

Local
Postal Customer

The Suffield Observer

Vol XXVII, No. 10

A Watchful Messenger

December 2025/January 2026

Don't Miss Suffield's Holiday House Tour

From a press release
From the Revolutionary era through the early twentieth century, Suff-

ield's historic residences remain notable for their enduring beauty and architectural significance.

This December, visitors are invited to tour five distinguished properties on North Main Street, each thoughtfully decorated with holiday-themed arrangements by the skilled designers of the Suffield

Garden Club.
This year's tour features the following treasures:



480 NORTH MAIN
Built in 1795, Alden House, or "Aldenheim", was built by Dr. Howard Alden. He and his wife Rhoda (Williston) and their 12 children lived there until his death in 1841, after which the property changed hands many times. In 2018, the property was subdivided, and the house and barn were renovated with modern updates. The owners were dedicated to preserving and restoring their original character.



71 STONEGATE
Built in 1900, this barn as well as the main house were previously part of the 20-acre property at 480 North Main Street. Old photos show the barn once faced west and sat closer to Main Street. Today it looks south, welcoming friends and neighbors. Set back from Main Street, it's become a favorite gathering spot for the owners, who see it as a perfect backdrop for celebrations in the heart of the town where they both grew up.

The Holiday House Tour is set for December 6 from 2 to 6 p.m., rain or shine. Shuttle buses will run between Suffield Senior Center parking lot and North Main Street for attendees.

Tickets for the Holiday House Tour will be available for purchase beginning November 1. You can buy tickets in person at the Garden Club's 6:30 p.m. event, "Sustainable Suffield" on November 3



500 NORTH MAIN
According to the Suffield Historical Society, the best research to date gives this historic farmhouse a build date of 1837 by Daniel M. Warner. When the 37-acre property was purchased and subdivided in 2018, it included a house, a barn, a tobacco warehouse and a large tobacco shed used to hang and cure tobacco leaves. The tobacco shed can still be seen at what is now 510 North Main Street.



532 NORTH MAIN
Built in 1818 by or for Apollos Norton, this distinguished historic residence underwent a comprehensive renovation in 2016 by its current owners. The exterior was meticulously restored to reflect its original architectural detailing, including solid mahogany trim around the window alcoves, eaves and gable roof. Inside, thoughtful restoration uncovered and preserved wide plank floors, exposed brick walls, authentic wood beams, and more.



541 NORTH MAIN
Built in 1776 and known as The Saddle Shop, Consider Williston, who fought in the Revolutionary War, had this shop built to house his leather goods business where he made and sold saddle bags and saddles. It was eventually converted to a private home and displays stunning colonial era wide pine floors, exposed beams, and even the original fireplace. The exterior wood siding and gently sloping roof preserve the Georgian-Saltbox typical of late 18th century New England dwellings.

at the Kent Library. Tickets are also available at Suffield Hardware, located at 63 Mountain Road, or online via the Suffield Garden Club's Facebook, Instagram, and official website: Facebook.com/

SuffieldGardenClub; Instagram.com/SuffieldGardenClub#; www.SuffieldGardenClub.org. Advance tickets are priced at \$35. On the day of the event, tickets will be available for \$40. On De-

cember 6, tickets may be picked up or purchased at the Suffield Senior Center between 10:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.
No pets, no strollers and no photography please. ☹

The
Suffield Observer

Editorial

Letter to the Editor

Write to
Inbox@TheSuffieldObserver.com

Don't Call it State Aid

The CT state government distributes Statutory Aid to Municipalities annually. Many of the people who control the state government like to remind the citizens about how generous they are when doing so. But are they really?

I investigated what the citizens of each municipality pay in personal income taxes to the state and compared it to the money the municipalities get back in state aid, using the most recent data available. It turns out that, in total, municipalities only get back 37% of what they pay in income taxes. If you drill down further, it's clear that some municipalities make out very nicely, while others don't do well at all.

Of the 169 municipalities in Connecticut, 23 get more state aid than what their citizens pay in income taxes while the remaining 146 get less, as follows:

	CT Income			
	CT Statutory Aid	Taxes Paid	Excess / (Deficit)	%
23 that get more	\$1,858,288,331	\$ 814,812,242	\$ 1,043,476,089	228%
146 that get less	1,314,261,477	7,870,206,379	(6,555,944,902)	17%
	\$3,172,549,807	\$8,685,018,621	\$ (5,512,468,814)	37%

Most of the municipalities that get more are cities and larger towns (e.g., Hartford, Bridgeport, New Haven, Waterbury), while suburban and rural towns like Suffield get less.

Looking at the data, it's reasonable to conclude that the state income tax is largely a mechanism to transfer wealth and income from some municipalities to others. It's also reasonable to ask whether all this money transferred to Connecticut cities actually solved any of their problems.

The taxpayers of Suffield only get back 31% of what they pay, as follows:

	CT Income			
	CT Statutory Aid	Taxes Paid	Excess / (Deficit)	%
Suffield	\$ 11,978,699	\$ 38,746,404	\$ (26,767,705)	31%

To make matters worse, even though the cost of everything, including Town government, rises each year due to the impact of inflation, state aid to Suffield has decreased over the last decade, as follows:

	FY 2014-15		FY 2024-25	
Education Cost Sharing (ECS)	\$	6,267,018	\$	6,163,712
Mashantucket Pequot & Mohegan Fund Grant		2,774,997		2,760,598
Tiered PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes)		2,588,799		2,227,287
Town Aid Road		290,658		291,827
Other		348,025		535,275
Total	\$	12,269,497	\$	11,978,699

In contrast, Hartford's state aid increased by approximately \$50,000,000, or 20%, over the same period.

This reduction in state aid, coupled with rising expenses, has resulted in a larger burden on local property taxpayers to fund the Town government (68% in FY 2024-25 compared to 65% in FY 2014-15 and, going back further, 61% in 1999-00).

This entire system of taxation and redistribution in Connecticut is very unfair and getting worse, especially when you also factor in all the unfunded mandates (over 1,400 and counting) on local governments and the continued erosion of local tax bases through tax exemptions and other changes. Add on top of that excessive regulation on businesses and poor energy policy and the result is the affordability crisis that we are all dealing with. The impact is reflected in Connecticut losing population in relation to other States, as evidenced in our decrease in Congressional representation and declining student counts throughout the State.

So, while some may continue to refer to the money we get back as "state aid," I liken it more to a bully taking our dollars, spending it on their friends, and throwing the change back at us.

Eric Harrington
Editor of the Month



A Town of Farms

Dear Editor,

Thank you, Ray Dalrymple, for the new feature showcasing farm stories – how appropriate for A Town of Farms!

Reading Margaret Godfrey Festi's experience working on our family farm brought back so many great memories.

She was on point about everything. Most of the kids back then were from Windsor Locks because it was more densely populated and easy to pick up a group of kids with one bus stop. And while we were sports rivals – how wonderful it was coming from Suffield to meet a whole new group of friends from our neighboring town.

While many of my friends were swimming at the town Country Club – I was lucky enough as a family member to start working tobacco even before the age of 14. It was hot and dirty, but it was also fun, and I will forever be grateful for the work ethic it taught me. AND we were too tired in the evenings to go out and get into any trouble!

I look forward to future farm stories, Ray!

Patti Ann Christian
Christian Farms

A Barn Salute to the Red, White and Blue



A newly painted tobacco barn in West Suffield as seen on Mountain Road.

Photo by Danny Cohan

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TOWN GOVERNMENT

December/January Commission Meetings

Please check the Town of Suffield website for time, location or schedule changes. Not all January meeting dates were available at Observer publishing time. Please see the Town Board and Commission Calendar.

ACCE Dec. 11 & 18 Jan. 8, 13, 15, 22, 27, 29 7 p.m., Town Hall	KML Commission Tues., Dec. 9, Jan. 13 7 p.m., Town Hall
Conservation Comm. Mon., Dec. 9 Jan. 13, 27 7 p.m., Town Hall	Parks & Rec. Comm. Wed., Dec. 10 7 p.m., Town Hall
Economic Dev. Comm. Thurs., Dec. 18 8:30 a.m., Town Hall	Perm. Bldg. Comm. Thurs., Dec. 18 7 p.m., Town Hall
Education, Board of Mon., Dec. 1 & 15 Jan. 5, 20, 26 6:30 p.m., SHS	P&Z Commission Mon., Dec. 15 7 p.m., Town Hall
Finance, Board of Mon., Dec. 8, Jan. 12 7 p.m., Town Hall	Police Commission Wed., Dec. 17 7 p.m., Police Station
Fire Commission Tues., Dec. 9 7 p.m. Fire Station, Ratley Road	Selectmen, Board of Wed., Dec. 3, Jan. 7 & 21 7 p.m., Town Hall
Historic District Comm. Mon., Dec. 1, Jan. 5 7:30 p.m., Town Hall	Social Service Comm. Fri., Dec. 19, Jan. 16 8 a.m., SCA Office
	WPCA Tues., Dec. 9 7 p.m., WPCA 844 East St. South

First Selectman’s Update



Colin Moll

As we head into another season, I want to thank our community for your support in the recent election. I’m, once again, honored to begin another term as your First Selectman and look forward to our continued work ahead. As we move into the December and January, here are the key updates I’d like to share.

First, congratulations to all who were elected or re-elected in November and welcome to our new Board and Commission members. A big thank you to everybody who came out and voted. We had one of the largest voter turnouts for a municipal election. A special thanks to our Registrar’s office to include the full-time staff and volunteers who spent the entire day and the two weeks of early voting manning the polls.

On Veteran’s Day, the schools and Town once again partnered to honor and celebrate our veteran’s while bringing awareness and educating our students on the importance and meaning of the day. Thanks to the entire school faculty and staff, every Principal and Assistant Principal, Assistant Superintendent Laura Norbut, Superintendent Matt Dunbar, the Scouts, volunteers, VFW members, and of course our Veterans and their families for participating and hosting the events. I encourage any veterans for next year, who

didn’t come out, to join us on Veteran’s day for recognition and celebration.

The Department of Public Works recently completed a road study on all of our Town owned roads. Unlike past road studies, this one gives you the ability to interact and look at it online. For those interested to see what the condition of their road is and how the results were formulated, the link can be found in the DPW section under the “Department and Services” tab on our Town website. We will be utilizing this study to plan for future repairs, reconstruction and budgeting on the roads for both a short-and long-range plan.

We’ll be going out to bid over the next few months to get pricing on the planned reconstruction of the Windsor Locks Canal Trail. The project is funded through the Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTICIP), which gave Suffield \$1.2 million for the project two years ago. There is still some engineering and design work that needs to be completed before we receive a final sign off from our Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) for final funding approval.

The Permanent Building

Commission (PBC) continues their work on the Facilities Master Plan that includes the top priorities of major construction or new builds of the Middle School and FD Station 1 Headquarters. We continue to have Collier’s, as our consultant, guide us through the appropriate and necessary steps for you to consider what project should move forward. The Town has recently hired Tecton for architectural design and educational specifications on the Middle School. The PBC will be going out to bid for an architect as well, on Firehouse 1.

Suffield Alight will be on December 13 at 5 p.m. on the Town Green. Hope to once again see a large turnout for our annual tree lighting event.

Our Veteran’s Breakfast is December 6 and January 3 from 9-11 a.m. at the VFW.

Coffee Hours will continue to be held the first and third Friday of the month at Café Barista from 8:30-9:30 a.m.

I look forward to another productive term and to all we will accomplish together. Wishing you a wonderful holiday season and a bright year ahead with family and friends. As always, my door is open at Town Hall. Enjoy your holiday season. ☘



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Municipal Election Results

By Darlene Burrell,
Registrar of Voters

A close vote recanvass was held on Sunday, November 9 for the Fire Commission contest.

The official results of the Municipal Election are as follows:

- First Selectman:**
 - Jim Irwin - 1920
 - * Colin Moll - 2193
 - Ricardo L. Sotil - 153
- Selectmen:**
 - * Kathy Dunai - 2671
 - * Pete Hill - 2341
 - * Kathie Harrington - 2114
 - * Klaire Bielonko - 2365
- Board of Finance:**
 - * Tom Frenaye - 2413
 - * Brian Kost - 2339
 - * Michael Haines - 2294
- Board of Finance Alternate:**
 - * Glen Garrity - 2324
 - * Brad Belcher - 2176
 - * Candace Forsman - 2189
- Board of Education:**
 - * Dustin Rose - 2241
 - * James Mol - 2267
 - * Samuel J. Toskin - 2179
 - Saeed Akbar - 1971
 - * Gregory M. Sparzo - 2089
- Board of Education Vacancy:**
 - Aaron Marcavitch - 2080
 - * Gianna Rossi - 2174
 - * Maureen Sattan - 2139
- Board of Assessment Appeals:**
 - Brad Czarneck - 1904
 - * Krystal Holmes - 2403
 - * Norm Noble - 2442

- Planning & Zoning:**
 - * Jen Metcalf - 2263
 - * Jeff Girard - 2152
 - Frank Bauchiero Jr - 2092
 - * Jake Byrnes - 2113
- Planning & Zoning Alternate:**
 - Kristen C. Kling - 1962
 - * Arthur Christian II - 2107
- Police Commission:**
 - * Kristina Hallett - 2315
 - * William J. Boucher - 2255
- Fire Commission:**
 - * Amanda Thibedeau - 2419
 - * Dan Vindigni - 2063
 - Victor G Mathieu - 1905
 - * Jack Bucior - 1921
 - Peter Yeskey - 1707
- Water Pollution Control Authority:**
 - * Michael Blanchette - 2303
 - * Daniel Holmes - 2242
 - * Nicholas D. Shute - 2121
 - * Benjamin R. Frost - 1884
- Charter Revision Question:**
 - Yes - 927
 - * No - 2433
- (* Denotes candidates who were elected)

Out of 10,039 eligible voters 4,341 voted in the municipal election.

121 electors voted by absentee ballot, 1,045 early voted, 27 voted during same day registration and 3,148 voted at the polls. ☞



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Town News You May Not Know

Compiled by Kate Spoto

Too busy to look up what's going on in town? This article covers selected information from the minutes of various Town Boards and Commissions. If you want more details, it can be found by going to suffieldct.gov, Agendas, Minutes, Recordings.

- Board of Education October 20 District's Health Insurance**
 - Individuals from MDG Benefit Solutions presented an overview of Suffield's self-funded health insurance plan including budgets and actual costs from FY19 through FY26, a summary of the FY25 renewal with Cigna, plan offerings, the use of pharmacy and care management programs, claims history and other information.
 - Board members discussed, among other things, the differences between fully funded and self-funded plans, the cost of prescription medications, and the outlook for next year's budget.

- Special Education Program Update**
 - Director of Special Services Diana Kelley, Ed.D., presented an overview of the district's special education program including accomplishments, the department's goals, budget drivers, and a plan to contract with Effective School Solutions (ESS) to provide behavioral supports to either reduce or prevent outplacements.
 - Board members discussed, among other things, the cost and desired scope of the ESS program in Suffield; the status of a proposal to build a formal, in-district special education school to serve students closer to home and reduce outplacements and the potential benefits of conducting a survey of special education families to assess their satisfaction with the district's special education program.

- Board of Finance October 14 Purchase of Development Rights for Kaplan Farms**
 - Mr. Childs moved for the Board of Finance to approve the expenditure of \$95,268 (subject to any adjustment due to the final survey acreage) from the open space fund for the purchase of development rights to the 47.3 +/- acre Kaplan Farm located at 714 North Street and refer the request to a Town Meeting.
 - Mr. Christian seconded. Motion passed 6-0.
- Director of Finance Updates**
 - FY 24-25 Review of YTD Budget vs. Actual Reports: A surplus of \$1,148,025 is estimated due to both higher revenues and lower expenses.
 - Medical Insurance Fund update: Total costs for the plan year paid through August 2025 are running 94.1% of the estimated budget, which is favorable by \$254,273.

- Board of Selectmen October 22 Appointments**
 - Selectman Harrington moved to approve moving Jessica McCue from alternate to full member on the Conservation Commission to fill the remainder of Pat Reilly's term through June 30, 2028. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.
 - Selectman Harrington moved to reappoint Victor Mathieu to the North Central District Health Department Board from July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2029. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.
- Library Atrium**
 - First Selectman Moll discussed the additional costs associated with the Library Atrium Project. He reported that the town received confirmation that the vendor will hold the quoted price of \$85,000 un-

- til spring.
- First Selectman Moll referred to an email from Board of Finance member Chris Childs, who recommended that it may be more financially prudent for the Town to cover two-thirds of the project cost, rather than having the Library Commission contribute one-third. First Selectman Moll expressed his agreement with Mr. Childs's recommendation and advised that the Board move forward with the Town covering two-thirds of the total cost.
 - Selectman Chafetz moved to approve the Town covering two-thirds of the overall cost of the Library Atrium Project, with the Library Foundation covering the remaining one-third, and to refer the matter to the Board of Finance. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.
- Conservation Commission - October 28**
 - Chad Kuzontkoski, Economic Development Specialist, addressed the commission to present two potential projects: enhancements to the entranceway of Sunrise Park and the development of a dog park at Stony Brook Park.
 - Following review of drawings and discussion, the commission expressed support for moving forward with the Sunrise Park Entrance Enhancement project. They requested that Mr. Kuzontkoski return at a later date with additional information regarding the potential placement of the dog park at Stony Brook Park.
- Police Commission October 22**
 - Chief Canon reported that the department is currently fully staffed and will likely begin a hiring process mid to late fall in anticipation of a potential retirement in the Spring.
 - He indicated that contract negotiations are still ongoing with the Town Hall Employee Union, and that he is awaiting the final outcome of the negotiations and will make the necessary adjustments to the budget.
 - The Town is currently in the process of applying for a Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Grant. ☞



Christopher Stone

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Captain's Corner:

By Suffield Fire Captain
Ron Carlson

Winter Holiday Fire Safety

Winter holidays are a time for families and friends to get together. This also means a greater risk for fires. More than two of every five decoration fires happen because decorations are placed too close to heat sources, and more than one third of home decoration fires are started by candles. Following a few simple tips will help ensure a happy and fire-safe holiday season:

- Be careful with holiday decorations. Choose decorations that are flame resistant or flame retardant.
- Keep decorations away from (not blocking) windows and doors.
- Replace any string of lights with worn, broken or pinched cords or loose bulb connections. Read manufacturer's instructions for the number of light strands that can be connected together. Turn off all light strings and decorations before leaving home or going to bed.
- Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use, but not both.
- Use clips or hooks (not nails) to hang lights so the cords do not get damaged.
- Keep candles at least 12 inches away from anything that burns. Make sure they are in stable holders and place them where they cannot get knocked down easily or come in contact with combustible items such as curtains. Extinguish candles when you leave the room or go to bed.
- Keep children and pets away from lit candles.
- When picking a live Christmas tree, choose one with fresh green needles that

SUFFIELD FIRE DEPARTMENT INCIDENT REPORT October 2025		
REASONS	# OF CALLS	
Structure Fire	3	
Natural vegetation fire	1	
Excessive heat, scorch burns with no ignition	1	
Medical assist	1	
Combustible/flammable spills & leaks	1	
Accident, potential accident	4	
Service call, other	1	
Smoke, odor problem	1	
Unauthorized burning	2	
Good intent call, other	1	
Wrong location, no emergency found	1	
Controlled burning	2	
Steam, other gas mistaken for smoke	1	
System or detector malfunction	7	
Unintentional system/detector operation (no fire)	13	
TOTAL:	40	
Mutual Aid Given:	0	
Mutual Aid Received	0	

do not fall off when touched. Before placing the tree in the stand, cut 2 inches from the base of the trunk.

