in a way that is connected to the community."

Ag-ed students make up most of the staff at the store, and they must go through extensive training before participating in the event, said Housatonic Valley FFA President Riley Mahaffey. "Training starts roughly two weeks in advance for our students," Mahaffey said. The four

ag-ed educators — Ms. Boardman, Mrs. Lloyd, Mr. Moran and Mrs. Melino — lead the training. "They go through five stations of training. Knowing what to expect from the unit, identifying the plants, running the register, working with customers outside," Moran said.

The Holiday Store is a true group effort. Every student in an ag-ed class participates, as the event takes up a majority of class time in the winter. "Class time is definitely devoting 95% of our time towards the Holidays Sales and Marketing because of how much we actually get out of it," Mahaffey said. "You're learning the aspects of your class through Holiday Store."

Students are expected to spend at least eight hours working in the store during the month it operates. How serious they take that time commitment is up to the student. "It's open until 4:30 after school, so I know some students do it after school before sports, during flex blocks, and during their class time they can use as well," Mahaffey said. Students can also work in the store on weekends. "On the weekends we're open all day," she said.

While students are required to spend at least eight hours in the store, there's no cap for those that want to contribute more time. "The average student spends 8 hours, but you have those excellent students that go for 16, 20 hours, and then some of them it'll be three or four," Mahaffey said.

Moran said students build a multitude of skills staffing the Holiday Store. "Mainly communication, problem solving — that's constant — a lot of times the students have to encounter all kinds of problem solving," Moran said. "When they meet with customers and serve people, they gain a lot of confidence, and you can just see the confidence grow as they work through the unit."

There are also specific professional and business skills incorporated. "They learn the business aspect of it while getting a grasp of everybody in our program and working as a team," Mahaffey said. Mahaffey explained students track their time using a digital system. "Responsibility and accountability with our clock in system, making sure that you're being accountable for your time and honest with your time."

After the Holiday Store closes, students are graded on their performance and knowledge. "Their summative is based on how well they produce, how well they sell, their work ethic, and the time that they invest," Moran said.

Profits from the Holiday Store are donated to area food banks and a nonprofit chosen by a vote of the student body. "The five food banks come in at the end of the unit in January, and we present them significant funds and also a nonprofit," Moran said. "It's been the Jane Lloyd Fund ... a fund for women that are living with cancer and want to stay in their homes. It covers some of their everyday expenses." The amount given differs, but it usually stays within a certain range. "The last couple years they've given \$4,000 to \$6,000 away," Moran said.

Reception of the Holiday Store is generally positive — among student participants and customers. "It has a very good reputation, and for some people, it's their only interaction with the high school from the community," Moran said. "We have celebrities come in, and they really connect with those students in front of them and do something to serve the community."

## Barn animals, volunteers adjust to winter weather

By Shanaya Duprey

HVRHS's agriculture education program is abundant with unique experiences and opportunities for students, one of which is the barn. This barn, located next to the Science and Technology Center, has seen a wide variety of animals; from the typical sheep and goats, to the occasional heifer, alpacas and miniature ponies.

This barn looks a little different, however, when the grass dies and the wind turns frigid.

Care for these animals during the more ideal seasons is split between a couple of the ag-ed classes. "Students in agriculture classes learn about all aspects of animal care in the classroom and take shared responsibility over weekends and breaks for the care of the animals," said Madison Melino, the 2025-26 Housatonic Valley FFA Historian. While both the teachers and the students are involved in the animals' care, students lead in most of the work. "Teachers buy the supplies for the animals, but I would say it's mostly students feeding and caring for them all year round, not just in the winter," said Hannah Johnson, the 2025-26 Housatonic Valley FFA Vice President. "These chores are delegated mostly to students in the Vet Science class."

Students even organize who does what chores among themselves. "They take care of the animals and everyday they volunteer to do the different tasks necessary."

While the delegation of these chores remains the same throughout the year, the supplies and care plans used differ. There is one main priority in the winter; keep the animals warm. "In the winter we have to really make sure that [the animals] water is not frozen, so they always have something to drink. We also have to make sure that they have enough hay to keep them warm," Johnson said.

Winter care also requires additional supplies — leading to higher costs through the season. "Additional costs include bedding material like shavings and straw," Melino said. "They go through more hay in the winter which is an additional cost," Johnson said. In addition to extra straw and shav-

“  
**These skills that are developed with animal care transfer to owning personal animals or a career that works with animals.**

Madison Melino,  
2025-26 Housatonic  
Valley FFA Historian

ings, Melino said barn animals can require heat lamps, water heaters, blankets and extra bedding to stay warm in the cold.

For the sheep specifically, it's important that they go into winter with extra weight to keep warm. "In the winter we check the body condition of the animals every week to ensure a healthy weight," Melino said. "It is always a good idea to go into winter with a few extra pounds on the sheep."

"The number one priority ... ensuring that they don't get frostbite," Johnson said. Blankets and extra bedding can help, but snow gets in the way of animal care in more ways than one may think. "The biggest struggle in the winter is the weather if it gets extremely cold or a lot of snow is on the ground preventing the opening of the stalls," Melino said. "Closed stalls are hard for humans because it takes additional work to keep the area clean inside."

Winter brings some benefits along with the challenges, FFA members said. "One benefit during the winter is that there's little to no mosquitos and bugs which creates less worry about disease transmission," Melino said. There is also little impact on the animals' general lifestyle. "For the animals we have at the school they are pretty acclimated to the winter from past seasons so we don't really notice a change in behavior," said Melino.

Students learn valuable lessons and skills while taking care of these animals. "Students learn about nutrition, health, vaccination schedules, behavior, breeding, and more," Melino said. "These skills that are developed with animal care transfer to owning personal animals or a career that works with animals."

Winter Sports  
Continued from page A5

the school, and coached the boys basketball team at HVRHS for four years. Johnson cited the large time commitment as the reason for his resignation before the start of the season.

Chatfield, Johnson's replacement, has coached basketball and baseball for the Region One middle school programs since 2020, and this year he started coaching for HVRHS's basketball team. But this is far from the first time he's played with this team, as only a few of the students on the team are players he hasn't coached previously.

"I think we're gonna do pretty good, pretty competitive ... [Berkshire League] and State Tournaments are our two team goals," Chatfield said. "We're senior heavy, so that bodes well for us."

Coach Chatfield believes the team's athleticism is one of the biggest strengths, a sentiment echoed by many on the team such as seniors Wesley Allyn and Anthony Labbadia.

"I think our biggest strength is gonna be our size and our speed," Labbadia said. "In the four years that I've been here, this is easily our strongest year."

The HVRHS girls basketball team is set out for success this year, with aspirations to win the Berkshire League title and compete at states.

"I'm feeling very optimistic," said senior Victoria Brooks. "Our strength is definitely going to be our dedication this year."

Last but not least is the HVRHS Ski team, a small team that competes at Mohawk Mountain against private schools from around the area. Having lost the talent of various seniors, the team of six is looking for new talent to break through and give the team an edge against more formidable private school teams.

"Last year, we finished third in the League, and we're looking for new talent," said junior Danny Lesch. "We're a bit short staffed ... but we're really excited."





Peter Vermilyea, right, teamed up with sophomore Logan Miller in a game of dodgeball during the Turkey Olympics on Friday, Nov. 21.

PHOTO BY SIMON MARKOW

# Seniors dominate at annual Turkey Olympics

By Maddy Johnson

The senior class at HVRHS won the Turkey Olympics on Friday, Nov. 21, the week before thanksgiving. Unlike previous years, the competition against the seniors was minimal as the three other grades all had fewer than 10 representative students each. The teachers had about the same attendance as usual, while also adopting the single sophomore that came to represent his entire grade.

The Turkey Olympics is made up of a collection of games from dodgeball, tug-of-war, knockout, and more. All of the games took place after school and the grades competed against each other in each game, trying to win the most points. First place wins five points, and last place wins one point. At the end of the afternoon, the student government tallied up the points and declared an overall winner.

Even with the senior population dominating the event, the other classes represented to the best of their ability.

The biggest competition this year was between the juniors and seniors. Representatives from those classes dominated the competition, with either a junior or senior winning every challenge. Back and forth they went, until eventually it was clear that the seniors would be the ones to take the glory.

HVRHS students offered some explanation for the lackluster participation from underclassmen.

“I think that the underclassmen did not show up because



Seniors Hannah Johnson and Celeste Trubucco wrap up Katherine Crane with toilet paper in the mummy contest.

PHOTO BY SIMON MARKOW

there was some lack of advertising and the upperclassmen had already been involved previously,” said Celeste Trubucco, a member of student government. “Next year they should work towards advertising more in advance so

that people, specifically the underclassmen, can plan.”

The student government made fliers, instagram posts, and school announcements. But the efforts didn’t seem to drive more underclassmen to the event.



Senior Anthony Labbadia makes a dunk in a game of knockout.

PHOTO BY PETER AUSTIN

# English department tries out after-school film screening

By Maddy Johnson

After reading Ken Kesey’s “One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest,” the AP English literature class agreed to get together at 5 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 4, and watch the movie. Fueled by Goshen Pizza supplied by Mr. Osora, blankets, and a newly finished novel, the 12 students settled in and watched the film in room 133.

“The premise of ‘One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest’ teaches students ideas of conformity and compliance to people of power,” Osora said. “These messages are more important today as ‘Cuckoo’s Nest’ can reveal to people the importance of not being a silent witness when power is abused.”

Watching the movie is important to understand the messages. The students compared the film to the novel by looking at what they left out and why the movie deemed it unimportant. This way, a comparison can be made between the ideas and messages either discarded or highlighted in the movie. “They can look at

whether the movie preserved the most important ideas and themes,” Osora said.

Some of the students stuck around after school to watch the girls’ soccer team play, and didn’t have time to go home before watching the film. The movie, being 2 hours and 18 minutes long, did not provide for a short night as the students got home roughly around 7:30 p.m.

But the academic and social experience it provided the students negated the cons of their thirteen-hour day.

Watching the movie outside of school meant that the students did not need to waste multiple class periods watching and dissecting the movie. Instead, they took two hours out of their night to watch it all together.

“I liked being able to compare and contrast the movie, especially because there were so many changes, and that we got to discuss these changes after the movie,” Sara Ireland said.

At the end of the night, the class agreed they would like to do it again with other books the class reads together.

# Taking a closer look at HVRHS’s course levels

By Shanaya Duprey

HVRHS offers courses at four levels: college prep (CP), honors, Early College Experience (ECE) and Advanced Placement (AP). Students can choose between these different levels, but their trajectory is largely dependent on what their middle school teachers recommend them for.

The major differences between AP/ECE classes and CP classes are rigor and the credits received from taking that particular class. AP/ECE classes are weighted more when a student’s GPA is calculated. “There is also an increased rigor in AP/ECE curriculum, with an emphasis on preparing students for college level expectations,” said Karen Littau, HVRHS’s Counseling Department Chair.

While AP provides more credits and harder classes, CP classes allow for subject exploration. “It provides students with the ability to try many of the courses we offer — both to reach graduation requirements and also the opportunity to use elective space for class exploration,” Littau said. These classes are also a lower-stress alternative to AP or ECE courses. “If a student has no plans of pursuing a career that has to do with one of the higher level courses, they can take a lower level that will still give them information on the course and the skills needed to grow as a learner without taking on the intense stress of a higher level class,” said Sara Ireland, an HVRHS senior.

In terms of what these classes have to offer, it varies from student to student. “I think that all of the classes have something to offer; it really just depends on what a student is willing to put in and what they’re looking to get out of a class,” said Elizabeth Forbes, an HVRHS senior.

The variety of offerings gives students the ability to tailor their schedules to their goals and interests. “It really depends on the student specifically and their interests/ post graduation goals,” said Littau. They also allow a student to pick classes that fit their academic abilities or styles. “Each level of rigor for CP and AP classes will reflect a student’s ability to remain organized and on task with course understanding and work completion,” Littau said.

Students may find that, as they grow throughout high school, their

needs are not being met where they were initially placed. Students can request more or less rigorous courses if needed. “To switch to a higher level class, first you need an approval from the teacher that you’re ready to take the classes and that they think you can handle it. Then you need to fill out a Level Change form from the Counselors, informing them of what classes you wish to switch into and a signature from your parents affirming that they want you to be in the higher level classes,” Ireland said.

Students reported some differences in their experience changing levels to more rigorous classes. “I think that when you are put in a class level, you really have to advocate for yourself and say ‘I’m ready to move up or down in this class,’ because teachers will just recommend you for the same class levels for the next year, sometimes without talking with you about it beforehand,” Forbes said “You really have to tell them yourself”

While some students feel they had to self-advocate, others felt completely supported in their efforts. “I felt supported by my teachers when I changed levels,” Ireland said. “They were very accommodating to my switch, giving me extensions on the earlier projects to help me adjust to both the curriculum and the pace the Honors kids worked at.”

