

# The Suffield Observer



Vol XXVIII, No. 1

A Watchful Messenger

February 2026

## A Love Match Made in Japan

By Johanne Presser

While most couples find love within their own country, Dave and Joanne Thayer found theirs in Japan. Married since August 12, 1967, the pair celebrated 58 years of love, happiness and mutual respect this past year and are still going strong.

Dave, a mid-western kid with wanderlust was born in Baraboo, Wisconsin, the one-time headquarters of Ringling Brothers Circus since 1884. His business/economics studies at Wisconsin State-Whitewater were interrupted two and a half years in by the draft. Because he had learned to type somewhere along the way, the Army assigned him to Philadelphia as a clerk typist. During his two-year stint, Dave traveled frequently on military transports, visiting eight European countries during his service. He had a top security clearance due to documents he had to type. Once he accepted a courier assignment that included transporting two grenades that were to be detonated rather

than let the document fall into the wrong hands!

Upon leaving the Army and finishing college, Dave taught high school history for three years. He then applied to the Department of Defense (DOD) program to teach at military bases abroad, listing Europe as his first choice and Japan as his second.

Meanwhile, Joanne DeMita, four years younger than Dave, grew up in Arlington, Massachusetts, the middle child in a large Italian family of two boys and three girls. Her first cousin, Ciriaco De Mita, was a prominent Italian politician who, in addition to holding several ministerial positions over the decades, was also the Prime Minister of Italy for a time. Joanne attended Riviera College in New Hampshire, studying to become a teacher. Upon graduation she took a job teaching elementary school in Boston for two years. Her college roommate suggested they apply to the DOD program, convinced that the two of them would end up



Photo by Johanne Presser

**Observer's Valentine Couple, Dave and Joanne Thayer**

in Europe (their first choice) and have a great time together. When Joanne got assigned Japan, she was hesitant, but her roommate, who had been assigned Turkey, convinced her that it would be fun, so off she

went.

Dave and Joanne lived on the Camp Zama base, which was the Japanese military headquarters during WWII. Dave spent two years teaching English and history on the

base while Joanne spent a year teaching elementary school at the Camp Sagamihara base.

While they had seen each other at Zama, it wasn't until a picnic for the new teachers at the end of September 1965 that sparks flew. They started dating the next day and were engaged by January! Joanne reported that they had "chemistry" from day one and they "just knew" they were meant to be together. They spent the year traveling all over Japan in their free time, visiting all four of the major islands. In September 1966 they returned home to the United States.

They were married on August 12, 1967, at the Copley Plaza in Boston. Joanne wore a gown made in Japan which she bought for \$60.

Leaving teaching, Dave got a job with Tenneco, an auto parts manufacturer in Harrisburg, Virginia while Joanne taught first grade. After a couple of years Dave was transferred to Tenneco's packaging division in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

*Continued on Page 2*

## A Tribute to a Special *Observer* Volunteer

By Ann Kannen  
Managing Editor

On December 7, I lost a dear friend and the *Observer* lost a very special volunteer. Carol Martin passed away peacefully.

Carol was a volunteer at the *Observer* from day one in 1999 until she retired a couple of years ago. She contributed enormously to the paper performing multiple jobs - Co-Editor in Chief, Editor-of-the-Month, a prepper, a proof-reader, a writer, a columnist with her Book Review column for over 20 years (her book reviews were engaging and piqued your interest in reading the books) and anything else she could offer.

Carol had a great personality which put a smile on your face while working on the paper. When the paper transitioned to color, she brought a huge bunch of colorful balloons to the



Photo provided by the author

Pictured second row, third from the right, at the 2024 Volunteer Party is Carol Martin with her fiesty, enthusiastic energy. She loved gatherings and she was having a blast with everyone.

office to celebrate. Supporting the volunteers, she would bring in hot "out of the oven" delicious oatmeal raisin cookies for everyone. Lester Smith loved them - inspiring him to stay longer and write more articles for the paper.

Carol cared about community. Every week she would make sandwiches for Enfield Loaves and Fishes. She volunteered at The Second Chance Shop where her wit and humor were on full display. For years she attended the town's Memori-

al Day parade and hosted a gathering afterwards which we all enjoyed - her homemade pies were "to die for!"

Carol's two loves were family and animals. She cherished family events with competitive games which she wanted to win! She talk-

ed a lot about wanting to attend her grandson's wedding in August and she did - filling her heart with tears of joy. Her love for animals was limitless. Her dogs meant the world to her, rescuing older dogs to give them a second chance in life. Winnie, her son's dog, gave Carol much joy and unconditional love right to the end.

I played bridge with her every week for many years, with her final outing on December 4. She was mentally sharp enough to play bridge and looked forward to our bantering at the bridge table. She was a fearless bidder, pleasantly surprising us with her aggressiveness. That day, we played for hours, enjoying her many classic stories, even though we had heard them multiple times.

I will deeply miss Carol, but her spirit and love of life will forever be with me. ☺

# The Suffield Observer

## Editorial

### Words Matter

I find it disturbing that it's common for people in all walks of life to use derogatory, hurtful, negative and harmful words. Listening to the news, podcasts or reading newspapers or magazines, it's common to read about someone using hurtful language.

I guess people don't think their words matter. My father stuttered. My brother and I suspect he left school in the fourth grade because he was taunted and harassed. It's not unusual to read about a middle or high school student attempting suicide or successfully completing the sad and tragic act because they were hazed, harassed, belittled, taunted or tormented by their peers.

I find it particularly disturbing when I read about our national leaders using derogatory, hateful, belittling, racist, homophobic, sexist language as a way to describe someone or groups that they don't like or want them removed for their own reasons. I often hear people say that kids don't understand these words. Of course, they do. Let me share a true story.

When I was principal in Suffield, I had a teacher ask me to come to her classroom immediately. It was very rare for this teacher to have a student discipline problem, so I went immediately to the classroom and found the teacher in the hall with a young boy. She said to the student, "Tell the principal what you called me." He said, "I didn't call you anything."

By this time the student's mother appeared. The teacher said again, "Tell your mother what you called me."

Again, he denied calling the teacher a name. His mother insisted the boy tell her what he said. Finally, he said, "I called the teacher a bitch." The mother was aghast and said, "Where did you hear that language? We never use that language." The boy looked mom in the eye and said, "Dad calls you that all the time."

This now humorous story points out that kids may not always understand the words we use, but they certainly understand the tone. They know when some things are said, it hurts. They use hurtful words on the playground when adults aren't around. But today we find disturbing words being used by all kinds of leading figures.

Young people mimic adults. If it's okay for so and so to use hateful words, it must be okay for them to use them. I know before I retired, we spent considerable time trying to dissuade kids from such language, often successfully, but

not always. That concern is still relevant to teachers, administrators, and parents. Think before you speak. Young people take cues from you. Words do hurt!

**Mel Chafetz**  
Editor of the Month

### Leave Me to My Own Devices



I am worried about screen time. And as I toddle around, sometimes I feel that the cards are stacked against those of us who are. For some reason, everywhere I go, there seems to be a TV blaring in my ear. The other morning, I crossed the state line to fill up with gas in the wee hours. As soon as I selected my gas type, some guy came on the screen trying to lure me in to the station's convenience store so I could stock up on Monster drinks. Now I am at my peak energy level at 4 a.m., so this request was especially ridiculous, and I just didn't want to hear it.

A few weeks ago, we went out to dinner at an establishment in town, and the hostess sat us down at a table right under a huge, blaring TV. If I wanted to watch TV, I could stay home. My partner noticed me twitching and called the waitress over and asked her to shut it off. This necessitated finding and figuring out the remote, and it appeared that no one had ever made such a crazy request. And these days if I go to a doctor's appointment, I always bring my bookbag and plan to settle in, catch up on my book and wait. But all the offices appear to have added a TV in their waiting room which is loudly announcing all of the possible catastrophic illnesses that await, and by the time I see the doc I am in a cold sweat.

At any rate, it is all too much. Too many big screens with folks shouting at me. All I want to do is to curl up in the fetal position clutching my book to my chest. Is that too much to ask?

**Abby Wolcott**  
Columnist

### A Love Match

*Continued from page 1*

vania where Joanne taught 4th grade.

In 1971 Dave accepted a supervisory position at Connecticut General Insurance Company (now Cigna) where he remained for 30 years, traveling 23 of them to set up field offices, until his retirement. Joanne taught 2nd grade in Somers, and they lived in Enfield.

On February 14, 1973, Joanne advised her principal that she and Dave were seeking to adopt a child, and assured him that the process could take several years. Later that day, Dave

called Joanne and told her they were getting a little boy, who they named David, straight from the hospital. Joanne resigned her teaching position that day to be home with their newborn.

In 1974, while approved for a second adoption, Joanne got pregnant and their daughter Rebecca was born March 25, 1975.

When the kids were older, Joanne returned to teaching, first at St. Bernard's and then later at Parkman in Enfield. Dave retired in 2001, Joanne in 2006. They moved to Suffield in 2005 so Dave, an avid racket sportsman, could be closer to tennis and paddle ball courts.

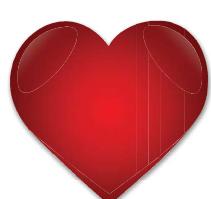
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### Letter to the Editor

Write to  
Inbox@TheSuffieldObserver.com

### Clearing Main Street Sidewalks

Dear Editor

Year round, I, as many in this town, enjoy the beauty of our Main Street. Most often, I am driving through town and most recently have appreciated the lovely holiday lights that brighten the cold winter evenings. On other occasions I enjoy walking and sometimes jogging in this safe, flat and beautiful area. There are many others that I encounter on the sidewalks. Some are pushing strollers, walking their dogs or having conversational walks with friends. This is a very popular area with town folk.

I wish to thank the homeowners who take the responsibility of clearing the sidewalks after snowstorms to keep the well-used paths safe to use. I appreciate their diligence and their commitment to keeping the sidewalks usable during the winter season.

Joan Heffernan

The Thayers have three grandchildren. Son David has Michael, 27, while Rebecca and her husband Todd Zanzac have Josh, 19, who plays tennis for Nichols College, and Joseph, 16, who is at Suffield High School.

When asked for the secret of their longevity, Joanne replied that they have always looked out for each other's welfare. "We come first for each other. We have a lot of the same interests, but also separate interests, and our faith has kept our union strong." ♫



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## February Commission Meetings

Please check the Town of Suffield website for time, location or schedule changes.

### ACCE

Thu., Feb. 5 & 12  
7 p.m., Town Hall

### Conservation Comm.

Tue., Feb. 10 & 24  
7 p.m., Town Hall

### Economic Dev. Comm.

Thurs., Feb. 19  
8:30 a.m., Town Hall

### Education, Board of

Mon., Feb. 2 &  
Thu., Feb. 19  
6:30 p.m., SHS

### Finance, Board of

Mon., Feb. 9 & 23  
7 p.m., Town Hall

### Fire Commission

Tues., Feb. 10  
7 p.m.  
Fire Station, Ratley Road

### Historic District Comm.

Mon., Feb. 2  
7:30 p.m., Town Hall

### KML Commission

Tues., Feb. 10  
7 p.m., Town Hall



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# TOWN GOVERNMENT

## First Selectman's Update



Colin Moll

Happy New Year and looking forward to another great year in Suffield. There's already a lot happening, here are some updates.

### Board of Selectmen:

The Board of Selectmen (BOS) and Board of Finance (BOF) are currently in discussions for bond issuance dates and the potential for adding other large capital projects that require immediate need. The current open bond that the Town approved last year has the Town Wide Radio Project and School HVAC Projects in it. The additional projects will ultimately need approval at Town Meeting which we hope to present towards the end of February or beginning of March in order to add the debt to this upcoming fiscal year budget. The projects for discussion include:

- Replacement of culverts and bridges at Copper Hill Road, Hickory Street, Suffield Street, Spruce Street, River Boulevard, and Boston Neck Road.
- Full road replacement of Phelps Road
- Replacement of the shingled roof at the High School
- Floor replacement at the High School

Follow along at our next few BOS/BOF meetings.

As the BOS continues to find ways to meet the State mandated affordable housing requirements, we are currently looking at opting into the Connecticut Municipal Development Authority. The state formed quasi organization al-

lows for the creation of "development zones" in Town centers or transit areas that allow for zoning changes to make development easier. It also provides the opportunity for funding of projects where funds normally would not be available. Follow along at BOS meetings as we continue to discuss and move forward with plans. As a reminder, the BOS has chosen to potentially look at expanding our Housing Authority, which is located on Bridge Street, to meet these needs.