- Water your Christmas tree every day and maintain it at least 3 feet from any heat sources like fireplaces, radiators, space heaters, candles or heat vents. Remove your tree after Christmas or when it is dry and never leave a dried out tree in the home or garage

or placed outside against the home.

- Test your smoke detectors to insure they are in working order.
- Review your family home fire escape plan, and update if needed.

The members of The Suffield Fire Department wish you and your family a safe and healthy Holiday Season and New Year. ☸

Town of Suffield Road Closure Notice

By Lee Corbert

The Quarry Road Bridge will be under construction starting on Monday November 3. The road will be shut down heading south-bound from Phelps Road starting Wednesday, October 29 to begin the staging of materials and equipment. The road is scheduled to be reopened by the last week of June 2026. Please follow the posted detour signs or

plan an alternate route. Any questions about the project may be directed to Lee Corbert, Director of Public Works, 860-668-3280 or emailed to Lcorbert@suffieldct.gov. ☸



SUFFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY REPORT October 2025	
REASONS	# OF CALLS
911 Hang-Up	31
Abandoned Vehicle	0
Animal Complaint	46
Animal Impound	1
Arson	0
Assault/Fight	0
Assist Citizen	44
Assist Motorist	12
Background Investigation	0
Body Found	0
Breach of Peace	2
Burglar Alarm	32
Burglary	0
Car Seat	0
Cell Block Check	0
Civil Matter	0
Community Policing - School	42
Community Policing Contact	56
CVS Drop Box	1
Directed Patrol	132
Disorderly	1
Domestic Disturbance	4
Drone Use	2
DUI/Erratic Operation	14
Escort Transport	2
Fingerprints	30
Fire Dept. Box/Hazmat/Still/Confirmed/Structure	24
Firearms Surrender	0
Follow Up	1
Fraud	5
General Information	35
Harassment	0
Hazardous Condition	50
Identity Theft	0
Indecent Exposure/Sex Offense	0
Intoxicated Person	0
Juvenile Matters	10
Larceny	2
Lost/Found Property	6
M/V Accident No Injury/Injury/Evading	25
Medical	100
Mentally Disturbed Person	5
Missing Person/Runaway	0
Motor Vehicle Pursuit	3
Motor Vehicle Theft	1
Motor Vehicle Violation	169
Narcotics Violation	0
Noise Complaint	4
Notification	5
Occupational Accident	2
Outside Assist	16
Parking Violation	2
Property Check	821
Pursuit Review	4
Robbery	0
Sexual Assault	0
Subpoena Service	0
Sudden Death	2
Suicide Attempt	0
Suspicious Activity	21
Suspicious Person	8
Suspicious Vehicle	16
Threatening	0
Town Ordinance	0
Traffic Control/School Traffic	113
Training	1
Trespassing	2
Use of Force - Admin	0
Vandalism	3
Warrant Service	1
Welfare Check	13
TOTAL:	1,922

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Community Calendar

December 2025/January 2026

- Tue, Dec 2 to
Fri, Dec 5

FFA Holiday Shop - 8:00 a.m. to 6 p.m., Suffield High School Large Animal Facility. Wreaths, poinsettias, floral arrangements, birch deer, kissing balls. (pg 17)
- Dec 2 thru 23

KML exhibits artwork from Suffield High School's Studio Art I students - Regular KML hours, Pinney Gallery, w/Suffield Arts Council. (pg 17)
- Tue, Dec 2,
Wed, Dec 3

Polar Express: A Story Time - 7 p.m. Tuesday, 10:30 a.m. Wednesday. At Kent Memorial Library. Take a train ride to the North Pole! Ages 3 to 5. (pg 25)
- Wed, Dec 3

Medicare Fraud Discussion with members of Senior Medicare Patrol - 1:30 p.m. at Kent Memorial Library. Protect yourself from financial exploitation. (pg 24)
- Wed, Dec 3,
Thur, Dec 4

FFA Holiday Shop MAKE & TAKE - 6 to 8 p.m., Suffield High School Large Animal Facility. Make your own wreath! (pg 17)
- Thur, Dec 4

Holiday Fiesta Fun with Santa! - Pizza and nachos dinner, seatings at 4 or 6:30 p.m. at the Suffield Senior Center. Reserve by calling Pam at 860.668.3862. (pg 31)
- Fri, Dec 5

DEADLINE! Meghan Voisine "Kindness Matters" grant applications open to youth and youth groups - Contact maryc@suffieldcommunityaid.org or an application.
- Fri, Dec 5

First Selectman Coffee Hour - 8:30 to 9:30 a.m., at Cafe Barista, 66 N. Main. 10% discount on your drink order. (pg 3)
- Fri, Dec 5

Poker Night Texas Hold'em - First Friday of the month. Doors open at 6 p.m., play at 7 p.m. VFW hall on Sheldon Street. upstairs. \$40 buy-in. Must be 21 or older.
- Sat, Dec 6

Veterans Breakfast - 9 to 11 a.m. All Veterans and family members are welcome. At the VFW Hall, 972 Sheldon St., West Suffield. (pg 3)
- Sat, Dec 6

Winter Farmers Market - 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the large animal facility at Suffield High School, 1060 Sheldon St. (pg 6)
- Sat, Dec 6

Book Collection for the Annual Library Book Sale - 9:30 to noon. Drive up to the Mary Anne Zak entrance where volunteers will help you.
- Sat & Sun,
Dec 6 & 7

Holidayfest at The King House Museum - 11 a.m to 4 p.m. Holiday decorations, punch & cookies, Suffield artists display and papercutting demonstrations. (pg 27)
- Sat, Dec 6

Holiday House Tour - 2 - 6 p.m. Tour five historic homes along Suffield's North Main Street. Hosted by the Suffield Garden Club. Advance tickets \$35. (pg 1)
- Sat & Sun,
Dec 6 & 7

Holiday Lantern Tour: Suffield's Main Street - 4 to 5 p.m. See the historic thoroughfare decorated to celebrate the season. Meet at Phelps-Hathewy.
- Fri, Dec 12

PJ Day at the Library - join us in supporting this fantastic initiative by wearing your favorite pajamas to the library! (pg 24)
- Fri, Dec 12 to
Sun, Dec 14

8 Ways to Survive the Holidays performed by the Suffield Players - 8 p.m., except 2 p.m. matinee Dec 14. At Mapleton Hall. Tickets at SuffieldPlayers.org. (pg 22)
- Sat, Dec 13

Suffield Alight Holiday Market! - 3 to 7 p.m., Center green. Tree lighting, concert, caroling, visit with Santa, trolley rides, crafts, food trucks. SuffieldCT.gov. (pg 9)
- Sat, Dec 13

Community Concert & Sing-Along - 4:15 p.m. ,First Church (81 High St.) Led by the Cetto Chamber Singers. (pg 12)
- Sun, Dec 14

Chanukah Celebration - 4 p.m. on the town green. Doughnuts, hot latkes, music, dancing Rabbis, chocolate gelt! (pg 10)
- Wed, Dec 17

Polish Christmas Carol event (Kolędy Concert) - 10:15 a.m., Sacred Heart Church, with the Polish Heritage Society. (pg 14)
- Fri, Dec 19

First Selectman Coffee Hour - 8:30 to 9:30 a.m., at Cafe Barista, 66 N. Main. 10% discount on your drink order. (pg 3)
- Fri, Dec 19

Holiday Gift Wrapping- 3 to 8 p.m., Second Baptist Church. Benefit for Troop 260 & 262. (pg 10)
- Fri-Sun,
Dec 19-21

Santa comes to Suffield (Santa home visits) - 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. Register by Dec 13 at www.suffieldonthegreen.org/santa. (pg 33)
- Sat, Jan 3

Veterans Breakfast - 9 to 11 a.m. All Veterans and family members are welcome. At the VFW Hall, 972 Sheldon St., West Suffield. (pg 3)
- Sat, Jan 3

Book Collection for the Annual Library Book Sale - 9:30 to noon. Drive up to the Mary Anne Zak entrance where volunteers will help you.
- Thur, Jan 22

Family Game Night! - 6 p.m. at KML, Featuring giant versions of common games. (pg 25)
- Sat, Jan 24

Repair Café Featuring Stuffie Urgent Care - 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Senior Center. (pg 30)
- Sat, Jan 31

Springfield THUNDERBIRDS! - 6:05 p.m. Join the Suffield Lions Club for a family fun night at the Thunderbirds. (pg 33)
- Sun, Feb 9

SFES Classic Pickleball Tournament - 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Suffield Pickleball, 15 Kenny Roberts Memorial Drive. SFES.org to sign up. (pg 19)

Suffield Winter
Farmer's Market

By Ellie Binns

Get into the holiday spirit again this year with the Suffield Winter Farmer's Market "December Holiday Edition". Mark your calendars for Saturday, December 6 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. as the Farmers Market comes alive once again, teaming up with the Agriscience program. The Market offers lots of holiday items with the Agriscience students offering their wreaths, décor and crafts, and local farmers selling their produce as well as crafts from local artisans. The Market is held indoors at the Large Animal Facility (LAF) in the northeast corner of the high school parking lot (behind the greenhouse) at 1060 Sheldon Street in West Suffield. This means shoppers and vendors can do business in a great area with easy access and park-

ing. It's a great way to beautify your home while supporting the Agriscience program here in town. This is the only winter market of the season so don't miss out on a chance to stock up! It's great to use local vegetables, fruit, pork, eggs, honey, baked goods, jams, herbs, plants and craft items during the winter months, buying local and supporting our farmers and Agriscience students.

Check out our Facebook page – Suffield Farmers Market for a list of vendors and more details

Market hours are from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

For more information, please contact Ellie Binns at Suffield Planning and Zoning (860)668-3848 or ebinns@suffieldct.gov Visit our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/SuffieldFarmersMarket ☼

Tree-ific News! \$6,000 Goal
Doubled by Sustainable CT

By Danna Gauntner

Thank you to all the residents and businesses that so generously donated to our trees! With your support, Trees for Suffield has successfully completed a crowdfunding campaign to plant 12 more trees. Sustainable CT, a statewide initiative that inspires and supports communities in becoming more resilient, inclusive and efficient, has matched our effort, dollar for dollar! \$6,000 is now \$12,000!

"We're thrilled to support the Trees for Suffield Initiative that puts residents at the

forefront of creating positive, impactful change," said Jessica LeClair, executive director for Sustainable CT. "Like all Match Fund projects, this initiative is community-led and community-funded, demonstrating the power of people working together to make change where they live."

The Community Match Fund is generously supported by the Hampshire Foundation, the Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation, the Connecticut Green Bank, and Supporting Organizing Work CT. ☼



Photo by Sue Mayne

Tree Committee members - Judy Hanmer and Danna Gauntner are all smiles about the successful matching grant challenge!

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Food For Thought

Compiled by Beth Chafetz
International Day of Persons with Disabilities
December 3

“People with disabilities are just as worthy as those without disabilities to live happy, productive lives.”

– Sydney Badeau

“I wish people would refrain from making assumptions or judgments about individuals with disabilities based solely on their appearance or perceived limitations. It's important to approach each person with respect, understanding, and open-mindedness.”

– Ashley Glears

Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day – December 7

"Let us therefore brace ourselves to our duties, and so bear ourselves that, if the British Empire and its Commonwealth last for a thousand years, men will still say, "This was their finest hour."

– Winston Churchill

"Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen of the Allied Expeditionary Force! You are about to embark upon a great crusade, toward which we have striven these many months. The eyes of the world are upon you. The hopes and prayers of liberty loving people everywhere march with you."

– Dwight Eisenhower

Hanukkah Begins
December 14 (evening ends Monday, Dec. 22)

“We light candles in testament that faith makes miracles possible.”

– Nachum Braverman

“When we share something material, we are left with less of what we start-



Happy Holidays!

ed. But currencies of spirit, elements such as light, love and knowledge, defy these physical conditions—they increase as they are shared and become eternal. On Chanukah when we use one flame to light another, the glow is not halved – the light is multiplied.”

– Micaela Ezra

Bill of Rights Day
December 15

The very purpose of a Bill of Rights was to withdraw certain subjects from the vicissitudes of political controversy, to place them beyond the reach of majorities, and to establish them as legal principles to be applied by the courts. One's right to life, liberty, and property, to free speech, a free press, freedom of worship and assembly, and other fundamental rights may not be submitted to vote; they depend on the outcome of no elections. – Robert H. Jackson, Supreme Court Justice

“The Bill of Rights is the United States. The United States is the Bill of Rights. Compromise the Bill of Rights and you dissolve the very foundation upon

which the Union stands... Nowhere in the Bill of Rights are the words ‘unless inconvenient’ to be found.”

– A. E. Samaan

Games Day – December 20

Popular games from the 1960s and 1970s – Monopoly, Concentration, Battleship, Sorry, Dominos, Jacks, Old Maid, Clue, Yahtzee, Game of Life, Twister, Chutes and Ladders, Pong, Asteroids, Space Invaders, Cat's Cradle, Tag, Kingpin, Red Light-Green Light, Red Rover, Freeze Tag and Kick the Can – what games did/ do you play?

Christmas – December 25

“Our hearts grow tender with childhood memories and love of kindred, and we are better throughout the year for having, in spirit, become a child again at Christmastime.”

– Laura Ingalls Wilder

“Christmas magic is silent. You don't hear it — you feel it, you know it, you

believe it.” – from *The Paper Bag Christmas*

Kwanzaa

December 26 – January 1

"The holiday reflects the best of African thought and practice in its reaffirmation of the dignity of the human person in community and culture, the well-being of family and community, the integrity of the environment and our kinship with it, and the rich resource and meaning of a people's culture."

– Dr. Maulana Karenga

"Kwanzaa is a special time to remember the ancestors, the bridge builders, and the leaders."

– Dorothy Winbush Riley

New Year's Day
January 1, 2026

"With the new day comes new strength and new thoughts."

– Eleanor Roosevelt

"Kindness, kindness, kindness. I want to make a New Year's prayer, not a resolution. I'm praying for

courage.” – Susan Sontag

Trivia Day – January 4

What is the only food that can never go bad?

– Honey

The first iPhone was released in what year? – 2007

What actor played Alex Keaton on the '80s show *Family Ties*?

– Michael J. Fox

What European explorer discovered a passage that connects the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans?

– Magellan

What president was a licensed bartender?

– Abraham Lincoln

What was America's first national park?

– Yellowstone

National Bird Day
January 5

“A bird sitting in a tree is never afraid of the branch breaking because her trust is not in the branch but in her own wings. Believe in yourself.”

– Kelly Nelson

“I don't feed the birds because they need me. I feed the birds because I need them.”

– Kathi Hutton

Martin Luther King, Jr.
Day - January 19

"Intelligence plus character—that is the goal of true education."

– MLK, Jr.

"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of convenience and comfort, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy."

– MLK, Jr.



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Who's accepting your Christmas tree for animal feed



Your tree must be free of decorations, ornaments, tinsel, plastic, sprays and the like.

If you have an untreated, all natural Christmas tree, you can donate it for animal consumption at one of the addresses listed below.

Roaring Acres Alpacas, 685 Hale St.: Follow signs to drop off under the maple tree on the right side of the parking lot.

Made by LLC, 50 Cross Street: Drop off between the little library and the farm stand.

1286 Mountain Rd: Drop off next to the goat pen.

860 Overhill Drive: Drop off on the left side of the driveway behind the flower bed.



**Sustainable
Suffield**

Christmas in Suffield



Photo by Karen Jason

At The Second Chance Shop, Kelly Alexander shows off the many Christmasy items for your home available at great prices.



Photo by Karen Jason

At Sacred Heart, Shawna Nelson (STROOPS! There it is) has Stroopwafels, cakes, bakery items, sourdough, gluten free sourdough and gluten free baked goods. Check her out on Facebook.



Photo by Karen Jason

Erica Leigh Caginalp (Nutmeg Empire-Ceramic Artist) and daughter Clara look to sell their products at the Fire Auxiliary event. Check them out on Facebook and Instagram.



Photo by Karen Jason

The West Suffield Congregational Church's ladies and gentlemen cook up a storm at their event.



Photo by Karen Jason

At First Church's event, David Witkins poses with his Christmas wares.

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Suffield Alight!

By Ray A. Dalrymple

Vendors: no more than 16 unique vendor spaces. The vendors will offer everything from handmade jewelry, felted soaps, art, holiday greens, artesian, breads, clothing and more great gift ideas.

The vendor area will have a similar look to Suffield on the Green, with the addition of festoon lighting, lining the walkways between the tents.

There will be food trucks on site: Indulge Deluxe Mini Donuts and Coffee, Smoke N Fire Barbecue, Cousins Maine Lobster, Chick Fil A, as well as Suffield Scouts Troop 260 & 262 and their famous kettle corn.

- Christmas/Holiday music will be provided by WMAS 94.7 and Suffield’s own Chris Kellogg.

- Trolley rides from the North Green along historic Main Street.

- Horse drawn wagon rides around the green area.

- Musical concerts from members of the Suffield Public Schools in front of the gazebo.

- Santa arrives and visits with children around 5 p.m.

- The Christmas tree is lit shortly after Santa arrives.

- At 7 p.m., the Grinch will lead carolers along Main Street

- There will be live Ice Carving demonstrations on the

Green, as well as vehicles decorated with lights to enjoy.

- Hot chocolate will be provided by the Suffield Rotary and Suffield Academy on the Green and in front of the Academy.

- Disney’s FROZEN will be shown at Kent Memorial Library at 3:00 p.m. with a special meet and greet after the movie with more activities.

Per Peter LeClerc, Director of Community Services - “Suffield Alight! has become a family tradition over the past few years, and we are excited to add in the new Holiday Market.

We’ve been very fortunate to have great community partners and a lot of hard-working people behind the scenes putting this together.

We’ve reached the point where others are starting to get inspired and add events around Suffield Alight! There will be a free community concert at First Church featuring the Cetto Chamber Singers at 4:15 p.m. Any donations at the concert will go to support the Suffield Senior Center kitchen fund, and canned goods will go to Suffield Community Aid.

With all of the family activities and the addition of quality vendors for a market, it is sure to be a great event again.” ❧

Need Dynamic Speakers for your Group Meeting?

From a press release

Whether you lead a civic, religious, veterans, or other local group and need impassioned speakers on an important topic for an upcoming meeting, Sustainable Suffield can help.

As the town task force, charged with reducing landfill waste through various initiatives, educating the public and helping beautify the town, we’ve created a presentation that should rouse the interest of your members.

It’s filled with photos of our initiatives and our plans, accompanied by brief explanations, so it moves quickly and sparks a lot of discussion. Expect it to run for an hour, perhaps a bit longer if there are many questions. We’ve included the basic information in our slides and added “More” buttons, where appropriate, so that we can dive deeper if your members ask.

They’ll learn about our Repair Cafes, where 16 local

volunteers repair household items, such as lamps, food mixers and torn slacks for free. They’ll observe what happens to the food scraps that our schools and residents collect and how the scraps are converted into energy, fertilizer and other byproducts. They’ll learn how to sign up for our energy workshops and the Town Tag Sale, allowing them to declutter their homes of unused household items without contributing to landfill waste.

They’ll learn the process we follow to direct pumpkins and Christmas trees to area farms for animal feed. We’ll describe the tours we’ve taken, such as to the \$40 million Berlin facility that handles Suffield’s recyclables, and how your members can participate in future trips.

Scout leader Krystal Holmes said this about the presentation, “The scouts learned how to better recycle, manage food waste, re-

pair and reuse old items and think about their overall consumption. It was great to understand all the ways Sustainable Suffield is helping our community improve our environment.”

After viewing the presentation, Garden Club member Sue Mayne noted, “Sustainable Suffield is a group that has its act together. Anna-Kristin Daub-Murphy and Tony Peterson from Sustainable Suffield make an impressive duo. The team presented a highly informative and interesting program about their ongoing projects. Though the subject was not new to the audience, everyone learned something, and all walked away with a clear sense that Sustainable Suffield is making a difference.”