Among the student body, class levels perpetuate some harmful stereotypes. “AP students have a lot expected of them,” Ireland said. “There are less chances to try again and the classes generally contain a harder curriculum.” Ireland further explained there is a stigma around CP classes. “CP classes and students generally have a stereotype of being ‘dumb’ or ‘taking the dumb classes.’ This is unbelievably incorrect,” Ireland said. “While it was not the right pace for me, the CP level courses still taught me a lot. There’s nothing ‘dumb’ about the CP classes or those who take them.”

While competition and bias may persist, it’s important to recognize the importance of both AP and CP classes. “Enrolling in a variety of classes opens the door to new opportunities for students,” Littau said. “It allows them to take a plethora of courses offered at HVRHS, and to educate themselves with many different learning pathways.”



# Robotics team raises \$1,000 at annual dinner

By Maddy Johnson

The HVRHS robotics team hosted their annual dinner at Freunds Farm on Nov. 6.

The dinner had it all from lemonade, to chicken and apple crisp. And proceeds from the \$20 entrance fee provided the robotics team with funding for important equipment needed for their robot.

Although they have a separate fund already, the robotics team has a lot to pay for. The team stays at hotels for competitions, pay to enter competitions, and most importantly, have to upgrade their robot every year.

“The money goes towards new driving technology for the robot called swerve drive,” said robotics team member Danny Lesch. “This includes inverted wheels in each corner. It makes a big difference in competitions and helps us with getting far.”

The annual dinner helps with outreach as much as fundraising. “We are looking for other ways to get more people to know about it because people don’t think it has the excitement of GNH football or intensity of soccer,” Lesch said. “But if more people knew how fun and intense it was, more people would join.”

The team brought their robots to show off at the dinner. They explained the robot, thanked every-



PHOTOS BY MADDY JOHNSON

Above, Finn Malone, Steven Barber, Addie Diorio, and Ivy Zeng serving food donated by Freunds Farm in the buffet line at the robotics dinner on Nov. 6. Right, junior Meadow Morschell and sophomore Katie Money serve desserts.



one for coming, and the members also all served the food. The food itself was donated by Freunds Farm.

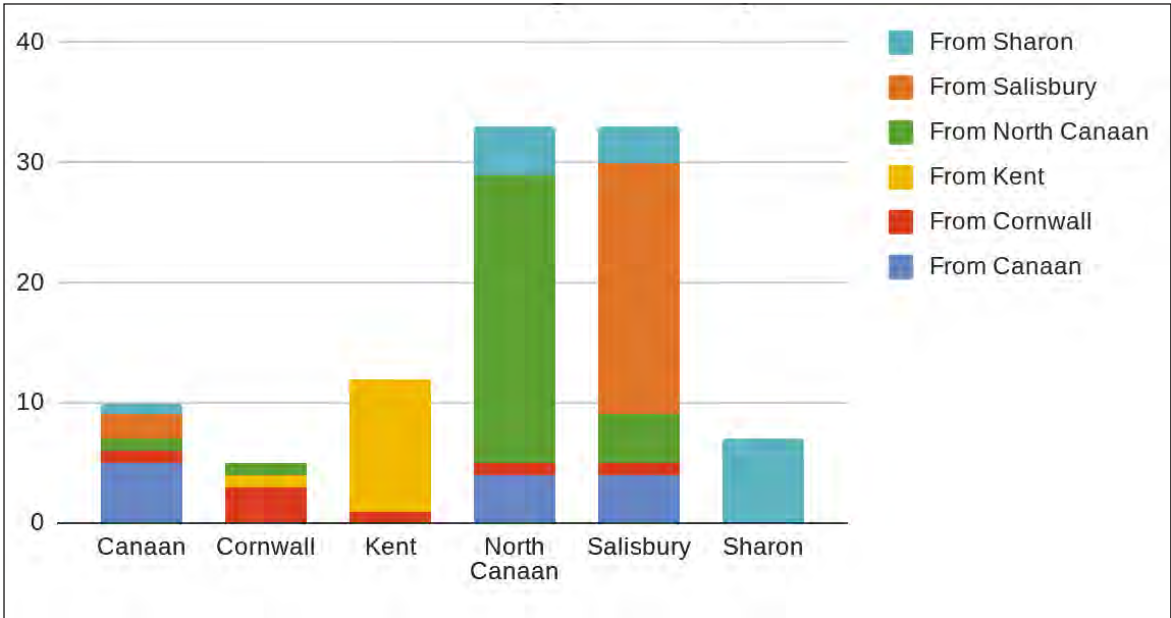
“Freunds is very generous, food free of charge, they helped

set up, and serve the food,” Lesch said. “Yeah so it’s very generous. They are probably losing money on it.”

The robotics team made about \$1,000 from the dinner. This will

provide them with the money they need to buy new parts for their robot. As their only fundraiser every year, a lot rides on the event. Families, friends, and

teachers all attend to support the team and share a meal together outside of home and the classroom.



GRAPHICS BY PETER AUSTIN

HVRHS Today sent a survey to students asking them to rank the six towns in Region One. While North Canaan received the most votes total, Salisbury surpassed North Canaan in most votes from non-residents.

## North Canaan, Salisbury ranked top towns in Region One

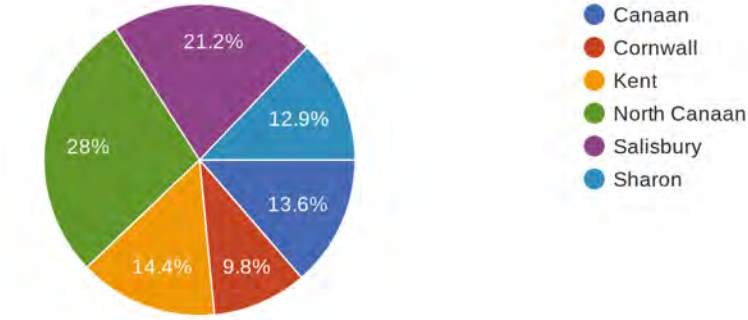
By Peter Austin

The HVRHS Today sent an anonymous survey to HVRHS students asking them to rank each of the six towns in Region One — Falls Village (Canaan), Cornwall, Kent, North Canaan, Salisbury and Sharon — from best to worst. Over 120 students responded, and the results show some interesting trends.

Taking an initial look at the data, North Canaan barely leads Salisbury in the race for first place, the apparent favorites among students. Falls Village takes a close third over Kent, with Sharon in fifth and Cornwall sits comfortably sixth.

And if the story ended here, this conclusion might be the one the readers take home: according to the students of HVRHS, the towns from best to worst are North Canaan, Salisbury, Falls Village, Kent, Sharon and Cornwall. However, this conclusion doesn’t account for a bias in the data.

Making up over half of responses, students from North Canaan and Salisbury represent 35, or about 30%, and 27, or about 24%, of the votes respectively. Sharon, Falls Village and Kent each make up between 14 and 15 votes respectively, or about 12.5% of the votes each. Only 11 students from Cornwall responded, leaving them to make up the last 9% of



This chart breaks down the home towns of the students that responded to the survey. North Canaan represented more than a quarter of the responses, with Salisbury trailing closely.

responses to the survey.

To see if responders really do exhibit loyalty to their town of origin, we can see what percent of responders ranked their town as their top choice. The data reveals there is often clear loyalty to one’s own town, particularly in Kent and Salisbury where over 90% of responders ranked their town first.

Once this factor is taken into account, it becomes clear how North Canaan and Salisbury managed such a hefty lead, while Cornwall and Sharon fell far to the bottom of most students’ rankings.

One way to see the full picture would be to break down what

town each of the votes came from.

Attempting to figure out which town is the best comes down to the fight between Salisbury and North Canaan. While they received almost the same number of votes, Salisbury received many more votes from people outside of Salisbury than North Canaan did. Salisbury also received more second place and the same number of third place votes, while receiving fewer fourth, fifth and sixth place votes than North Canaan.

But drawing any definitive conclusions is more complicated than it may seem at first glance. This leads to a more important idea, that data isn’t always as simple as it seems.

## National Honor Society opens membership to rising juniors

By Ibby Sadeh

NHS faculty counsel voted this year to invite Sophomores to apply and be inducted to the National Honor Society.

While NHS inductees at Housatonic were historically limited to juniors, this change is something that’s already common across the country.

The decision came after a unanimous vote by the faculty counsel of the National Honor Society. This is a group of five teachers who are voting members.

Then the decision was handed off to senior student members of the NHS chapter for approval. The decision was posed as a yes or no question on the ballot when students voted for officers in the fall. A majority of seniors voted in favor of allowing sophomores to join the club, so this year’s chosen sophomores will be inducted in June 2026.

“Some people might be upset because it has been Juniors for so long, so they might not think that the Sophomores should be able to join, but it is a good opportunity for everyone so there is honestly no harm in it,” NHS member and HVRHS senior Maddy Johnson said.

Although this is new for HVRHS, faculty advisor Peter Vermilyea said that’s not the case nationwide. “That’s pretty typical across the country for students to be inducted as Sophomores,” Vermilyea said. “So, I was inducted as a Sophomore to the National Honor Society, and my two sons were inducted

as Sophomores.”

This would create a bigger NHS group which will allow a bigger pool for different volunteering, leadership and service opportunities. “Our members are pulled in so many directions, they are class officers, they are captains of sports teams, they have lots of different responsibilities,” Vermilyea said. Having a bigger group will ease the burden for after school volunteer opportunities, like graduation, parent night, service projects.

“The thing that really excites me about this is the problems that we have now in the National Honor Society is that there is no continuity of membership,” Vermilyea said. “So, when our current seniors were inducted on June 4 last year, we left school eight days later, and we came in completely cold next year. Nobody knows what’s expected of them, nobody has had the opportunity to gain any leadership opportunity to become officers.”

“I’m not sure that there is a downside, I never see a downside in recognizing worthy students,” Vermilyea said. The only possible challenge that he acknowledged is that it may be more difficult for them to qualify. Being younger, sophomores have less time than juniors to cultivate leadership experience and community service.

NHS member Hannah Johnson explained her perspective. “It will be good to expand our program but will make the ceremony longer and make it a less special achievement at HVRHS,” Johnson said.

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Our Towns

P&Z extends hearing on Kent treatment center permit

By Alec Linden

KENT — The Planning and Zoning Commission has delayed discussion of proposed amendments to High Watch Recovery Center's special permit until January, following a request by the facility to extend the public hearing. The next hearing is scheduled for Jan. 8.

High Watch, a substance-use disorder treatment facility on Carter Road, first approached the commission in November seeking changes to several conditions of its special permit. CEO Andrew Roberts said the proposed amendments are intended to bring the permit into compliance with current operational realities and federal confidentiality laws.

Among the requested changes are approval to add two beds to the facility's detox unit; modification of a condition requiring the center to notify the first selectman and police when a patient leaves without notice; and removal of a provision barring the facility from accepting patients under legal custody or those mandated by a court to attend treatment.

The proposal to lift the restriction on court-mandated patients drew particular concern from residents during the Nov. 13 public hearing, with several speakers raising public safety objections and repeatedly referring to High Watch's patients as "criminals."

Roberts, former First Selectman Marty Lindenmayer and several commissioners pushed back on that characterization, calling it inaccurate and insensitive to individuals seeking treatment for addiction.

Roberts said the proposed change reflects common practice for people facing addiction-related charges, such as driving under the influence, and does not alter the facility's screening standards. "We only admit people that are appropriate for this level of care," Roberts said at the November meeting. "There

are not people being dropped off in handcuffs, and we wouldn't accept people who are violent criminals... that would be a risk to our community, our staff, or otherwise."

Roberts also cited specific permit conditions he said have proven unworkable since the permit was approved in 2019. One provision bars the facility from accepting patients after 8 p.m., a restriction he said fails to account for unavoidable travel delays.

In the weeks following the hearing, discussion of the application spilled onto the town's Facebook page, where residents debated the proposal.

Ellen Altfest, who spoke against the changes at the November meeting, posted several times encouraging others to participate in the hearing.

In a Dec. 9 post, Altfest said that as a 27-year resident of Carter Road, she believes High Watch has negatively affected the neighborhood and that the proposed changes raise broader concerns. "This is the first time that what they are asking to do might directly affect more than our road but the whole town," she wrote.

Others defended the facility. "High Watch is a great asset to our town," wrote Ellen Corsell in the same thread. "I am glad they are my neighbors and part of my community."