Our Permanent Building Commission continues their work on the Facilities Master Plan. They've recently hired architectural firm, Tecton, to do an educational specification for the Middle School as part of the study to understand the needs there. Tecton was also hired to study Fire House 1.

As a reminder, road replacement work will continue until June on Quarry Road, which has left the road closed for any thru traffic.

We expect to finally begin work on the fully funded Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTCIP) grant for the Farmington Canal Trail that will include new fencing and repaving of the path.

We also recently received right-of-way approvals from two of the three homes on Mapleton, which gets us closer to being able to add the sidewalk there that was funded 5 years ago. We have asked DOT to approve the design.

Pleased to announce that Suffield was awarded the Safe Streets and Roads For All grant in the amount of \$2.4 million. This federally funded grant will go towards our Suffield Volunteer Ambulance Association, Police Department, and Public Works. Some of the projects

include creating a school safety zone in front of McAlister and the Middle School which includes sidewalks on both sides, crosswalks, and speeding signs, and the potential to start adding speed cameras on our roads. Speed cameras will require Town Meeting approval, so stay tuned.

### Upcoming events:

Trees for Suffield invites all 5th graders to enter the Arbor Day Poster Contest. All submissions are due by March 6th. Check out [ctpa.org/arbor-day/](http://ctpa.org/arbor-day/) for contest details.

Budget development is already underway. Follow along towards the end of February at BOF meeting if interested.

Don't forget to check out the programs at KML and our Community Services.

Check out the "Taste of Suffield" contest run by our Economic Development Commission to support local restaurants this month.

Plans for America's 250th are ongoing. Stay tuned for updates.

*And as always, my door at Town Hall is always open.*

### Star Award goes to

#### Ed Danek, Jr.

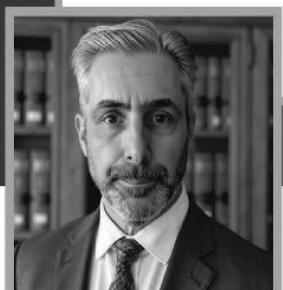
Suffield Resident, Ed Danek Jr. Hartford Federal Credit Union (HFCU) President and Chief Executive Officer has been named a 2025 CEO winner of the Hartford Business Journal's C-Suite Awards. The award recognizes top executives for their leadership and lasting contributions to both their organizations and their communities. Mr. Danek has led HFCU for 35 years and under his leadership, more than \$350,000 has gone to charitable causes since 2023.

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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

December 15, 2025

#### Youth Voices Survey Results

- Bonnie Smith and Luke Smith, both of B. Weyland Smith Consulting, LLC, presented the 2025 Youth Voices Survey results. The anonymous survey examined youth lifestyles, mental health, bullying, substance use, and related risk and protective factors, with data analyzed by subgroup.

- Key findings included continued improvement in reported bullying over the past three years, though classroom bullying remains the most prevalent location. Students reported improved levels of stress, worry and anxiety compared to prior survey results. Substance use rates remain relatively low, with peers identified as a significant source of support. The presentation emphasized a particular focus

on middle school students, prevention efforts related to substance use, and strategies for teaching students how to access support.

### Board of Selectmen

#### Special Meeting December 15, 2025

**Appointment of an alternate member of the Planning & Zoning Commission to fill the remainder of Jeff Girard's term through November 20, 2027**

- First Selectman Moll noted that two volunteers had expressed interest in appointment as an alternate member of the Planning & Zoning Commission: Kevin Keane, who was recommended by the Democratic Town Committee, and Sandra Janik.

- Selectman Hill moved to nominate Kevin Keane as an alternate member of the Planning & Zoning Commission to fill the remainder of Jeff Girard's term through November 20, 2027.

- Discussion ensued, with Selectman Harrington noting that both submissions were very well written and thoughtful. She expressed her appreciation for the quality of the submissions as well as for both individuals stepping forward to potentially fill the role.

First Selectman Moll echoed Selectman Harrington's comments.

- Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

**Appointment of an alternate member to the Ethics Commission to fill the remainder of Dan Vindigni's term through June 30, 2026**

- First Selectman Moll noted that the Democratic Town Committee recommended Michelle Zawawi to fill the role. He commented that he had worked with Ms. Zawawi over the past four years in her role as Assistant Superintendent, during which time he developed a strong working relationship with her and felt that she performed outstandingly in that position.

- First Selectman Moll moved to appoint Michelle Zawawi as an alternate member to the Ethics Commission to fill the remainder of Dan Vindigni's term through June 30, 2026.

- Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

### Economic Development December 18, 2025

#### Passport Drawing

- The annual Suffield Small Business Saturday Passport promotion ran for a week and had 19 participating businesses. The 50

completed passports were entered into the drawing for gift cards.

- EDC Commissioners gathered and drew three winners from the entries. The video-taped drawing will be posted on the Town website.

#### Commission Projects

##### Update

- Ms. Demko distributed a spread sheet with a list of Commission projects. Members discussed the status of the projects and directions for proceeding on them.

- Preliminary plans to redesign the entrance to Sunrise Park are in the works. That project may be one that a grant could be applied for.

- There was discussion about the renovations to the Town greens and what the scope might be.

#### EDC Projects Report

- Mr. Kuzontkoski distributed his written report summarizing the activities in the Light Industrial, Commercial and Town Center Village District zones for the month.

- The Buddhist meditation center Nalandabodhi had a well-attended ribbon cutting ceremony at their new facility at 1380 Mountain Rd.

- The solar array on

Mountain Road by the landfill is underway, with the solar company paying leasing fees to the Town.

### Police Commission

December 17, 2025

- Officers made 12 arrests between 11/14/25 and 12/11/2025.

- Officers have responded to multiple calls for mental health concerns in the last month. Risk Protection Orders are being completed for most of the emergency committals, which is extremely time consuming. The Social Work Intern is being utilized for follow-up.

### Planning and Zoning

December 15, 2025

#### Report On New Connecticut Housing Bill

- Mr. Hawkins, Director of Planning & Development, distributed a memo he prepared regarding Housing Bill HB 8002. The memo contains an overview of the new municipal responsibilities created under this act.

- The State Office of Policy and Management is expected to issue guidelines on the legislation by March of 2026.

- Some of the regulations will be mandatory and others are optional or can be handled regionally. ☺

## Taste of Suffield Encourages Dining Local

By Chad Kuzontkoski

Winter is traditionally a slower season for local restaurants, and this year the Town of Suffield is encouraging residents to turn winter nights into an opportunity to support local businesses through our promotional program - Taste of Suffield.

Now through March,

diners who eat at Suffield restaurants can submit two receipts online through email or the Economic Development Facebook page for a chance to win a \$200 gift card to their favorite local restaurant. Whether it's a cozy dinner out, take-out on a cold night, or trying a new spot in town, every meal

helps strengthen Suffield's local economy.

Taste of Suffield is designed to keep local dollars circulating in the community while giving residents an easy reason to dine out during the winter months. No coupons or special menus are required — just enjoy a meal and enter to win.

Email receipts to Economic Development Specialist Chad Kuzontkoski at ckuzontkoski@suffieldct.gov. Additional details and entry information can be

found on the Town of Suffield website - SuffieldCT.gov ☺



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# Captain's Corner:

## Fire Safety During Winter Storms

By Captain Ron Carlson

Winter storms can happen almost anywhere. They can cause us problems. Know what to do before, during and after a storm. This will help keep you and your family safe from a winter fire.

- Test all smoke alarms. Do this at least once a month.

This way you will know they are working. Install carbon monoxide alarms in your home. Test the alarms.

- Plan two ways out of the home in case of an emergency.

Clear driveway and front walk of ice and snow. This will provide easy access to your home.

- Make sure your house number can be seen from the street. If you need help, firefighters will be able to find you.

• Be ready in case the power goes out. Have flashlights on hand. Also have battery-powered lighting and fresh batteries. Never use candles.

• Stay aware of winter weather. Listen to the television or radio for updates. Watch for bulletins online.

- Check on neighbors. Check on others who may need help.

## SUFFIELD FIRE DEPARTMENT INCIDENT REPORT

November/December 2025

REASONS	# OF CALLS
Structure fire	4/2
Rescue/emerg. medical (EMS), other	1/0
Outside rubbish fire	0/1
Medical assist	1/0
Excess. heat, scorch burns w/no ignit.	0/1
Emerg. med. service (EMS) incident	1/5
Flammable gas or liq. condition other	1/1
Extrication, rescue	0/2
Chem. release, reaction, or toxic cond.	1/3
Combustible/flammable spills & leaks	0/2
Electrical wiring/equipment problem	1/0
Service call, other	1/0
Person in distress	6/3
Smoke, odor problem	1/0
Water problem	0/1
Public service assistance	2/1
Unauthorized burning	3/0
Cover assign.,standby at stat., move-up	1/0
Dispatched and canceled en route	1/1
Controlled burning	2/0
HazMat release invest. w/no HazMat	1/3
Steam, other gas mistaken for smoke	1/1
System or detector malfunction	4/0
Unintentional system/detector operation (no fire)	12/14
False alarm and false call, other	0/1
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>45/42</b>
Mutual Aid Given:	1/0
Mutual Aid Received	1/3

- Generators should be used outdoors. Keep them away from windows and doors. Do not run a generator inside your garage, even if the door is open.
- Stay away from downed wires. Report any downed wires to authorities.
- Be ready if the heat stops working. Use extra layers of clothes and blankets to stay warm. If you use an emergency heat source, keep anything that can burn at least three feet away.
- Turn portable heaters off when you leave the room. Turn them off when you go to bed. ☺

## Citizen's Police Academy Program

By Geoffrey Miner

Are you interested in learning more about the operations at the Suffield Police Department? If so, we encourage you to apply to the Citizen's Police Academy. This free program is being offered

at the Suffield Police Department every Thursday from 6pm to 8 p.m. starting March 26 and running until May 14.

For more information or to get an application please contact Sgt. Geoffrey Miner at gminer@suffieldct.gov 860-

668-3870 or stop by the police department. ☺



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## SUFFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY REPORT

November/December 2025

REASONS	# OF CALLS
911 Hang-Up	16/14
Abandoned Vehicle	0/0
Animal Complaint	50/30
Animal Impound	0/0
Arson	0/0
Assault/Fight	0/0
Assist Citizen	33/39
Assist Motorist	17/18
Background Investigation	0/0
Body Found	0/0
Breach of Peace	0/0
Burglar Alarm	36/37
Burglary	1/0
Car Seat	1/1
Cell Block Check	0/0
Civil Matter	1/1
Community Policing - School	27/14
Community Policing Contact	56/51
CVS Drop Box	1/1
Directed Patrol	224/158
Disorderly	1/3
Domestic Disturbance	2/6
Drone Use	0/0
DUI/Erratic Operation	6/8
Escort Transport	2/3
Fingerprints	11/15
Fire Dept. Box/Hazmat/ Still/Confirmed/Structure	20/21
Firearms Surrender	1/0
Follow Up	1/4
Fraud	3/5
General Information	30/22
Harassment	1/0
Hazardous Condition	23/18
Identity Theft	0/0
Indecent Exposure/Sex Offense	0/0
Intoxicated Person	1/0
Juvenile Matters	4/2
Larceny	4/1
Lost/Found Property	8/3
M/V Accident No Injury/Injury/ Evading	29/36
Medical	102/93
Mentally Disturbed Person	4/2
Missing Person/Runaway	0/0
Motor Vehicle Pursuit	0/2
Motor Vehicle Theft	1/1
Motor Vehicle Violation	165/115
Narcotics Violation	1/0
Noise Complaint	2/0
Notification	10/5
Occupational Accident	0/1
Outside Assist	16/25
Parking Violation	1/4
Property Check	840/760
Pursuit Review	0/1
Robbery	0/0
Sexual Assault	0/0
Subpoena Service	0/0
Sudden Death	1/3
Suicide Attempt	0/1
Suspicious Activity	20/26
Suspicious Person	3/5
Suspicious Vehicle	38/20
Threatening	0/0
Town Ordinance	0/0
Traffic Control/School Traffic	93/71
Training	2/3
Trespassing	3/1
Use of Force - Admin	0/0
Vandalism	1/1
Warrant Service	2/0
Welfare Check	9/14
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>1,924/1,665</b>



# Community Calendar

## February 2026

Now through March **Taste of Suffield** encourages dining local. You could win a \$200 restaurant gift card! Email receipts to [ckuzontkoski@suffieldct.gov](mailto:ckuzontkoski@suffieldct.gov) in Economic Development. (pg 4)

February **Artwork from Granville, MA resident Kim Velky** displayed at the Kent Memorial Library - Regular KML hours, Pinney Gallery, w/Suffield Arts Council. (pg 31)

Sun, Feb 1 **Full Moon Walk** - 5 p.m. at the Suffield Land Conservancy Grand St. property, enter north of the driveway for 1466 South Grand. An SLC member will direct you. Free.