If your group is seeking worthy speakers on an important topic for an upcoming meeting, please email Sustainable Suffield at sustainablesuffield@suffieldct.gov. ❧

Pumpkin & Christmas tree recycling

To keep pumpkins and Christmas trees from clogging the landfill, we offer them to area farmers and advertise drop off points online.

[More](#)



Christmas Tree Recycling

Dec. 26 - Jan. 5

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Rearing Alpaca Farm: 685 Hale St.
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Carol Sing

By Kathryn Roberts

The First Baptist Church of Suffield is hosting its annual Christmas Carol Sing-A-Long at 4 p.m., Sunday, December 14. This is a family-friendly afternoon, not to be missed. Festivities include carol singing followed by hot chocolate and sweets. A highlight each year is when the children are handed jingle bells and then lead the crowd in a rousing rendition of that popular song. Founded in 1769, this special church is part of the Hastings Hill Historic District and on the National Register of Historic Places. The First Baptist Church is located at 1217 Hill St. Please join us! ☞



Photo provided by the author

Back row (left to right): Bob Parks, Fr. Joe Keough, Peg Parks and Meg Atwood. Front (left to right): Grayson Borawski, Rylan, Harper and Austin McIntyre.

Swing Your Partner!

By Jeanne Forschino

Sacred Heart Church celebrated Fall with an old-fashioned barn dance. On Saturday, October 18, sounds of claps, stomps, “left-arm swing” and “dosa-do” were heard. Sacred Heart Parish sponsored a family Barn Dance complete with farm animals outside and a toasty fire inside. Professional caller Richard Sbardella led adults and children in a variety of dances, some dating back to the 1600s. At any time given throughout the evening, more than 30 dancers were on the floor. Joe and Madonna Santos hosted the event at their beautiful barn. Even co-coordinators were thrilled to run the event for the third year. ☞

Sacred Heart News

By Fr. Joe Keough

On top of everyone's mind around here is Christmas. For me, it is pretty much all year, but some people actually like to wait until December. The term “the most wonderful time of the year” comes to mind. This is undoubtedly one of the biggest and most crowded times of the year. Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Masses at our parish and most all Christian Communities are wonderful times to come together. The multi-generational families jamming into a pew, the return home of college students and military members, as well as long-time members, make for a truly blessed event.

Here at Sacred Heart, we have a tradition of praying all through the Advent and Christmas Seasons for our loved ones to “Come Home for Christmas” and hopefully stay with us. The sign in front of property on Mountain Road serves as a reminder that everyone is invited to come for a visit and stay if possible. We place the first name or initials of the person or people we would like to have come home on silver and gold stars that are then placed on the Christmas trees that decorate the church. This year, each person will be given a prayer card focused on the return of their loved ones. This may sound a bit corny, but it actually works and pays off in many blessings for all of us.

Throughout Advent we have opportunities for prayer and social events. On Sunday, Dec. 7 beginning at 5:15 p.m., we will have a Christmas sing-along, beginning in the church with a selection of sacred and secular Christmas songs for all ages. Then we head outside for the Blessing of our outdoor Nativity Scene, and the lighting of our Christmas tree. Once the tree is lit, we head into Fr. Ted Hall for cookies and hot chocolate, and, if everyone has been good this year, a visit from Santa to round out the evening. This free event is open to all.

Taking note of the Polish history of Suffield, we will once again host a Polish Christmas concert on Wednesday, Dec. 17 in the church beginning at 10:15 a.m. with music and historical notes by James “Jimmy” Turek and friends. The traditional Polish Christmas Oplatek will be available as well.

Continued on Page 11

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FREE ADMISSION

COME HOME FOR CHRISTMAS!

Your Sacred Heart Parish Family invites you to join us for the Advent and Christmas Season...we will be praying for our inactive members all through December. Please join us for our weekend and Christmas Masses.

Sunday, Dec. 7th
Christmas Carols, Blessing of the Creche and Lighting of our Christmas Tree begins in the church at 5:15 and ends in Fr. Ted Hall with refreshments and a visit from Santa Claus. All ages are encouraged to attend.

Wednesday, Dec. 17th
Traditional Polish Carols in the church beginning at 10:15 AM.

Advent Confession/Reconciliation
Monday afternoons from 3:15-4:00PM,
Friday mornings at 8:30 AM and
Saturdays 2:30-3:30 PM.

Christmas Eve Vigil Mass 4:00 PM
Christmas Night Mass 10:30 PM
with Carols beginning at 10:00 PM.

Christmas Morning Mass 10:00 AM.
New Year's Eve Mass 4:00 PM and
New Year's Day 9:00 AM.

New Year's Eve Mass 4:00 PM and
New Year's Day 9:00 AM.

For more information visit our website www.sacredheartct.com

Second Baptist Church News

From a press release

Second Baptist Church will celebrate the Advent/Christmas Season during Sunday worship services starting on the first Sunday of Advent (November 30) through Christmas Eve. Sunday services begin at 10 a.m. Two Christmas Eve services are scheduled for Wednesday, December 24:

- **Christmas Eve Children's Pageant** – 5 p.m. This service is led by children and youth and is designed for all ages. ALL children and youth are invited to participate in this service. Please call the church office for more information.
- **Candlelight Service** – 10 p.m. This is a Service of Lessons and Carols.

Along with Sunday morning worship services we also have the following spiritual opportunities:

- **Sunday Mornings – Reflection, Study, and Prayer** – 9 a.m. - Parlor. This time prior to the worship service is an opportunity to settle your mind and soul for the week.

During December we will be discussing the Advent Devotionals that will be provided to the congregation. January's topic of discussion is to be determined.

- **Tuesdays, December 2, 16, 23 – Weekly Bible Study** – 11:30 am - Library. Interim Pastor Jim is leading a study on the "Arrival of Christ". Discussions are designed to help us understand the time and the setting when the scriptures were written as well as how these ancient words are relevant in today's society.
- **Prayer Shawl Ministry** – Friday, December 5 and 19 – Parlor. This recently revived ministry gives individuals the opportunity to come together for a time of prayer and fellowship while creating shawls that are intended to provide love and comfort to their recipients. Dates for January have not been finalized.
- **Join us in our Fellowship Hall** on Sunday, December 28 at 10 a.m. for an informal

"Coffee House Worship Service".

Other events during December include:

- **Christmas Workshop** – Sunday, December 7 – after church service. The theme of the workshop is "How Sweet It Is to Be Loved by God". Pizza and birthday cake for Jesus will be served.
- **Participate with the Suffield community in Suffield Aight** on Friday, December 13, 3-7 p.m. The Common Room will be open for visitors and outdoor activities are planned.
- **The Annual Carol Sing** at the historic First Baptist Church on Hill Street in Suffield on Sunday, December 14 at 4 p.m. The Second Baptist congregation joins with residents of various faith communities to sing and celebrate the Christmas season.
- **Fourth annual Cookie Swap** on Saturday, December 20 at 10 a.m. Call the church to RSVP.
- **Don't miss our Community Christmas Concert!**

Join us for a special concert on Sunday, December 21 at 3 p.m. presented by our choirs and other local musicians. Audience singing of Christmas Carols will be highlighted!

Special services/events in January are the following:

- On Sunday, January 11 we welcome The Hot Cat Jazz Band as they lead the music during the worship service.

Regular scheduled activities include:

- Hosting American Red Cross Blood Drives in Fellowship Hall. For an appointment, please visit redcrossblood.org or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767). Dates of blood drives are Monday, December 15, Monday December 29, and Tuesday, January 13.
- Soup Kitchen Ministry – Serving a meal on the second Saturday of the month for anyone in need at the Loaves and Fishes Soup Kitchen at South Congregational Church in Springfield, MA - December 13 and January 10.

In Memoriam

Rose Marie Yvonne DeSimone

October 21

Age 91

Dr. William Garrity

October 29

Age 72

Arlene Coulter

November 3

Age 92

James "Jim" Liamis

November 10

Age 80

- **Fellowship Time** – Monthly outreach program for our friends with cognitive limitations to give them a safe environment for crafts, singing, and fellowship meeting on the second Mondays – December 8 and January 12. Please contact the church office (860-668-1661 or office@secondbaptistsuffield.org) if you would like additional information regarding any of the above events. ☙

West Suffield Congregational Church

By Denise Peterson

I can't believe Christmas is right around the corner. By the time you read this the West Suffield Congregational Church will be wrapped in greens and twinkling lights. I wish I could say I feel prepared, but I don't. I never do. Don't get me wrong. I love Christmas, I love all the sacred elements, the image of the sweet baby that came to change the world, the music, the advent candles, especially the excitement in the children's faces... that's my favorite part. Nonetheless, holidays are stressful, Christmas among them. Emotions tend to run high, finances can be a worry, as can trying to find the time to do all of our shopping and preparation. For those of us who have lost people, Christmas can feel isolating. There is nothing more poignant than grief when you are surrounded by people who

are celebrating; it can be very hard.

I have a suggestion for those of us who struggle; come to church. Really. Give yourself one precious hour a week to decompress, to listen to music, hear words of hope, and be among friendly, supportive people. Grant yourself that grace in this busy season. It doesn't have to be any particular church. For years I have had a habit of slipping into the back of churches when I need some rest. I find the soft lights and the music soothing. On one memorable Christmas when I was a teenager, I snuck into the back of a church after some Christmas shopping and promptly passed out cold (at first, I thought I'd been struck by lightning, but it turned out just to be the flu). As embarrassing as that was, the kindness of the people who came

to tend to me became a real Christmas present for me that year; miracles abound at Christmas, you know.

So come to church. Slide into the back pews if you're shy. Rest. Seek the joy of the season and you will find it in abundance.

If you need a reason to smile, our children's pageant and potluck will be at our 10 a.m. service on December 14. We have 30 children registered for Sunday school this year so we're expecting some merriment! Our Christmas Eve service will be held at 5 p.m. That way those of you who are entertaining can still get out. It is sacred, the sanctuary will be candlelit, and the musical will be glorious.

I hope we get to see you. If we don't, I hope you have a blessed Christmas, filled with joy and the sacred. Love, Denise ☙

Sacred Heart

Continued from page 10

In the spirit of the season, our Human Needs Committee will be collecting food items, as well as Christmas gifts for our friends and neighbors in need, in cooperation with Suffield Community Aid and other local relief agencies.

Masses for Christmas Eve will be at 4 p.m. with a children's nativity just before the Mass. The Mass at Night is at 10:30 p.m. with music from our choir beginning at 10 p.m.

On Christmas Day there will be Mass at 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. For New Year's there will be a Vigil Mass at 4 p.m. on New Year's Eve and 8 a.m. on New Year's Day.

We hope you can join us for some of these events. To see all the happenings at Sacred Heart, please follow us on Facebook or visit our website at <http://www.sacredheartct.com>. Have a blessed Advent and a very Merry Christmas from Fr. Joe Keough and the entire Sacred Heart Parish Family. ☙

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December and January at First Church

By Amber Bigley

For every time there is a season - it is the season of Advent! First Church welcomes all to join us in faith and worship at 10:00 a.m., in-person or through our YouTube livestream, every Sunday for Advent, journeying Together for Joy as we prepare for the birth of the Savior.

Sunday, December 7, First Church welcomes the Rev. Dr. Sarah B. Drummond to the pulpit. After worship, take a chance on those last-minute gifts at the Glad Tidings Auction! Beginning at 11:30 a.m. at First Church, this festive auction offers gift-ready items, with all funds raised supporting Suffield Community Aid Fuel Bank.

Saturday, December 13, First Church participates in Suffield Alight! A free concert featuring the Cetto Chamber Singers begins in the Sanctuary at 4:15 p.m., with a holiday sing-along to follow! Warm up inside or tune in through YouTube for the live stream with festive songs.

Sunday, December 14, We celebrate the season at 9:15 a.m. with an Advent Pancake Breakfast! Following breakfast, First Church welcomes Director of Worship Arts Amy Pott to the pulpit.

Sometimes it can be difficult to get into the “holiday spirit.” First Church welcomes all who are feeling blue to The Longest Night, a special service of remem-

brance, reflection and hope for those who need it most around the holidays. This ecumenical service, led by the Rev. Dr. Sarah B. Drummond, is for anyone experiencing sadness, loss, or stress during the holidays. It is a time to acknowledge pain, loss, and hardship, and to find comfort in community, prayer, and the understanding that one is not alone. This event begins at 7:00 p.m. on Thurs, Dec 18.

Sunday, Dec 21, First Church welcomes Mike Ryan, YSD to the pulpit, and a Christmas Carol Sing will be hosted at Suffield by the River (SBTR)! Join us at 11:30 a.m. at Suffield by the River for Christmas carols, hot cocoa, cookies, and joy! No singing experience required - all voices are welcome!

The Christmas Eve service begins at 6:00 p.m. in our Sanctuary, with The Rev. Brenda Pelc-Faszczka preaching. All are welcome to this traditional and beautiful candlelight service, welcoming the light of God to the Earth. Joy to the World, the Lord is come!

Donations to the Going the Extra Mile mission for the month December support The Christmas Fund, offering support for veterans of the cross and emergency relief funds. Head to our website giving page to learn more about supporting our ministries.

January 2026 brings new journeys and changes to First Church! From Epiph-

any to Laity Sunday and the Annual Meeting at the end of the month, stay connected to upcoming news and info on our website www.first-churchsuffield.org.

The Blessing Box, located right in front of First Church, is open to our neighbors and community members to “take what you need; leave what you can”. We encourage our community to donate; please do not donate perishable foods or foods requiring refrigeration.

First Church hosts Narcotics Anonymous and Alcoholics Anonymous weekly in our building. Questions and general inquiries should be directed to office@fcsuffield.org. Email the church office with any pastoral needs or to arrange an in-person appointment. ☞

BDL Runway 624 Update

By Ray A. Dalrymple

Per Brian Spyros, Public Information Officer for the Connecticut Airport Authority and Bradley International Airport, North/South Runway 624 opened on Saturday, November 8. It will close briefly for a few days after November 8, but will reopen again for good on Thursday, November 20. The runway has been closed since May of 2025 for milling, resurfacing and other equipment upgrades. This type of maintenance usually occurs every ten to fifteen years. ☞



Suffield Observations

By Andy Sauer

A Boxing Day Story

About a hundred years ago, an Italian tinsmith encountered a problem at the dinner table: The gravy bowl and its accompanying spoon were entirely ill-equipped to dish out an appropriate amount of its contents. So, he crafted a smaller version of the industrious soup ladle – one that not only could properly apportion tomato sauce but could reach into a taller, deeper gravy bowl (or pitcher) more suitable for a table full of people.

The ladle, which has served thousands of grateful guests, passed to his son, and upon that son’s passing at 99, was given to his granddaughter, my wife

There is only one rule in the care of this ladle: Never put it in the dishwasher.

As with all commandments, its purpose, which is empirical in nature (the heat tarnishes and weakens the metal) is irrelevant to one’s faithfulness in following it. In short, you must be worthy to possess it and care for it.

Which is why, on the morning of Dec. 26, 2017, when the ladle was discovered in a recently run dishwasher in my home, a feeling of visceral betrayal fell upon my mother-in-law, the tinsmith’s granddaughter.

And she accused me of violating the ladle’s one rule.

It takes a provident heart to respond to accusations calmly, one, at least at the time, I did not possess. I’ll spare you the blow by blow, which added a whole new dimension to Boxing Day, but it all boiled down to this exchange:

“Well, if you didn’t do it, who did?”

“I don’t know, there are 14 other people under this roof. Pick one.”

She picked me.

In the absence of facts, when we select one narrative at the expense of all others, we have strayed from a sincere inquiry into the truth into the realm of belief. Belief is a compelling force and considered a measure of character when associated with values such as love, friendship, family or religion. As with all motivational vectors, however, it can be misdirected to things like hate, fear or suspicion, and prompt the most faithful people to commit the most ignoble acts. Some may comfort themselves that despite whatever was done for whatever reason, they are still faithful to their beliefs. Nevertheless, we are still judged by our actions. And, I believe accusing your son-in-law, your host, of mishandling a family heirloom without a shred of proof is an enormous breach of etiquette.

Fortunately, the resulting din and clamor could be heard down Hill Street as my wife was returning from a walk. She ran in, and without missing a beat, admonished her mother. Already wound up, her mother doubled down on her suspicions and threatened to appropriate the ladle. My wife shot back “take it!”

But she didn’t. The ladle is still here, and I just hand washed it last weekend.

I’d like to believe my mother-in-law had a change of heart in her estimation of my worthiness to possess something precious, but I think she relented because she had faith in her daughter’s faith in me.

Sometimes, all you need is a little bit of faith, even if it’s by association, to keep the peace.



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The Way We Were

HISTORIC SUFFIELD



100 Years Ago in Suffield

Selected from the pages of the Windsor Locks Journal and lightly annotated by Wendy Taylor of Kent Memorial Library.

December 4

Henry B. Richmond, aged 85 years, who had been in business in this town for nearly 40 years, died at his home...with pneumonia. He was a well known resident of the town and was a familiar figure on the streets going to his place of business every day, regardless of the weather. Mr. Richmond was born in Glasgow, Scotland...and came to this country with his parents when two years old. The family settled in Thompsonville, Mr. Richmond's father being one of the six men that founded the carpet company.

When twelve years of age the deceased started to learn the harness-maker's trade...in Springfield... After four years...he went to Washington, D.C.

Mr. Richmond became acquainted with President Abraham Lincoln, for whom he made a special riding outfit. Mr. Richmond remembered vividly the night the President was assassinated....Mr. Richmond [was] among those who escorted the body from the White House to the Capitol.

"Brownie" Karpinski is in the Hartford hospital suffering from an injury to his back which he received by splitting wood at his home... While swinging an axe with a chunk of wood on it over his shoulder the wood became dislodged, causing it to make a severe cut in his back and break a small bone there. Karpinski is in a serious condition and will probably be operated upon.

George Adams of West Suffield, local cattle dealer, is caring for eight cows which were badly bruised when a truck in which they were being brought here from New Hampshire turned turtle. None of the animals will suffer any permanent ill effects.

December 11

The tobacco damp which ended...gave the growers ample opportunity to take down their tobacco and probably 90 per cent. of the crop is in the bundle...the crop this year is said to be the best in several

years.

The community Christmas tree on the park will be lighted next week for the holidays.

December 25

There has been considerable complaint the last two or three years of the wholesale destruction of evergreen trees around Christmas time by people who cut trees without permission of the landowners. The West Suffield Mountain has been the most frequented place by the tree hunters.

A beautifully mounted landlocked salmon in the window of the Martinez store has attracted considerable attention the past day or two. It was caught by Allen Scott in Maine last summer.

January 1

At the meeting of the fire department...it was voted to join the American Legion in giving a carnival in the new Bridge street school auditorium.

An aged farm horse was reported as wandering around the country in the vicinity of Taintor Hill.

January 8

A grass fire on Bridge Street gave the firemen a hard fight...About five acres were burned over and two large sheds were threatened. The fire was finally extinguished without damage.

January 15

Mrs. Sarah (McCaroll) Adams, aged 89 years, died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Nelson A. Humason, last Saturday. Mrs. Adams was born in Kiltinney [sic] Ireland.

The fire department was called out for a chimney fire at the home of Nelson A. Humason Sunday morning. The fire proved to be a stubborn one and sixty gallons of chemicals were used before the fire was extinguished.

January 29

The nomination of Edward Perkins to be Postmaster at this place was confirmed by the United States Senate Tuesday. This is Mr. Perkins' third appointment, having been postmaster here since 1913.