Arron Parsons, who said he is a former patient, also weighed in, writing that High Watch is seeking approval "to help more people seeking addiction services."

At the commission's Dec. 11 meeting, High Watch formally requested a hearing extension. The commission granted the request and allowed Roberts to address members briefly before adjourning the matter until January.

Roberts said the extension was requested to allow time to review an analysis prepared by town attorney

Michael Ziska, dated Dec. 8, which raised questions about several of the proposed permit changes.

He also reported that he had held what he described as constructive conversations with First Selectman Eric Epstein and the Kent Volunteer Fire Department. Fire officials had previously expressed concern about whether adding two detox beds could increase ambulance calls, but have since indicated support for the request, Roberts said.

"Good will come from [those meetings] regardless of the outcome of this application," Roberts told the commission.

Roberts said High Watch initiated the permit review voluntarily in an effort to improve its relationship with the town.

"We came forward voluntarily, not by force," he said. "For the betterment of both Kent and High Watch."

The public hearing will resume at the commission's Jan. 8 meeting.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Mrs. Claus visits mom's group at Sharon Hospital

The little ones attending the mom's group at Sharon Hospital were surprised by a special visit from Mrs. Claus last week. The children received a few special gifts and treats from the North Pole. Mothers interested in joining the group at Sharon Hospital can contact Candy Osborn at [candy.osborn@nuvancehealth.org](mailto:candy.osborn@nuvancehealth.org)

Humes continues on as finance chairman in North Canaan

By Riley Klein

NORTH CANAAN — The Board of Finance elected officers during its first meeting of the new term Wednesday, Dec. 10. Doug Humes was re-elected as chairman of the board. Brian Johnson was elected vice chair.

Christian Allyn was nominated to fill a two-year vacancy on the board. His appointment was unanimously approved

and Town Clerk Jean Jacquier swore him in on the spot.

The board went on to discuss line items that went over budget and will need to be balanced with approval from a town meeting.

The Board of Selectmen called a town meeting to vote on the reallocation of \$64,088.28 in year-end budget transfers. It will be in Town Hall Monday, Jan. 5, at 6:30 p.m.

Town vote set in Sharon to accept STEAP grant for River Road repairs

By Alec Linden

SHARON — A town meeting is set to be held at 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 18, to authorize First Selectman Casey Flanagan to formally accept the \$1 million in funds the town received in the 2025 round of Small Town Economic Assistance Program, commonly known as STEAP grants.

The funds, matched by \$700,000 from the town, are

dedicated towards the repair of River Road, which has been limited to single-lane travel since the structural failure of the roadway in the summer of 2023.

Sharon's award of \$1 million was the maximum amount allocated to any one town in the program.

Thursday's vote is to allow Flanagan to sign the agreement for the grant, and does not involve the additional movement of funds.

Kent P&Z votes on cannabis regs, parking rules in busy meeting

By Alec Linden

KENT — The Planning and Zoning Commission took several actions Thursday, Dec. 11, approving new cannabis regulations, updating parking provisions related to affordable housing and electing new officers.

Cannabis regulation

The commission voted unanimously to adopt a new section of its regulations governing cannabis establishments.

Recreational retail cannabis establishments remain prohibited townwide under an ordinance approved by voters in the Nov. 4 election. The newly adopted regulations establish parameters for other cannabis-related uses — including cultivation and production facilities — which would be subject to special permit approval.

Under the regulation, all cannabis establishments are prohibited in residential zones, with one exception: cultivation may be permitted in the Rural Residential 1 zone. The regulation is set to take effect Jan. 1.

Affordable Housing regulation fix

The Commission voted to remove two stipulations on parking in its affordable housing Section 6400.

Land Use Administrator Tai Kern explained that the section was out of date, as it was meant to be removed when P&Z revised its parking regulations in Section 8200. The removal was intended to remedy conflicts between the outdated regulation and the newer parking code, which had caused issues in a recent application.

New officers

Following the departure of longtime chair Wes Wyrick in November, the Commission rearranged its officer suite during the Dec. 11 meeting.

Karen Casey was elected as the new chair. She was previously vice chair.

Sarah Chase was elected as vice chair. Donna Hayes was elected as secretary.

"I'm honored," said Casey after she was voted into the leadership role, "especially to have Sarah standing right behind me."

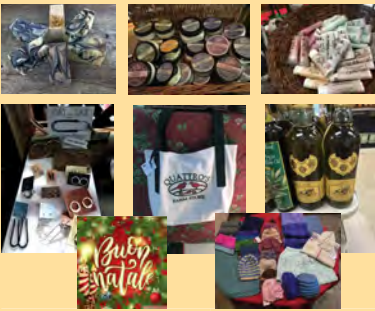
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Can it happen here?

It Can't Happen Here is Sinclair Lewis's 1935 novel about a fascist demagogue who is elected president of the United States and establishes a dictatorship. Given the 1933 rise to power of Adolf Hitler, it was a chilling read in its day.

It remains a chilling read today, because we are living through the gravest attack on our democracy, and the rule of law that sustains it, in the history of our country. Donald Trump claims the powers of a dictator. He asserts that the Constitution allows him to do "anything [he] want[s]," including the right to "terminate" it.

His conduct has been consistent with his aspirations. Just for starters, he has called for the execution of members of Congress for daring to remind military personnel that they have a duty to disobey illegal orders. His so-called Department of War murders helpless civilians on the high seas. The masked agents of ICE terrorize and brutalize innocent women, children and clergy members. He has tried, through coercion and punishment, to silence law firms who challenge his policies in court or speak out against him. He has claimed the power to abolish the constitutional right to birthright citizenship.

But, one year into Trump's second term, we have not yet descended into a full-blown dictatorship. The courts have rejected many of Trump's power grabs and unconstitutional acts. Millions of citizens publicly protest his administration's actions. Governors and members of Congress – including Republicans – continue to speak out, and bipartisan Congressional oversight investigations have begun.

Yet the question remains: Can it happen here? As grim as things look, I think the answer is probably not. Compared to Hitler's Germany, the path to dictatorship in the U.S. contains major roadblocks not easily overcome. Among other things:

- Our First Amendment guarantees freedom of speech and freedom of assembly – the most important bulwarks against tyranny. As Adlai Stevenson said, "the first principle of a free society is an untrammelled flow of words in an open forum." Nazi Germany banned all dissent and protest.
- Under our Constitution, the federal government must share power with the states, which have their own governments, police forces, and taxing authorities. In Nazi Germany, there were no power centers other than the federal government.
- We have an independent judiciary that can check, and has checked, Trump's illegal or unconstitutional acts. In Nazi Germany, the courts were nothing more than rubber stamps for Hitler and his minions.
- We have an opposition party that continues to speak out against, and shine

GUEST COMMENTARY JAMES SPEYER

a light on, the excesses of the Trump administration. The Nazis banned all opposition parties.

- We have a 250-year history of democracy and freedom that has been ingrained in us. Our country was founded on opposition to tyranny. Germany had no such tradition when Hitler rose to power. Until the short-lived and troubled Weimar Republic of 1919-1933, Germans had no experience with democracy.

But how reassuring are these roadblocks? After all, the Weimar Republic also had these features (except for our democratic tradition). And yet Hitler was able to consolidate his power and establish his dictatorship within two months of being named chancellor.

The answer is that the obstacles in Trump's way would be far harder to surmount than those Hitler faced. The Weimar constitution contained a kill switch: a provision declaring that all of the civil liberties and other protections it provided could be eliminated simply by a decree pronouncing a public safety emergency. And that is exactly what happened when a fire destroyed the Reichstag (the seat of parliament) in February 1933. Using the fire as a pretext to claim that communists were threatening to overrun the country, the Nazis issued the Reichstag Fire Decree, which eliminated freedom of the press and free speech, and allowed the Nazi party to take over the state governments and eliminate opposition parties.

One month after the Reichstag Fire Decree, through physical intimidation and terror, the Nazis forced through parliament an amendment to the Weimar Constitution known as the Enabling Act. The Enabling Act gave Hitler, rather than parliament, the power to make and enforce laws. The Reichstag Fire Decree and the Enabling Act formed the foundation of the Nazi regime.

Our Constitution is made of sturdier stuff. It has no self-destruct mechanism; the civil liberties it provides cannot be abolished by decree. And Congress alone cannot enact constitutional amendments. Instead, an amendment requires the approval of at least 38 states — which explains why they are so rare.

The last year has shown us how much damage a man of bad faith, bent on grabbing as much power as possible, can do to our democracy. And there is likely more damage yet to come. But thanks to the genius of our Constitution's drafters and the resolve of much of our citizenry, I believe it will survive Donald Trump.

James Speyer is a lawyer and lives in Sharon.



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EARLY DEADLINE For the Dec. 25/Jan. 1 edition, the deadline for letters to the editor is Friday, Dec. 19 at 10 a.m.

Murders in the Caribbean

On Sept. 2 of this year, a fishing boat propelled by an outboard motor was attacked by a missile from an American helicopter overhead. The boat was demolished as were nine of its 11-member crew. Two members of the crew remained alive, floating in the water. Within a few minutes, the helicopter returned with another missile to kill the two survivors.

The U.S. government reported the incident saying that it was an authorized attack intended to stop the importation of banned drugs into the U.S. by a "narco-terrorist" nation, in this case Venezuela. This incident was not an isolated event and was followed by dozens more over the next few months. President Trump spoke enthusiastically about the attacks, describing them as a part of our "war on drugs" and indicated that they might well be followed by future attacks on land. He seemed oblivious to the law that only Congress has the right to declare war and had not done so.

In the many lethal attacks on small boats that followed, no proof was ever offered that they were carrying drugs; the boats, their crews and any cargo were destroyed. Some experts have suggested that the Sept. 2 boat with its crew of eleven men wouldn't have had space for a regular shipment of drugs.

In his many remarks on the matter, the President claimed that most of the illicit drugs entering the country, especially fentanyl, the most dangerous, were coming in by sea from South and Central America; actually, fentanyl largely arrives by land from Chinese sources via Mexico. The small boats in the Caribbean were probably transporting cocaine, if any drugs, with most of it going to other countries. Were President Trump really so distressed by cocaine traffic into the U.S., why would he have just issued a pardon to the former Honduran President who had recently been sentenced here for operating a very large international cocaine drug trafficking business?

Combating the international drug trade is an excuse for other Trump ventures south of the border. Perhaps it's exercising military power in the mode of the Monroe Doctrine. Many notable observers (including The Lakeville Journal's columnist

OCCASIONAL OBSERVER MAC GORDON

Bill Schmick's article Dec. 4, 2025) think that taking control of Venezuela's enormous fossil fuel reserves might be Trump's main goal.

But overthrowing Maduro's government and controlling a replacement Venezuelan government might be very difficult for Trump to manage. The U.S. boarding and takeover of a giant Venezuelan oil tanker left us wondering if war might be around the corner, even more so if Trump decides to attack Columbia which he has threatened as well. Stay tuned!

Most commentators of late have been focused on the second strike of the Sept. 2 attack where the two helpless individuals floating alive in the sea were killed. According to numerous military experts such a killing would be illegal in either a civilian or military context. If so, the question remains: who is responsible? Admiral Frank Bradley, the Commander of the overall mission? Secretary Hegseth?, the officer firing the missiles? Someone else?

As the recent video by six members of Congress made clear, a member of the military is not obliged to follow an illegal order; it's right there in the Uniform Code of Military Justice But is a private in the Army going to tell a high ranking commanding officer that he won't follow the officer's order, that it's illegal?

In this case nobody seems to want to take the responsibility. Hegseth, who has lately gone out of his way to demonstrate his machismo, recently told a gathering of military officers at Quantico that "it was time to take the gloves off."

Perhaps because he remains invulnerable to legal discipline because of his Supreme Court grant of immunity, President Trump has been lately left out of the public discussion regarding responsibility for the Sept. 2 attack and the killings. But this whole conflict, with its two dozen attacks and more than 82 killings of supposed "enemy combatants" is Trump's doing. Like Hegseth he may not have been right there in the attack helicop-

ter to give the order to fire. But he planned the overall campaign while letting subordinates receive any blame.

President Trump's use of the military in the Caribbean has much in common with his sending of troops into American cities. Describing several of our foremost cities as "war zones", he has used his own inaccurate characterizations of Washington, Chicago, Portland, Los Angeles and other cities as justification for sending in troops that the mayors and governors of these places have told him were, not needed and not wanted. In both the Caribbean and in U.S. cities, Trump has concocted ridiculous excuses for illegal and provocative incursions. Our cities are not "burning to the

ground" as Trump publicly claimed to be the case.