Feb 2 to 28 "There's SNOW better time to read!", at KML. The winter reading program has a great line up of programs and prizes for adults and kids. (pg 20)

Wed, Feb 4 **Amiel and Mary Anne Zak Public Service Fund is accepting grant applications** - Zoom info session at 1 p.m. Email [CommPhil@greaterhartfordgives.org](mailto:CommPhil@greaterhartfordgives.org). (pg 26)

Fri, Feb 6 **First Selectman Coffee Hour** - 8:30 to 9:30 a.m., at Cafe Barista, 66 N. Main. 10% discount on your drink order.

Fri, Feb 6 **Poker Night - Texas Hold'em** - First Friday of the month. Doors open at 6 p.m., game starts at 7 p.m. Upstairs at the VFW hall. \$40 buy-in. Must be 21 or older.

Sat, Feb 7 **Veterans Breakfast** - 9 to 11 a.m. All Veterans and family members are welcome. At the VFW Hall, 972 Sheldon St., West Suffield.

Sat, Feb 7 **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.

Sun, Feb 8 **SFES Classic Pickleball Tournament** - 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Suffield Pickleball, 15 Kenny Roberts Memorial Drive. [SFES.org](http://SFES.org) to sign up.

Sun, Feb 8 **MLK Event** - 3 p.m. at Third Baptist Church, 188 Kent Ave. The Suffield Interfaith Council Sponsors a Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Service. All are welcome. (pg 9)

Thur, Feb 12 **Paczki Day Celebration** - 10 a.m. in person. At Suffield Ambulance Center with the Polish Historical Society. Free Pączki, traditional fat tuesday treats and coffee. (pg 9)

Thur, Feb 12 **Meet the Artist reception with Kim Velky** - 6 to 8 p.m. in the Pinney gallery at KML w/Suffield Arts Council. (pg 31)

Fri, Feb 13 to Sat, Feb 28 **Holidazed performed by Suffield Players** - 8 p.m. Fri & Sat evenings, 2 p.m. Sun. Subtitles Feb 14, 20 and 22. At Mapleton Hall. Tickets at [SuffieldPlayers.org](http://SuffieldPlayers.org). (pg 31)

Sat, Feb 14 **Home-delivered Senior Valentines meals** - call Lori Sych at 860-668-5122 by Feb 5 to reserve a meal. Friends of Suffield and Suffield Academy sponsoring. (pg 31)

Fri, Feb 20 **First Selectman Coffee Hour** - 8:30 to 9:30 a.m., at Cafe Barista, 66 N. Main. 10% discount on your drink order.

Fri, Feb 20 **Open Mic Coffee House & Talent Show** - 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. (doors open at 5:15), at the Suffield Senior Center. Free to attend, Snacks & beverages on sale. (pg 27)

Fri, Feb 20 **Purse & Power Tool Bingo!** - 6 p.m., American Legion Hall, 566 Enfield St., Enfield. Suffield High Class of 2026 benefit. Email [sschrager@suffield.org](mailto:sschrager@suffield.org) for tickets. (pg 18)

Mar 3 to Apr 21 **Drafting the Drama** - A playwriting workshop with Matt Bissett. 6 to 8:30 p.m., Tues evenings at Mapleton Hall. Register at [SuffieldPlayers.org](http://SuffieldPlayers.org). Cost \$375. (pg 31)

Fri, Mar 6 **Roaring 20's Party & Mock Casino Night** - 5:30 to 8 p.m., at the Senior Center. Activities for all ages. Register at [SuffieldRec.com](http://SuffieldRec.com). \$10, age 2 and under free. (pg 27)

Fri, Mar 6 **DEADLINE! Arbor Day Poster Contest for 5th Graders!** "My Favorite Tree in My town". *Mail in your entry by Feb 27*. Details at [www.ctpa.org/arborday/](http://www.ctpa.org/arborday/). (pg 3)

Fri, Mar 6 **DEADLINE! Zak Public Service Fund Grant Application**. Please eMail [CommPhil@greaterhartfordgives.org](mailto:CommPhil@greaterhartfordgives.org) for access to the online application. (pg 26)

Sat, Mar 7 **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, Mar 14 **Spring & St. Patrick's Weekend Hike/Walk** celebrating America's 250th Anniversary - 1 to 3 p.m., at Sunrise Park. Guided hike and fun workshop for all skill levels.

Sun, Mar 15 **Samplers with Alexandra Peters, Historian** - 2 p.m. at the Suffield Police meeting room. Historical Society collaboration with Phelps-Hatheway House. Free. (pg 9)

Tues, Mar 17 to May 12 **Cold-Case Christianity Video Series** - 6:30 to 8 p.m. 9 Tuesdays. At Kent Memorial Library. Register at [Suffield-library.org](http://Suffield-library.org) or call 860-668-3896. Free. (pg 21)

Thurs, Mar 26 to May 14 **Suffield Citizens Police Academy**, 6 to 8 p.m. Thurs Mar 26 to May 14. At Suffield Police Department. Register w/ [gminer@suffieldct.gov](mailto:gminer@suffieldct.gov) or 860-668-3870. (pg 5)

Sat, Mar 28 **Dancing with the Stars of Suffield** - 6 p.m., at the Fred Astaire Dance Studio, 68 Bridge St., Tickets for Desserts and Dancing from [recreation@suffieldct.gov](mailto:recreation@suffieldct.gov). (pg 27)

Sun, Mar 29 **Sustainable Suffield Repair Café** - 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Bring your broken items to the Suffield Senior Center to get them fixed for free!

Sat, Apr 4 **Revolutionary Era Suffield Mini-Bus Tour** - at 1 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. Reserve at [rsvphistory@gmail.com](mailto:rsvphistory@gmail.com). SHS collaboration with Parks & Rec. \$10 pp. (pg 9)

Tue, Apr 14 **America250 Commemorative Process** - Bill Sullivan's American Studies Class will present on Suffield's preparations - 7 p.m. at the Suffield Police meeting room. (pg 9)

Sat, Apr 25 **Dedication of the Liberty Tree** in celebration of the 250th anniversary of American independence - 4 p.m., in veterans memorial park south of the library.

Fri, May 1 to Sat, May 16 **20th Century Blues performed by the Suffield Players** - 8 p.m. Fri & Sat, 2 p.m. Sun. Subtitles May 2, 18, 16. At Mapleton Hall. Tickets at [SuffieldPlayers.org](http://SuffieldPlayers.org).

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## Homeowner's Program Open for Applications

By Lisa Trase, CCMAII,  
Assessor

2025 is needed to apply. Income includes:

- Social Security Benefit Statement (1099 Form for 2025). This must be submitted if you and/or your spouse receive Social Security benefits.
- Federal Income Tax Return (If you file).
- If you do not file an income tax return, statements of 2025 taxable income -including Taxable Pensions, IRA's, Interest, Dividends, Wages, etc., in addition to the Social Security Statement must be provided.

Applications for additional veteran's benefits are also being taken, with a deadline of September 30 for that program. The same income guidelines apply.

Applications are filed online in the Assessor's Office. The office is open Monday – Thursday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and on Friday from 8 a.m. – 1 p.m.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call the Assessor's office at (860) 668-3866. #

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# Food For Thought

Compiled by Beth Chafetz  
**Freedom Day – February 1**

"To be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others."  
 – Nelson Mandela

"Rightful liberty is unobstructed action according to our will within limits drawn around us by the equal rights of others." – Thomas Jefferson

**Groundhog Day**  
**February 2**

"To shorten winter, borrow some money due in spring."  
 – W. J. Vogel

"This is one time where television really fails to capture the true excitement of a large squirrel predicting the weather." – Phil Connors

**Thank a Mail Carrier Day**  
**February 4**

"Postal employees regularly go above and beyond to protect the lives of the people they serve, including elderly or disabled customers, through the Carrier Alert Program. In 2024, the Postal Service recognized 109 heroic employees through the Postmaster General Heroes' Program."

"The Postal Service employs nearly 70,000 military veterans, making it one of the largest employers of veterans in the country. The Postal Service is the heart of the \$1.9 trillion United States mailing industry, which employs more than 7.9 million people."  
 – usps.com

**Weatherman's Day – Feb. 5**

"Weathermen merely forecast rain to keep everyone else off the golf course."  
 – Larry David

"Weather forecast for tonight: dark." – George Carlin

Don't let this market melt away, call us today!

## THE BANAK TEAM

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## Hello February!

**Hershey's Chocolate**  
**founded – February 9**

"Put 'eat chocolate' on the top of your list of things to do today. That way, you'll get at least one thing done."

– Unknown

"After about 20 years of marriage, I'm finally starting to scratch the surface of that one [what women want]. And I think the answer lies somewhere between conversation and chocolate."

– Mel Gibson

**Valentine's Day**  
**February 14**

"Love has nothing to do with what you are expecting to get—only with what you are expecting to give—which is everything."

– Katharine Hepburn

"Love is always patient and kind. It is never jealous. Love is never boastful or conceited. It is never rude or selfish. It does not take offense and is not resentful. Love takes no pleasure in other people's sins, but de-

lights in the truth. It is always ready to excuse, to trust, to hope, and to endure whatever comes."

– 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

**Presidents' Day – February**

**16**

"Think about every problem, every challenge, we face. The solution to each starts with education."

– George H.W. Bush

"You cannot extend the mastery of government over the daily life of a people without somewhere making it master of people's souls and thoughts. Every step in that direction poisons the very roots of liberalism. It poisons political equality, free speech, free press, and equality of opportunity. It is the road not to more liberty but to less liberty."

– Herbert Hoover

**Random Acts of Kindness**  
**Day – February 17**

"In a world where you can be anything, be kind."

– Unknown

"If you want to lift yourself up, lift up someone else." – Booker T. Washington

"Carry out a random act of kindness, with no expectation of reward, safe in the knowledge that one day someone might do the same for you." – Princess Diana

**Quiet Day – February 25**

"Let silence be the art you practice."

– Rumi

"Silence is a source of great strength." – Lao Tzu

**American History Month**

"Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do

to ourselves. All things are bound together. All things connect." – Chief Seattle

"One is astonished in the study of history at the recurrence of the idea that evil must be forgotten, distorted, skimmed over. We must not remember that Daniel Webster got drunk but only that he was a splendid constitutional lawyer. We must forget that George Washington was a slave owner . . . and simply remember the things we regard as creditable and inspiring. The difficulty, of course, with this philosophy is that history loses its value as an incentive and example; it paints perfect man and noble nations, but it does not tell the truth."

– W. E. B. DuBois

"Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction."

– Ronald Reagan

**Black History Month**

"I had no idea that history was being made. I was just tired of giving up."

– Rosa Parks

"Won't it be wonderful when Black history and Native American history and Jewish history and all of U.S. history is taught from one book. Just U.S. history."

– Maya Angelou

"For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others."

– Nelson Mandela



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## How we helped improve Suffield in 2025



**16,240 lbs of organic waste recycled**

Public Schools & Town Hall



**116 residents got free repairs of household items, reducing landfill waste**

3 Repair Cafes hosted



**5 educational events held**

To join our dedicated group of volunteers, email us at:

[SustainableSuffield@SuffieldCT.gov](mailto:SustainableSuffield@SuffieldCT.gov)



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## Suffield Celebrates America250

By Kacy Colston

This year all 50 states, and almost 20,000 cities, towns and villages commemorate the 250th anniversary of the United States, and Suffield is no exception!

Suffield Parks & Recreation and the Kent Memorial Library will be hosting anniversary programs all year. The Sibbil Dwight Kent chapter of the DAR will be celebrating both their 130th anniversary and the U.S. semi-quicentennial. The Suffield Historical Society already has several special programs on their calendar. You can also expect Trees for Suffield to plant a red oak tree in celebration of the 250th anniversary of American independence.

The Suffield Summer Fair, already renown for an exceptional fireworks show, will be even bigger and better, and we can look forward to live music and a boat parade at Babbs Beach on the 4th of July. We can also expect many of July's outdoor mov-



*Red White & Suffield*

ies on the green and concerts on the green to have an America theme.

How can you find out all the details? Look for America250 under Things To Do on the town website at [www.suffieldct.gov](http://www.suffieldct.gov) or click on the QR code below to go directly to Suffield's America250 page. The page will be updated regularly as more organizations finalize their plans. We will also highlight special events in neighboring towns and have included a links to [www.CT250.org](http://www.CT250.org)

for information on activities across the state.