A Moment in Time

Old Photos Invited from Our Readers



Originally from the Journal Inquirer archives, donated to the KML collection

How do I get their attention? Maybe just spin the parasol. Spaulding School 1986

Your Community. Your Ambulance. Your Opportunity.

By Chief John Spencer, Suffield Volunteer Ambulance Association

In last month's article, Karl Cicitto beautifully captured the remarkable 50-year journey of the Suffield Volunteer Ambulance Association (SVAA), a story built on service, compassion and community partnership. As we look forward to celebrating this milestone, we're also looking ahead to the next generation of community leadership that will help sustain and strengthen SVAA for the future.

That's where you come in.

Q: Why is SVAA's 50th anniversary such a big deal?

Because this milestone belongs to everyone in Suffield. For five decades, our neighbors have cared for neighbors—responding to emergencies, comforting families and saving lives. It's a celebration not just of ambulances and calls, but of compassion, generosity and community spirit.

Every call answered, every life touched, and every act of volunteerism reflects what makes Suffield strong. Reaching 50 years means we've built something enduring together—and that's worth honoring.

Q: What does the Board of Trustees actually do?

The SVAA Board of

Trustees helps guide our mission, ensuring that we remain a strong, transparent and community-centered organization. Trustees bring their skills and perspectives to support:

- Fundraising and sponsorships
- Planning community and anniversary events
- Long-term financial sustainability
- Building community and regional partnerships

You don't need to be a healthcare professional to serve. The Board benefits from a wide range of talents—business, communications, education, finance,

Continued on Page 14

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Suffield Trivia

by Jackie Hemond

1. Major General (Retired) Thaddeus J. Martin was inducted into the Connecticut Veterans Memorial Hall of Fame in January 2023. Which of the following statements are correct?

- a. He was Adjutant General of the Connecticut National Guard.
- b. At one point in his career, he was the most senior adjutant general in the United States.
- c. He successfully fought against closing the Bradley Air National Guard base.
2. When did the PMC Kids Ride in Suffield start and for what institution does it raise money?
 - a. It started in 2012 and raises funds for the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute.
 - b. It started in 2012 and raises funds for the Jimmy Fund.
 - c. It started in 2012 and raises funds for the Sloan Kettering Cancer Center.
3. Were any Civil War Battles fought in Connecticut? Yes or No.
4. Frederick G. Williams (1787-1842) was born in Suffield although he and his immediate family did not stay in town. However, he has his own Wikipedia page. What is his claim to fame?
 - a. He was an early leader of the Latter-Day Saints movement.
 - b. He was the founder of the Hartford Times.
 - c. He founded the first Owenite utopian socialist community which advocated equality, shared work and communal living.
5. Did President Dwight Eisenhower visit Suffield? Yes or No.
6. Was Armistice Day, now called Veterans Day, the official end of World War I? Yes or No.

7. Andrew Carnegie gave a gift of \$10,000 to something in Suffield. For what was the money given?

- a. To build the old Kent Memorial Library on High Street.
 - b. To rebuild the Town Hall when a fire destroyed the previous one.
 - c. To renovate the Connecticut Literary Institute, now called the Suffield Academy.
8. According to Hezekiah Sheldon, Suffield supplied men to the 29th Regiment Connecticut Volunteer Infantry, Connecticut's first regiment of African-American soldiers, which was formed in 1863 and fought in key battles like the Siege of Petersburg and was the first Union regiment to enter Richmond. How many men were enlisted from Suffield?
- a. 12
 - b. 37
 - c. 28
9. Attending a town meeting in early Suffield required strict decorum with fines levied on absentees and people who spoke without permission. According to Hezekiah Sheldon, what was the fine for those who were absent, for those absent without a valid reason and those who spoke without permission?
- a. Absent - 6 pence: Absent without a valid reason - 1 shilling, 6 pence; Speaking without permission - 3 shillings for each breach.
 - b. Absent - 1 shilling, 5 pence: Absent without a valid reason - 3 shillings, 6 pence; Speaking without permission - 4 shillings for each breach
 - c. Absent - 5 pence: Absent with no valid reason - 2 shillings, 6 pence; Speaking without permission - 5 shillings for each breach.

10. On the face of it, Connecticut's early government appeared to be democratic. From 1639 and beyond, a General Assembly, court system and governor were elected by freemen by paper ballot. In actuality, the government was controlled by the aristocracy until 1819. With the Federalist Party in control of the State from 1789 to 1819, every man from Connecticut elected to the United States Congress, Senate and the upper house of the Connecticut General Assembly belonged to that conservative and elitist political party. Federalists feared the "mob of democracy" and in 1801, voted in the "stand-up law." What was this law?

- a. It was a voter registration block which required voters to be educated beyond rudimentary schooling and own a certain amount of property.
- b. Voters were required to raise a hand or stand up to record a vote.
- c. Voters had to be educated beyond rudimentary schooling, own a certain amount of property and raise a hand or stand up to record a vote.

Answers

Field with the New England governors.
6. No, the official end of the war was in June 28, 1919 when the Treaty of Versailles was signed.
7. c. In 1906, Andrew Carnegie gave \$10,000, the final amount needed to fulfill a \$50,000 campaign chaired by Charles C. Bissell to renovate the Connecticut Literary Institute.
8. b. 37. Probably some of the 37 men who enlisted were from other towns.
9. c. Absent – 5 pence; Absent with no valid reason – 2 shillings, 6 pence; Speaking without permission – 5 shillings for each breach. Half of the money collected went to the poor of the town.
10. b. Voters were required to raise a hand or stand up to record a vote. ☹

*Polish
Heritage
Society*

By Sara Zak

For the fourth consecutive year, the annual Kolędy Concert, arranged by Jim Turek, will be held at Sacred Heart Church on Wednesday, December 17, at 10:15 a.m. Jim and several other professional musicians will perform a set of traditional Polish Christmas carols.

The familiar songs always prompt attendees to smile, sing or hum along as they recall the holiday celebrations from their youth. Each year, Jim adds a different historical dimension to these concerts, providing valuable insights into our cultural heritage.

Last year, Jim discussed the origin of the Polish National Anthem, further enriching our understanding of our cultural heritage. This year, Jim may compare and contrast the special ways that families in the cities and rural towns might have celebrated, offering an educational experience for all. This concert is free and open to the public. ☚

Suffield Ambulance

Continued from page 13

trades, or simply a passion
for helping others.

Q: Why join now?

This anniversary year marks both reflection and renewal. We're celebrating the past while building for the future. New trustees will help drive 50th-anniversary celebrations—including our gala, silent auction, and community outreach programs—and help ensure SVAA continues to thrive long after the confetti settles.

Your voice and vision
can help shape the next 50
years of emergency care in
Suffield.

Q: What kind of time commitment is involved?

The Board typically meets once a month, with optional committee work focused on fundraising, community events, or operational support. It's a flexible, collaborative way to make a lasting difference without a large weekly commitment.

Q: How can I get involved?

Email SVAA@Suffield-EMS.org to learn more about serving as a Trustee, volunteering for an anniversary event or sponsoring a celebration. There's a place for everyone who wants to help sustain this vital community service.

Q: What's next for Suffield Ambulance?

As we honor 50 years of lifesaving service, we're also preparing for the future - through innovation, training, and partnership. With continued community involvement, we'll ensure that the next emergency call is answered with the same compassion, professionalism, and dedication that have defined Suffield Ambulance since 1976.

Together, we can honor the past—and build the future of emergency care in Suffield. ☿

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A Suffield Farm in the 1930s

By the Ives Siblings: Cathy Beaulieu, Roger Ives, Jackie Hemond and Missy Moxley with Estelle Ives Stetson, our aunt

Our grandfather, Roger Leete Ives, Jr., aka Leete, moved to Suffield to farm in 1933. His wife, our grandmother, had recently died, leaving him with four young children; their ages were 8, 7, 5 and 3. The two younger children, Marilyn and Shirley, were sent to live with their maternal grandmother until they became older. The older two children were Roger Leete Ives III, our father, who was the eldest, and his sister Estelle. In a car piled high with household items, they, with Leete, left their farm in South Britain, Connecticut to start life anew at 311 Halladay Avenue. Their two workhorses, driven by the hired hand, pulled their hay wagon filled with farming tools and more household goods.

The house was large enough for the family, a hired hand, a housekeeper and Leete's mother, who lived with them on occasion.

The bathroom was an out-house. Water was fed into the barn and house by a gravity-fed pipe from a spring on a hill to the east. A tobacco shed was converted to a cow barn with stanchions for the cows and space for tools and hay. A second older tobacco barn stored extra hay. The milk

cans were kept cool by a tank of spring water in the barn. A large field lay behind the house. The pasture extended down to the Town Farm, now a residence at 463 Halladay Avenue. In between, there was a good-sized watering hole fed by Muddy Brook, which was suitable for a refreshing swim. Leete, despite other demands, taught his children how to swim, mindful that the water presented a hazard.

It was the height of the Great Depression. In addition to managing his farm, Leete took on jobs. He delivered grain for A.C. Wetherell in exchange for grain for his own cows. He probably worked for Giles Halladay and Ray Randall on their farms. Bill Austin, who lived across the street, continually reminded him that there was more money in tobacco than cattle farming, but Leete refused to grow tobacco because he thought it was a vice.

The children worked on the farm with their father. In those days, tractors were rare. The work was done by horsepower and manpower.

Our father, though only a child, worked as hard as a grown man. At haying time, the mown grass was raked into long windrows. Estelle drove the horses between the rows while Leete, using a hayfork, threw the hay atop the wagon, and Roger, in the

wagon, organized the hay. In the barn, the action was much the same. The horses, steadied by Estelle pulled a roped fork-lift of hay which was guided upward by Leete to Roger who organized the hay in the haymow.

The children weeded the garden and tended the chickens, among other chores. When a calf was born, it was Estelle's job to strip the milk from the cow's teats to prevent mastitis. One day, a cow collapsed after giving birth due to ketosis, a lack of sugar. Leete hoisted the cow up with a belt looped over the rafters so he could milk her. He fed the cow Coca Cola and she survived.

Leete started a 4-H club and sang in the choir at the First Congregational Church. Once, Leete used the horses to pull a bakery truck from a ditch. As payment for his kindness, the truck driver rewarded the family with a feast of donuts and cupcakes. The kids swam in the summer and slid down the Halladay Avenue hill in the winter. Our father became a champion cow judge at agricultural fairs.

During the school year, Roger and Estelle attended the one-room schoolhouse on the corner of Halladay Avenue and North Street.

Leete overworked himself. In 1938, he collapsed, sick with pleurisy. Then, while recovering at the hospital, he

Field of Flags



Photo by Beth Chafetz

Honoring our veterans, first responders and personal heroes.

contracted a staph infection that quickly killed him.

Just before he died, Leete had been working to improve the farm and his finances. He explored the viability of market gardening by planting a field of cucumbers.

At the farm auction after Leete's death, our father stood by the podium as each of the 30 cows were auctioned. Just 13, he knew each cow's age, milk production and breeding status. A few weeks later, our father, scoring higher than much older participants, won the cow judging contest at the Eastern States Exposition, just days after the 1938 Hurricane.

Roger and Estelle left Suffield after the auction to join their sisters at their grandmother's house in Tewksbury, Massachusetts but Suffield had left its mark on our father. In the five years that he

lived in Suffield, he came to love the town.

In 1955, 17 years later, our father returned to Suffield to raise his family and start his pioneering business, "Soligenics Frozen Semen Service."

Offering a complete service for the cattle breeder, he traveled to farms in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states to collect semen from bulls, stored it with dry ice and later liquid nitrogen, and shipped it throughout the United States and internationally. He worked as a matchmaker, advising farmers on what genetic qualities in both bull and cow made the best offspring for milk production. His was one of the first businesses to do this work. Suffield, his beloved childhood home, with its close connection to the highway, the airport and bus transportation, was an ideal location for his business. ☘

Dowd Realty Spotlight on Suffield

JOIN A VILLAGE MOVEMENT TASK FORCE

BUILD A STRONGER COMMUNITY



Suffield residents are taking steps to become a more caring, resilient and connected place by adopting a **Village Movement** – a grassroots approach that empowers neighbors to support one another, share resources and age in place with dignity. We are building volunteer opportunities to grow intergenerational connections that allow our residents to maintain independence and a high quality of life. These projects currently range from privately replacing the Town Bandstand to providing the Suffield Sidekicks grant-funded program (for our teens and seniors).

CareCruiser - The next project is to build a network of volunteers to drive their own cars, taking Suffield residents to medical and social service appointments. Volunteers would commit to one day per month. **We need a team of 4-6 residents who meet 2x/month for about 5 months to explore existing programs in other towns and figure out how to adapt it to our town.**

If you're interested in figuring out a CareCruiser program OR if you have other ideas to bring out the best of small town culture, let me know!

Robin Zatony
Social Services Chair
Cell: 860-214-8624 | Email: robin_zatony@yahoo.com

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Suffield Community Aid

By Mary Curtin, MSW
Director
860-668-1986

What’s happening at SCA this Month?

Thank you for all food and cash donations to the Food Pantry: The pause to the SNAP program put many households in a precarious position. Thanks to the outpouring of donations from the Suffield community, Suffield Community Aid (SCA) was able to meet the growing need and offer those affected extra resources and support. If you or someone you know in Suffield needs help around food insecurity, please call SCA at (860)668-1986.

SCA’s Annual Appeal is Out: You should have received a mailed Annual Appeal letter from SCA within the past few weeks. Suffield Community Aid needs your help in promoting our mission on behalf of families – right here in Suffield – requiring support in their time of need. Read more about what we do and the impact your past donations have made by going to www.suffield-communityaid.org. You can donate through our webpage, too!

Some Ongoing Program Updates:

Medicare Open Enrollment Ends December 7- Thinking about changing plans? Are you confused about your Medicare options? Perhaps you are turning 65 soon... Meet with a trained CHOICES Medicare counselor to explore what’s best for you. Volunteers provide unbiased telephone assistance. Call 860-668-1986 to schedule a consultation.

SCA Seeks Residents for Priority Emergency Response List:

We are updating our list of residents who would benefit from a check-up call during a town or state-wide emergency. Residents who use oxygen, or need electricity for medical equipment, are strongly encouraged to call. Names, addresses, medical information, and family contact information will be included for confidential use in the event of an emergency as declared by the First Selectman. If you or someone you know would like to be included on this list, please contact SCA at 860-668-1986.

SCA’s Fundraiser at the Polls was a Great Success- Thank you Suffield!

There was such a terrific turnout at the polls for Election Day, and thanks to the generosity of our community, over \$1,000 was raised to help support our Food Pantry. A huge thank you as well to SHS’ Interact Club, Amy Rea and Christo Nikolis, who helped with SCA’s table to collect non-perishables and monetary



Photo submitted by the author

Interact Club Members who helped staff the table collecting donations for the Food Pantry on Election Day. (Pictured L to R) Beatrice Williams, Taylor Abbiatti, Dallas Janick, and Rachael Logie

donations. Thank you to all!

Stay Warm This Winter! – We Are Taking Applications for the CT Energy Assistance Program:

These government programs help offset winter heating costs for financially eligible households so that their health is not jeopardized by their inability to afford critical heat. Please contact SCA to apply at 860-668-1986. More information on eligibility is available at www.ct.gov/staywarm ☞

Flower Stand Painting



Photo by Ron Kirschbaum

Anna Rucci adds to her painting on the flower stand at 584 Thompsonville Rd. Anna is a family friend of Traci Artioli, who founded Rue & Co. Flower Farm two years ago. You can follow them on Instagram @rueandcoflowerfarm and Facebook @rue&co.flowerfarm.

Food Support For the Suffield Community

Submitted by Mary Curtin

- Suffield Community Aid**
- 450 South St – Monday-Friday 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.
 - Meals on Wheels / Food Pantry
 - Outdoor 24hr/7day Food Cabinet
 - suffieldcommunityaid.org (860) 668-1986
 - MaryC@suffieldcommunityaid.org
 - Requirements: Suffield Resident, Income documentation
 - Food Pantry by Appointment
 - No financial requirements for Meals on Wheels
 - No requirements for Outdoor Food Cabinet
- Foodshare Mobile Food Truck (Suffield Site)**
- 1408 Mountain Rd (W. Suffield Congregational Church)
 - (860) 668-2271 - Every other Tuesday 1:15 – 1:45 p.m.
 - CTFoodshare.org for schedule
 - Requirements: Connecticut Residents Only
- Suffield Senior Center**
- 145 Bridge St.
 - \$5 Lunch Tuesday / Wednesday / Thursday 12 p.m.
 - Suffieldct.gov / (860) 668-3862
 - pleclerc@suffieldct.gov
 - Requirements: Reservations – (860) 668-8830
- First Church of Christ**
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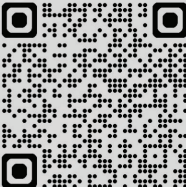


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Observed



Schools, Library and Scouts

Suffield Regional FFA Annual Holiday Sale

By Rebecca Ferguson
Location: Suffield High School Large Animal Facility (LAF)
Hours: December 2 - 8 a.m.-6 p.m.; December 3 - 8 a.m.-8 p.m. (Make and Take night 6 p.m.-8 p.m.); December 4 - 8 a.m.-8 p.m. (Make and Take night 6 p.m.-8 p.m.); December 5- 8 a.m.-6 p.m.; December 6 - 9 a.m.-1 p.m. (Suffield Farmers Market)

Suffield Regional FFA hosts the holiday sale to give students in our chapter more opportunities and valuable experiences that they can benefit from while attending the program, as well as outside of school. We will have a variety of goods to choose from, including wreaths, poinsettia,



The FFA Students (L-R) Lillian B., Katie T., Alanna W., and Wyatt show off beautiful poinsettias.

swags, kissing balls, cemetery boxes and pots, as well as birch reindeer, made by our FFA students. We will have special make and take nights, where our community members can come to

the LAF, learn how to make a wreath and practice those skills on your own. Food and refreshments will be provided. We will also be hosting the Suffield Farmers market on 12/6/25 to sell

our products. Thank you, from the Suffield Regional FFA chapter, we hope to see you there!
Selling:
• Wreaths in sizes: 12, 16, 24, and 20 inches

Order forms will be available to choose size, and decorations including pinecones, mixed greens, ornamental glass balls, and bow color.
• Swags
Order forms will be available to choose bow color.
• Kissing balls
Order forms will be available to choose bow color and ornamental glass balls color.
• Birch Reindeer in Micro, Small and Large
Order forms will be available to choose the size of reindeer and bow color.
• Cemetery pots
• Cemetery boxes
Order forms will be available to choose the color of the pot and box. ☿

Studio Arts at Kent Memorial Library

By Liz Bologna, Assistant Library Director
This December at the Kent Memorial Library, the William Pinney Gallery features artwork from Suffield High School's Studio Art I students, taught by Mr. Tim Kudrle. The foundational art course introduces students

to the language of art and the creative process. Students gain a basic understanding of art elements and learn to apply art principles to a variety of artistic media. They develop skills in observation, drawing, composition, use of color, and painting. Studio Art I includes the

study of known artists and their works, art history, aesthetics, and criticism. The artwork on display are a mix of graphite value studies, large-scale silhouette narratives, abstract charcoal mark-making drawings, and observational drawings. Featured artists include

Juliana Balsamo, Evan Held, Evangelina Plano, Nora Rodriguez, Rhyon Schuster, Gavin Sepko, Harrison Stauffer, Noah Turton, Amelia Manegre and Kalina ViVenzio.
This is a great opportunity for the students to see their artwork on display in a gallery,

and for the public to enjoy the work of these young artists. While you're at the library this December, stroll through the Gallery from December 2-23. Thanks to Fran Milliken, the Suffield Arts Council and the library for establishing monthly displays. ☿

Dowd Realty Spotlight on Suffield

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(Monetary donations will support Senior Center lunches and canned goods will fill our Community Aid shelves.)