We are on the wrong track if we continue to view the Sept. 2 attack as a military matter focused solely on the killing of the two men in the water. The Pentagon has admitted to more than 22 similar attacks on small boats and suggested that they killed at least 80 individuals.

What we know so far, prior to a serious Senate investigation, is that Secretary Hegseth, Admiral Bradley and possibly others all have much to answer for; and so does President Trump who initiated and set in motion this whole shameful enterprise.

Architect and landscape designer Mac Gordon lives in Lakeville

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Thanks for supporting Salisbury Winter Sports

The directors of the Salisbury Winter Sports Association would like to thank all of those who donated, purchased and attended our annual Ski and Skate Sale this past weekend.

We also greatly appreciate the use of the space that

the Lakeville Hose Company allows us to use and their continued support for our community organizations.

Ken Barker President Salisbury Winter Sports Association

Salisbury

THE LAKEVILLE JOURNAL (USPS 303280)

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# VIEWPOINT

## Jobs trump inflation in the Fed’s calculations

Faced with the choice, the Fed considers unemployment a greater threat to the economy than higher inflation. It is why they lowered interest rates again by one quarter point to close out the year.

Stocks rallied on the news on Wednesday afternoon but fell back on Thursday and Friday. At least the major averages did, but what went on under the hood spoke volumes about how investors are interpreting the news.

Commodity stocks of all kinds were up and outperforming, as were precious metals. Silver was the standout this week, outpacing gold, platinum, and palladium. The equal-weighted S&P 500, which allocates the same weight to each stock in the index, outperformed the benchmark index.

Why is that significant? A mere handful of stocks (around 10 overall), which represent 40% of the benchmark, have consistently beaten the remaining 490 stocks in performance for several years.

Why would the Fed’s interest rate decision create this kind of dispersion? The central bank not only cut rates but also promised to begin buying \$40 billion worth of short-term Treasury bills starting today, Friday, Dec. 12. Their buying spree is open-ended, but many believe it could taper off by April. I have my doubts.

Investors were also surprised by several other com-

### @ THE MARKET BILL SCHMICK

ments by Fed Chair Jerome Powell. In the Q&A session after the FOMC meeting, Powell mentioned that the policy board expected the economy to accelerate next year to above 2%, which was higher than most investors had expected. Powell also said that while inflation was still not at the Fed’s 2% target, the effect of tariffs would be a one-off price jolt and not the beginning of a spike in inflation rates.

As for the employment picture, he thought it might be faltering a bit. He revealed that the data in every monthly non-farm payroll report was 60,000 per month too high, due to how the data is collected and processed. As such, labor gains are often overstated. In summary, Powell believes the fed funds rate is now at a level where monetary policy is in equilibrium, neither too tight nor too loose.

Investors could not help but conclude from his comments that the Fed seems willing to run the economy “hot” in 2026. A faster-than-expected growth rate in the economy, moderate inflation, and an injection of \$40 billions of additional liquidity into the financial system is a recipe for invest-

ing in ‘real economy’ stocks.

Consumer discretionary, financials, industrials, small-cap, and cyclical stocks suddenly began to outperform. These are stocks with attractive valuations, reasonable growth, and that should stand to benefit from Fed policies in the overall economy. Traders began to rotate out of the narrow, more focused speculative “AI” momentum stocks that have outperformed everything else in the last 18 months.

The problem with that scenario is that technology stocks, in general, and Mag 7/AI Five in particular, comprise such a large share of the main equity averages that selling them cannot help but sink the entire market. Friday’s sell-off was an example of the impact of this rotation. However, stocks have been climbing nonstop for the last several days, so this bout of profit-taking was overdue.

For me, the Fed’s move to shore up the credit markets by buying \$40 billion in short-term bills and treasury notes is the first shot across the bow of what I believe will be the monetization of the nation’s debt. Short-term government debt accounts for two-thirds of all sovereign debt outstanding.

Both Treasury Secretaries Janet Yellen and Scott Bessent have steered clear of auctioning off long-term debt securities to cover our burgeoning debt costs. They knew that doing so would force yields on the ten- and

twenty-year bonds to rise much higher. Instead, they have used short-term treasury notes and bills in the auctions.

Enter the U.S. central bank. Does anyone else see this circle forming? The U.S. central bank (which prints money) is now buying \$40 billion of U.S. short-term debt each month as the U.S. Treasury sells it to a shrinking market. This is not quantitative easing. This is the U.S. government buying back the securities it sold to cover our debt obligations by printing money.

I know most will disagree with my premise. After all, this is early days, and we won’t truly know for sure until the spring, when supposedly these Fed purchases will no longer be needed. In the meantime, I will be listening for moves of this sort out of the government.

Readers should also prepare for the Supreme Court decision, expected in the next week or so, on the Trump tariff question. The way they address the legality of these tariffs will likely affect markets. I expect stocks to fluctuate for the next week or two. This pullback in the process has a little more to run, but then we should bounce back and test, if not exceed, highs.

*Bill Schmick is a founding partner of Onota Partners, Inc., in the Berkshires. Bill’s forecasts and opinions are purely his own and do not necessarily represent the views of Onota Partners, Inc. (OPI).*

# OBITUARY

## Bonnie Lynn Hunter Sheldon

CANAAN — Bonnie Lynn Hunter Sheldon, 75, of East Canaan, passed away Nov. 28, 2025, at Charlotte Hungerford Hospital in Torrington, where she was born on Dec. 17, 1949.

Bonnie was the daughter of Lester William (Bill) Hunter, Jr., and Huldah (Bet) O’Donnell Hunter. She grew up in Canaan and spent her entire life in the Northwest Corner. She was a graduate of Housatonic Valley Regional High School and received her BA degree from George Washington University. She later did advanced studies in Gerontology at the University of Hartford.

Bonnie was the wife of Robert Sheldon prior to her move to East Canaan where she lived for the past 23 years with her partner, Robert Mather.

Bonnie’s early career was as an assistant doing research and editing for the syndicated columnist, Robert Yoakum, in Lakeville. Her interest in and passion for politics and current events continued throughout her life. In her later life she made a career change and became a recreational therapist at Noble Horizons in Lakeville. She loved and cared deeply for the residents she worked with. Her kind, compassionate nature made her a natural in the field of geriatrics. Bonnie loved animals and to the delight of the residents she brought her dog to work with her.

An avid runner, Bonnie competed in numerous local 5K and 10K road races for many years. Her other interests, talents and loves were reading, puzzling, gardening and cooking. She loved

reading as a young child and went through most of the available books at the Douglas Library. This love of reading and writing continued through her study of literature and journalism at George Washington University. Additionally, she was a wonderful grandmother. She always enjoyed and supported her grandkids’ curiosity, loved watching them swim, and kept a nurturing eagle eye on them and their safety while in her care.

Survivors include her brother, Barry James Hunter and wife Christine, of Lempster, New Hampshire, her two aunts, Lynn Hunter Cline, of Sharon, and Cynthia Hunter Fenton and husband Terence, of Lincoln, Massachusetts, Robert Mather, of East Canaan, his son Justin Mather and wife Caryn Wright of Boulder City, Nevada, two daughters, Sarah Pollock and husband Brendan Pollock of Southfield, Massachusetts, and Bethany Mielke and partner Jamie Foster of Sandisfield, Massachusetts, grandchildren Isabella Pollock, Fiona Pollock, and Evan Mielke as well as numerous nieces and cousins. She was predeceased by her brother, Robert (Duffer) Hunter.

Calling hours and a church service will be held in January. Date and time will be announced. The Newkirk-Palmer Funeral Home of Canaan, CT, is in charge of arrangements. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to North Canaan Volunteer Ambulance Corp. PO Box 178, 15 Main Street, North Canaan, CT 06018, [www.northcanaanems.org](http://www.northcanaanems.org).

For more obituaries, see page A4

## TURNING BACK THE PAGES

NORMA BOSWORTH

### 125 years ago — December 1900

A beautiful bronze memorial tablet was recently placed on the organ in the Congregational church in Norfolk in memory of Miss Sarah Eldridge who died a year ago last June. Miss Eldridge gave the organ to the church in 1892. The inscription on the tablet is surrounded by a wreath with foliage in which are several little birds.

Jimmie, the 8 year old son of Milton Rice, sustained a serious and unusual accident on Thursday morning. Walter Loucks was drawing water in barrels in an old fashion spring lumber box wagon, and Jimmie in company with some other boys climbed up the back. The wagon was slippery with ice and in some way Jimmie slipped, and his left leg became caught between the wheel and spring breaking the bone just above the knee. The break was of such a serious nature that the boy after being made as comfortable as possible by Dr. Bissell was placed on a stretcher and taken to the hospital in Pittsfield where he will receive the best of treatment. He bore the pain with great fortitude and exhibited much grit.

T.F. Dexter of Litchfield has been in town the past few days, shipping the machinery from the bicycle factory to Bantam.

Dr. Sellew, who has been very dangerously ill from an abscess of the lungs, has been steadily improving under the care of Doctors Beebe and Bissell.

### 100 years ago — December 1925

LIME ROCK — The Casino has been closed for the winter, and there will be no more movies until spring.

The United States Gypsum Co. of Chicago has purchased 75 acres of land, including what is known as Point O’ Rocks at Falls Village. It is said that the Gypsum Company will manufacture building material from the stone, and will soon erect a plant to employ a number of men.

Charles Miller is giving his residence a new covering of asbestos shingles.

The Connecticut Power Co. this week is advertising a reduction in residential lighting rates, as may be seen by their large advertisement elsewhere in this paper. This will, in the opinion of the Company, result in a larger use of electricity the lower rates making it possible from an economic point.

Adirondack balsam Christmas trees may be purchased at Martin’s Garage in Lakeville or Salisbury at prices from 75 cents to \$1.50 each.

### 50 years ago — December 1975

Crews from CBS television network have been stalking the area of Barbara Gibbons’ murder and interviewing those who have been involved in the Peter Reilly case for the filming of a documentary for television’s “Sixty Minutes.” Over the weekend, Mike Wallace interviewed Reilly as well as some of those involved in his arrest and in the effort to exonerate

Reilly from the conviction of first-degree manslaughter in the death of his mother.

On display at Sharon’s Hotchkiss Library is a marvelous large handmade dollhouse, hinged to let children get a good view of the detailed miniature furnishings. Loaned by Martha Boll, age 7, the dollhouse was built and furnished by her parents, Ray and Peggy Boll. It can be seen during regular library hours.

A.J. Rosenstein, owner of the large Clayton Farms just across the Massachusetts line in New Marlboro, announced that he is donating 28 acres of land and 5 housing units on the farm to the United Nations International School. UNIS will seek endowment funds for the acquisition of approximately 472 additional acres and farm buildings. The funds would provide for the land purchase, alterations required to produce dormitory facilities, and support for initial stages of a new approach to environmental and food production studies by UNIS students.

Reaction was mixed this week to a proposal by Falls Village First Selectman David Domeier that the town’s landfill be opened to Sharon and Salisbury. Domeier suggested the move as a means to raise enough money to finance a substantial upgrading of the appearance of downtown Falls Village. The town’s appearance was recently criticized by 27 residents of the community who asked the new selectman to find a means to improve it.

About 100 persons attended a simple ceremony Sunday dedicating a little

park at the North Canaan Elementary School to the memory of 6-year-old Michael Joseph Dunn. The park, with memorial stone and plaque, overlooks the kindergarten that Michael attended. The boy, son of Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Dunn, was drowned in an accident last June in Lime Rock.

CANAAN — Housing Authority Chairman Arthur Baldwin this week reported that the first month of operation at Wangum Village has gone smoothly. The housing for the elderly project was opened early in November.

Construction of Templeton Farms Apartments, the 24-unit project for senior citizens in Kent, is progressing rapidly. Completion of the project located on the edge of the village near the intersection of routes 7 and 341, is scheduled for June 1976.

### 25 years ago — December 2000

A problem with the water supply to the building forced the closing of Housatonic Valley Regional High School on Wednesday. A 90-minute delay had already been called because of an overnight snowstorm when the word went out that high schoolers would get the day off.

Worldwide business conditions are blamed for the need to cut jobs — possibly 10 percent of the work force — at the Specialty Minerals plant in Canaan.