Are you aware of an event that we need to make sure gets onto the calendar? Please send us a note at [America250@SuffieldCT.gov](mailto:America250@SuffieldCT.gov). ♣



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# Suffield Historical Society Events

By Jackie Hemond

**Thursday, February 12**

**Polish Heritage Society**

**Paczki Day - Free!**

10 a.m. Suffield Ambulance Center, 205 Bridge Street

In Poland, Fat Thursday is celebrated the week before Lent. Join us for Paczki and coffee!

**Sunday, March 15**

**ABCs of Antique Samplers - Free Program**

Alexandra Peter  
Sampler Collector & Historian

2 p.m. Suffield Police Meeting Room

Samplers explain so much about the lives of women in the past.

In collaboration with the Phelps-Hatheway House

**Saturday, April 4**  
**Mini-Bus Tour:**

**Revolutionary Era Suffield**

**\$10 admission at tour**

**2 sessions: 1p.m. and 2:30 p.m.**

**Limited Registration**  
**RSVP requested at rsvphistory@gmail.com**

In collaboration with Suffield Parks & Recreation

**Tuesday, April 14**

**America250 - Free Program**

**7 p.m. Suffield Police Station Meeting Room**

Bill Sullivan's American Studies class will present their collaborations with community partners regarding Suffield's preparation for America's 250 commemorative process.

**Saturday, April 18**

**Raindate: April 25**

**Work Day at the King House Museum & Barn - All welcome!**

9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. #

## MLK Event

**The Suffield Interfaith Council Sponsors a Community Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Service**

**Sunday, February 8, 2026**

**3:00 p.m. at Third Baptist Church  
188 Kent Ave., Suffield, Conn.**

*In case of really bad weather the Service will be held on Sunday, February 15, 2026  
3:00 p.m. at Third Baptist Church*



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Photo by Ron Kirshbaum

(l-r) Jaime Smith - Dept. of Agriculture, Rebecca Eddy - Dept. of Agriculture, State Representative Tami Zawistowski, Seth Bahler - Dairy Farmer, Arthur Spielman - Dairy Farmer, Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz, Jon Hermonot - Dairy Farmer, (mostly hidden) Susan Hastings and State Senator John Kissel celebrate Milk Day with a milk toast.

## Hastings Farm Tour Six Generations Strong

*From a press release*

Hastings Farm, the Connecticut Milk Promotion Board and the Connecticut Department of Agriculture invited members of the media to a special National Milk Day farm tour and milk toast at Hastings Farm in Suffield, Connecticut. The event offered an up-close look at modern dairy farming, highlighting how local farm families care for their cows and produce fresh, high-quality milk for their communities. National Milk Day is celebrated annually on January 11; this year, it fell on a Sunday, so the event was held on the preceding Friday.

National Milk Day commemorates the introduction of home milk delivery in glass bottles in 1878. In addition to its historical significance, National Milk Day underscores the vital role dairy plays in our daily lives. Connecticut is home to more than 80 dairy farms, with our state's dairy industry supporting nearly 5,000 jobs and contributing \$2.2 billion annually to the state's economy.

During the event, attendees were guided on a farm tour by the Hastings family with an opportunity to see the cows, learn about daily routines, and hear firsthand how the Hastings family manages a multi-gener-

ation dairy farm that has been in operation for more than 100 years. The event concluded with remarks by Susan Hastings of Hastings Farm, Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz, State Senator John Kissel, State Representative Tami Zawistowski and Representatives from the Connecticut Milk Promotion Board and Connecticut Department of Agriculture followed by a milk toast.

National Milk Day is an opportunity to celebrate the hardworking farm families behind one of Connecticut's most nutritious and locally produced foods — milk — and to share the care, dedication, and innovation that go into dairy farming today. #

## Observer Scholarship Available

the founder of the paper, and Robert O.Y. Warren, a former chairman of the board.

The \$2,000 scholarship can be applied for by contacting the guidance department at Suffield High School or Suffield Academy, by requesting a form from the

Observer office or online at [www.thesuffieldobserver.com](http://www.thesuffieldobserver.com). Scholarship applications must be completed and submitted to the Observer at [inbox@thesuffieldobserver.com](mailto:inbox@thesuffieldobserver.com) or the Observer office at P.O. Box 424, Suffield, Conn. 06078 by May 15, 2026.



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# First Church Congregational Welcomes Pastor Christopher Hart

By Elizabeth Kaplan

On January 1, 2026, First Church Suffield welcomed Interim Minister Christopher Hart to Suffield. First Church Congregational in Suffield is part of the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ (UCC). It is common practice in the UCC for churches to call an Interim Minister to assist a church in preparing for and searching for a settled Senior Minister. This process can often take one to two years to accomplish the reflection and written profile needed during a leadership change.

Pastor Chris comes to us with a Master of Divinity



Pastor Christopher Hart

from Eden Theological Seminary and as a current Social Transformation Doctoral Student. He is a dynamic fusion of poet, storyteller, process theologian and revitalization pastor, blending science with faith. As a faculty member of the Interim Min-

istry Network, he's passionate about empowering communities of faith to grow, change and flourish. Married to his high school sweetheart and father to three children, he's a lover of long road trips, good coffee, science fiction, and homemade creations. Pastor Chris is the go-to for helping communities of faith not just manage but thrive during times of transition.

Please join us in welcoming Pastor Chris to the community of Suffield! We encourage everyone to join us Sunday mornings for worship at 10 a.m. No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here! ♫

## First Church of Christ, Congregational

By Amber Bigley

First Church welcomes all to join in weekly Sunday worship at 10:00 am., in-person or virtually through the church YouTube livestream, continuing on the journey "Together for Joy!" All are welcome at First Church of Christ, Congregational UCC of Suffield. No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

2026 started off with a blessing! First Church welcomed Pastor Chris Hart as Interim Minister at the beginning of the year. Pastor Chris preaches Sunday mornings and offers faithful engagement for all ages during worship services.

Ash Wednesday, February 18, marks the beginning

of Lent, a season of reflection and spiritual preparation for Easter. It's a time for self-examination, prayer, and faithful focus. Join First Church in worship at 7:00 p.m. on Ash Wednesday, stepping into the Holy season together in community.

Go the Extra Mile during the month of February in supporting Fidelco Guide Dog Foundation, Inc. Fidelco is dedicated to limitless potential — to ensuring men and women who are blind enjoy increased independence to improve their lives and the world around them. All Going the Extra Mile denoted giving for the month of February supports Fidelco. Give today through the church giving webpage.

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". First Church encourages our community to donate shelf stable food and self-care items any time. Oft-needed items include powdered milk, just-add-water potatoes, microwaveable whole grain rice, whole grain pasta, sauces, peanut butter, cereals, and sweets! Deodorant, 3-in-1 body wash, toothpaste, and other basic hygiene items. Please refrain from donating perishable foods or expired foods.

First Church hosts Narcotics Anonymous and Alcoholics Anonymous in our building weekly. Stay connected to meetings, upcoming news, events and more through the church website [www.first-churchsuffield.org](http://www.first-churchsuffield.org).

General inquiries can be directed to [office@fcsuffield.org](mailto:office@fcsuffield.org). For Pastoral needs, contact Pastor Chris Hart PC@pastorchrish.faith. God bless! ♫



Photo submitted by the author

Proud children stack the donations.

## West Suffield Congregational Souper Bowl of Caring

By Pastor Denise Peterson

It's that time of year again, our WSCC Souper Bowl of Caring! On Super Bowl Sunday, the children collect non-perishable food items for the elderly and disabled in town. The children spend weeks making announcements, drawing posters, and organizing the collection of hundreds of cans of food (close to 500 last year). It all makes them so proud to know that they've made a difference in someone else's life.

We started this tradition three years ago in memory of a parishioner, Deborah Halladay Pierce, a beloved town schoolteacher and long time Sunday School teacher. Debbie loved, loved, loved children so we thought it appropriate to have her be the inspiration for this event. The children collect cans while

we grownups get cooking. During our service the children go out into the congregation and collect the cans. They pile them high and then we follow our service with a potluck of homemade soups and bread. The children always sneak up to the sanctuary and make can sculptures and count their takings.

It is a wonderful, warm gathering of generations. The children learn that they can change the world one can of food at a time, and the grownups among us receive both physical and spiritual sustenance while we're having some fun watching the kiddos caper about. If you want to join in on the show, come on the 18th, laden with goods and watch the fun. 10 a.m. service as usual.

Blessings on your day, Denise. ♫

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## Second Baptist Church News

### From a press release

As we enter February, we find our days getting a bit longer as we move closer to the start of spring. We also will be entering the season of Lent in the Christian calendar. Lent is the period of 40 days leading up to Easter but does not include the Sundays. This begins with Ash Wednesday, which falls this year on February 18.

The 40 days is representative of the 40 days that Jesus spent in the wilderness after his baptism, where we are told he fasted for those 40 days and then was tempted. In the early church, the period was often used in preparation for baptism of new converts, who would then be baptized on Easter morning, symbolic of Christ's rising on Easter. But during those 40 days, the new converts would spend time in prayer and contemplation, fasting and preparing themselves before entering the waters.

These days, not all Christians pay much attention to the season of Lent, focusing more on Holy Week and Easter. For the millions who do practice Lent, there is no one practice that all follow. Lent is still a time for self-reflection and prayer as people prepare for Easter. For many, "fasting" takes on a different form, often by giving up something for the period, such as chocolate, sweets or alcohol. Others might take on a practice for the period, such as volunteering, setting aside a specific amount of money daily to give to a cause or filling a box weekly with food to donate to a local pantry. These practices can take many forms, and these are but a few ways people have practiced a new way of "fasting."

In addition, many churches have special services during Lent. Many will have an evening service

on Ash Wednesday. Second Baptist will have a **service at 7:00 p.m. on February 18** in our sanctuary, and anyone is welcome to join us. There are also special services during the last week of Lent, known as Holy Week. If you are interested in learning more reach out to one of the churches in town. Rev. James Leavitt is our Interim Pastor.

### Community Hymn Sing and Potluck on Saturday, February 28, at 6:00 p.m.

The evening will include a shared potluck meal followed by singing of well-loved hymns. All are welcome to attend. For more information, please contact Second Baptist Church of Suffield. (860-668-1661 or [office@secondbaptistsuffield.org](mailto:office@secondbaptistsuffield.org))

Regular scheduled outreach opportunities include:

- **Monday, February 9**
- Fellowship Time - 6:30

**p.m.** - This monthly outreach program is for our friends with cognitive limitations to give them a safe environment for crafts, singing, and fellowship.

### • Saturday, February

**14 - Soup Kitchen Ministry** - Help serve a meal on the 2nd Saturday of the month for anyone in need at the Loaves and Fishes Soup Kitchen at South Congregational Church in Springfield, Mass.

### • Tuesday, February

**24 - American Red Cross Blood Drive - Noon-5:00 p.m.** in Fellowship Hall. For an appointment, please visit [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org) or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

Additional information for all service and program opportunities at the church are available on [secondbaptistsuffield.org](http://secondbaptistsuffield.org) as well as our Facebook and Instagram sites. ♣

## Sacred Heart News

By Fr. Joe Keough, Pastor

The Sacred Heart Parish Family wishes everyone a happy and healthy new year! The month of January is that "catch your breath" month when the Christmas Season comes to a close, and we prepare for Lent and Easter. It is not without a few activities in addition to our regular worship through the Mass and devotions. If you made a new year's resolution to strengthen your faith life, consider joining us for Mass on the weekends or weekdays if your schedule

will allow it. Our adult Bible study has resumed after a Christmas break. The group meets every Tuesday in Fr. Ted Hall at 6:30 p.m. Our young families can enjoy the annual Winter Carnival hosted by our Religious Education department. This was held on Sunday, January 25 in Fr. Ted Hall. This event provided families with an opportunity to come together and enjoy some games, refreshments and most importantly, time together as family and parish family.

As January passes, we

enter February and get ready for a good Lenten experience. We will once again hold our Mardi Gras the Sunday before Lent begins. February 18 is Ash Wednesday and once again, we will begin with Mass at 8:00 a.m. and the distribution of ashes. From noon until 4:00 we will be open for anyone wishing to receive ashes and take the opportunity to spend some quiet time in prayer and reflection. There will be another Mass at 6:00 p.m. As a reminder, Catholics are

asked to fast and abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday as well as not eat meat on Fridays in the Lenten Season as a small sign of sacrifice and repentance.