Join in the fun of an event designed to bring us closer this season through the joy of shared song! If you'd like to join from home, please email office@fcsuffield.org for the livestream link.

DEC
13

Suffield
Aight!

Schools of Thought

Suffield High • Suffield Middle • McAlister Intermediate • Spaulding • Suffield Academy

Agriscience Center: A Suffield High School Gem

By Tony Peterson

If the level of maturity, enthusiasm, poise, and intelligence of high schoolers is a reliable predictor of their future success, then Dr. Laura LaFlamme and her staff at Suffield High’s Regional Agriscience Center are minting solid winners.

On November 6, LaFlamme, the program director, hosted 250 to 300 8th graders and their families at an Open House I attended. As a regional center, Suffield’s program accepts students from Avon, East Granby, East Hartland, East Windsor, Enfield, Granby, Hartford, Simsbury, Suffield, West Hartford and Windsor Locks.

Exuberant students

Excitement charged the air from the moment I stepped through the entrance; students held doors, politely said, “Thank you for visiting,” and directed visitors with enthusiasm. They were having fun together and exhibiting unmistakable school pride.

Nicholas, a student guide in the aquaculture lab, showed me the Center’s aquaponics system. Growing in a base of small stones immersed in water circulating from a nearby



Photo by Tony Peterson

10th-grader Koa Matteson showed off Apollo, a leopard gecko, at the Agriscience Open House on November 6.

fish tank are dozens of the same plant. Nicholas explained, “It’s kind of a mini ecosystem. The fish live off the nutrients that the plants provide, and the plants live off the nutrients that the fish provide.”

At the grooming lab, Sara, a sophomore, and Makayla, a junior, both from East Windsor, showed me the dog washing and drying stations. They explained the hair trimming and toenail clipping they perform, as well as their importance in meeting breed standards for students participating in American Kennel Club-ap-

proved shows.

I visited the reptile lab and the separately located large animal facility. Noah, a Simsbury junior, was tending three goats. As an 8th grader, he had attended an earlier Open House and knew immediately that the Center was right for him. He shows his goats at the Big E and other venues and plans on pursuing a two-year Animal Science degree at UConn.

Nate, in the wood-working/mechanics lab, pointed out the welding machines, metal-cutting tools, a partially dismantled 1950s farm tractor,

and wood-framing areas. He proudly boasted that the lab had recently built a chicken coop for the Center.

A school within a school

At an information session, LaFlamme, the program director, explained that the 172 students of the Agriscience Center enjoy all the benefits and opportunities afforded to regular Suffield High students. They can join the band, chorus, drama club and football team. Additionally, they must adhere to Suffield High’s curriculum requirements to be eligible for graduation. The agriscience courses they take are in addition to the required courses, so it’s a full course load for most of the four years, with few free periods.

Prospective students, including those from Suffield, are required to apply and participate in an interview. The Center seeks applicants with a strong interest in agriculture and usually accepts 40 to 45 applicants annually. Last year, the acceptance rate was about 70%, which is “pretty typical,” said LaFlamme. All 11 participating towns have equal access.

LaFlamme stated that the Center would disregard infractions, such as tardiness and missed homework assignments, as well as disciplinary issues that appear on a prospective student’s record up to the date of the Open House, November 6. “From now on till January, I want to see no problems,” she stressed. “So, don’t count yourself out if you’re doing those struggles, and don’t count yourself out if you’re not a really strong

student. Don’t count yourself in if you’re a straight-A student, because it’s really your agriculture interest and fit with the program [that matters].”

Benefits beyond the courses

In addition to classes, Agriscience students are required to take on leadership roles through the Future Farmers of America (FFA) and participate in a Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE). Sophomores through seniors spend 150 hours annually on an agriculture-related project.

The learning experiences provided by these components far exceed those of regular high school enrollment, according to several people I interviewed.

Simone, a senior from Suffield, said that learning how to speak in public was the most significant benefit of attending the Agriscience Center. She credits her position as an officer in the local FFA chapter with providing her with speaking opportunities at conventions in Indianapolis and Connecticut. She plans on becoming an agricultural teacher. She said that her SAE, which involved managing horses at a local equestrian farm, has given her invaluable hands-on experience.

Former student Janine Eitel, now a sophomore at Worcester Polytechnic Institute, headed the Bienial Ag Expo at the Center during her senior year. Students showcased their expertise and projects, provided tours and put on demonstrations. She said,

Continued on Page 20

Suffield Veterinary Hospital December 2025

Suffield Veterinary Hospital is delighted to introduce our newest veterinarian, Dr. Shannon Moran. She is pictured here with her best pal, Hazel. Hazel was found as a tiny bedraggled kitten cowering under cars at an ice cream shop and quickly won a place in Dr. Moran’s heart. Hazel now lives with Dr. Moran and her fiancée near Evergreen Walk.

Dr. Moran grew up in the Philadelphia suburbs. Her parents were animal lovers and as a toddler she had a Himalayan cat and a little Shih Tzu dog as playmates. She has strong memories of how much these pets helped support her when the family was going through a rough patch. At age three she declared her intention to give back to pets as a veterinarian, and hasn’t wavered once.

After high school Dr. Moran completed four years of pre-vet studies at the University of Delaware (Go Hens!) and then attended the new Long Island University College of Veterinary Medicine with clinical rotations through some of the finest hospitals and specialty centers in New York City.

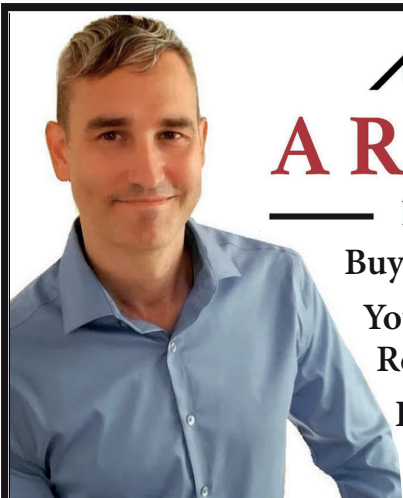
There are countless blessings received from being a veterinarian, and we asked Dr. Moran what her favorite aspect of practice is. “I love the opportunity to make a difficult situation better and ease the fears of both the pets and their worried owners.” We are all happy to welcome Dr. Moran to the Suffield Veterinary Hospital Family, and are confident you’ll like her as much as we do.



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Schools of Thought

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Celebrating Growth and Achievement in Our Schools

By Suffield Board of Education

As the holiday season approaches, it's a wonderful time to reflect on the innovation and achievement taking place in Suffield Public Schools.

STEAM Lab

This fall marked the official opening of the new STEAM Lab at Suffield High School. It is a bright, modern space that invites students to explore science, technology, engineering, the arts, and mathematics through hands-on projects and real-world problem solving. The space was once home to the old wood shop; it now features 3-D printers, laser cutters, robotics equipment, and spaces where students can work together, experiment,

and bring their ideas to life.

Earlier this month, Board of Education members joined representatives from other town boards, Superintendent Dunbar, and school administrators for a special reception in the new lab. Guests had the opportunity to explore the space and talk directly with students as they demonstrated the tools in action. The evening offered a firsthand look at how this space supports innovation, teamwork, and future-ready learning.

We extend our gratitude to our Director of Technology, Rebecca Osleger, who guided this project from start to finish - overseeing renovations and researching the equipment that brings

the lab to life. Thanks to the collaboration and support of the Board of Education, Board of Finance, Board of Selectmen, and ACCE, this space will shape the future of STEAM learning and innovation in Suffield for years to come.

Quiz Bowl Champions

Congratulations to Suffield High School's Quiz Bowl team - Saanvi Nalla, Ellie Babcock, Jane Kelly, Amelia Shanks, and Lucy McCoy - on winning the Harvard Crimson Quiz Bowl for Government and Politics Global Competition! Lucy McCoy, who serves as a Student Representative to the Board of Education, described the experience as incredible, noting how special

it was to compete with teams from across the globe. Their success on the global stage reflects the curiosity and determination we see in our students. Way to go!

Ecology Explorers

Suffield Public School's 2nd, 5th, 7th, and 10th graders had a hands-on adventure with the Ecology Explorers program last month at the McLean Outdoor Education Preserve. Students rotated through fun stations like Wildlife, Forest Ecology, Vernal Pools, and Insect Life, connecting what they learned in the classroom to what is happening in the natural world all around them. The event was a major success and was made possible by our partnerships

with the Suffield Foundation for Excellent Schools, Suffield Rotary, and the Suffield Land Conservancy.

Best Wishes

As we head into the holiday season, we hope everyone enjoys time with family and friends. Wishing everyone a safe, happy, and restful start to the new year!

Connect With Us!

We encourage families to stay connected. Our meetings are open to the public, and community feedback is always welcome.

Suffield Board of Education members include Maureen Sattan, Melissa Finnigan, Debra Dudack, Brian Fry, James Mol, Dustin Rose, Gianna Rossi, Greg Sparzo and Sam Toskin. ☿

SFES: Acoustic Shells, Pickleball and Mannikins, Oh My!

By Johanne Presser

Who knew that acoustic shells could make such a big difference in the listening pleasure of an audience? Apparently, the Music Directors Corey Killian (Band) and Anthony Ferreira (Vocal) at Suffield High School did and after attending the fall SHS concert, all of us present at that event did, too! The shells, usually made of a hard reflective surface such as wood, are placed behind the performers on stage and both reflect and amplify the sound from the musicians to the audience. Without shells, the sound goes off in a multitude of different directions, often being absorbed by stage curtains, side walls, floors, ceilings etc. but the curved and angled shells bounce the sound directly and distinctly to the audience.

While the bulk of the funds were appropriated in the school budget, Killian applied for a grant from the Suffield Foundation for Excellent Schools (SFES) to address the shortfall. The SFES appropriated \$2,000 and sought collaboration from the Greater Suffield Community Fund of the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, which kicked in the additional \$5,500 needed to complete the purchase of seven shells. Of course, major credit must be given to the hard work of the chorus and bands which produced the wonderful sounds the shells directed. Walking out of the auditorium, I heard one parent say, "I can't believe the difference those shells made!" and another stating, "It wasn't all mushed

up, you could hear distinct instruments!" It was money well spent and I urge residents to hear for themselves at the upcoming winter concert.

In another grant this year, the SFES funded CPR mannikins for the middle school, which will enable students to learn hands-on how to properly assist someone having a cardiac event. Other grants include funding for genetic/DNA editing tools, school composting, 7th grade robotics program and a visit to middle and high school English classes by writer Jarrett J. Krosoczka, a National Book Award Finalist for his graphic novel *Hey Kiddo!*

Of course, money doesn't grow on trees, and the SFES will be holding its second annual Pickleball tournament fundraiser on

February 8, 2026 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the indoor Suffield Pickleball facility on Kenny Roberts Memorial Drive. It's a chance to get out and move before chowing down on those wings, chips, dips and other standard Super Bowl fare later in the day. Participants will get to play a minimum of five games. There will be a beginner, intermediate and advanced division with women's, men's and mixed doubles, in each division provided enough players sign up. The entrance fee is \$100/team. If you don't have a partner, you can sign up as a single for \$50 and we will match you with someone. The title sponsor for the tournament is Windsor Federal Bank, which

has always been a big supporter of the SFES. We are presently looking for court sponsors for the five courts at the facility. The cost for a sponsorship is \$250 which includes mention on our website and a sponsor banner along the side of the court. If you wish to sponsor a court, email us at sfesct@gmail.com. For further information see the ad we have in this *Observer* or go to our website at www.sfes.org. ☿



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Support Suffield Students Traveling to Europe

By Kelly Blais, SHS Social Studies Teacher and Anthony Ferreria, SHS Concert Choir Teacher

This spring, we are excited to lead a group of Suffield High School students on an educational adventure of a lifetime. Students in our AP Human Geography and Concert Choir courses will travel to Germany and Austria, where they will further their classroom lessons and broaden their understanding of world history and culture.

During the trip, our students will visit Munich, Vienna and Salzburg, where they'll explore historic landmarks such as the 1972 Olympic Park, Schonbrunn Palace, and the United Nations complex. They'll also take a Sound of Music guided tour to see sites featured in the famous movie and will learn about world-famous composers who shaped classical music. The Concert Choir will also have the unforgettable opportunity to perform in several locations.

To help offset the cost of the trip for our students, we are holding several community fundraising events. Please join us!

– Friday, December 19: We are holding a Sound of Music movie night at Suffield High School at 6 p.m. Admission will be free; concessions will be available, including Apfelstrudel and Schwarzwälder Kirschtorte (Black Forest cake!). Holiday raffle items will also be available!

– Saturday, January 24,



2026: We are holding a community pancake breakfast in the Suffield High School Commons from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. We'll have plenty of characters to interact with kids, including Belle, Elsa, Anna and Olaf! Other activities will also be available such as a craft station, cookie decorating, Disney karaoke and more! Raffle items will be available for all ages. Suggested donation for this event is \$10 per person.

In addition, we also have established a community fundraising link through Square. Please feel free to donate directly to this link: <https://square.link/u/pR0lkmS1> or click the QR code below.



SHS Germany and Austria Trip Donations

Money raised through all of our fundraisers will be shared among our travelers. It is our goal to ensure our students can enjoy this international travel experience without worrying about the cost. Thank you for your support! ☘

Agriscience

Continued from page 20

"I definitely gained a lot of experience in planning events and time management." She also praised the Center for providing other leadership opportunities, including career development events that involve competition and livestock judging.

Danel Eitel, Janine's mother, credits the leadership opportunities as one of the reasons why Janine and her older sister, Sidney, were accepted into competitive colleges. Sidney is also a former Agriscience grad. Danel is a 9th-grade science teacher in South Windsor, so she understands what works and doesn't. She noted, "I think project-based learning [the SAE model] is super important, especially for those kids who aren't so academic. My daughters had some amazing opportunities that they wouldn't have had in the standard high school program."

She also said that as a high school teacher, she's typically at school from 7 am to 4 pm. Applauding the Agriscience teachers, she said, "It's nothing compared to what these guys do. It is a lifestyle for them. They're truly there all the time."

The deadline for applying to the Suffield Regional Agriscience Center is December 11. The application is on the Suffield High School website. ☘



Suffield Soccer Club Announces 10-Year Community Investment Initiative

From a press release

The Suffield Soccer Club (SSC) is announcing a long-term initiative focused on enhancing the quality, safety, and accessibility of playing fields used for youth soccer and community recreation in Suffield. Over the next 10 years, SSC plans to leverage grant funding and continued community fundraising to make strategic improvements to public-use lands designated for club play.

Each year, the Suffield Soccer Club provides a safe and fun youth soccer experience for more than 350 local participants, supported by over 70 dedicated community volunteers. Founded in 1985, SSC remains committed to building soccer skills, sportsmanship, and a lifelong love for the game.

Thanks to amazing community support, SSC is able to keep improving for our kids. In 2025, we were awarded a \$9,680 grant from the Amiel and Mary Anne Zak Public Service Fund and a \$3,450 grant from the Suffield Community Fund (via the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving). These funds are going directly toward new field benches and upgraded soccer goals, which will make our fields safer and give our children an even better place to play and grow.

"As a parent, coach, and SSC board member, I see firsthand how soccer brings our families together and helps our kids build skills and confidence," said Jason Fontaine, SSC Field Director. "We're really grateful for these generous grants and



all the town's support—it shows just how committed we are to making a positive difference for every player, now and for years to come."

The 10-Year Infrastructure Vision includes:

- Ongoing enhancements to field maintenance, drainage, and turf quality
- Player and spectator safety upgrades
- Increasing accessibility and ADA-compliance
- Long-term sustainability through improved equipment, lighting, and technology
- Expanded capacity for hosting town events and regional tournaments

Key to success will be the continuation of volunteer engagement, grant partnerships, and the generosity of local families and businesses.

"With every improvement, we are building a stronger, safer, and more welcoming community sports environment," said Club President Matt Andre. "We are excited for the future of soccer in Suffield."

Residents, organizations, and local businesses interested in donating or volunteering can contact fundraising.suffield.soccer@gmail.com for more information. ☘

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Have You Seen Alfred E. Neuman Lately?

By Abby Wolcott

These are quieter days as we take to the woods. Many of the birds have migrated and the ones that stay put are going about their business without much fanfare. So, as we put one foot in front of the other, we turn to the trees, the giants and the saplings. They have shed their leaves so we can fully admire them as we hoof it around town. We run our hands over their bark and admire lichen attached to the trunk. We pretty much know what to expect as we hike on these familiar trails but are still amazed at how deep we can see into the woods now that the leaves are gone. We notice stone walls that we had forgotten and big holes in trees begging for a raccoon to set up shop. There are a few aberrations in the actual trees that we count on as well. At Stoney Brook there is a tree shaped like a seat, and we can't pass it by without stopping and resting our feet for a while. At Lewis Farm bird sanctuary there is a bulging root that looks like T-Rex's eye. We peer at it, and it peers back, and we cue the music to Jurassic Park in our heads. This year I was in for a new surprise when I came across a tree that had Alfred E. Neuman's face in it. It is an old giant of a tree with gnarled bark and a gash or two. But these scars all worked together to present as Alfred E. Neuman with branch buds as ears and a gash as a gap-toothed smile.



Photo by Joan Heffernan

Some recent finds while trekking amongst the trees. "Look carefully and what do you see?"

For those who are unfamiliar with Alfred E. Neuman (AEN), he was the mascot of *MAD* magazine. He was known for his freckled face, gap tooth smile and bulging ears. Alfred E. Neuman was the face of the anti-establishment periodical that would arrive at our doorstep monthly. *MAD* magazine reached its peak circulation in 1973-74 with its satirical commentary on life, pop culture and public figures. In our teenage years, its arrival would immediately cause a big ruckus as we fought over first viewing. My brothers always won, but eventually I would get my turn to look at spy versus spy. I knew my older brothers would have commandeered the *MAD* fold in page, and the alter image would have been revealed by them before I even had a chance at it. We were enthralled by Al-

fred E. Neuman and tried to locate him throughout the issue which involved hours of thumbing through the pages when we should have been doing our homework. So, needless to say, I was pretty excited about locating Alfred E. Neuman disguised on the bark of a tree before my brothers beat me to it.

I recalled back a few decades when there would be news items on someone somewhere spotting the likeness of a famous individual on the pattern of bark on a tree. It might be the likeness of Elvis or a religious figure and would prompt a pilgrimage of regular folks coming from a great distance, lined up to see it with their own eyes. I relayed this backstory to my partner as I went to great lengths to show him Alfred E. Neuman in

Continued on Page 22

A Rock Sails By Review

By Christine Sinopoli

The Suffield Players chose a thought-provoking play to start its 2025-2026 season! *A Rock Sails By*, by Sean Grennan, dives into the world and mind of Dr. Lynn Cummings, a brilliant scientist, a renowned astrophysicist, a tenured college professor, a mother, and recently, a grieving widow. Together we travel along with Lynn, on her emotional journey after the death of her husband Tom.

The play explores the tension between scientific certainty and emotional truth, and whether the belief in the supernatural can coexist with rationalism. *A Rock Sails By* is not so much about aliens, as it is about processing grief and finding meaning in life, since not all truth can be scientifically proven and measured.

More specifically, the play asks the question: Can there be room for wonder, belief, or the supernatural within a logical, scientific mind? When Dr. Cummings states: "There are in fact two things, science and opinion; the former begets knowledge, the latter ignorance" the audience knows where she initially stands. But Dr. Cummings also attempts to reach beyond science when she announces: "I want to know. What is the point?" Dr. Cummings, grief-stricken from loss, questions the meaning of life, and this is one of the most powerful moments in the play, delivered beautifully by actress Linda Storms, who adeptly plays the part of a brilliant but grieving spouse who is also in the early stages of experiencing the loss of her own memory.