*These items were taken from The Lakeville Journal archives at Salisbury’s Scoville Memorial Library, keeping the original*



PHOTO BY CAITLIN HANLON

## Winter wonderland



## Realtor® at Large

Since we spend all of our time in the trenches with representing either sellers or buyers, it can be difficult to get a bird’s eye view of what the real estate market is doing in Litchfield County as a whole. Fortunately, there are people in William Pitt Sotheby’s whose only job is to measure the pulse of the market and to produce monthly and quarterly reports both for Litchfield County and for our towns. To access these countywide reports, please visit: [www.virtualpreview.com/q3-2025-litchfield-county](http://www.virtualpreview.com/q3-2025-litchfield-county). One can also ask for a specific town—Salisbury for example, which can be viewed at [www.williampitt.com/community-real-estate/litchfield-hills/salisbury-ct/market-report](http://www.williampitt.com/community-real-estate/litchfield-hills/salisbury-ct/market-report). This is a wonderful way to quickly get a sense of the real estate markets without reinventing the wheel!



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ADVERTISEMENT



POST OFFICE

Continued from Page A1



Hilary Van Wright created several rubber stamp designs that can be used at the Norfolk Post Office.

be an ambassador to Norfolk, the awesome town that I am grateful to have raised my four daughters in, surrounded by natural beauty and super talented people.”

As part of the campaign, Norfolk artist Hilary Van Wright designed four custom rubber stamps featuring snowflakes inscribed with “Ice Box of CT,” which postal customers can use to decorate outgoing packages.

The initiative was organized by the town’s Economic Development Commission after rumors circulated about potential reductions to the post office’s hours. While officials determined there was no immediate threat, the discussion prompted broader reflection on the importance of supporting essential local services that are often taken for granted.

Veronesi said the post office is prepared for the busy season ahead.

“Your postal team at the Norfolk Post Office is proud to be the most affordable, reliable way to send cheer this holiday season, and we’re



IMAGES BY PROVIDED



PHOTO BY JENNIFER ALMQUIST

Norfolk Postmaster Michelle C. Veronesi

ready to deliver exceptional service during the holidays and beyond.”

The campaign will also include a public program at the Norfolk Library on Sunday, Feb. 8, at 3 p.m., featuring USPS Art Director Antonio Alcalá, a designer of iconic U.S. postage stamps. Alcalá will speak about the history and design of stamps, and a hands-on stamp-design session for children is also being planned.

For a complete list of holiday mailing and shipping dates, visit [usps.com/holidayshippingdates](https://usps.com/holidayshippingdates)

FORUM

Continued from Page A1

oped countries is about 1.5 children per woman. “So we need to look at fertility projections after those decades and see if they’re likely to decline as fast as they’ve risen over the past two centuries resulting in global depopulation,” he said.

Prefacing their remarks throughout the talk that their theories are likely, but not certain, the two, who are both economic demographers and associate professors of economics at the University of Texas at Austin, say long-term depopulation over the century is probable. That would occur if the total fertility rate falls lower than two children per two adults.

Spears said so far there are fewer deaths per year

than births, but eventually those numbers will meet. In 2012 there were 146 million births around the world. That is more than any other year since.

“We’re not saying fertility rates are falling; we’re saying they are likely to fall below 2 children per couple and stay there,” said Spears.

Geruso said evidence shows the likelihood of heading into a future with low birth rates. “As long as data has been kept, we’ve seen that as a path for hundreds of years. The baby boom was a blip. The rates went down before and after.”

There is no simple answer as to why fertility rates are low, said Spears. He posed the question as to whether

it’s affordability, a decline in religiosity, gender-equal societies? None of those fit the story, he said.

They then brought up the idea that humans cause environmental harm, so wouldn’t it be a benefit to have fewer people emitting carbon into the air? Climate change is important and urgent, but some demographers say waiting six decades to see equalized birth and death rates and thus decarbonization, is way too long, said Spears. Instituting rules and policies is the way to go, he said, pointing out how in India, where he’s done a lot of research, air quality was a huge problem. The birth rate increased, but regulations helped to improve the air.

“We’re advocating stability,” said Spears. “If we want a future, parenting can be a successful option. We need to have more. If people want to have children, they can. Declining population is not going to solve our problems.”

Geruso said, “We’re lucky to live in a time when many others live with us.”

Spears talked about all those who have made our lives richer, longer and better than they were 200 years ago. All advances have come from people who inhabit the earth. We need a future where there are more people and more opportunities. In a depopulated society, you’ll have fewer things you want and need. It’s not a solution to have fewer of us.”

NRRA

Continued from Page A1

authority.

At the Dec. 11 meeting of the Northwest Hills Council of Governments (NHCOG) — a regional planning body representing 21 municipalities in northwest Connecticut — Director of Community and Economic Development Rista Malanca encouraged more towns to sign on. “We need towns to join the Northwest Resource Recovery Authority to show your support, show this is what you want to do,” she said.

Salisbury First Selectman

Curtis Rand said his municipality is planning a town meeting in January to vote on a resolution to join the NRRA. Cornwall’s Board of Selectmen recently discussed scheduling a town meeting in the winter for the same purpose. Sharon, Falls Village and North Canaan have also expressed continued interest in pursuing a public option.

Kent is the northernmost member of the Housatonic Resource Recovery Authority, a regional solid waste authority representing 14 mu-

nicipalities stretching south to Ridgefield.

NHCOG towns expressed interest in joining HRRA in 2024, but they were denied and set out to develop the NRRA.

“We also have been having conversations with the Capital Region Council of Governments and the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments to think about how we can use existing resources, maybe some of these grant funds, to bring in shared resources or shared staffing

that will help with some of the recycling coordinating efforts,” said Malanca.

With grant funds secured, NRRA aims to grow to a point that it can take over operations at Torrington Transfer Station to serve as a regional hauling hub. What happens to the trash after that has yet to be determined. Currently, it is being shipped to a landfill out of state.

The existing municipal refuse hauling contracts that were established with the state expire in 2027.

COOKIES

Continued from Page A1

ies allowed and label cookies with any potential allergens. As cookies arrived, scents of vanilla and lemon filled the air.

Britta Sallick, manager of The Center on Main, organized the event. “I was always the dessert baker in my family, especially peanut butter cookies.” She added, “A cookie swap seemed like a fun way to get the community together.”

Her baking, however, was not without travails. The first batch of pistachio shortbread for the exchange fell off the parchment paper as she was taking them out of the oven and crumbled on the oven floor.

Jenny Law didn’t exactly make a cookie. She made Buttercrunch, which she said is more of a candy. She was “very excited” about the cookie swap and ate something before coming so she wouldn’t be tempted to eat any cookies on the way home.

Carol Jenkins and her granddaughter, Edith Losh, baked cut-out shortbread cookies in red and green.

They had fun baking together for the holidays.

Ruth Hackett brought candy cane cookies. She used natural food coloring to make the red stripes. “I believe they use beet juice.” She added, “The secret is almond extract. It gives that extra ‘ting’”

Emily Peterson brought ginger cremes. “My grandfather’s favorite cookie,” she explained. “We make them every December to honor him. I made a double batch and gave half of them to my grandmother.”

At 5:15 p.m., Sallick declared it time to swap sweets. She continued, “I am very excited about all the cookies on the table. Extra points for being creative.”

She pointed out white boxes with gold stars, provided for the participants. “Pick out two dozen cookies.” She added, “There is one exception. Two-for-one on the chocolate crinkles.”

The bakers circled the cookie filled table, picking cookies to take home – or sample in the car on the way there.

SELECTMEN

Continued from Page A1

Bunce, who took office from Brian Ohler following last month’s close election, acknowledged that the transition has included some early bumps and thanked town officials and staff for their work during a period he said has not been without challenges.

“I’d like to thank Brian for all the efforts that he’s put in in this transition,” Bunce said at the meeting. “This process has not been perfect. We are working through it all.”

Among the challenges cited in recent weeks was a disruption in town communications after Bunce was unable to gain access to the town’s official government Facebook page during the transition. Ohler said technical issues prevented him from transferring administrative control of the page—and it was deleted.

A new Facebook page was launched on Dec. 10, which has about 350 followers.

Ohler, who was seated beside Bunce at the meeting, continues to serve as a selectman.

Bunce said newly elected officials have been settling

into their roles and highlighted several town employees for their work during the transition. He thanked Krysti Segalla, incoming town clerk, noting that her office has seen significant turnover in recent months.

“She’s been working really hard on her certifications and updating her office and cleaning up things,” Bunce said. “There’s been a lot of people in and out of that office over the last six or seven months, so there’s lots of loose ends. She’s doing a great job.”

Segalla will assume the role of town clerk on Jan. 6, having been elected to the position in November. She is currently serving as assistant town clerk under Jean Jacquier, whose term ends Jan. 5.

Bunce also praised Tax Collector Rebecca Mochak, saying residents have taken note of her professionalism, and Treasurer Melanie Neely for her efforts to build the framework needed to pursue additional grants for the town. He thanked Teri Aitken and Christian Allyn for helping during the transition period.

Ohler later addressed at-

tendees and offered public support for Bunce.

“It’s great to see everyone,” Ohler said. “I think we all need to commend Jesse on his first month taking over the reins of this town.”

Ohler acknowledged that political transitions can be difficult but said the board’s shared goal remains unchanged.

“The common denominator is we just want what is best for the town, and that’s it,” Ohler said. “It’s pretty black and white.”

He urged residents to focus on constructive dialogue and move past divisive or unproductive commentary.

Ohler pledged his support for Bunce.

“You have my assurance. I

will give you my full support when it is of benefit to the town,” he said. “We can have hard conversations. It will be professional. It will be based on substance, not rhetoric.”

Newly elected Selectman Melissa Pinardi, attending her first meeting since taking office, also addressed residents and reflected on her first month in the role.

“I’m honored to have been elected for the next two years,” Pinardi said. “I’m really excited to see what we all can do together.”

She thanked both Bunce and Ohler for their guidance as she learns the responsibilities of the position and echoed calls for a collaborative and forward-looking approach.

YOUR NEWS

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NO NEWSPAPERS PRINTED THURSDAY, JANUARY 1<sup>ST</sup>

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!

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# COMPASS

Your Guide to Tri-State Arts, Entertainment & Lifestyle

FILM: BRIAN GERSTEN

## ‘The Nutcracker at Wethersfield’ captures creativity and resilience in dark times

In the fall of 2020 — months into a global shutdown and at the onset of a long, uncertain winter — a group of artists, organizers and community members in the area undertook what many believed to be an impossible task: staging a full reimaging of “The Nutcracker” during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Their story is now captured in the new documentary “The Nutcracker at Wethersfield,” directed by award-winning filmmaker Annie Sundberg.

For Sundberg — long known for documentaries tackling heavy social issues — the project was a significant departure from her previous work. “It really felt like a fairy tale. This just felt very pure in an incredibly delightful way,” she said. The idea began when choreographer and Ballet Collective artistic director Troy Schumacher feared that the annual “Nutcracker,” a lifeline for dancers and audiences alike, would vanish entirely that year. “We all began to realize that ‘The Nutcracker’ was probably going to end up getting canceled,” he said. “As working artists this also felt very scary for us, because ‘The Nutcracker’ is such an essential part of our year.” Around this time, Schumacher was invited on an impromptu tour of the Wethersfield Estate in Amenia. After seeing the historic home and gardens, he immediately recognized its potential. “We weren’t expecting to have this revelation that this place could actually serve as the perfect and perhaps only place that a ‘Nutcracker’ could exist that year.” But that’s ex-



Still from the movie ‘The Nutcracker at Wethersfield’.

actly what he came away thinking. As the seed of an idea gradually became something more tangible, Tara Schafer — the executive director of the Wethersfield Estate and an executive producer of “The Nutcracker at Wethersfield” — recalls the legwork that went into the project. “The entire production was really made possible by people of the Millerton, Millbrook and Pine Plains area. People in the community really rallied together to support these artists to try to achieve the impossible.” What followed was a whirlwind. Over five weeks, 24 New York City Ballet dancers lived and rehearsed on site — masked, distanced and isolated — to bring the performance to life. And the performance itself prioritized an audience who most needed joy that season: frontline workers, first responders and community members deeply affected by the pandemic. Sundberg’s film captures both the dreamlike

beauty of the production and the emotional stakes behind it. “It’s about creative resilience,” she said. For Schumacher, the memory remains powerful. “It was this really bright spot in a very dark, scary time for all of us,” he said. “People can come together and work hard and achieve things that seem impossible.” For the filmmakers, the dancers and the local volunteers who helped make the performance possible, “The Nutcracker at Wethersfield” stands as a testament not only to artistic determination but also to community collaboration in times of uncertainty. This holiday season, the film offers audiences a chance to revisit a moment when creativity, courage and holiday spirit helped light the way through darkness. The film, which had its world premiere at DOC NYC, screened at The Moviehouse in Millerton on Thursday, Dec. 11, and was followed by a Q&A with director Annie

Sundberg and executive producer Tara Schafer. Upcoming screenings will take place Thursday, Dec. 18, at Upstate

Continued on B3

MUSIC: MIKE COBB

### Crescendo presents holiday concerts in Great Barrington and Lakeville

Crescendo, the award-winning music organization of the Berkshires, presents several concerts this holiday season, including A Tapestry of Traditions: Unraveling the History of Christmas Carols and A Baroque Portrait: Élisabeth Jacquet de La Guerre. A Tapestry of Traditions explores the history of holiday carols. The Crescendo Chorus and Vocal Ensemble, accompanied and directed by Christine Gevert at the organ, will trace the origins and development of carols and Christmas songs, their evolution over centuries and their adaptation across cultures. “Song and dance were very important at the ancient winter solstice celebrations of the Northern Hemisphere,” said Gevert. “While we don’t have the original music from these festivities, modern poets and composers have written about this dark time of the year when we yearn for hope, joy and symbolically search for light.” The program starts with a winter solstice piece that superimposes a secular poem, sung by one choir, with a Latin Christmas prayer, sung by a second choir, accompanied by handbells. “The Romans celebrated the feast of Saturnalia in a very similar way to what we do for Christmas. We present a piece that portrays the spirit of Saturnalia — something you don’t get to hear very

Continued on next page



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PERFORMANCE: NATALIA ZUKERMAN

# All is calm, all is bright as Kingston prepares for Unsilent Night

In the spirit of community and creativity, Kingston will host its sixth annual Unsilent Night on Dec. 19, an immersive, musical walking experience created by composer Phil Kline. The event transforms the streets into a moving soundscape, inviting participants to become part of a living, breathing musical composition.