We will pray the Stations of the Cross each Friday of Lent beginning at 6:30 p.m. Our young people will present a Living Stations on Friday, March 6 also at 6:30 PM. Just as a reminder to anyone who wishes to pray the stations on their own, the church is open during

*Continued on Page 12*

### Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

**585 South Street (Route 75)**  
**Suffield, Connecticut**

**FaceBook: Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Suffield CT LCMS**  
**email: [gslsuffieldct@gmail.com](mailto:gslsuffieldct@gmail.com)**  
**860-668-2790**



### Worship

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**Pastor Adam Moore**



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## In Memoriam

**William Lucia**  
November 21, Age 80

**Eric S. Gross**  
November, 23, Age 57

**Virginia Stephens**  
December 4, Age 102

**Natalie Das**  
December 5, Age 89

**Carol B. Martin**  
December 7, Age 91

**Erika Pafford**  
December 10, Age 40

**Terry Lyn Gorski**  
December 11, Age 78

**Francisco Jose Sabater**  
December 11, Age 67

**Tamara Weeks**  
December 14, Age 60

**Amparo Reyes Mallma**  
December 16, Age 76

**Shawn Timothy Byrne**  
December 19, Age 51

**John G. Fisher Sr.**  
December 21, Age 83

**Evelyn Garner**  
December 25, Age 84

**Robert C. Boroski**  
December 27, Age 84

**Lyle W. Pearson**  
January 1, Age 78

**Roxanne Eigenbrod Zak**  
January 2, Age 72

**Richard Barnett**  
January 4, Age 90

**Patricia Reynolds**  
January 7, Age 89

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## Sacred Heart News

*Continued from page 11*

the day, and we are now blessed to have an outdoor display of the stations in the Meditation Garden between the church and Fr. Ted Hall. This new addition to our campus is the fruit of an Eagle Scout project that was completed in the fall of last year. The stations were originally in St. Joseph Church and moved to Sacred Heart. They were repainted and coated for protection against the elements and are a welcome addition to our parish grounds. Weather permitting, we will pray

the outdoor stations of the cross on Good Friday.

As a reminder, our daily Masses and two of the weekend Masses are live streamed and available on our website <http://www.sacredheartct.com> as well as our Facebook and YouTube pages. In the event of snowy and/or icy winter weather, please use caution when coming to any event at Sacred Heart. Our plowing crew does a great job but there are always slippery spots on the campus or local roads. Prudence and common sense are our best tools in bad weather.

For a complete listing of winter and Lenten activities, please visit our website or pick up a bulletin in the church. Have a blessed new year! ☩



## Suffield Alight Was a Delight for All

*By Peter Leclerc, Suffield's Director of Community Services*

Our annual Tree Lighting event, "Suffield Alight!", has become a beloved community tradition since 2020, filled with music, lights, community spirit and festive activities that truly capture the magic of the season. If I could describe the event in one word, that word would be "magical"! We have thoughtfully and purposely, grown the event each year, finding that delicate balance of having fun things to do, without losing the small town feel that makes Suffield so special.

I was inspired by Donna Carney-Bastrzycki's stories and pictures of Austrian winter markets and debuted a new Holiday Market on the Town Green. This added the perfect touch with vendors lining the Town Green,

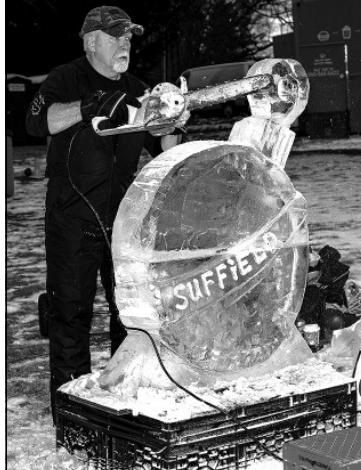
offering a wide variety of seasonal goods including baked treats, holiday greenery, homemade jewelry and unique gifts—perfect for anyone looking to start their holiday shopping locally. The new market, thoughtfully arranged with decorative lighting along the booths, gave the entire green a beautiful look and feel. Many attendees commented that it felt like stepping into a Hallmark movie.

Food trucks added to the festive atmosphere, with popular offerings from Indulge Donuts, Fire on the Mountain, Cousins Maine Lobster, Chick-fil-A, Fat City Kid and the ever-popular kettle corn from the Boy Scouts, filling the air with familiar aromas. Adding an outdoor

essential, Suffield Rotary handed out hundreds of free cups of hot chocolate, once again demonstrating what an outstanding community organization and valued part of our town the Rotary is.

Holiday music set the tone for the evening, led by WMAS 94.7's Chris

*Continued on Page 15*



*Photo by Ron Kirschbaum*  
Ice sculptor Billy Poe works to finish his creation.



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## Suffield Observations

*By Andy Sauer*

### Love, American style

I know a woman who hasn't had the best luck with guys. A self-described country girl, she's a full-time student and works as many hours as she can to pay the bills. She doesn't have a lot of time to hit the dating scene, but fortunately there's an app for that! She sifts from the pool of eligible bachelors on her phone, swiping from one photo to the next, until she finds a match.

It hasn't been working out too well.

I know a guy who works at the gym I belong to. A typical 20-something suburban guy, he also goes to school full-time and works as many hours as he can to make ends meet. He is incredibly friendly and radiates positivity. But, dating technology has been letting him down.

These are two hard-working, wonderful human beings who are inexplicably single.

So, I set them up on a blind date.

It wasn't easy. It took weeks of coordination, reconnaissance and the right balance of promotion and discretion.

The concept of a blind date in today's digital world seems, well, dated. Who needs a matchmaker when you can launch a multitude of apps, employ all sorts of filters and sort through the seemingly endless list of candidates in the comfort and security of your own home? With an infinite supply of data aggregating in real time within an ever-growing network, the algorithm of love will surely create the perfect match.

Except, when it doesn't.

Such is the weakness of data-driven endeavors that is so common there are several academic terms to describe it – Campbell's Law, Goodhart's Law, The McNamara Fallacy, to name a few. Since human beings began counting things, the ones doing the counting understood data has limitations. It doesn't always have the answers.

That hasn't stopped everyone from giving it the college try – designing complex equations, expanding networks and gathering all forms of information in an effort to comprehend a chaotic world. At the speed of light and with relentless resolve, an online merchant can suggest products you desire, an entertainment network can deliver content you find compelling, and social media apps can identify communities to which you want to belong. With each interaction, the algorithm becomes freakishly more accurate.

Except, when it isn't, and often in the most critical areas of existence, such as love.

I have zero experience in match-making, but I had a gut feeling about these two kids. She's on the introverted side, but once she warms up, she's full of energy. He's extroverted and thrives on energy. Most importantly, he's sincere and patient. Marketing types would call my hunch "qualitative data."

A couple of weeks before the holidays, the pair met at a quiet coffee shop and hit it off. There was a first date, a second, a third and, now, they've been seeing each other as often as they can.

It's still early. My friend admits that this guy is different from the type she normally dates, but he keeps surprising her, which she likes.

The guy, whenever I see him at the gym, never stops thanking me.

It all looks very promising, whatever the numbers say.

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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.

### February 5

One of the heaviest snow storms of recent years struck this place.

Mrs. Florence W. Rich of this town, is offering two prizes, one each to a boy and a girl, under 15 years of age, who shall write the best essay on "How Young People Can Make the Best Use of the Public Library."

A resident of Burbank avenue was the first person to have been arrested on complain (sic) of a warrant issued by the personal tax collector. After having remained in the lock-up over night, he thought better of his nonpayment and settled.

An institute under the auspices of the Hartford County Farm Bureau will be conducted... The speaker will be E. H. Manchester of Storrs Agricultural College, whose topic will be "Advantages and disadvantages of growing crops other than tobacco."

### February 12

Howard Beresford drove a sleigh ride party to Suffield [from West Suffield] Tuesday evening to attend the whist and dance in the new school auditorium.

### February 19

John C. Nemirov, who gave his address as... Springfield and Philip Oharmus of Chicopee, Mass, were arrested...by Deputy Sheriff George L. Greer after he had stopped Nemirov, who was piloting a Reo speed wagon loaded with alcohol...

Oharmus said that he was 22 years old and took the job of driving the truck because he could find no other employment by which to support his wife and 6-weeks old baby. He said that he had only worked for Nemirov three weeks and that the first week was spent in fixing up the truck, the second week he was high-jacked and his load stolen on the Berlin turnpike at 2:30 in the morning, and this week he was apprehended, so his career as a booze

runner was not a marked success.

The Suffield School will stage its first annual winter carnival. The program will consist of outdoor sports.

Harvey Johnson, a young [Black] boy in the employ of Bernard Flanagan, complained to the town officers..that Flanagan knocked him unconscious with a piece of a 2.4 scantling for being ten minutes late to work. Johnson was attended by Dr. Levy, who found it necessary to take several stitches in a bad scalp wound Flanagan was brought before Justice G. Stephen Potwine and was fined \$25 and costs and given a suspended jail sentence of fifteen days.

Domenic Alfano has purchased the lot on the corner of Main and Depot streets where the hotel building is being razed. The price reported is \$7,500. The lot contains just an acre of land with a small building thereon, which tradition says was at one time the office of the postmaster-general of the United States.

Ash Wednesday was observed as the beginning of the Lenten season in St. Joseph's and the Sacred Heart church Wednesday. Special services were conducted in the morning and evening and the ashes blessed for the occasion were distributed.

### February 26

A new traffic signal has been placed at the corner of Main and Depot streets and the blinker that it replaces has been set up in West Suffield. The new signal is of the acetylene gas type and is on a heavy concrete base with an iron standard. It gives a much better signal in that place than the old one.

The work of razing the hotel property at the corner of Main and Depot streets is about completed and the work will be finished next week. The lot has been purchased by Domenic Alfano.

Matthew Leahey has returned from a trip to Cuba.

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## A Moment in Time

Old Photos Invited from Our Readers



Photo submitted by Art Sikes

Suffield Center Store front about 1880. From left to right- Mrs. Mary Jane Thompson, Mrs. Sackett, Leverett Sackett (in front of wagon), Hiram Jones and Zella Sackett in wagon and Edward Perkins and Emily Sackett in wagon. Horace D. Sackett store - then Martinez, until taken down in 1968. Delphia H. Clark photo collection, KML

## Heartful Appreciation

By Sara Zak

This month, I write as interim President of the Suffield Historical Society, rather than as Chair of the Property Committee. In this role, I extend the sincere appreciation of the Society to all those who support us in our mission to collect, preserve and stimulate interest in the history of Suffield. This past year approximately 40 volunteers contributed over 2,300 hours of time and energy. Special thanks are due: to the officers and members of the Board of Trustees for their work (often behind the scenes); to the ten docents who collectively volunteered nearly 500 hours to showcase the King House Museum & Barn to almost as many visitors (including 173 fourth graders and their teachers);

to the remaining 20 volunteers who help maintain the King House, barn and property; to our researchers and genealogists who help families connect to their Suffield ancestors; and to those who attend our programs. The Society also appreciates the financial support we receive throughout the year. We are especially grateful to those who have generously donated \$11,000 toward our goal of repairing and painting the north wall of the King House. The Society would not exist without your time, energy, and dollars. Thank you!

I have taken on the responsibility of President at an exciting time. As we celebrate the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, the Society is starting the year with several opportunities to

further our mission, including improving our relationship with the public schools and bringing our collection of artifacts out to the community. We are also ever mindful that we have a 260-year-old house to tend to. So, as grateful as I am for your support to date, I humbly ask for more. The Society welcomes ideas to improve our website, programs, and newsletter. There is always a need for volunteers (especially younger, more energetic ones) to attend to small chores, graphic design, public relations, yard work, data entry, etc. Though our Annual Appeal is mailed primarily to members, everyone is welcome to donate to this critical project to repair the house's north wall. We still need \$4,000 to reach our goal. Every donation counts! ☺

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# Suffield Trivia

*By Jackie Hemond*

These trivia questions are derived from stories in the January 2026 issue of the Suffield Historical Society's newsletter. Become a member of the Society if you are interested in learning more about these topics and more. It's easy! Applications are available and payments can be made at [suffieldhistoricalsociety.org](http://suffieldhistoricalsociety.org). Choose to get a digital copy in your email or a copy by mail.

## 1. What were the Suffield Resolves?

- a. A resolution to end the border dispute between Suffield and Southwick.
- b. A resolution condemning British acts, which urged self-governance and the rights of the town against British rule.

With British soldiers were captured after the Battle of Saratoga. The battle was the first major victory for the American Army. The Con-vention Army rested for a night in Saratoga and then to imprisonment in Charlotteville, Virginia.