A mysterious rock, which reporter Jason Harper suggests

may be an alien probe, is scheduled to pass through our solar system. Jason's genuine curiosity challenges Dr. Cummings and shows he's more than just a sensationalist tabloid reporter for a rag magazine after "clicks," but is the play's unexpected philosopher. Jason, played by actor Jamie Reopell, brings out his character's persistence, empathy, and ability to be disarmingly honest and open to possibilities, even if they seem improbable or unprovable.

Lynn's daughter Olive, who is more emotionally open and spiritual, serves as a foil to her reserved and skeptical mother. Olive, played by actress Krystle Bernier, shows the audience her compassion and care for her mother, and helps Lynn to accept that science does not have all the answers. Lynn's late husband Tom, played by actor Rick O'Neil, is warm and supportive, and even humorous at times, as he helps guide Lynn through her grief.

As Dr. Cummings becomes more interested in the study of this strange rock that represents the unknown, she receives a mysterious visitor – the enigmatic Messenger – possibly an alien, an angel, or an emotional projection. The Messenger, played by actor Joe Lessard, poetically offers wisdom and portrays the embodiment of that "something more" that may be out there.

Even though it is never revealed whether this figure is real, the encounter serves as a vital catalyst for Dr. Cummings' emotional breakthrough, where she is compelled to confront the limits of logic and the possibilities of belief. Lynn learns to work out her grief -- to live, to love, and to heal, despite existing in a world of scientific unknowns. ☞

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Suffield Players

From a press release

Holly, Jolly, and Hilarious: 8 Ways to Survive the Holidays! A Benefit You Don't Want to Miss

This December, The Suffield Players invite audiences to laugh their way through the season with *8 Ways to Survive the Holidays*, a spirited comedy by Don Zolidis presented as the theatre's annual Holiday Benefit for its Hope-Hearth-Happiness season. Performances will take place December 12, 13, and 14 at Mapleton Hall.

Directed collaboratively by Becca Coolong, Mary Fernandez-Sierra, Konrad Rogowski and Kelly Seip, this year's benefit blends heart, humor and holiday mayhem in a collection of short sketches that celebrate the joy (and occasional chaos) of the festive season.

Four Directors, One Merry Mission

Each director brings their own perspective to the eight comedic vignettes, which highlight everything from disastrous family photos to impossible gift lists and culinary catastrophes—all threaded together by a pair of narrators trying their best to keep the holiday madness under control.

Director Becca Coolong describes the project as a joyful reunion of creativity and friendship: "I was drawn to this production because I was looking forward to the opportunity to work with so many people I love," Coolong said. "As we head

into the holiday season, the thing that is most important to me is connecting and creating with my people. *8 Ways to Survive the Holidays* is a collection of silly and light-hearted sketches that allow us to work together in fun and joy!"

For Mary Fernandez-Sierra, the Holiday Benefit is a chance to go "no-holds-barred" with comedy and creativity: "I love directing *The Players' Holiday Benefits* for the opportunity to direct over-the-top crazy comedy," she shared. "It's pure fun to have so many folks together in a relaxed atmosphere to laugh and have a wonderful time!"

Fernandez-Sierra also praised the easy collaboration among the directing team: "All four directors have worked together before, so there's a lot of trust in each other's abilities. We're similar in our approaches—we all run a tight-but-fun ship! We communicate constantly and help each other solve potential problems ahead of time—like how to make Proton Blasters from scratch for one of my scenes involving *The Ghostbusters*!"

Balancing Humor and Heart

Though each vignette bursts with laughter, the directors agree that heart remains at the center of the show.

Coolong noted, "You can't have humor without heart! We want to make these pieces relatable so everyone

can find a bit of themselves somewhere in the stories."

Rogowski added that laughter unites both cast and audience: "These are silly characters doing silly things—and that's the joy of it!" he said. "We all face the same holiday chaos, but humor helps us step back, breathe, and remember the true heart of the season."

Fernandez-Sierra agreed, emphasizing that the scripts themselves strike the perfect balance: "Each script shines a spotlight on the stressful side of our most common holiday experiences—family photos, big meals, decorations, gift-giving—and reveals how those stresses can be handled in humorous, unconventional ways. It's cleverly and insightfully written, so it's easy for all the actors to relate."

Community and Connection on Stage

In keeping with The Suffield Players' long-standing spirit of community, *8 Ways to Survive the Holidays* brings together a vibrant mix of seasoned performers and newcomers. One cast member shared that his favorite part of the production has been meeting and collaborating with both new and returning actors in a relaxed, low-pressure environment that encourages creativity and connection.

He described the atmosphere as reminiscent of The Players' New Faces Program—a welcoming opportunity for artists to learn,

grow, and become part of the larger theatre family. Among his fellow performers is a newcomer appearing onstage for only her second time, inspired to audition by her son, who performed in *A Few Good Men* last winter. Her enthusiasm and dedication, he noted, have brought an inspiring sense of discovery to the ensemble.

Moments like these highlight how The Suffield Players continue to build connections through creativity—making the Holiday Benefit not only a show, but a celebration of artistic community.

The Heart of the Benefit

The annual Holiday Benefit is one of The Suffield Players' most beloved traditions—combining laughter, generosity, and community spirit. Proceeds from the event support the theatre's ongoing artistic programming, scholarships, and accessibility efforts as part of its Hope-Hearth-Happiness 2025–2026 season.

When asked how they personally "survive the holidays," the directors were quick to share their own wisdom:

Alfred E. Neuman

continued from page 21
the towering tree. We stood, looking at the tree from various angles with me pointing out what he should be looking at. Sadly, he couldn't make it out, and my dream of notoriety for having found *MAD*'s Mascot here in Suffield was dashed. We agreed to put any thoughts of AEN to bed and to call it a day.

Coolong: "Pie... lots and lots of pie."

Rogowski: "Remember the real purpose of each holiday and enjoy being with the people with whom you share them."

Fernandez-Sierra: "Be grateful for everything that happens and throw yourself into it all with a good heart."

Event Details

What: *8 Ways to Survive the Holidays* by Don Zolidis – Holiday Benefit Performance

When: December 12, 13, and 14*, 2025 (Sunday matinee marked with an asterisk)

Where: Mapleton Hall, 1305 Mapleton Avenue, Suffield, Conn.

Tickets: No reservations required; donations welcome at the door

Info: www.suffieldplayers.org

This December, come laugh, smile, and celebrate the community at The Suffield Players' *8 Ways to Survive the Holidays*—proof that the best way to make it through the season is with humor, heart, and a room full of friends. ☿

That was all good and fine, but one byproduct remains from my deep dive into Alfred E. Neuman and *MAD* magazine. Alfred's motto in life "What, me worry?!" is something I am trying to incorporate into my self-talk. Maybe it can replace my wringing hands and sleepless nights from excessive worry. Sounds like he has the right attitude. ☿



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Holiday Baking

By Lynette Roy

With the holidays coming soon, this month's recipe is a sweet one and does not involve a particular state in the country, especially since the one I was going to use for Alaska turned out to be awful!

The Rugelach cookie is a pastry originating from the Jewish communities of Central and Eastern Europe during medieval times. The word Rugelach (roo-guh-laak) means "little corners" because of the shape of the pastry. Fillings include nuts, jams (such as raspberry, apricot, strawberry) and/or chocolate.

Many culinary historians believe Rugelach evolved from the Viennese Kipferl, a crescent roll that dates back to at least the 13th century. The Kipferl, often made with yeast dough and sometimes flavored with almonds, was a popular pastry in aristocratic circles. The Kipferl was generally a larger, fluffier pastry than the often smaller, denser rugelach we know today. This suggests that while the Kipferl may have provided the initial inspiration, Jewish bakers made significant modifications to create their own unique pastry.

Over time, different regions have adapted the recipe with the original recipe using a yeast dough. Since the 1930's, Rugelach dough has been commonly made with cream cheese and sour cream.

If you are looking for another kind of cookie to make for the holidays, the Rugelach

is definitely one to try.

Rugelach
From King Arthur Flour
Yields: 48 Cookies

Crust
16 tablespoons unsalted butter, at room temperature
6 ounces cream cheese, at room temperature
1/3 cup sour cream
1/2 teaspoon table salt
2 cups unbleached flour

Filling
1/2 cup (106g) light brown sugar or dark brown sugar, packed
1 cup (113g) walnuts, chopped
1/2 cup (85g) dried cranberries or raisins
1 tablespoon cinnamon
Water, for brushing dough

Topping
Granulated sugar or coarse sparkling sugar
Milk or heavy cream

Using a mixer, beat together the butter, cream cheese, sour cream, and salt until smooth. Add the flour, mixing to make a stiff dough.

Divide the dough into three equal portions. Press each gently into a disk. Make the disks as round as possible, smoothing their edges; this will allow you to roll the disks into a perfectly round circle. Wrap the disks in plastic, and chill the dough for about 1 hour, until it's firm but not rock hard. Or chill longer (up to overnight), then warm for about 45 to 60 minutes at room temperature, until the dough softens enough to roll out without cracking.

To make the filling: Pro-

cess the sugar, walnuts, dried fruit, and cinnamon in a food processor or blender until finely chopped and well combined (but not pasty). Don't have a food processor? Simply stir together the filling ingredients; your filling will be chunky rather than smooth.

Working with one piece of dough at a time, place it on a generously floured surface. Roll it into a 10" circle and brush it lightly with water. For a flavorful touch, brush the rolled-out rugelach dough with a thin layer of boiled cider, warmed apple or currant jelly, or puréed fruit preserves, instead of water.

Use a small offset spatula or knife to spread about 1/3 of the filling onto the round, going all the way to the edges and gently patting the filling to help anchor it to the dough.

Using a pizza cutter, baker's bench knife, or sharp knife, divide the dough into 12 equal wedges. Roll each wedge up, beginning with the wide end and ending with the narrow end. Place the rolls point-side down on a baking sheet; lining the baking sheet with parchment will help with cleanup. Repeat with the remaining two pieces of dough.

Brush the rugelach with milk or cream; and sprinkle with granulated or coarse sparkling sugar.

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Refrigerate the rugelach while the oven is preheating.

Bake the rugelach for 25



Photo from the internet

Rugelach

to 30 minutes, or until golden brown. Remove from the oven, and cool right on the pan. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Store leftover rugelach in an airtight container at room temperature for several days. Freeze for longer storage.

Tips and Other Version
Both the rugelach dough and shaped, unbaked rugelach can be made ahead, wrapped airtight, and frozen up to 4 weeks before using. For best results, thaw in the refrigerator overnight, wrapped, before using.

Try these tasty fillings; each makes enough for one-third of the dough, so feel free to mix and match various fillings using a single batch of dough.

Dark Chocolate: Whisk together 1 tablespoon brown sugar and 1 teaspoon unsweetened cocoa powder; add 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon, if desired. Sprinkle atop rolled-out dough. Sprinkle with 1/4 cup (45g) mini chocolate chips or chopped semisweet chocolate.

Double Apricot: Process 1/2 cup (64g) chopped dried apricots, 3 tablespoons (64g) apricot jam or preserves, 1 teaspoon lemon juice, and a pinch of salt until the apricots are finely chopped, but the mixture isn't totally smooth.

Apple-Cinnamon: Combine 2/3 cup (about 113g) peeled, grated apple; 2 teaspoons lemon juice; 1/3 cup (66g) sugar; 2 tablespoons (14g) cornstarch, and 3/4 teaspoon cinnamon in a small saucepan. Stir to thoroughly combine. Cook over low heat, stirring frequently, until the apple starts to release its juice. Increase the heat to medium and bring to a simmer. Simmer, stirring, until the mixture thickens, for 1 to 2 minutes. Remove from the heat and set aside to cool to room temperature; if you want to hasten the process, place in the refrigerator. ☘

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go to sfes.org to sign-up before all spots are taken!

Kent Memorial Library

Director's Corner



By Amy Vessella,
Library Director

PJ Day for the Kids

With the holiday season upon us, it feels like the perfect time to make you all aware of a very special fundraiser that the library staff will be participating in alongside McAlister Intermediate School this December. This fundraiser is PJ Day for the Kids, which is held yearly on the second Friday in December and benefits the Connecticut Children's Center for Cancer & Blood Disorders.

This state legislature-recognized day of awareness has gained widespread participation over the years,

with schools, businesses, and individuals all coming together to show their solidarity with children facing serious medical challenges. It is a fun and festive occasion that encourages everyone to wear their favorite pajamas to school, work, or home, while supporting the hospital's mission to provide exceptional care for their young patients.

As the library and local schools rally around this initiative, PJ Day for the Kids becomes more than simply a fundraiser—it's an opportunity for us to foster



Photo provided by the author

Library staff participating in 2024's PJ Day for the Kids.

compassion and connection, especially as the holidays draw near. Whether we're sporting festive holiday pajamas or a favorite pair of cozy flannels, participating in this feel-good event is a perfect way for

the library's staff to give back during the season of giving.

We encourage everyone to join us in supporting this fantastic initiative by wearing your favorite pajamas to the library on Decem-

ber 12—we would love to see your support (and your silliest pajamas)! Through this simple act of kindness, PJ Day for the Kids helps make the holidays a little brighter for children who need it the most. ☸

Library Activities

For more information or to register for a program, please stop by or call the library at 860-668-3896 or go online to suffield-library.org
Follow us on Facebook. All programs are free.

General Programs

By Hollie Garrity

We are busy organizing some great programs and raffle prizes for adults and kids for our Winter Reading Program, which will kick off on February 2. Keep an eye on our website and social media for info as it draws closer!

Holiday closures:

The library will close at 5 p.m. on Tuesday, December 23 and will remain closed on December 24 and 25. We will also be closing at 5 p.m. on December 31 and will remain closed January 1 for New Years. We will be closed Monday January 19 for Martin Luther King Jr Day.

Programs for Adults

Movies at the Library

KML is showing movies again! Visit our website at www.suffield-library.org/ for more information, including this month's movie show times.

Thursday Readers Book Discussion Group

Thursday, December 18 and January 29 at 1 p.m.

Get together on the last Thursday of the month with other readers to discuss a book. Books are available at the library. Registration is not required. The December title is *Time of the Child* by Niall Williams. The January title is *Isola* by Allegra Goodman.

Rise to the Challenge Book Group

Monday, December 8 at 6:30 p.m. and January 12 at 6:30 p.m.

Join us in reading and discussing books that have been challenged and/or banned. December's book will be *A Light in the Attic* by Shel Silverstein and January's book is TBD, check our website for updates. Copies of both books will be available at the library. Registration is not required.



Rabble Readers

Tuesday, December 16 and January 13 at 7 p.m.

Rabble Readers is a new book club at KML for adults. We'll read fantasy, sci-fi and horror, anything Escapist Lit. We will meet on the third Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m., except in January when we will meet on the second Tuesday. Copies of the books will be available at the library. No registration required. The December book title is *All Systems Red*, Book 1 of *The Murderbot Diaries* by Martha Wells. The January title is to be determined.

Mahjong

Thursday mornings from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Join us for a morning of American Mahjong!

Make new friends as you play one of the world's oldest tile-based games. For Adults -Basic knowledge of the game required. Please bring your 2025 NMJL (Nation-

al Mahjong Junior League) card. Registration required.

Wish Tree

KML, in partnership with Suffield Community Aid, is supporting local families during this holiday season. Unleash the magic of the holidays by granting a family's wish from the giving tree. Stop by and pick a wish from the tree. We will be collecting the gifts through December 13.





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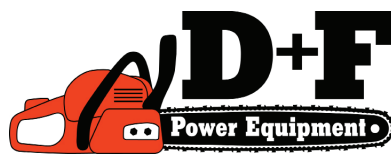
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How to detect Medicare fraud and abuse

Wednesday, December 3 at 1:30 p.m.

Please join Kim Selden, Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) Volunteer and Au-

Continued on Page 25



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General Programs

Continued from page 24

drey Cole, SMP Program Coordinator from the Western CT Area Agency on Aging (WCAAA) in a group discussion on the latest Medicare frauds impacting our local communities. A Q/A session will follow.

Health care fraud drains billions of dollars out of our pockets every year, with Medicare one of the leading programs within the federal government where the loss is extremely high.

Attendees of this program will learn:

- How to protect themselves or a loved one from financial exploitation.
- How Medicare fraud, abuse and errors are defined.
- How to detect Medicare fraud and abuse.
- Some of the most common types of Medicare scams.
- Who to contact or where to report suspected fraud & amp; scams.

Friday Mindful Mediation Series

Friday, December 5 at 10:30 a.m.

Join us for our 3-week meditation series, designed to help you build a consistent and sustainable meditation practice. Whether you're a complete beginner or looking to deepen your existing practice, this series offers the perfect space to reconnect with yourself. Registration is required.

Suffield Alight at the Library!

Saturday, December 13
All Ages/Families

Join us at the Kent Memorial Library for a special event during the annual Suffield Alight event. We'll start at 3 p.m. with a showing of Disney's Frozen, before we read multicultural holiday stories to celebrate the season at 5:30 p.m. Stop by to enjoy a story before you head out to enjoy the many other activities that Suffield Alight has to offer.

Recognizing Neurodiversity in Our Communities

Wednesday, January 7 at 6 p.m.

Join us for a discussion of 'neurodiversity' as it becomes better recognized by society and educational institutions. Authors John Elder Robison and Caroline Bissell d'Otreppe, both members of the local Autism Spectrum community, will discuss the challenges of recognizing

and including neurodiverse individuals in our families, schools, workforce, and society. John and Caroline will answer questions and sign books for those who bring them.

John Elder Robison is the author of *Look Me in the Eye* and *Be Different* as well as other best sellers. Caroline d'Otreppe is a co-author of *The Perfectly Imperfect Family: Real Solutions for Mindful Parents Navigating Today's Biggest Challenges*.

Suffield Players

Tuesday, January 20 at 6:30 p.m.

The Suffield Players will be here to do another great page to stage reading! The play will be *Holidazed*. Light refreshments will be served



during intermission.

Giant Family Game Night

Thursday, January 22 starting at 6 p.m.

Join us for a GIANT family game night on January 22. We will have giant versions of common games set up all throughout the building. There will be games for all ages. Bring your whole family or group of friends.

Kids and Teens Programs Rhyme Time

Fridays at 10:30 a.m.
December 5, 12, 19 January 2, 9, 16, 30

Ages 0-5
Bring your singing voice on Fridays at 10:30 a.m. We sing, dance, blow bubbles -- and have fun! Drop in, no registration required.

The Kids Who Read Books Book Club

Thursday, December 18 and January 15 at 3:30 p.m.

Join us for the next meeting of The Kids Who Read Books Book Club! In December we'll be discussing *Dogtown* by Katherine Applegate and Gennifer Choldenko. The January title is yet to be determined. Books will be available to check out at the library. Open to all

people in grades 5-12. Registration is not required.

Outside the Box: A Club for Neurodiverse Friends

Second Thursday of each month from 3:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Next meetings: Thursday, December 11 and January 8 at 3:30 p.m.

Open to Kids 10+ (under 12, adult must remain in the building)

Welcome to our club, where neurodiversity is celebrated! All kids 10+ are welcome, regardless of diagnosis. We'll have snacks, play games, do crafts and generally celebrate being ourselves. (This is a social group and will not provide diagnosis or therapy.)

Polar Express: A Story Time

Ages 3 - 5
Tuesday, December 2 at 6:30 p.m. or Wednesday, December 3 at 10:30 a.m.