Kline, a veteran of New York City's downtown scene with a résumé that zigzags from rock clubs to revered museums, has long delighted in blurring the boundaries between public art and public ritual. Raised in Akron, Ohio, he came to New York to study English literature and music at Columbia University, then embedded himself in the unruly creative ferment

of the early 1980s East Village. He co-founded the post-punk band the Del-Byzanteens with Jim Jarmusch and James Nares, collaborated with Nan Goldin on the soundtrack to "The Ballad of Sexual Dependency," and played guitar in Glenn Branca's cacophonous ensemble, all experiences that shaped his appetite for art that is social, subversive and never quite where most expect it to land.

Unsilent Night debuted in Greenwich Village in 1992 and has since traveled to more than 175 cities on five continents. The premise is simple: Participants walk a set route while playing one of four prerecorded tracks on phones, speakers or whatever portable device they can wrangle. The piece lasts 45 min-



PHOTO BY TAYLOR DAVIDSON

**Unsilent Night is an original composition by Phil Kline, written specifically to be heard outdoors in the month of December. Since its debut in 1992, the piece has been performed in cities around the world.**

utes, "the length of one side of a cassette," Kline likes to remind people, and the format he originally composed for.

In practice, Unsilent Night is far more than a clever technological

conceit. Its chiming, layered textures refract through streets and buildings, creating what one Wall Street Journal critic described as "bell sounds [that] lap up against buildings and

ricochet all around," warming "even the coldest of hearts."

That sense of immersion has resonated with critics over the years. Jon Pareles of The New York Times called the experience "suspended wonderment."

For Kevin Muth, the organizer of the Kingston event, that feeling was immediate and personal.

"I went to my first Unsilent Night in Manhattan in 2002," Muth said. "I was new in town, hadn't quite found my people yet, but braved the cold and took the subway with my boombox to Washington Square Park. It was snowing. There were hundreds of people gathered around the fountain and volunteers handing out cassette tapes. There was a countdown, and we all pressed play at the same time and started walking. The music was sparkling and shimmering, and the crowd felt like a funny mix of solemn and festive. As the procession slowly made its way east, the sounds changed from chimes, to choruses, to church bells, bouncing off the buildings and

mixing with the honking horns of traffic waiting for us to pass. When the crowd reached the Christmas tree in Tompkins Square Park, the music faded except for one warbling boombox with dying batteries that made everybody laugh. The crowd cheered and dispersed, and it became one of my favorite annual holiday traditions."

This year's walk will begin at Frog Alley Park in Kingston's Uptown/Stockade District at 6 p.m. Participants are encouraged to download the track or the Unsilent Night app in advance and bring Bluetooth speakers if possible. The route takes about 45 minutes and is, as Muth describes it, "a moving boombox parade."

Kline has likened the experience to a contemporary twist on a familiar holiday tradition. "I always thought of it as being sort of a variation on Christmas caroling," Kline said, "a combination of my own work and memories of caroling back in Ohio."

For Muth, the event's enduring appeal lies in its openness and emotional range. "I really love this event because the holiday season can mean different things to different people," he said. "For some, it's a time of celebration and joy, and for others, it may be a time of reflection, or sadness. This event allows us to come together and experience the season however we need to."

On Dec. 19, residents are invited to come as they are and take part in the transformation of Kingston's streets. As Kline put it, "Sometimes the only way to escape is to use your imagination."

For more information, visit [unsilentnight.com](http://unsilentnight.com).

## ...Crescendo *Continued from previous page*

often. The rest of the program features carols and holiday songs that are mostly familiar, in traditional settings, with modern arrangements for chorus, organ, bells and percussion. Audience members will be invited to join in singing some of them."

The concert will be held at 4 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 21, at Saint James Place in Great Barrington.

Crescendo will close out the year with a New Year's solo recital of music by French composer Élisabeth Jacquet de La Guerre, one of the few prominent female composers of her era. The concert will include sonatas for solo violin and basso continuo and the "Suite in D Minor" for harpsichord, complemented by "Caprices" for solo violin by Louis-Gabriel Guillemain. Edson Scheid will perform on Baroque violin, with Gevert on harpsichord.

Regarding A Baroque Portrait, Gevert said, "Jacquet de La Guerre was a Baroque composer, harpsichordist and organist, and the first woman to compose an opera in France. A musical prodigy, she made her debut as a singer and harpsichordist at the court of Louis XIV at a very young age. She later became his protégé and court musician, something unusual for a woman in those times. The harpsichord piece on our program is from her collection published in 1687, noteworthy especially because publication of harpsichord music was still rare in France in the 17th



PHOTO BY STEPHEN POTTER

**Crescendo, under the direction of Christine Gevert, present two holiday concerts.**

century, even for male composers."

These concerts will take place at 4 p.m. Dec. 27 at Saint James Place, and at 4 p.m. Dec. 28 at Trinity Church in Lakeville.

Both venues are historic buildings that

enrich the performances acoustically and visually. Tickets are available at [crescendomusic.org](http://crescendomusic.org) and on a first-come, first-served basis at the door beginning 45 minutes before each concert. Support for the concerts is provided by

the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development/Connecticut Office of the Arts through funding from the Connecticut Legislature, with additional support from NBT Bank and WMNR Fine Arts Radio.



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# A designers weighs in on the color of the year

Every January, the design world waits with the same anticipation fashion lovers reserve for runway week. Pantone announces its Color of the Year, something it has been doing for more than two decades. Suddenly, our social feeds fill with mood boards, swatches and breathless predictions about what we'll all be painting our living rooms.

For 2026, the palette designers were buzzing about ranged from Sunlit Citrine (a soft, optimistic yellow), to Quill Blue (a dusty, serene blue-green), to Verdant Drift (an herbal, grounding green). All beautiful. All fresh. And they would photograph beautifully on Instagram.

But around here — where the landscape itself offers a centuries-old palette of neutrals like pine, granite and sky — clients often ask:

“Should I jump on a color trend?”

And the answer?

Maybe... but carefully.

As an interior designer, I see the same pattern every year. A new color lands, and clients begin to wonder whether their red Shaker cabinets or their beloved Hale Navy office suddenly feel “out.” After all, we’re surrounded by inspiration here — from the quiet sophistication of Salisbury’s historic homes to the

## WRITER'S NOTEBOOK KERRI-LEE MAYLAND

newly renovated estates near the shores of the Grove.

Trends bring a spark. They keep design exciting. They remind us that a refresh is always possible, even in spaces we’ve lived in for years. There is nothing wrong with loving what’s new.

But there’s a flip side designers talk about quietly — especially when we chat at design centers while flipping through samples.

Here’s the truth: What’s “in” will always go out. Always. Often faster than we expect.

Chasing trends year after year can leave your home feeling disconnected — a collection of quick fixes instead of a story. And in the Northwest Corner where many homes carry histories and families carry traditions, constant reinvention can be exhausting (and expensive). When everything changes every year, nothing feels settled. Your home should be a sanctuary, not a revolving door of what’s new and next.

New throw pillows are one thing. New furniture? A new backsplash? Those decisions add up quickly — especially as the trend cycle acceler-

ates.

If your choices hinge on what designers say is hot, you risk losing what you actually love. Your home becomes a showroom, not a reflection of the people who live there.

And authenticity is everything. Our homes don’t need to look like every city apartment or every online mood board. They should look like us — rooted in the natural textures, calm silhouettes and lived-in beauty we are surrounded by.

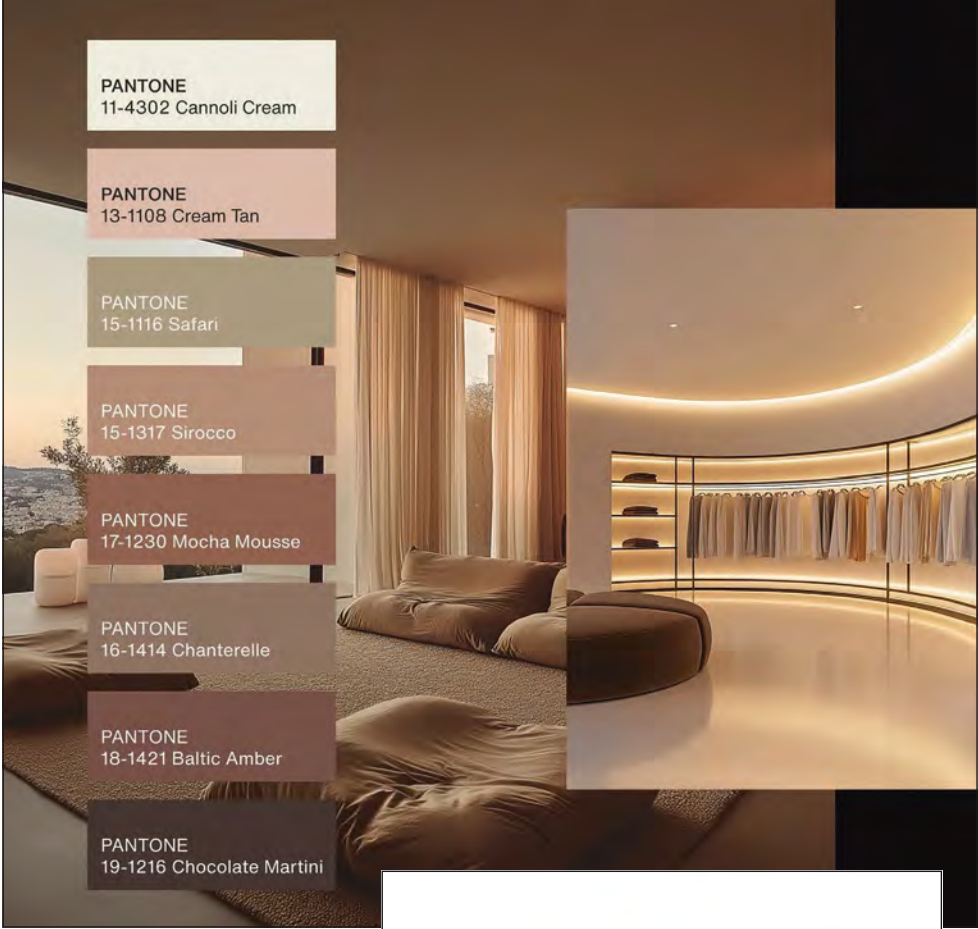
So... How Do You Stay Current Without Redecorating Every Year? This is where the fun begins.

You can touch on trends without committing to a full remodel. In fact, the most stylish homes blend timeless bones with fresh seasonal energy.

Here’s how: Your big pieces — sofas, cabinets, rugs, built-ins, lighting — should be neutral, well-made and enduring. Think warm whites, natural woods and the slate blues and greens that mirror our surroundings.

Introduce Pantone-inspired colors through art that can rotate, pillows and throws, small side tables or vases, seasonal florals, even a painted back-of-bookshelf or interior door. These changes give you the hit of “new” without major commitment.

Nature always sets the



PHOTOS PROVIDED

For 2025, the Pantone Color Institute selects PANTONE 17-1230, "Mocha Mousse," as the color of the year.



palette better than Pantone ever could. Mossy greens, stone walls and honey-gold fields — those hues are forever. If a trend aligns with the colors we already see outside our windows, it will never truly feel dated.