10. Yes. In addition to Loy- alists and British soldiers during the Revolutionary War, the prison also incar- cerated burglars, robbers and counterfeiters. Com- mon criminals were sen- tenced for no more than ten years for a first offense. A second offense was life imprisonment.

c. A resolution to provide a detailed map from a required survey by the State of Connecticut.

2. Was Alexander King, who built and lived in the house now owned by the Historical Society on South Main Street, a Loyalist (a person who favored British rule over the American colonies)? **Yes or no.**

3. Were there Black soldiers in the American Revolutionary War? **Yes or no.**

4. Who was the first man to lead soldiers from Suffield to respond to the British attack on Lexington, Massachusetts in 1775?

- Captain Elihu Kent
- Lieutenant Oliver Hanchett
- Captain Daniel Austin

5. Were Paul Revere, Wil-

liam Dawes and Samuel Prescott the only “Midnight Riders” who alerted people that British troops were marching into Lexington? **Yes or no.**

6. Why was Oliver Hanchett, a Suffield resident, a character in the Pulitzer Prize-winning historical novelist Kenneth Roberts’ book Arundel?

- Hanchett helped to found Arundel, a town in Maine in 1770.
- Hanchett was the privateer captain of the ship “Arundel” which fought against the British in the Revolutionary War.
- Hanchett was an officer when troops under Benedict Arnold attempted to seize Quebec City during the Revolutionary War.

7. What is the story of the musket on the wall at the King House Museum? Choose which answers are correct.

- It was owned by Alexander King during the Revolutionary War.
- It is a British musket.
- It was damaged in the 1983 fire that occurred at the King House Museum & Barn.

8. Who was Moses Huxley, a Suffield soldier in the Revolutionary War? Choose which answers are correct.

- He was the first Suffield resident to die in the American Revolution.
- He died from smallpox while imprisoned by the British after the Battle of Quebec.

c. He died during the Siege of Boston when American soldiers surrounded the British troops in Boston.

9. How did Hessian soldiers come to dance in Suffield? Choose all answers which are correct.

- They were Convention Army soldiers.
- The Hessian officers thought so well of the residents that they invited Suffield “belles” to a ball.
- After the Revolutionary War, many Hessian soldiers settled in the area. To thank residents for their acceptance in the community, the now ex-soldiers staged a ball.

10. Were counterfeiters imprisoned in Old New-Gate Prison? **Yes or no.**

## Answers

Answers

1. b. A resolution con-  
cerning British sol-  
diers were not officially al-  
lowed to serve until 1777.  
2. No. King became an ad-  
vocate for independence  
from British rule but op-  
posed the persecution of  
Loyalists such as tar and  
feathering them, raiding  
their homes and running  
them out-of-town.

3. Yes, although Black sol-  
diers were about 40 riders  
in the King House fire but  
the musket was damaged  
in the first major victory for  
the Americans. The Con-  
vention Army rested for a  
night in Suffield on their  
way to imprisonment in  
Charlottesville, Virginia.

4. a. Captain Elihu Kent,  
the Revolutionary War.  
5. No, there were about  
40 riders who spread the  
alarm including Isaac Bis-  
sell, a Suffield man, who  
brought the news to several  
towns including Springfield  
and Suffield on his way to  
Hartford.

6. c. Hanchett was an of-  
ficer when troops under  
General Arnold attempted  
to seize Quebec City during  
the Revolutionary War.

7. b. And c. are correct an-  
d d. is wrong. In the Battle of Long  
Island Sound, Eliphale Kent  
was killed by a British  
cannonball.

8. a. And c. are correct an-  
d b. is wrong. The battle was  
of Saratoga. The battle was  
the first major victory for  
the Americans. The Con-  
vention Army rested for a  
night in Suffield on their  
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9. a. And b. are correct an-  
d c. is wrong. Monmouth  
Court held that the Con-  
vention Army was more than  
ten years for a first offense.  
A second offense was life  
imprisonment.

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18. a. And b. are correct an-  
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vention Army was more than  
ten years for a first offense.  
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19. a. And b. are correct an-  
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Loyalists such as tar and  
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their homes and running  
them out-of-town.

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**Suffield Alight***Continued from page 12*

Kellogg, host of The Kellogg Krew, who guided the crowd through seasonal favorites. Activities filled the green and surrounding areas, giving families plenty to see and do. At First Church, the Cetto Chamber Singers presented a beautiful chorale concert and made a generous donation to the Senior Center Kitchen Fund, further highlighting the spirit of giving that defined the day.

Volunteers always play a special role in Town events, and this one had many opportunities to give back to the community. Thanks to students from Suffield High School and Agri-science and community members who generously donated their time, families enjoyed horse-drawn wagon rides

in front of beautiful Suffield Academy, where students and staff also shared complimentary hot chocolate. Festive trolley rides along historic Main Street, led by Stephanie Salerno and her crew, were another highlight of the evening.

Kent Memorial Library hosted a screening of *Frozen*, welcomed special guest visitors, and offered multicultural readings celebrating other holidays observed in December. Live ice carvings—one transforming into a large ornament and another into snowflakes and penguins—drew crowds, as did a surprise appearance by the Grinch. The undeniable “hot spot” of the night was the new oversized illuminated ornament, built and donated by Jerry Macari and John Legg, where a steady line of visitors waited to capture the perfect family photo.

I would like to extend sincere thanks to all volunteers, staff, and departments who made the night so special, including Santa and Mrs. Claus, the Grinch, the Parks & Recreation Commission, Dave Camera, Rick Neis, Robin Zatony, Stephanie Salerno, Chris Viscel, Shannon Foley, Kris Lambert, Bethany Sullivan, Kelly Blais, Colin Moll and the First Selectman’s Office, Lee Corbert and the Department of Public Works, Police and Fire Departments, Suffield Volunteer Ambulance Association, Kent Memorial Library, Planning and Development, Youth Services, Senior Center and Mini-Bus Transportation, Lemmens Creative Design, and Suffield Academy. The Parks & Recreation Department (Donna Carney-Bastrzycki, Dan Leonard, Pam Cocca, Eric Hamylak) led the organization of

the event and the successful launch of the new Holiday Market, helping to create a truly magical evening for the Suffield community.

An event with so much to offer would not be possible without the strong support from our friends at PeoplesBank. They are a joy to work with and really have an interest in the Suffield community. The Parks

& Recreation Department will be forming a group of volunteers to help with the planning and operations for next year’s Suffield Alight! & Holiday Market. If you are interested in joining the group, please email your name and phone number to, [recreation@suffieldct.gov](mailto:recreation@suffieldct.gov). Ed Note: Thanks, too, to Peter Leclerc for his time and effort! ☺



Photo by Ron Kirschbaum

Sibel and Azra visit Santa and Mrs Claus.



Photo by Ron Kirschbaum

Sarah Roberts of Muddy Brook Farm in Amherst, Mass. drives the horse and wagon



The perfect (cold) night to kick off the holidays.

Photo by Ron Kirschbaum

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# Suffield Community Aid

By Mary Curtin, MSW  
Director  
860-668-1986

## What's happening at SCA this Month?

Thankful for our Holiday Basket Sponsors:

A huge thank you to all our sponsors, consisting of many individuals, families, organizations, churches, businesses, and Town Departments who made the 2025 Holiday Basket Program such a success. 106 Suffield households comprised of children, adults, and older adults enjoyed the holidays thanks to your kindness and generosity!

### In-Person Bereavement Support Group Starts Up Again:

Masonicare is partnering with Suffield Community Aid to offer a six-week, in-person support group for people who are grieving the loss of a loved one. The group will meet at SCA, 450 South Street, Suffield, beginning Friday, April 3 from 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. This program is offered at no cost. Registration is required, and the expectation is that all participants will

be fully vaccinated. Please call SCA for more information, 860-668-1986.

2025-26

### Meghan Voisine "Kindness Matters" Grants!

Grant applications closed in December. To date this year, the Voisine Fund has awarded funding to four grants with the purpose of spreading kindness, inclusivity, and friendship in Suffield. Be on the lookout for upcoming kindness initiatives around town and in the school communities.

### Some Ongoing Program and Updates:

[SCA Food Pantry is Well Stocked to Help with Your Food, Pet Food & Personal Care Needs:](#) If you are struggling to afford food, pet food or personal care items, SCA can help. Thanks to the generosity of the Amiel P. Zak Public Service Fund, residents are welcome to call and reserve use of the room for their needs, during normal SCA business hours: Monday - Friday, 8am – 4pm.

[Parkinsons Peer Support Group:](#)

SCA hosts a monthly Parkinsons Peer Support Group at Suffield Community Aid (450 South St.) on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. February's group will be held on February 10th from 11 a.m. -12 p.m. Please call SCA to register.

[Stay Warm This Winter! – We are Taking Applications for the CT Energy Assistance Program:](#)

This government program helps offset the winter heating costs for financially eligible households. Please contact SCA to apply at 860-668-1986. More information on eligibility is available at: [www.ct.gov/staywarm](http://www.ct.gov/staywarm). ♫

ical items for free loan to Suffield residents. Items available for loan include: Canes, Walkers, Bath seats, Commodes, Crutches, Wheelchairs, and Transport chairs. The wheelchairs and transport chairs are loaned on a limited time basis. Other items are available for long-term use. To borrow, residents are welcome to stop in during normal SCA business hours: Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

### P.I.L.O.T. Room for Resident Use:

Did you know that SCA has a private office space, equipped with a phone, copier, and computer for resident use? Thanks to the generosity of the Amiel P. Zak Public Service Fund, residents are welcome to call and reserve use of the room for their needs, during normal SCA business hours: Monday - Friday, 8am – 4pm.

[Parkinsons Peer Support Group:](#)

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## Hello, My Little Chickadee



A black-capped chickadee pauses for a tasty snack.

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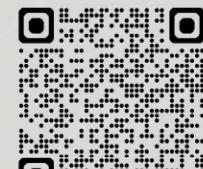
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Photo by Lauren Marino

The Suffield Police Department donated \$500 through the police union to support the Suffield Community Aid Food Pantry. Pictured: Officer Alex Scata with SCA Social Services Coordinator, Beth Sheridan

## 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](http://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](http://CTFoodshare.org) for schedule  
Requirements: Connecticut Residents Only

**Suffield Senior Center**  
145 Bridge St.  
\$5 Lunch Tuesday / Wednesday / Thursday 12 p.m.  
[Suffieldct.gov](http://Suffieldct.gov) / (860) 668-3862  
Pleclerc@suffieldct.gov  
Requirements: Reservations – (860) 668-8830

**First Church of Christ**  
81 High St. Outdoor 24 hr/7 day Food Cabinet  
(860) 668-7223  
No Requirements



## Schools, Library and Scouts

### McAlister Kid Governor Program

By Melissa Todd

Connecticut's Kid Governor Program: Government, responsibility and leadership

The annual Connecticut Kid Governor Program continues at McAlister Intermediate School. This is a unique opportunity for McAlister fifth-grade students to learn about leadership, civic engagement, and the electoral process. Through this initiative, students not only get to elect a "Kid Governor" for our state, but they also gain a real life understanding of democracy.

Throughout this unit of study, students research issues they care about in their community, school, statewide and some global concerns. Based on their research, students develop a platform—a set of priorities or goals they desire to address, if elected. This helped students create a plan for their campaign and gave their peers an idea of what matters to them most.

Once a candidate selects a platform, the students then write a speech that communicates their ideas. The expecta-



Photo submitted by the author

Congratulations to the Kid Governor candidates from Suffield Intermediate School l-r – Isabella Rodriguez, Addie Begin, Madelyn Bousquet, Everett Pillsbury, Chase Cauchon and Luke Chase (missing Khloe Barnes).

tion is that the speech is both informative and persuasive, demonstrating to classmates why the candidate's platform is important and how they plan to make a difference if elected.

Candidates first presented their speeches to their own classmates. After the presentations, students voted for the class representative who advanced to the next stage—the election of a school-wide representative. Our seven classroom representatives then

presented their speech to the entire fifth-grade class. After hearing all the candidates, our fifth-grade students voted for their school's Kid Governor representative. This candidate, Madelyn Bousquet, then rep-

resented McAlister and the town of Suffield in the broader Connecticut Kid Governor program.

Through this program, Connecticut students gain more than just political knowledge—they also learn valuable lessons in leader-

ship, communication, and community engagement. The Kid Governor program offers them a real-world experience in democracy, preparing them to be active, informed citizens in the future.

To culminate this unit of study, our fifth graders had the opportunity to visit the State House and State Capital. The visit to the historic Old State House offered a glimpse into the early foundations of our state's government. The tour of the State Capitol connected

their classroom learning to the real-life chambers where laws are made today. Students asked thoughtful questions, explored the legislative process, and reflected on the importance of civic engagement. They also got to meet the State Representative, Tami Zawistowski, who represents Suffield!