All aboard the Polar Express! Children ages 3 - 5 are invited to Kent Memorial Library for a Polar Express Story Time. Take a train ride to the North Pole, listen to Santa read *The Polar Express* by Chris Van Allsburg, get a goody bag, and make a craft! Wear your pajamas if you'd like! Registration is limited. Register online at suffield-library.org or call (860) 668-3896. Sponsored by the Friends of Kent Memorial Library.



Plant An Amaryllis with the Suffield Garden Club

Ages 5-9
Saturday, December 13 at 1 p.m. or 2 p.m.

Plant an amaryllis and take it home to watch it grow! The Suffield Garden Club will be at the library showing children how to pot an amaryllis and take care of it. You'll get to take it home and watch it bloom. A parent or guardian must be present. Registration required. Sponsored by the Suffield Garden Club.



A Hanukkah Story Time Families

Thursday, December 18, 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Celebrate, learn to play dreidel, taste a latke and learn about the traditions of Hanukkah with the Healy family. Drop-ins welcomed, no registration required. Sponsored by the Friends of Kent Memorial Library.

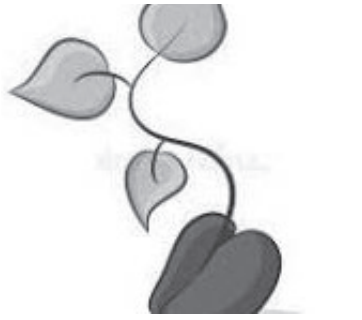


Noon Year's Eve Party

Thursday, December 31 at 11 a.m.

Ages 0-12 (older siblings are welcome too!)

Join us for our Noon Year's Eve Party! We'll have snacks and activities to celebrate the new year ahead. Then we'll count down for the New Year! Registration encouraged, but drop-ins welcome.



Winter Sowing with the Suffield Garden Club

Ages 10-13
Saturday January 31, 1-2 p.m.

Come celebrate National Seed Swap Day! Learn about winter seed sowing of vegetables, annuals and perennials. You'll be taking home your newly winter sown seeds to carefully monitor -- and watch them germinate in spring! Sponsored by the Suffield Garden Club. ☘



Photo by author

Two of our family's menorahs that we light every year. (l-r) A wedding gift 54 years ago and my husband, Mel's, mother's music box menorah which is about 70 years old.

The History and Observance of Hanukkah

By Beth Chafetz with information from Reform Judaism.org

Although Hanukkah (also known as The Festival of Lights) is considered a "minor" Jewish festival by many Jews, along with Passover and Purim, it's one of the most recognized Jewish holidays, one full of light and family celebration. As a candle is added on each of the eight nights of Hanukkah, it brings both actual and symbolic light, reminding Jews to rededicate themselves to keeping alive the flame of Jewish religion and culture. The emphasis on the commitment to *tikkun olam* (the idea of doing our part in repairing the world) has also become a meaningful part of the holiday.

"Meaning "dedication" in Hebrew, Hanukkah (also spelled Chanukah) commemorates the victory of the Maccabees over the Syrian army in 165 B.C.E. and the liberation

Continued on Page 26

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Senior Center & Mini Bus News

By Peter Leclerc, Director of Community Services 860-668-8830

Lunches are \$6 and include tea, a cold beverage, and dessert.
Please make reservations by noon the day prior.
Please bring your own container for leftovers.
Menu is subject to change.
Tues, Dec 2 - Tortellini soup, egg salad sandwich, chips
Wed, Dec 3 - Meatballs with mushroom gravy over mashed potatoes, vegetable
Thurs, Dec 4 - Baked apple pork chop, baked sweet potato, vegetable
Tues, Dec 9 - Sausage breakfast casserole, oven home fries, fruit
Wed, Dec 10 - Chicken cordon bleu foil packet, tossed salad
Thurs, Dec 11 - Unstuffed cabbage roll soup. Caesar salad, crusty bread
Tues, Dec 16 - Cheeseburger on a roll with lettuce & tomato, coleslaw, chips
Wed, Dec 17 - Holiday party with a catered lunch provided by the Suffield Police Department
Thurs Dec 18 - Creamy ham and potato soup, ham sandwich with lettuce & tomato
Tues, Dec 23 - Pizza, chips
Tues, Dec 30 - Crispy chicken sandwich with lettuce & tomato, tater tots
Wed, Dec 31 - Two hot dogs on a roll, side of mac & cheese
Tues, Jan 6 - Chicken alfredo pizza on French bread, celery & carrots with dip, chips
Wed, Jan 7 - Meatloaf with

gravy, mashed potatoes, vegetable
Thurs, Jan 8 - Ham steak, scalloped potatoes, vegetable
Tues, Jan 13 - Swiss chicken casserole, Caesar salad
Wed, Jan 14 - Shepherd's pie, tossed salad, roll & butter
Thurs, Jan 15 - Meatball grinder with sauce & cheese, roasted vegetables
Tues, Jan 20 - Hot dog in a roll, bowl of chili
Wed, Jan 21 - Baked spaghetti, tossed salad, roll & butter
Thurs, Jan 22 - Oven BBQ chicken leg quarter, mac salad with vegetables
Tues, Jan 27 - Sweet & sour meatballs over rice, roll & butter
Wed, Jan 28 - Chicken stew, Caesar salad, crusty bread
Thurs, Jan 29 - Philly cheesesteak casserole, vegetable, bread & butter
Mini Bus trips require five passengers and are weather permitting. Reservations for Dec trips will open on Nov 20. Reservations for January trips will open on Dec 20. Call (860) 668-3844 to make a reservation.
Shopping at Walmart - Thursday, December 4 - Pickups begin at 8:30 a.m.
Lunch at Lulu's Restaurant - Friday, December 5 - Pickups begin at 11:30 a.m.
Westfarms & World Market Shopping - Tuesday, December 9 - Pickups begin at 9:00 a.m.
Lunch at Captain Jimmy's - Friday, December 12 - Pick-

ups begin at 11:30 a.m.
Bright Nights in Forest Park - Tuesday, December 16 - Pickups begin at 4:30 p.m.
Shopping at Trader Joe's - Thursday, December 18 - Pickups begin at 8:30 a.m.
Lunch at Three Figs - Tuesday, December 19 - Pickups begin at 11:30 a.m.
Lunch at The Nutmeg - Tuesday, December 23 - Pickups begin at 11:30 a.m.
Shopping at Westfarms - Tuesday, January 6- Pickups begin at 9 a.m.
Lunch at Zanto's - Friday, January 9 - Pickups begin at 11:30 a.m.
Lunch at Red Lobster - Tuesday, January 13 - Pickups begin at 11:30 a.m.
Shopping at Walmart - Thursday, January 15 - Pickups begin at 8:30 a.m.
Lunch at Wood-n-Tap - Friday, January 16 - Pickups begin at 11:30 a.m.
MGM Casino in Springfield - Tuesday, January 20 - Pickups begin at 9 a.m.
Lunch at Olive Garden - Friday, January 23 - Pickups begin at 11:30 a.m.
Shopping at Trader Joe's - Thursday, January 29 - Pickups begin at 8:30 a.m.
Holiday Lunch & Concert with Patrick Tobin
Monday, Dec 1 Noon-2 p.m.
\$20/senior. Your choice of a pork wellington or turkey dinner followed by Patrick Tobin singing! Register online or with Pam/Bethany.
Tuesday Afternoon Movies
Tuesday Dec 2, 16, 23, &

30 12:40—2 p.m.
FREE! Join us to watch movies and enjoy snacks & drinks.
Art Hour
Thursdays 10—11:30 a.m. FREE!
Dec 4 — Sugar Scrub (make multiple jars for yourself or to give as gifts)
Dec 11 — Sugar Scrub
Dec 18 — Painting Embossed Patterned Planters
Jan 8 — Bookmarks for the Library
Jan 15 — Fabric Paint Aprons
Jan 22 — Fabric Wrap Bangles
Jan 29 — Pinecone Flowers
Armchair Travel to Switzerland
Monday, Dec 8 - 11 a.m.-Noon
FREE! We will be virtually traveling to Switzerland while trying Swiss food.
Card Making Class
Tuesday, December 9 & January 13 - 9:30 – 10:30 a.m.
Hosted by Karenoughcrafts. \$15 per person. To register, call (860) 836-1326 by the Sunday before.
Framed Christmas Tree Craft
Tuesday, Dec 9 - 1:00-2:00 p.m.
10 people max. Register with Bethany. Free. Katey will lead us in making this adorable decoration.
Suffield Alight
Saturday, December 13 - 6:00—8:00 p.m.
Tree lighting ceremony on the Town Green with a con-

cert, visit with Santa & Mrs. Claus, DJ, food trucks, caroling, trolley rides, crafts, and more!
Holiday Party Sponsored by the Suffield Police Department
Wednesday, December 17 - 12:00—2:00 p.m.
Join us for a fun-filled afternoon as a fundraiser for the Senior Center Kitchen including lunch and followed by BINGO! \$10 per person.
New Year's Eve Noontime Toast
Wednesday, December 31 - 12:00 p.m.
Included with lunch sign-up for this day. Come early to get your festive wear & noisemakers, then countdown to noontime sparkling cider toast followed by Auld Lang Syne sing along. Homewell Care sponsored goodie bag.
Balloon Swat Game
Tuesday, January 6 - 12:45-1:30 p.m.
Free! Join us to see which team can keep the balloon in the air the longest with their fly swatters.
Armchair Travel to Kenya
Monday, Jan 12 - 11:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.
FREE! We will be virtually traveling to Kenya while trying Kenyan food.
Musical Bingo
Tuesday, January 20 - 12:45-1:30 p.m.
Free! Prizes for winners!
For more information please visit suffieldseniorcenter.com or call (860) 668-8830. ☿

Hanukkah
Continued from page 25
and "rededication" of the Temple in Jerusalem." Hanukkah reminds us of Jewish bravery against overwhelming odds and the fight for Jewish self-determination.
“According to the legend, when the Maccabees entered the Temple and began to reclaim it from the Greeks, they immediately relit the *ner tamid* (the Eternal Light), which burned constantly. In the Temple, they found a single jar of oil, which was sufficient for only one day. The messenger sent to secure additional oil took eight days to complete his mission, and miraculously, the single

jar of oil continued to burn until his return. The rabbis of the Talmud attributed the eight days of Hanukkah to the miracle of this single jar of oil.”
“The lighting of the menorah (also called a *hanukkiyah*) was common throughout much of the 19th century. By the 1920s, however, Jews increasingly added gift-giving to their Hanukkah celebrations, prompting

some people to refer to Hanukkah as the "Jewish Christmas."
“Although Hanukkah has become an important holiday among North American Jews, it would be incorrect to regard it as an imitation of Christmas with an emphasis on the exchange of presents. Rather, North American Jews use this holiday as a celebration of family, reinforcing Jewish identity

in a place whose population may be overwhelmingly Christian. Hanukkah is a means for North American Jews to feel a kinship with their neighbors while simultaneously remembering their Jewish distinctiveness.”
Today, celebrations of Hanukkah center on lighting the Hanukkah *menorah*; singing and playing *dreidel* (a bit of a gambling game which we

play with M&Ms), and enjoying oil-fried foods including *latkes* (fried potato pancakes), *sufganiyot* (jelly donuts) and *bimuelos* (fried dough puffs) and sharing as much of this as possible with family and friends. Hanukkah runs this year from December 14 (starting after sundown) until the evening of December 22. *Chag sameach* – Happy Holiday! ☿





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Historical Society

By Jackie Hemond
December and January Programs
Holidayfest at the King House Museum
Saturday & Sunday, December 6-7
11 a.m. - 4 p.m.
King House Museum & Barn, 232 South Main Street

Celebrate the season with us at Holidayfest! Step into a festive wonderland at the King House Museum, decorated for the holidays with cookies, punch and holiday greetings.

Featured Events:
Artists of Suffield Exhibit (held over from the summer), showcasing the work of 40 local artists—past and present

Papercutting Demonstrations by Landi Hou, an acclaimed artist known for her intricate and expressive designs

About Landi Hou
Landi blends Eastern and Western papercutting traditions to create works that highlight dynamic compositions and detailed craftsmanship. In 2024, she received the Outstanding Chinese Heritage Advancement Award from the Chinese-American Heritage Association. She also serves as professional staff and adjunct faculty at CT State Community College, Middlesex Campus.

Come celebrate history, heritage, and the holidays with us! free and open to everyone.

January Zoom Program
When the winds blow cold and the glow from the fireplace makes it too cozy to step outside, snuggle down into a comfy chair and enjoy this program.

Wednesday, January 28, 2026 at 7 p.m.



Tiger papercut by Landi Hou

John Trumbull: Painter of the American Revolution presented by Jan Beatty from the Wadsworth Atheneum

2026 is the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. We could not have picked a better program for the start of the 250th anniversary year!

John Trumbull (1756-1843) is the artist whose iconic painting depicts the presentation of the draft of the Declaration of Independence to Congress. The painting was placed in the United States Capitol rotunda in 1826 and is on the reverse side of the two-dollar bill. The painting was based on a much smaller version of the same scene, presently held by the Yale University Art Gallery.

The painting shows 42 of the 56 signers of the Declaration. He painted most of them from life. He knew them! Trumbull painted so many revolutionary leaders and scenes from the War that he has been called the



Painting of the Declaration of Independence by John Trumbull

Book Review

By Jane Shipp



The Winds from Further West Alexander McCall Smith 2024, 272 pgs., Polygon pub.

Every once in a while, even the most avid book lover will long for a quick and easy read, so long as the author is skillful and there is at least a modest message in the prose. Alexander McCall Smith is such a writer. Many readers will recall his series about a woman detective in Botswana, written in a style that is charming, capable of portraying a society different from our own, indulging in a wry humor, and at the same time delivering a gentle moral lesson.

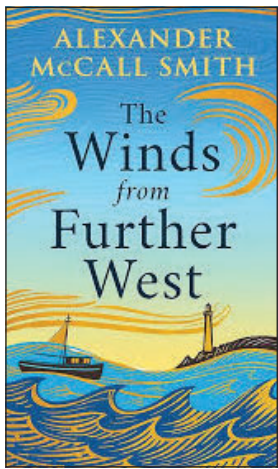
Smith himself is a Scotsman. In fact, he has written a different series about a Scottish woman detective, also warm and inviting but not silly.

In addition, he has written a number of stand-alone novels, the latest one recently published. Its main character, Neil, is a physician working in a lab and teaching medical students at a research institute, a place where politics prevail and the new boss has proved herself manipulative, deceitful, and vindictive. Most

of Neil's colleagues prefer to go along with her demands rather than risk losing their jobs. When a false accusation is made against Neil, he resigns rather than fight the battle that would inevitably follow.

Neil has a gay friend, another physician, very loyal but also very combative; he urges a legal confrontation and feels Neil is taking the coward's way out. He also offers Neil the use of his seaside cottage on the island of Mull off the coast of Scotland for a period of recovery and rumination. On the island Neil discovers a different way of life which immediately appeals to him. It is slower and simpler and seems devoid of political underhandedness; the people he meets are straightforward and honest, warm-hearted and generous--paragons of virtue. In the meantime, hints appear which indicate that Neil's live-in lady friend is in cahoots with the nasty boss. It is a dilemma for our hero, and the outcome is interesting.

The book has its shortcomings; it is no Nobel prize winner. The villains are slimy human beings



through and through, the island people are almost too good to be true, the resolution seems pretty quick and easy. But there is something to be said for a gentle tale that presents intrigue without violence and helps the reader recognize that there are different styles of courage. There are many sub-issues in the plot, reflecting modern times and present-day strains and stresses, but there is also an endearing old-fashioned patriotism which shines through the prose. Smith clearly loves his country with all its flaws, particularly the seacoast, which he describes in loving detail. This book makes you want to get on the next plane to Edinburgh, and from there on the next boat to Mull! ☘

"Painter of the Revolution."

Jan Beatty will talk about Trumbull and some of his paintings, particularly the ones hanging in the Atheneum. Trumbull was born in Lebanon, Connecticut but he also has a connection to Suffield. His great grandfather lived in Suffield down

by the Connecticut River on River Road, now known as River Boulevard. For many years, the site of his farm was marked by a very large tree, known as the Trumble Oak, as that is how the family name was spelled back then. The tree was cut down in 1910.

We hope that you will join

us to celebrate the holiday season and catch the spirit of the American Revolution from John Trumbull and Jan Beatty.

Zoom Meeting ID: 830 3757 7498

Passcode: History

A link to the meeting will also be available on <https://suffieldhistoricalsociety.org> ☘

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Photo by John Matlach

Members of Troop 66 at the start of their bike adventure.

Bike Hike and Camping for Troop 66

By Dean Prusi age 12

In October, Troop 66 went on a bike hike campout at Cape Cod. We started by doing some archery at the camp's archery range to get the archery merit badge. We learned about the parts of arrows, safety stuff and how to aim and shoot the bow. Then we got to shoot at the targets for points. We were aiming for 70 points with 10 arrows each. The closer to the center of the target the more points you get. We also got tips and tricks on the best ways to shoot.

The next day we rented bikes at the campsite and went on a bike trail near camp where we went biking for over 25 miles down by the Cape. We saw cranberry bogs, beaches and more. We were going to go 50 miles but unfortunately there was a Nor'easter coming so we had to stop af-

ter 26 miles. After we did the bike ride, we had lunch and returned our bikes.

Next, we went to Whydah Pirate Museum in Yarmouth Massachusetts. There was a scavenger hunt where we had to find all these different pirate things like the parts of cannons, old money and different jewelry. We learned all about the pirates near Cape Cod, like this one ship called the Whydah that sunk during a bad storm. We also learned about this one pirate who was called John King. He was around 8-11 years old when he volunteered to become a pirate.

We had a good number of scouts, everyone had a good time, and we are looking forward to the next campout. For more information on Troop 66 campouts and meetings go to westsuffield66.mytroop.us. We hope to see you soon! ☘

Troops 260-266 in Iceland

By Krystal Holmes

The clear highlight was their incredible trip to Iceland — a breathtaking landscape of glaciers, waterfalls, and adventure. Scouts especially loved whitewater rafting and meeting international scouts at camp. Closer to home, the troops enjoyed summer camp, skiing, canoeing, hiking, and plenty of camping — logging over 200 nights outdoors in 2025, including one brisk night that dipped to 0 degrees!

The troops are deeply grateful for the unwavering support of their parents, from last-minute grocery runs and helping search for gear to helping with fundraisers. Special thanks also go to the Suffield Public Schools and the Town of Suffield for welcoming scout participation and to Suffield Hardware for their constant help and encouragement. The troops also appreciate the many residents who donate gently used camping gear — it always finds a good home!

Thanks to The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving (through the Amiel and Mary Anne Zak Public Service Fund and the Suffield Greater Together Community Fund) for their generous grants over the years. Their support has helped



Photo by Arctic Rafting staff

A big thank you to our fearless leaders (past and present) for guiding our scouts through these amazing adventures and using your vacation time to camp in the woods.

fund projects like the kettle corn start-up, troop trailer, canoes and essential gear.

Service remains at the heart of scouting. This year, scouts completed multiple Eagle projects and logged over 200 volunteer hours supporting local organizations like Friends of Kent Memorial Library, Suffield Community Aid and Suffield on the Green (to name a few) as well as conservation efforts like roadside clean-ups and trail maintenance. Projects included

- A new altar at Sunrise Park (Joe Krar)
- New picnic tables at Sunrise Park (Hayden Gibson)
- An atrium redesign at Spaulding Elementary

(Ethan Boldt)

- A new kiosk at the Mc-Clean Outdoor Education Preserve (Jack Ryan)
- New benches along the rail trail (Logan McHugh)
- A canoe rack for Second Baptist Church (Dylan Holmes).