If a color or style speaks to you emotionally, it’s less likely to feel temporary. When a trend resonates with your taste, it becomes part of your home’s narrative, not a passing

phase.

In the end, trends are fun — a gentle nudge, a fresh lens, a reason to re-imagine. But your home anywhere in the Northwest Corner should feel like you every day of the year.

So enjoy the Pantone buzz, pull in a touch of Sunlit Citrine or a

whisper of Quill Blue or Cloud Dancer if it calls to you, but let the bones of your home remain beautifully, confidently timeless. Design, after all, isn’t a moment. It’s your best way of living.

Kerri-Lee Mayland is an Emmy award-winning news anchor and designer. She lives in Lakeville.

## ...Nutcracker *Continued from B1*

Films/Orpheum Theater in Saugerties, New York, and Saturday, Dec. 20, at Bantam Cinema in Bantam, Connecticut. Both screenings will be followed by a Q&A with Sundberg.

For a listing of upcoming screenings, visit: nutcrackerfilm.com. For those who can’t make it to a local screening, the film is also available to rent exclusively through the website from Dec. 21 through Jan. 5. You can even gift a rental to someone for the holidays!



Movie poster for “The Nutcracker at Wethersfield”

PHOTO PROVIDED

## Correction

An article on “Peter Pan” at the Sharon Playhouse misspelled the name of co-director and co-adaptor Drew Ledbetter. The article also misstated several cast roles: Sienna Rose Lyon plays Skylights and Lily Starr; Kellen Lockton plays First Twin; and Sam Norbet plays Second Twin.



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TRI-CORNER CALENDAR

Items are printed as space permits. Submit calendar items to editor@lakevillejournal.com

DECEMBER 18

The Holiday Pop Up Shop at the Gallery of Dreams

Gallery of Dreams, 156 Gay St. Sharon, Conn.

Fine art, gifts and artisan crafts by local artists. 860-671-4651. Open this week Dec. 18 to 21, Thursday to Sunday, noon to 5 p.m.

DECEMBER 19

Closing Reception for Local Artist Marilyn Hock

Sharon Town Hall, 63 Main St., Sharon, Conn.

This is the last opportunity for art lovers to view and purchase work from Marilyn Hock. Closing reception will be 5 to 7 p.m.

Make & Mingle

4 Studio Hill Rd., Kent, Conn. 4:30 to 6 p.m.

Join us for Make & Mingle—a gathering where Kent's history comes alive through community connection.

Enjoy wine & cheese while making a fun holiday craft for gift-giving. Bring your curiosity and enjoy an evening celebrating Kent's unique heritage. Your participation helps ensure that the tales and artifacts of this beautiful town continue to resonate with future generations. Tickets: www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/make-and-mingle

DECEMBER 20

Holiday Themed Story Time

David M. Hunt Library, 63 Main St., Falls Village, Conn. huntlibrary.org

At 10:30 a.m. join Miss Anna for stories about winter holidays, enjoy snacks and make a fun ornament to take home.

Holiday Cookie Decorating with Chef Emma

Troutbeck, 515 Leedsville Road, Amenia, N.Y.

Dec. 20, 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., join Pastry Chef Emma Isakoff for a family-friendly cookie decorating session featuring fresh baked cookies and holiday treats. Each kit includes materials for six to eight cookies; limit one to two people per kit. Children 12 and under must be accompanied by a parent.

Cornwall Christmas Pageant

United Church of Christ (UCC), 8 Bolton Hill Road, Cornwall, Conn.

The traditional Christmas story and carols begins at 7:30 p.m. at the UCC in Cornwall, culminating with the giving of "white gifts" for children in need.

DECEMBER 21

Cornwall Parade of Lights

Cornwall Village, Pine Street, Cornwall, Conn.

Cornwall Parade of Lights in Cornwall Village, Sunday, Dec. 21. Lineup at 5:30 p.m. and step off at 6 p.m.

Holiday Block Printing and Bakery Pop-Up at the Center on Main

The Center on Main, 103 Main St., Falls Village, Conn. thecenteronmain.org

From 1 to 3 p.m., free for all ages. Print your own wrapping paper, cards, or gift tags using stamps carved from sprouting potatoes, turnips, and radishes from Adamah. While your creations dry, enjoy tea and browse a Black Crust Bakery sourdough pop-up.

A Tapestry of Traditions

Saint James Place, 352 Main St., Great Barrington, Mass.

Crescendo explores the history and evolution of beloved holiday carols, with audience sing-alongs. Sun., Dec. 21, 4 p.m., Saint James Place, 352 Main Street Great Barrington. Tickets \$15-\$80 at crescendomusic.org.

Winter Solstice at the Library

The Norfolk Library, 9 Greenwoods Road East, Norfolk, Conn. norfolklibrary.org

Celebrate the Winter Solstice around the fire in the Great Hall from 4 to p.m. We'll gather with warm beverages and light refreshments, and participate in a rolled candle craft. There will be time for conversations and short readings, so feel free to bring a solstice poem or reflection. This program is limited to 16 adults. To register, please visit www.norfolklibrary.org or call front desk circulation 860-542-5075 ext. 2.

DECEMBER 23

Cocoa & Crafts

David M. Hunt Library, 63 Main St., Falls Village, Conn. huntlibrary.org

Join Miss Anna on Tuesday, Dec. 23 and Tuesday, Dec. 30 from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. for cocoa and crafting! Hot cocoa and a light snack will be served while we make star ornaments out of recycled books (on the 23rd) and recycled book paper lanterns (on the 30th). All ages are welcome,

Last week's WotW

E	Q	U	A	L
D	E	C	O	Y
N	I	E	C	E
C	R	E	E	K
C	H	E	E	R

registration is requested. Sign up here: docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc1M06J0po\_eglz-e5z6Ge5p8iwSWE9pQn7ky5JSHWd1Su0YA/viewform

DECEMBER 27

New Year's Recital: Élisabeth Jacquet de La Guerre

Saint James Place, 352 Main St., Great Barrington, Mass. and Trinity Church, Lakeville, Conn.

A New Year's solo program featuring works by Jacquet de La Guerre, performed by Edson Scheid and Christine Gevert. Sat., Dec. 27, 4 p.m., Saint James Place, 352 Main Street Great Barrington; Sun., Dec. 28, 4 p.m., Trinity Church, Lakeville. Tickets \$15-\$80 at crescendomusic.org.

DECEMBER 30

Hidden Treasures Storytelling Tour Featuring our Revolutionary Founders

Scoville Memorial Library, 38 Main St., Salisbury, Conn. scovillelibrary.org

On Tuesday, Dec. 30, 5 to 6:30 p.m., join Scoville Library staff and friends for some holiday-magic time travel! Hear thrilling tales from our Revolutionary founders, explore the library's towers, climb secret staircases, and discover hidden treasure chambers. All ages welcome. Registration is required at scovillelibrary.libcal.com/event/13599821.

Word of the Week

Hints relate to adjacent five-letter words. Solve to reveal correct letters. Green tiles indicate correctly placed letters in the Word of the Week. Yellow tiles indicate a correct letter in the wrong place. Uncolored tiles indicate letters that do not appear in the WotW.

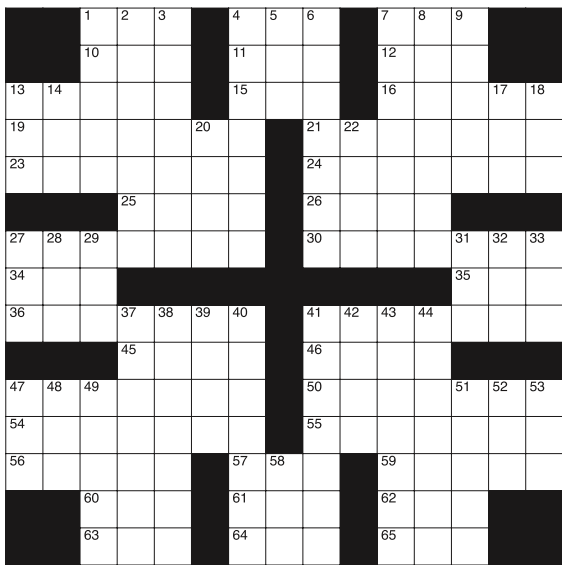

- Mean kid in school
- Window material
- "ZZZzzzz" in comics
- Piece of pie
- Slipping on ice

WORD OF THE WEEK ©THE LAKEVILLE JOURNAL

Brain Teasers

CLUES ACROSS

- American automotive titan
- Tire term
- Two-year-old sheep
- Indigenous people of Thailand
- Anti-Soviet Cold War group
- Actress de Armas
- Not moving
- Cool!
- Plants of the arum family
- Connected with touch
- Pen stain
- Monetary units
- School kids' art project
- Early Bell Canada executive
- Sword
- Hates
- Fixed in one place
- Pie \_ \_ \_ mode
- Moved swiftly on foot
- Carrier on vehicle
- A path to get through
- "Rule, Britannia" composer
- Spiritual leader
- Flowing
- Respectful compliments
- Cure
- Soft, lightweight fabric
- Building material
- Japanese delicacy
- A way to cause to be swollen
- One and only
- You might get one in summer
- Wrath
- Thus far
- They \_
- Employee reference number



- Ethnic people of Ethiopia
- Engine additive
- Explorers group
- Written account
- Consumed
- Opposite of first
- No (slang)
- Government lawyers
- NY Giants great
- Small amount
- A way to save for your future
- Fall behind
- Midway between northeast and east
- Head pain
- Wildly popular sport
- "Princess Diaries" actress Hathaway
- Boat race
- About fish
- Nursemaid

- Able to be marketed
- Not as large
- Parts per billion (abbr.)
- Paddle
- Oneness
- Bitter chemical
- Not around
- Very fast airplane
- Main tributary of the Rhine

December 11 Solution

M	A	B	B	I	S	S	A	L	I	N	E		
M	A	D	E	I	R	A	A	B	A	L	O	N	E
A	B	A	N	A	L	O	G	I	Z	E	D	A	
H	I	N	D	S	A	U	G	E	A	G	E	R	
D	E	U	S	A	T	E	S	G	R	A	N		
I	S	M	R	A	M	D	K	G	O	R	E		
E	X	E	C	O	R	O	G	U	E	S			
A	C	R	I	S	W	U	N	D	T				
B	R	A	V	E	D	M	A	I	O				
R	U	T	T	A	R	P	O	N	H	U	S		
E	S	O	P	B	A	S	A	L	T	O	N	E	
A	A	R	O	N	P	I	P	S	A	G	E	R	
S	D	S	A	T	I	R	I	C	A	L	A	U	
T	E	H	E	R	A	N	S	A	R	C	A	S	M
S	E	R	A	P	E	T	R	I	A	G	E		

Sudoku

		4					6		
7						1			
		8							4
					3		9	6	
1					6				
8					7	9	3	4	
	6						8		9
2								3	
		4			2	5			

Level: Intermediate

December 11 Solution

5	9	8	3	1	6	2	4	7
1	3	7	4	8	2	9	6	5
4	2	6	7	5	9	8	1	3
2	6	9	1	4	7	5	3	8
3	7	1	8	9	5	6	2	4
8	5	4	2	6	3	7	9	1
6	1	2	5	3	8	4	7	9
7	8	3	9	2	4	1	5	6
9	4	5	6	7	1	3	8	2

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PETER HALLE, FALLS VILLAGE

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EVAN FRIEDMAN, LAKEVILLE

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Our Towns

Holiday Extravaganza resonates with classic songs in Falls Village

By Robin Roraback

FALLS VILLAGE — Bright holiday lights, a decorated tree and live music set the scene Saturday, Dec. 13, as residents gathered at The Center on Main for the Falls Village Holiday Extravaganza.

Adam Sher, MC for the event, welcomed attendees and asked, “What is an extravaganza?” After audience comments, it was decided that “extra means more.” The last two parts of the word come from wandering and celebration.

Sher totaled this up: “We are wandering from our traditional way of being into the holiday spirit and an extra way of being.” He continued, “We will have a few acts to help us wander.”

The first act was Sher himself singing “All I want for Christmas is You” as he played the guitar and encouraged the audience to join in. “Eight Days of Hannukah” was next. He finished with “Someday at Christmas.”

Next came author Anne Bidou who read an excerpt from her young adult novel, “Girl in the System: A True Chicago Orphan Story.” Her reading brought to mind snowy days and the excitement of snowball fights.

Sher then introduced, “Everybody’s favorite duo,



Leo and Brook Martinez, who make up the father and son duo, the Mystery Twins, perform at the Holiday Extravaganza in Falls Village on Saturday evening as a young audience member studies them with interest.