The trip not only celebrated students' hard work and growing knowledge but also inspired them to be informed and active citizens.

The seven finalists from each of the 5th grade homerooms are listed below as well as the platform on which they ran their campaign.

Everett Pillsbury, Mrs. Harrington, Mental Health; Khloe Barnes, Mrs. Burkett/ Ms. Bouchard, Bullying; Luke Chase, Mrs. Sperrazza, Career Options; Isabella Rodriguez, Mrs. Bennett, Mental Health and Mental Disorders; Madelyn Bousquet, Mr. McCarthy, Mental Health; Adelaide Begin, Mrs. Popeleski, Bullying; and Chase Cauchon, Mrs. Christensen/Mrs. Gallerani, Air Pollution. ♫

### Dowd Realty Spotlight on Suffield

#### SUFFIELD YOUTH SERVICES BOOK RECOMMENDATION



Joann Moriarty,  
Director of  
Youth Services  
860-668-3329



**"The Amazing Generation: a guide to fun and freedom in a screen-filled world"** is a new book that we hope parents will check out! It's a follow-up to the very popular book titled **"The Anxious Generation"** by Jonathan Haidt, which addresses how smartphones and social media have a significant negative impact on our youth.

**"The Amazing Generation"** is an easy-to-read graphic novel that is written for kids and teens. It challenges young people to think critically about how technology affects the brain and how big corporations use that technology to get rich, leaving young people feeling lonely and trapped. Consider it a guide to living a *fun, happy, connected, real-world life*, not dominated by smartphones.

Pick up a copy today or drop it into your Amazon cart!

Suffield Youth Services is planning initiatives to raise awareness on this important topic. Stay tuned for more information.

# Schools of Thought

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

## NCCCC Kindness Award Winners

By Eric Hamylak,  
SHS Administrative Assistant

Congratulations to Suffield High School students, Ashton Egan and Peyton Libby who were recent recipients of the North Central Connecticut Chamber of Commerce (NCCCC) Kindness Award.

Each month the North Central Connecticut Chamber of Commerce recognizes a SHS student who has demonstrated exceptional kindness.

For September, junior, Peyton Libby, received the honor after nominations from SHS faculty and staff. Volleyball Coach, Mr. Plano wrote, "This award is presented to a truly amazing student whose kindness and initiative shine every day. Peyton goes out of her way to support her teammates and younger players in volleyball and track, taking the time to teach, encourage, and include

everyone. Whether it's sitting with someone who is alone, putting things away without being asked, or stepping up to help in any situation, she consistently goes above and beyond. Her natural ability to notice when others need support and her eagerness to step in makes a lasting impact on those around her. She not only builds friendships within her own team, but also reaches out to players from other teams, offering help and kindness wherever it's needed. She is a role model of compassion, leadership, and genuine care for others."

Congratulations Peyton! The NCCCC is making a donation in Peyton's honor to the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. If you would like to make a donation, please go to: <https://www.stjude.org/>

Senior Ashton Egan re-

ceived the Kindness Award for October. Science Teacher, Mrs. Sullivan wrote, "I am impressed by the level of respect I have seen Ashton show to others. Recently, he offered to carry a paraprofessional's bag to the second floor because the elevator was not working. Additionally, he worked with a behavioral and cognitively challenged student in group work with a lot of patience and kindness. These are just a few examples of the way he has exhibited kindness towards others."

Congratulations Ashton! The NCCCC is making a donation in Ashton's honor to the Susan G. Komen organization. If you would like to make a donation, please go to: <https://www.komen.org/>

Congratulations Peyton and Ashton for demonstrating exceptional kindness and setting a great example for others! ☺



Photo provided by the author

Kindness Awards (left to right): Scott Ryder, NCCCC, Anthony Hibbert, SHS Principal, Peyton Libby, Class of 2027, Ashton Egan, Class of 2026, Karen Campbell, NCCCC, Leanne Sullivan, SHS Science Teacher, Larry Plano, SHS Volleyball Coach and Chris Stone, NCCCC.

### Suffield Veterinary Hospital February 2026 Patient of the Month

Meet Aria, a sweet, patient Coton De Tulear owned and adored by our veterinary technician Crystal. Here's her story in Crystal's own words:

"I found Aria's puppy picture while researching Coton de Tulears online. I immediately fell in love with her and knew she was my heart-dog. When she came home with me, she climbed right into my lap, and hasn't stopped since. Like all Cots, she is quite the clown and very talkative. She also loves dressing up and gives the best hugs."

"It was always apparent that she was a sensitive girl and finding food Ari would eat was quite the challenge. She often turned her nose up to kibble and some foods gave her an upset stomach. Even after finding something she liked, she would randomly skip meals or, after a while, decide she no longer liked that food. As she grew up, she began having bouts of diarrhea, vomiting, inappetence, and lethargy. These became more frequent and progressed in severity each time. Over the course of the last 5 years, she had nine documented cases of these symptoms, often paired with high fevers and abdominal pain. At first, she was intermittently diagnosed with gastroenteritis; then pancreatitis. Sometimes we were able to discern what caused it, but other times we could not trace it back to anything specific."

"With the wonderful care of Dr. Laston, Dr. Rothbart, and the rest of the SVH staff, she was well taken care of whenever these instances would occur. Since there is no specific cure, we have to support her symptomatically. Aria would be placed on I.V. fluids or given subcutaneous fluids to help with her fever and dehydration, given Probiotic Forte to help her gut health and diarrhea, Cerenia and Pepcid to help her nausea and acid reflux, Meloxicam to help with her inflammation and pain, and Panoquel to prevent necrosis of the pancreas. While this protocol worked to get her well again, the process would take a couple weeks before she was back to herself as her symptoms would wax and wane. And each time, I worried she may not recover."

"After yet another episode came following her annual vaccines this past summer, Dr. Laston and I began to suspect this may be some sort of immune issue. We ran a lot of bloodwork that came back with no clear answers. Aria was referred to an Internal Medicine specialist at Integrity Vet who agreed that her immune system has been responding inappropriately with a hyperactive inflammatory response. It was decided that we should do our best to limit potential triggers, keep her on a strict prescription diet of Hill's i/d low fat, daily probiotics, and long-term low-dose steroids. It is our hope that these steps will prevent flare ups or at least minimize them."

"I think many people may worry that special diets and daily medications will limit their dog's lives but I want to assure them it does not. Aria loves her new food and she can still have some treats. She happily takes her meds and actually looks forward to the routine of it. Overall, it's a much better, longer life for her and she's still able to do the things most important to her: being silly and snuggling with me."

For reminding us that symptoms as common as vomiting and diarrhea can sometimes be caused by rare, difficult to diagnose conditions, we are happy to name Aria our February 2026 Suffield Veterinary Hospital Patient of the Month.



### Suffield Veterinary Hospital

Dr. Ann Huntington ♦ Dr. Anita Sabellico ♦ Dr. Dawn Burke

Dr. Daniel Rothbart ♦ Dr. Emilie Laston ♦ Dr. Shannon Moran

577 East Street South (Route 159), Suffield, CT 06078 (860) 668-4041

View all of our Patients of the Month on our web site, [www.suffieldvet.com](http://www.suffieldvet.com)

SUFFIELD HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 2026



FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20TH

6PM

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### Perfect Night out: Purse and Power Tool Bingo

By Kelly Blais

The Seniors at Suffield High School have the perfect night out to combat the winter blues: Purse and Power Tool Bingo. With only five months left at SHS, the seniors have been working hard to develop a fun event that can bring multiple community members together. Big prizes will be available that range from a Blackstone grill to Coach purses- to tea-cup raffles from many of the local businesses that have chosen to support our fundraiser.

Class President Nuvia Torrez-Flores admits, "Putting together a larger event like this has been challenging, but in the end we hope that we have put smiles on peoples' faces-

and that we have helped the Senior class reduce the cost of prom and senior outing!"

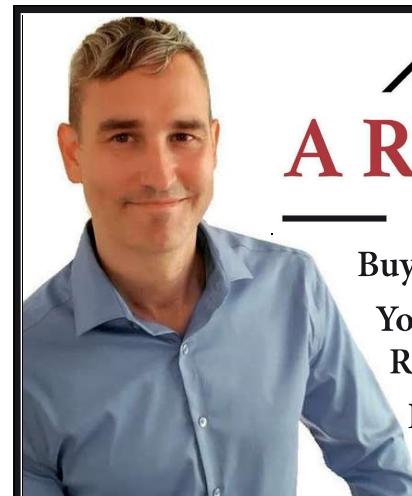
The event will take place on Friday, February 20 with doors opening at 6 p.m. at the American Legion in Enfield. There will be 10 rounds of big prizes, more than \$800 worth of tea-cup raffle prizes and a special raffle to win front row tickets at this year's graduation. Tickets are available for purchase starting Monday, February 2 and can be purchased until Friday, February 13.

They are \$30 per person and include 10 rounds of Bingo. Please email Samantha Schrager ([sschrager@suffield.org](mailto:sschrager@suffield.org)) for tickets or questions about the event. ☺



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# Schools of Thought

## Rotary Students of the Month Honored

By Eric Hamylak

December 3, the Suffield Rotary honored two Suffield High School seniors at the Suffield Country Club.

**Congratulations to Rotary Student of the Month for December, Kameron Aldridge!**

Social Studies Teacher, Miss Blais said, "Understanding the world, and your place in it, is truly important to knowing how to make changes. Kameron has taken this mantra seriously. She works hard to keep an even balance of school, organizations, work and extracurriculars. I have never seen a student be so interested in so many careers- but not afraid to explore and educate herself - in order to choose a path! As a high schooler, she is already taking college courses (not just AP classes) while maintaining steady grades, working (a solid number of hours each week) and participating in sports (swimming) and other organizations (Model UN, NHS, etc.). She loves interacting with others and is not afraid to participate in open discourse about challenges/changes. She is a natural leader, and although she may not know yet which field she wants to be in, she will do amazing things as a local, national and global citizen."

Math Teacher, Mr. Janick said, "Kam always has a positive attitude and shows commitment to academic growth. She consistently leads by example, supports her peers, and contributes to a positive classroom environment. With 29 students in my class, she does a great job of standing out. Kam's kindness, responsibility, and

determination make her a deserving recipient of this award. Congratulations, Kam!"

Social Studies Teacher, Mr. Barile said, "Kam is a highly engaged and insightful student. She has a very welcoming, down-to-earth, and kind personality that brings a positive energy to the classroom. She's well-deserving of this recognition!"

English Teacher, Mr. Kibby said, "Kam Aldridge is a thoughtful and charismatic leader. Her peers look to her for guidance and support almost every day. I noticed how kind she is when we had a new student come to the class from another state earlier in the year and she was one of the first students in the class to introduce herself and make a connection."

Physical Education and Health Teacher, Mr. Drago said, "Kam has a positive attitude and is an active participant in class who encourages those around her to do their best."

**Congratulations to the Rotary Student of the Month for November, Beatrice Williams!**

Special Education Teacher, Mrs. Grout said, "Bea is an exceptionally committed student whose academic dedication and leadership make her an outstanding representative of Suffield High School. She actively serves on multiple committees beyond the school community, demonstrating a deep passion for environmental preservation. As a student leader for the Youth Climate Summit, Bea consistently shows initiative, responsibility, and a strong commitment to serving the earth and in-

spiring others. She is an excellent candidate for Rotary Student of the Month."

Career and Technical Education Teacher, Mrs. McCluskey said, "Bea Williams is an amazing role model! She is always curious and wants to learn. Bea is a leader in the classroom - always prepared and having additional questions about what we are studying. She works at a daycare after school and is creative and a positive role model for the children in her care. Bea naturally exudes responsibility, kindness, and humility. Bea has been involved with Sustainable Suffield while at SHS and has used her knowledge with the elementary school children, teaching about composting as well as ecology. Bea has expressed an interest in becoming a teacher. She is exactly the kind of person we need to enter the field of education in the future."

English Teacher, Ms. Cerdeira said, "Bea Williams is a stellar student and community member. Not only does she strive for academic success, but she is also an environmental activist. These qualities not only showcase her hard work and time management skills, but they also highlight the positive impact that she wants to leave on Suffield High School and her larger community."

School Counselor, Mr. St. Amand said, "Bea has excellent character and integri-



Kameron Aldridge

Beatrice Williams

ty! She is the type of person a friend might go to when in need. She is a self-starter, who is conscientious and cares about those around her."