Looking ahead to 2026, Troops 260 and 262 are excited for new adventures — including canoeing the Allagash Waterway, more camping, and more service. Thank you, Suffield, for being such a strong foundation for Scouting. Your encouragement and support means the world. If you're seeking a new adventure in 2026, reach out at suffield-scouts@gmail.com. ☘

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The Final Hoot

Organizations



Organizers Chris and Denise Nikolis stand with hundreds of kids ready to start the 2025 PMC Kids Ride.



The Pan Mass Challenge has raised more than \$78 million dollars for the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute since 2009. From left Patrick McMahon, Lou Saledas and Chris Nikolis stand with the PMC sample check.

Suffield PMC Kids Ride

From a press release

With great pride, the Suffield PMC Kids Ride, presented by Koverage Insurance, is excited to announce that it has posted its best single fundraising year so far at \$72,022. "We continue to be amazed by the support received from so many people through their good thoughts, actions and donations," said event co-coordinators Denise and Chris Nikolis. "Our total now stands at over \$650,000 since 2012. PMC has announced a 2025 total of \$75 Million raised (\$1.14 Billion overall) and we are glad to do

our part for The Jimmy Fund and Dana Farber."

When combined with Chris' August PMC ride, their collective efforts have just passed \$895,000 since 2009. None of that would be possible without support from riders, families, sponsors, volunteers, and so many across Suffield and beyond. Connected events include the fourth Jordan Oaks concert, a pasta dinner and an ongoing can/bottle drive to name a few. All of it adds up to a banner year for a great cause.

The 2026 Suffield PMC Kids Ride will be held on May 9 with registration

to open in early 2026. The day features live music by Mixed Tape, an auction/raffle, lunch for all and so much more. Other great 2026 events are planned, including something brand new in the Spring.

To stay updated on all events, follow them on Facebook at "Suffield PMC Kids Ride." With questions or ideas on how you can help or fundraise, please send an email to cnikolis@cox.net. To support the Suffield PMC Kids Ride head to kids.pmc.org/suffield. To support Chris Nikolis' PMC ride head to at PMC.org/CN0049. ☘





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Rotary's New Members

By Natalie Donais
Suffield Rotary

Suffield Rotary is excited to introduce and welcome our two newest Rotarians, Gil Ahrens and Kelly Alexander. Both embrace the Rotary Motto of "Service Above Self" and bring energy and enthusiasm to our club.

Gil Ahrens was born and raised in Suffield and attended public schools before graduating from Suffield Academy. He has spent over 25 years advising high-growth companies in Silicon Valley. Most recently he was Global Head of Venture Capital & Growth Company Investment Banking at Deutsche Bank. He has also held senior roles at J.P. Morgan, Piper Jaffray, and Wells Fargo. He currently advises private growth companies.

Prior to Wall Street, he served as a strategic planning executive at Sanyo Electric Company in Japan and co-founded an award-winning consumer electronics start-up in New York.

Gil holds degrees from New York University (BA, Psychology) and Boston University (MBA), studied music at the New England Conservatory, and is the author of three books.

Kelly Alexander has been a proud member of the Suffield community for the past four years. With a lifelong passion for service, she has participated in multiple mission trips with her hometown church in Hyde Park, N.Y. — including three trips to Haiti with the organization Mountains of Hope for Haiti.

Since moving to Suffield, Kelly has eagerly sought ways to get involved. She began volunteering at the Second Chance Shop and now actively contributes to the Suffield Rotary Club. She also decided to go back to college to obtain her teaching license after 20 years of being a massage therapist and a nanny. Kelly is looking for new opportunities to give back to the community she loves.

A veteran of the New York Army National Guard, Kelly served in Iraq from 2004 to 2005. She now lives in town with her husband, Tyler Markkanen and their cat Mittens. Kelly is excited to be part of Rotary and grateful for the warm welcome she's received from fellow members! ☘



Photo submitted by the author
(l-r) Don Miner, Gil Ahrens, Kelly Alexander and Natalie Donais

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Next Repair Cafe Includes Stuffed Animal Mending

From a press release

If, along with your dull knives, ripped seams, broken lamps and cracked wooden chairs, your family has stuffed animals that need mending, please bring them to our Repair Cafe on Saturday, January 24, at the Senior Center, located at 145 Bridge Street, between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Dorian Taylor, one of our expert seamstresses, will be holding our first "Stuffie Urgent Care Clinic" within our Repair Cafe.

She can sew on torn arms, replace dangling eyes and repair whatever other injuries your children have inflicted on their favorite stuffed Squishmallow, Care Bear, Sesame Street character and other stuffies. For best results, please bring all damaged parts.

Our Repair Cafes now have 16 volunteer fixers, who repair everything from bicycles to food mixers to hedge and pruning shears - all for FREE. Donations to cover Cafe operating costs are always welcome.

Sustainable Suffield's Repair Cafe is one of 3,798 Repair Cafes worldwide, according to the Repair Cafe Foundation. The first Repair Cafe was held in 2009 in Amsterdam in the Netherlands. ☘

Repair Cafe

featuring:

Stuffie Urgent Care Mending



Other repairs include:
Bicycles • Electronics • Sharpening
• Ceramics • Woodworking • Jewelry (clasps and links) • Sewing



Graphic by Anna-Kristin Daub-Murphy
For 2026, Sustainable Suffield has scheduled four Saturday Repair Cafes on Jan. 24, March 28, June 27 and October 17.

Bring Old Devices to One of our Collection Bins!

By Natalie Donais

Did you get a new cell phone? Don't throw your old one away. Recycle it and help protect wildlife!

Why Recycle?

- Cell phones and handheld devices contain hazardous substances like arsenic, cadmium, and lead.
- When discarded, these toxins can pollute soil and water, harming animals and people.
- Devices also contain tantalum, mined from coltan in central Africa—home to gorillas, chimpanzees, and okapis.

How You Can Help:

- Drop off old cell phones, smartphones, flip phones, iPods, MP3 players, tablets, and handheld gaming devices at any of these locations:

- o Town Hall
- o Kent Memorial Library
- o Senior Center
- o M & T Bank
- o Suffield High School

Please erase all personal data before recycling.

Your actions make a difference. Clean out your old devices and help preserve our planet!

Sponsored by Suffield High School's Interact Club and Suffield Rotary Club. ☘



Photo provided by the author
Cell phone recycling machine





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PARKS & RECREATION NEWS

By Peter Leclerc/Donna Carney-Bastrzycki/Pam Cocca/Dan Leonard 860-668-3862

Personal Safety Program at Senior Center was a hit!

It was a full house at the Suffield Senior Center on October 6 as participants gathered for an empowering evening focused on personal safety and situational awareness. Hosted by Suffield Parks & Recreation and Suffield Youth Services, this very important program drew in many younger members of the community with their parents/caregivers to learn practical strategies for staying safe in everyday situations.

The interactive session, titled “Situational Awareness and Personal Safety for Seniors, Tweens, Teens, and Everyone in Between,” was led by safety expert Cheri DeMaria, whose engaging presentation struck a chord with attendees. Participants included families, local residents, and even members of the Suffield Soccer Program, all eager to sharpen their safety skills.

DeMaria’s instruction focused on key areas such as improving situational awareness, understanding and trusting in-

tuition, and learning simple yet effective self-protection techniques—no martial arts experience required. Special attention was given to high school and college students preparing to enter new and unfamiliar environments.

The evening began with a casual pizza-and-snack social, setting a welcoming tone before diving into the hands-on learning. Attendees of all ages participated enthusiastically, creating a vibrant, intergenerational atmosphere.

“This program wasn’t just informative—it was truly eye-opening,” said one attendee. “We left feeling more confident and aware, with practical tools we can use every day.”

Many thanks to all those that attended and to instructor Cheri DeMaria for instructing such an important class.

Holiday Fiesta Fun with Santa Coming to Suffield!

The holiday season is about to get a festive boost in Suffield as the Suffield Parks & Recreation Department, in collaboration with Youth Services



Photo by Donna Carney-Bastrzycki, Director of Special Programs

A good crowd gathered for the Situational Awareness and Personal Safety Session for Seniors, Tweens, Teens, and Everyone in Between.

and the Suffield Senior Center, hosts a Special Pizza Party Fiesta Dinner with Santa on Thursday, December 4, at the Suffield Senior Center, located at 145 Bridge Street.

This family-friendly event is open to all ages and abilities and promises an evening filled with holiday magic, delicious food, and joyful activities. Guests will enjoy a tasty dinner featuring pizza and nachos, have the opportunity to create

holiday crafts and handmade gifts, and, of course, meet Santa Claus himself, who will be visiting straight from the North Pole.

To accommodate everyone, two seating times are offered: the first is from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m., and the second is from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Doors will open no earlier than 15 minutes before each seating. The cost is \$10 per person for both children and adults. Children

age 2 and under may attend for free but must be registered in advance by calling Pam at 860-668-3862.

Advance registration is required, and space is limited. Please be sure to register early at www.suffieldrec.com to secure your spot. This cheerful community gathering is a wonderful way to kick off the holiday season with family, friends, and a visit from Santa himself. Register at suffieldrec.com ☿

Where is Suffield Rotary This Holiday Season

By Natalie Donais
Sand & Salt Delivery

For the 10th consecutive year, the Suffield Rotary will be delivering sand and salt to local seniors. This event will take place on the morning of Saturday, December 6. Seniors interested in receiving a delivery must register by December 1. Sign-up sheets are available at the Suffield Senior Center and Suffield Community Aid. Alternatively, you can email Rob

Kleczewski at info@truepositionmfg.com or call Natalie at 860-604-4956 to register.

Bell Ringing for Community Support

The Suffield Rotary will be ringing the bell for the Suffield Community and the Salvation Army on Saturday and Sunday, December 20 and 21. They will be stationed at Dunkin from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and at CVS from noon to 2 p.m. each day. Your

support and contributions are greatly appreciated.

Free Hot Chocolate at Suffield Alight

Join the Suffield Rotary Saturday, December 13, from 3 to 7 p.m. on Center Green, where they will be handing out free hot chocolate during the Suffield Alight and Holiday Market.

The Suffield Rotary wishes everyone a hanppy and healthy holiday season. ☿

A Last Goodbye to Autumn



Photo by Ron Kirschbaum

Halloween Pumpkin Display at Paula Bishop’s home.



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Small Town Connections

By Bill Moryto

Sometimes we travel different and narrow paths in life only to come across someone from our own small hometown on the very same path. Such is the case for Matthew Moryto and Ethan Amburn; two young men, both from Suffield, both graduates of Norwich University, founded in 1819, it is the oldest of six senior military colleges and is recognized by the United States Department of War as the "Birthplace of ROTC".

On October 10th of this year, these two young men completed The Basic School (TBS); a six-month course for newly commissioned officers where they learned leadership and command skills to be competent leaders for the Marine Corps. For their next chapter, they will train to be Logistics Officers with the Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) designation 0402 and each will be stationed at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, although in different units.

They will learn to plan, coordinate, execute and/or supervise the execution of all logistics functions and the six functional areas of tactical logistics: supply, maintenance, transportation, general engineering, health services, and other services. Logistics officers serve as commanders or assistants to the commanders of tactical logistics units/elements and as members of general or executive staff in the operating forces, supporting establishment and joint staff.

Second Lieutenant Matthew Moryto's journey began in the year 2000 in Winchester, Virginia, raised in Suffield and a 2018 graduate of Suffield Academy, where he played soccer, baseball and wrestled, as well as playing drums in the jazz band. With an interest in military service and a family steeped in



Photo submitted by the author
Second Lieutenants Ethan Amburn and Matt Moryto from Suffield cross paths in Quantico, Virginia.

military service, Matt earned a degree in Criminal Justice from Norwich University in 2022.

Following college, Matt enlisted in the Marine Corps in August 2023, graduating Marine Corps recruit training, also known as "boot camp," at Parris Island, South Carolina as an 0311- Infantry Rifleman, becoming a fourth generation Marine. Following the School of Infantry at Camp Geiger in North Carolina in March 2024, then Lance Corporal Moryto was attached to Fox Company, 2nd Battalion 25th Marines based in Plainville, Connecticut until January 2025 when he was selected for OCS. He graduated ten weeks later and commissioned a second lieutenant and immediately started The Basic School.

On that same cold March Day, Ethan Amburn was also commissioned second lieutenant. Ethan's journey began in Hartford in 2002. His early years were in Enfield where he graduated from Enfield High School in 2020, where he played football and lacrosse before moving over the bridge to make Suffield his home. Four years later, Ethan earned a degree in Political Science from

Norwich University where he was a member of the Corps of Cadets and played football for four years.

Ethan is a competitive athlete with a desire to serve his country as his father did in the United States Navy and his grandfather in United States Air Force before him. Drawn to the warfighting culture of the Marine Corps, he applied and was accepted into the Marine Corps' Platoon Leaders Course (PLC) program at Norwich to train and prepare for Officer Candidate School (OCS). Upon graduation from Norwich in 2024, he worked various jobs from restaurants to FedEx while waiting for his OCS class in January 2025.

Matt and Ethan's paths started in different places at different times, unknowingly their paths crossed with the town of Suffield and Norwich University. Their similar family histories of military service guided their paths to finally cross and meet face to face in Quantico, Virginia, The Crossroads of the Marine Corps, where they all each step off on their life's journeys, to new horizons, yet each always calling Suffield-HOME. ☘

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By Kathy Werth

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Suffield Players Rock the Lot

From a press release

The Suffield Players are giving their historic home a much-needed facelift — starting from the ground up. Through their new “Rock the Lot” fundraising campaign, the all-volunteer theatre company is upgrading the parking area at Historic Mapleton Hall, creating a safer, more accessible, and environmentally friendly space for patrons before the curtain even rises.

Facilities Manager Jason Fregeau noted that the improvement has been a long time coming. During heavy rain or snowmelt, the unpaved lot often turned soft and muddy, creating difficulties for both cars and theatre-goers. A temporary gravel layer was installed earlier this spring to stabilize the surface, but the ultimate goal is a permanent, professionally graded lot with a proper base and drainage system — funded entirely by community donations through Rock the Lot.

Working with Nature, Not Against It

Fregeau emphasized that this project required close collaboration with the Town of Suffield to ensure ecological responsibility. “The initial stages involved a number of members along with town and state assistance to ascertain what exactly could be done to reduce the mud and standing water in the lot,” he said. “This was impacted by the wetlands surrounding Mapleton Hall property and how the environment could be properly protected so there is no damage to the area.”

Thanks to the guidance of member Art Christian and contractor Thomas Remington of Remington Enterprises, the team ensured that all work meets environmental standards.



For Board President Renee Bouldin and Publicity Director Hanna Madler, sustainability was key. With Bouldin’s work in a conservation-focused nonprofit and Madler’s role at the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, both leaders were proud to see the theatre take an eco-conscious approach to preserving its historic home.

A More Inviting Environment

Co-Box Office Manager Martha Zalewski explained that the parking lot improvements show how much the group cares for both its patrons and its home. She noted that maintaining a level, well-drained surface not only keeps visitors safe but also reflects the Players’ continued commitment to making Mapleton Hall a more welcoming and comfortable place for all.

Madler added that the refreshed exterior sends a message of care and renewal. “When audiences see that we’re investing in our space, it signals our pride in this building and our dedication to keeping community theatre thriving for years to come,” she said.

Accessibility and Growth

Accessibility has become a cornerstone of The Suffield Players’ mission, reflecting the company’s broader goal of making the arts available to all. Recent improvements — including subtitled performances, additional matinees, and now a more visitor-friendly parking area — help lower

Continued on Page 36

Community Contributions Fuel Upgrades Honoring Local Fire Service

By Tom McCabe

The Suffield Firefighters’ Memorial Garden at Station 1, 73 Mountain Road, has recently undergone significant improvements, serving as a renewed tribute to all who have served the Town of Suffield as firefighters. The enhancements, made possible by the generous support of the Suffield Firefighters’ Association, Inc. (SFA), reflect the community’s deep appreciation for the men and women who have dedicated themselves to public safety.

The SFA, an independent non-profit Connecticut corporation, funded the upgrades entirely through contributions from the public. Notably, the Association receives no financial support from the Town of Suffield, making these improvements a testament to local generosity and civic pride.

The decision to enhance the Memorial Garden followed recent modifications to the Station 1 driveway, designed to improve traffic flow along Mountain Road. Recognizing the importance of preserv-

ing a meaningful space for remembrance and reflection, the SFA undertook the project to ensure the garden remains a fitting honor for Suffield’s firefighters, both past and present.

Originally installed in the late 1970s under the leadership of then-Chief Raymond Potter, the Memorial Garden has long been a place for the community to pay respects and reflect on the service of its firefighters. Today’s improvements build upon this legacy, with a renewed design and additional features.

The redesign was made possible through the expertise and generosity of Harkens Landscape Supply & Garden Center of East Windsor, Connecticut. Harkens not only created the new design free of charge but also supplied the plants and hardscape elements at a reduced cost. As a special addition, Harkens has donated a firefighter statue, which will be placed on a pedestal to the right of the memorial, further enhancing the garden’s significance.

Guzie Landscaping of Suffield also played a vital role, contributing both personnel and machinery at no cost to prepare the site and complete the installation of all improvements. Their collaboration underscores the spirit of community partnership that defines Suffield.

The SFA is composed primarily of Suffield firefighters, but membership is open to anyone interested in supporting the fire service and advancing the mission of the Suffield Fire Department: to honorably and safely protect citizens, preserve property, and promote public safety with professionalism and care.

Looking ahead, the Suffield Fire Auxiliary Memorial Garden at Station 3 on Copper Hill Road is also slated for renovation, extending these enhancements to additional locations.

Residents who wish to learn more about the Suffield Firefighters’ Association or support its mission are encouraged to contact infoSuffield-FA@gmail.com. ☞



Photo by Tom McCabe

Suffield FD Chief Scott Cunningham (left) and SFA President, Firefighter Roger Dubiel are pictured at the recently completed garden.

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Where in the World is the *Observer*?



Photo provided by Donna Gosselin
Roy and Donna Gosselin, with the *Observer*, on a Scandinavian cruise, pictured with “The Little Mermaid” in Copenhagen Harbor.



Photo submitted by Jay Presser
A group calling themselves the “Suffield Easy Riders” holding the *Observer* on a sailing/bike trip in Denmark and Sweden. All are current or former Suffield residents.



Photo provided by Diane Phelon
It was so great that our vacations coincided. So fabulous to connect with Suffield Public School co-workers in Brugge, Belgium this spring. Anne Kelly, Diane Phelon and Kim Moriarty to read the *Observer*.

Suffield Players

Continued from page 35

barriers for new audiences while encouraging greater community involvement.

“These projects open the door for new patrons and new volunteers alike,” Madler shared. “Every improvement helps us grow stronger as an organization.”

Fregeau agreed, adding that the parking lot upgrade symbolizes the group’s continued evolution: “We take pride in holding ourselves to professional standards both on and off the stage. The improvements at Mapleton Hall

highlight our potential for growth in every area — from facilities and accessibility to performance and community engagement.”

How to Help “Rock the Lot” — and Give Back This Season

The Rock the Lot campaign is currently underway, inviting donations from patrons and community members to help fund the grading, drainage, and materials needed for the new gravel surface.

With Giving Tuesday right around the corner, the Players hope supporters will consider making a tax-deductible donation to ensure Mapleton

Hall remains a safe, accessible, and inviting home for local theatre.

Donations can be made online at www.SuffieldPlayers.org or mailed to:

The Suffield Players
P.O. Box 101
Suffield, CT 06078

(Please note “Rock the Lot” on your check or donation.)

Each contribution helps keep Historic Mapleton Hall a welcoming and accessible space for theatre lovers of every generation — proving that the Suffield Players’ passion for the arts begins the moment you pull into the lot. 🎭



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