Brook and Leo Martinez also known as “The Mystery Twins.” While Leo played electric guitar and his father acoustic, they sang “White Winter Hymnal,” followed by Paul McCartney’s “Blackbird.”

Next Ruby Cammann sang an acapella version of “Hark the Herald Angels Sing.”

Then, Lara Mittaud on piano, Rachel Gall on violin and Dathalinn O’ Dea on the tin whistle played a series of lively jigs. Mittaud and Gall segued into a baroque piece.

Then the audience sang “Here We Go A Wassailing” accompanied by Gall and Mittaud as they made their way out to the town green for the tree lighting.

Before lighting the tree, First Selectman Dave Barger commented on the “fantastic turn-out” noting that there were 75 to 100 people. He thanked the organizers: The Center on Main, co-sponsor Hunt Library, his fellow

selectmen, the Recreation Committee and the public works department who set up all the lights.

As the tree lit up, Gall played “Oh, Christmas Tree” on her violin, followed by “Jingle Bells” and finally “Here Comes Santa Claus” as a firetruck decorated with multi-colored lights approached and Santa Claus emerged to lead the way back to the Center on Main, where he was available to listen to Christmas wishes.

While warming themselves and waiting to talk to Santa, cookies and cocoa were available to all.



Santa crosses the finish line, finishing next to last in a field of 48 runners.

Runners chase Santa

By John Coston

NORTH CANAAN — Forty-eight runners braved frigid temperatures to participate in the 5th Annual North Canaan Santa Chase 5K Road Race on Saturday, Dec. 13.

Michael Mills, 45, of Goshen, led the pack with a time of 19 minutes, 15 seconds, averaging a 6:12-per-mile pace. Mills won the race for the third time and said he stays in shape by running with his daughter, a freshman at Lakeview High School in Litchfield.

Don Green, 64, of Red Hook, New York, was second among male runners with a time of 21:17 and a 6:52-per-mile pace.

Becky Wilkinson, 47, of Southfield, Massachusetts, was the first woman to cross the finish line with a time of 22:16, averaging a 7:11-per-mile pace. Wilkinson finished fourth overall.

Margaret Banker, 52, of Lakeville, finished second among women runners with a time of 23:59 and a 7:44-per-mile pace.

Runners came from all over Connecticut, Massachusetts and New York. One runner listed home as London, England.

Many were members of

the Run 169 Towns Society, a group that is dedicated to completing races in every one of Connecticut’s 169 towns.

Elizabeth Smith, 32, of Manchester, a member of Run 169, said this was her 162nd town.

“I started 10 years ago,” she said.

Her husband, Daniel, 33, has run races in 73 Connecticut towns, now including North Canaan.

He was eager to know where to get a good cup of coffee after the race.

Santa, who got a head start on the group of runners but finished next to last with a time of 44:14 for a 14:15-per-mile pace, has been a feature in the North Canaan race since it started five years ago.

The 5K proceeds from a start in front of the North Canaan Elementary School on Pease Street to course around the Town Hall parking lot, up West Main Street past the transfer station to the state line and back.

Cheryl Ambrosi, 45, of Danbury, was the last to cross the finish line with her dog Benji.

“It was so much fun,” she said as she ended, even though she didn’t catch Santa.



PHOTOS BY RILEY KLEIN

12 days of Cornwall

West Cornwall was filled with holiday spirit Saturday, Dec. 13, as the 12 Days of Christmas Open Air Gallery kicked off. Attendees moved around town using a numbered map to view window displays inspired by the classic song. Each number corresponded to a location and a specific design, including “6 Geese a Laying,” created by Moon Zappa in the Cornwall Conservation Trust’s window, and “8 High Flying Dairy Darlings,” shown above, by Kate Ward at the Souterrain Gallery. Young visitors collected stickers at each stop to earn a prize. A warm opening reception was held at the Wish House, featuring pastries and “Santa’s Gluhwein,” a mulled wine served warm. The displays will remain on view through the holidays.



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Kent toy drive brightens holidays

By Ruth Epstein

KENT — Santa’s elves were toasty warm as they collected toys for the children of Kent.

Keeping with annual tradition, Fran Goodsell and Karen Iannucci manned the Stuff a Truck campaign sponsored by the Kent Volunteer Fire Department on Saturday, Dec. 6, and Sunday, Dec. 7. Sitting in front of a fire pit in the firehouse parking lot in between accepting donations from residents, they spoke of the incredible generosity displayed every season. That spirit of giving was clear from the piles of toys heaped on a table.

“This is always so gratifying,” Goodsell said, adding that several businesses and schools — including High Watch Recovery Center, Wilson’s, and the Kent and South Kent schools — de-



PHOTO BY RUTH EPSTEIN

**Katie Moore delivers toys to the Stuff a Truck campaign held by the Kent Volunteer Fire Department last weekend. Donated toys are collected so that parents, who need some assistance, may provide their children with gifts this Christmas. Accepting the donation are elves Fran Goodsell and Karen Iannucci.**

served special recognition for their support. She noted that South Kent School focuses on gifts for older children, a group that is often overlooked.

Unwrapped contributions are sought for children 1 to 15 years old who might otherwise find little or nothing from Santa, they said. The bounty will be set up at the Community House on Thursday, allowing parents to come and take what they want. If there are still items

left, grandparents are invited to “shop.”

The atmosphere was festive Saturday, as a stuffed dog began barking a Christmas tune whenever someone walked in front of it. A large decked-out bear posted at the parking lot entrance reminded passersby of the event. Visiting children were able to get a close-up look at the fire truck and could walk through the firehouse if they desired.

Goodsell and Iannucci were very grateful to those who donated wood for the fire pit. “And so many asked if they could bring us coffee or hot chocolate,” said Iannucci.

Goodsell said many who came talked about having grown children who were recipients of the gifts when their families were struggling.

“They are so glad to be able to give back,” she said.



PHOTO BY RUTH EPSTEIN

**A group joins together to share in the lighting of the menorah on the first night of Hanukkah on the Sharon town Green Sunday, Dec. 14.**



Sharon gathers to light menorah

By Ruth Epstein

SHARON — In an ecumenical atmosphere, the menorah on the Town Green was lit Sunday evening, Dec. 14, for the start of Hanukkah.

Carl Chaiet, who has been marking the Jewish holiday for several years, noted the candelabra used to observe the Festival of Lights, stands between the town’s Christmas tree and the creche, the latter sharing an electrical connection with it.

During the lighting ceremony, attended by close to 30 people, Chaiet lit the first candle. He had found the pieces of a candelabra about 20 years ago in his father’s basement, saved from a closed synagogue. As an artist, he saw the opportunity to reconstruct the disassembled piece of brass and bronze and erect it on the Green, with the approval of the then-Board of Selectmen.

Since then, he and his wife, Selectman Lynn Kear-

cher, lead a ceremony on the first night of Hanukkah. An additional light goes on each following night.

“The celebration of Hanukkah is a celebration of strength, determination and resilience,” he said. “Each year the message seems pertinent to all of us and we invite all faiths to join in the lighting.” One woman noted the importance of that message more so this year because of the mass shooting that took place in Australia that weekend with the killing of several people celebrating Hanukkah.

Chaiet recited some prayers and led the group in singing holiday songs. Since the Hanukkah miracle involved oil, it is customary to eat foods fried in oil. A favorite is the potato latke. Kearcher gave out their version—bags of potato chips—along with samples of circular pieces of chocolate wrapped in gold, known as Hannukah gelt, another holiday treat.

**Kent hosts Gingerbread Festival**

Shops on Main Street in Kent are a bit sweeter this month with the arrival of the Gingerbread Festival. Sugar palaces have been built at 10 locations, featuring classical designs, a gingerbread beach house and even a confectionery snow globe. They will be on display through the holidays.



PHOTOS BY LANS CHRISTENSEN



LEGAL NOTICES

**LEGAL NOTICE  
TOWN OF KENT**

The second installment of the Real Estate and Personal Property tax for the Grand List of 2024 is due and payable January 1, 2026. The Motor Vehicle Supplemental tax for the Grand List of 2024 is due and payable on January 1, 2026. The second installment of the Real Estate, Personal Property and the Motor Vehicle Supplemental tax for the Grand List of 2024 will become delinquent on Tuesday, February 3, 2026.

As soon as the tax becomes delinquent, it shall be subject to interest at the rate of 1.5% per month from January 1, 2026 until the same is paid.

Bills may be viewed and paid online by going to the Tax Collector’s page on the Town of Kent website at [www.townofkentct.gov](http://www.townofkentct.gov).

The Tax Collector’s office will be open from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday.

There is a red drop box next to the front door of the Town Hall for payments.

Payments are also welcome through the mail at P. O. Box 311, Kent, Connecticut 06757.

Deborah Devaux CCMC  
Tax Collector  
12-18-25  
01-08-26  
01-22-26

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS  
ESTATE OF  
JOAN A. MACVICAR  
Late of Salisbury  
(25-00455)**

The Hon. Jordan M. Richards, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Litchfield Hills Probate Court, by decree dated December 2, 2025, ordered that all claims must be presented to the fiduciary at the address below. Failure to promptly present any such claim may result in the loss of rights to recover on such claim.

The fiduciary is:  
Ellen C Marino  
Ellen C Marino  
596 Main Street  
Winsted, CT 06098  
Megan M. Foley  
Clerk  
12-18-25

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS  
ESTATE OF  
JANE B. LIPTON  
Late of North Canaan  
AKA  
Sibyl Jane Bryce Lipton  
(25-00460)**

The Hon. Jordan M. Richards, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Litchfield Hills Probate Court, by decree dated December 4, 2025, ordered that all claims must be presented to the fiduciary at the address below. Failure to promptly present any such claim may result in the loss of rights to recover on such claim.

The fiduciary is:  
Louise F Brown  
Vail & Vail, LLC  
5 Academy Street  
P.O. Box 568  
Salisbury, CT 06068  
Megan M. Foley  
Clerk  
12-18-25

**TAX COLLECTOR  
TOWN OF  
SALISBURY CT  
LEGAL NOTICE**

Pursuant to Sec 12-145 of the Connecticut State Statutes, the taxpayers of the Town of Salisbury are hereby notified the third installment of the Grand List October 1, 2024 is due and payable January 1, 2026. Pursuant to Section 12-71b of the Connecticut State Statutes, the Supplemental Motor Vehicle tax is due on January 1, 2026. Payments must be received or postmarked by February 2, 2026. If said Real Estate, Personal Property and Supplemental Motor Vehicle taxes are not paid on or before February 2, 2026, interest at the rate of 1 % (18% per year) will be added for each month from the time when such tax becomes due and payable until paid. Minimum interest \$2.00.

Mail to: Tax Collector, P.O. Box 338, Salisbury, CT 06068 or at Town Hall, 27 Main Street, Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 9am-4pm (Closed for lunch 12:30-1:30) or use the drop box located in the vestibule of the Town Hall or on side of building by parking area. Pay online [www.salisburyct.us](http://www.salisburyct.us). Click blue tab View/Pay Taxes. A fee is charged.

Dated at Salisbury CT this 3rd day of December 2025.

Jean F. Bell, CCMC  
Tax Collector  
Salisbury CT 06068  
12-18-25  
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Sports



PHOTOS BY RILEY KLEIN  
Anthony Labbadia throws it down Tuesday, Dec. 9.

Mountaineers fly high

By Riley Klein

FALLS VILLAGE — Housatonic Valley Regional High School's boys basketball team defeated Pine Plains High School 60-22 in a scrimmage Tuesday, Dec. 9.

The non-league preseason game gave both sides an opportunity to run the court ahead of the varsity season.

HVRHS's senior-heavy roster played with power and poise. The boys pulled ahead early and kept their foot on the gas through to the end.

By halftime the score was 33-8. Junior varsity players



Anthony Foley runs a fast break for HVRHS.

South Kent hockey sweeps series against Team Maryland

By Lans Christensen

KENT — South Kent School hosted a weekend of hockey when Team Maryland visited for a three-game stretch Dec. 12 to 14.

The Cardinals' 18U prep team cleaned up with decisive victories in the series and advanced to a season record of 22-11-1. Team Maryland's 18U team, a youth hockey development program based in Rockville, Maryland, moved to a season record of 8-10-2.

Action began Friday night with an 8 p.m. puck drop. South Kent came out strong and earned a 6-4 win against Team Maryland.



PHOTOS BY LANS CHRISTENSEN  
South Kent School outscored Team Maryland 16-9 in the three-game series.



Stepan Rezvyi attacks on offense for South Kent.



Alexander Sokolov sets up a play for South Kent in the Saturday game against Team Maryland.

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