English Teacher, Ms. DeAngelis said, "Bea is thoughtful, kind, and passionate about what she cares about. Everyone knows her in the school for her environmental activism, but she is also a thoughtful student and kind collaborator who is active in class discussions. She's constantly reflecting on her own work, but equally cares about the people around her, who are soothed by her calm presence and unflappable manner."

Family and Consumer Science Teacher, Mrs. Haefner said, "Bea has been an instrumental part of our school community. She leads our composting initiative with quiet determination and a strong moral compass. Her generosity, kind heart, and thoughtful nature shine through in everything she does...from gifting sourdough to sharing ideas to helping others think through challenges. I feel so lucky to have had Bea as a student/student leader! She is one of a kind!"

English Teacher, Mr. Kibby said, "Bea Williams is considerate and conscientious of others and the world around her. Her passion for the environment and the world is a reflection of her kindness and care for her fellow peers. Bea is approachable and easy to talk to, and I believe she will make impactful changes on the world and those around her in her future because she is already doing so now!"

Way to go, Beatrice and Kameron! ♫

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# Kent Memorial Library

## Director's Corner



By Amy Vessella,  
Library Director

### Kindness: No Experience Necessary

Let's be real – life can be hectic, stressful and sometimes downright exhausting. That's why National Random Acts of Kindness Day, celebrated every year on February 17, is the perfect reason to take a moment to spread a little joy wherever you go. The rules? There are none. Literally! Do something nice, make someone smile and feel awesome doing it!

It likely does not surprise you to hear that kindness is contagious. Buying a coffee for a stranger, complimenting someone's outfit, or letting someone cut in line can set off

a chain reaction of kind acts and positive vibes. Around the nation, schools, offices, businesses and libraries encourage kind acts, turning an ordinary day into a celebration of goodwill. And the best part? You don't need a cape or superpowers to play along. A simple smile, a sticky note with a kind message, helping a neighbor carry groceries or even letting someone merge in front of you onto the highway are easy ways to promote kindness.

Random Acts of Kindness Day is far more than just a social media hashtag. It's a

reminder that tiny gestures can leave a profound impact. That text you send, that door you hold or that compliment you give might just turn someone's bad day around. And let's be honest—watching someone light up because of something you did? It's an instant happiness booster for you, too!

For myself, part of the fun lies in the creativity. There are so many ways to show kindness. Want to leave surprise

notes on strangers' cars? Go for it. Want to donate a small treat to a local shelter? Amazing! Even the tiniest effort, a cheerful "good morning," a warm smile, sharing your dessert, or lending a hand with a task—can have a greater impact than you realize, so don't be afraid to think outside the box.

So, this February 17, get playful, get creative and get kind. Leave a little joy wherever you go. Sprinkle kind

acts everywhere, give it freely and enjoy the happiness it brings. Small acts of kindness, big smiles, and endless possibilities—because the world could always use more awesome, and today, you're the reason it happens.

P.S. Make sure to stop by the library this month. We have an amazing Winter Reading program for adults and children happening until February 28. We hope to see you soon! ♫



Photo provided by the author

Staff Shirts provided by the Kindness Matters Grant through the Meghan Voisine fund. L-R Sandy Chmiel, Hollie Garrity, Amy Vessella, Sabine Schneider, Pinki Shah, Anna Cierocki and Wendy Taylor.

## 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](http://suffield-library.org). Follow us on Facebook. All programs are free.

### By Hollie Garrity Winter Reading starts February 2

This year's theme for Winter Reading is "There's SNOW better time to read!" The program will run for the month of February, ending on the 28th, and we've got a great line up of programs and prizes for adults and kids. Read anything and everything you like, books, audiobooks, magazines etc., everything counts! So, let's get to reading and have some fun!

### Programs for Adults

#### Let it Flow Yoga

Wednesday February 4 at 5 p.m.

We invite you to join us for an evening of gentle yoga in this 45-minute session and experience the many benefits of this mindful practice. Please wear comfortable clothing and bring your own mat. Participants of all levels are welcome. Registration is required.

### There's SNOW better way to celebrate Valentine's Day Cookie Decorating

Wednesday February 11 at 6:30 p.m.

Join Stacey from The Cookie Jar as she teaches us the art of cookie decorating. You'll get to decorate three cookies alongside her and take them home to share with your Valentine. Registration is required.

### Dough-It-Yourself Pizza Class

Wednesday February 18 at 5 p.m.

In this hands-on learning experience, Matthew will teach us the art of dough and sauce making, the rolling and stretching of pizza dough and the dressing and firing of the pizza pie. Everyone will leave with their own 10-inch pizza. Registration is required.

### KML Quiet Time Book Club

Monday February 23 at 6 p.m.

Looking to jump-start

your winter reading? Need some accountability finishing those last couple chapters? Come to the KML Quiet Time Book Club! Take some time for yourself to read whatever strikes your fancy in the company of other book lovers. Bring your own or find one at the library. No social interaction required.

### Create Your Own Cyanotype Art – Adults

Tuesday, February 10 at 1 p.m. -

Join us to create stunning personal cyanotype prints! This historic, camera-less photographic method uses UV light and chemistry to produce striking blue images that become permanent after rinsing. All materials will be provided, each patron will have the opportunity to make two prints, one artistic and one using a favorite photo. Registration

is required.

### Wrap Up Party

Saturday February 28 at 1:30 p.m.

Join us for fun, food, and games. We will be announcing the winners live. First come, first served.

### Movies at the Library

KML is showing movies again! Visit our website at [www.suffield-library.org/](http://www.suffield-library.org/) for more information, including this month's movie showtimes.

### Rise to the Challenge Book Group

Monday, February 9 at 6:30 p.m.

Join us in reading and discussing books that have been challenged and/or banned. February's book will be *The Golden Compass* by Philip Pullman. Copies of both books will be available at the library. Please be aware that this group discusses books which may include sensitive topics. Registration is

not required.

### Thursday Readers

### Book Discussion Group

Thursday, February 26 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 February title will be *Three Days in June* by Anne Tyler.

### Rabble Readers

### Escapist Lit Book Club

Tuesday February 17 at 7 p.m.

Rabble Readers is an Escapist Lit book club at KML for adults. We'll read fantasy, sci-fi, and horror, anything that takes us away! We will meet on the 3rd Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m. Copies of the books will be available at the library; no registration is required. February's title is *One Dark Window* by Rachel Gillig.

Continued on Page 21



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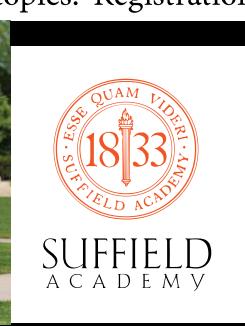
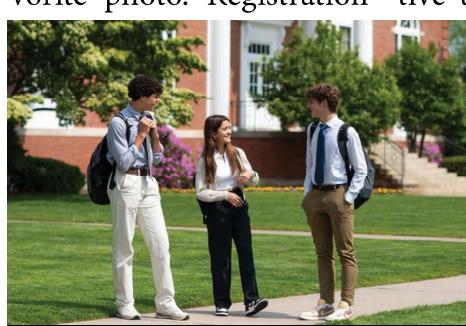
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## General Programs

*Continued from page 21*

### 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 (National Mahjong Junior League) card. Registration required.

### Kids and Teens Programs

#### Dinosaur Fossils with Jurassic Classroom

Saturday, February 7 at 10 a.m.–noon - **For Families**

Drop-in

Patrick Murphy will be here for two hours with fossils that you can touch! Be sure to ask all your questions! Real fossils. Real fun!

#### Kids' Craft:

#### Venetian Masks

Saturday, February 14 at 2 p.m. - For Ages 6 - 12

Come decorate fancy masks with us! We'll use markers, stickers, feathers and gems to transform plain white masks into works of art! Whether you wear your mask or hang it on a wall, participants will leave with works of art.

#### Lunar New Year

Tuesday, February 17, 1-2 p.m. -

Families

Drop in

Learn more about Lunar New Year! There will be a craft, traditional calligraphy, veggie dumplings and games! Be sure to try it all. 2026 is the year of the horse, one of the luckiest Chinese zodiac signs. Did you know that in Chinese, "upside-down" sounds identical to the phrase "good luck arrives"? Drop

by and learn other interesting things! No registration required.

### Secret Agent Training Camp

Wednesday, February 18 at 10:30 a.m.

Ages 6-12

Do you have what it takes to be a secret agent? We're hosting a training camp for future secret agents. We'll learn about secret codes, the art of disguise, and more! Space is limited; registration is required. After registration is complete, attendees will receive a secret password to allow them entry to the camp.

### Drop in Lego Build

Saturday February 28 between 9:30 a.m. and noon.

Stop at the Children's Room between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. and build a 77-piece Lego Mickey or Minnie Mouse. It's yours to take home and keep! Ages 6+ can do this independently, younger kids that want to participate can do so with parent assistance. While supplies last.

### Story Time

10:30 a.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays

Ages 2-5

Register or Drop-in

We read books, sing songs, make a craft and sometimes we do science experiments!

February 4 and 10: Let it snow!

February 11 and 17: Car Wash Time!

February 18 and 24: Miss Wendy's Favorite Books

February 25 and March 3: *It's almost Spring!*

### Rhyme Time

10:30 a.m. Fridays: 6, 13, 20, 27

Ages 0-5 / Families

## Bloom Sisters



Photo by Joan Heffernan

Amaryllis

### Drop in Outside the Box: Neurodivergent & Friends Club

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

Next Meeting: Thursday, February 12 at 3:30 p.m.

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

Welcome to our club, where neurodivergence is celebrated! If you are neurodivergent or you have a friend that is, come hang out with us! 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.)

### The Kids Who Read Books Book Club

Thursday, February 19 at 3:30 p.m.

Join us for the next meeting of The Kids Who Read Books Book Club! We'll be discussing *Team Chu and the Epic Hero Quest* by Julie C. Dao (Book 2). Books will be available to check out at the library. Open to all people in grades 5-12. Registration is not required. ♫

## SHS's *The Play That Goes Wrong*, and so Right!

By MaryKate Mormino

In an insanely hilarious and endlessly creative production, the Suffield High School Drama Club put on the Broadway award winning comedy *The Play That Goes Wrong* on November 21, 22 and 23 of this year. This play follows an ill-fated theater production company putting on a murder mystery, when everything goes horribly awry. "It's so fun, but it's also a little stressful because if something goes more wrong than it's supposed to, we might not

know how to react," expressed junior Ethan Boldt, who acted as the character Dennis.

In an unusual approach for Suffield High, this production was put on with two different casts, each performing in two of the shows, respectively called the Teal Cast and the Purple Cast. The Teal Cast performed in the first two performances and has worked with quite a degree of tenacity to bring together a show full of difficult tech cues and many,

*Continued on Page 23*



Photos by Kelly Blais

The Teal Cast's Jack Loranger struggles to connect Elianna Vega to the telephone as she holds up a perpetually falling wall by ways of connecting arms (and sometimes feet) with Ethan Boldt, MaryKate Mormino and Emma Gerkin.

## Cold-Case Christianity Video Series

A Homicide Detective Investigates the Claims of the Gospels.

**Where:** Kent Memorial Library, Suffield, Conn.

**When:** Tuesdays, March 17 – May 12

**Time:** 6:30 – 8 p.m.

**Format:** Video Series and Group Discussion

**Admission:** Free and open to the public

Seating is limited. Please register at [Suffield-library.org](http://Suffield-library.org) or call (860-668-3896)

### Can You Trust the Gospels?

Join us for an eye-opening community series based on *Cold-Case Christianity* – where former homicide detective J. Warner Wallace applies investigative techniques used to solve real criminal cases to the claims of the New Testa-

ment. Explore evidence, challenge assumptions and discover how reason and faith work together.

### Who Should Attend

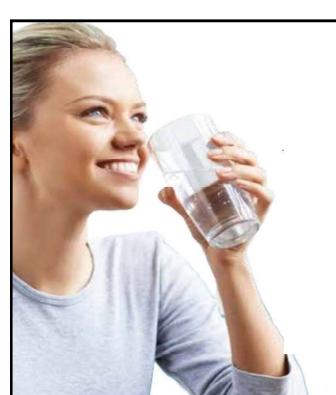
- Skeptics and atheists curious about evidence for faith
- Believers wanting a stronger foundation
- Anyone interested in respectful, open discussion

### What to Expect

- Engaging video sessions led by detective J. Warner Wallace
- Group discussions welcoming honest questions
- A friendly, judgment-free environment

"Cold-Case Christianity" invites you to examine the evidence, follow the facts and decide for yourself."

For more information, call Alan at (860) 550-3454 ♫



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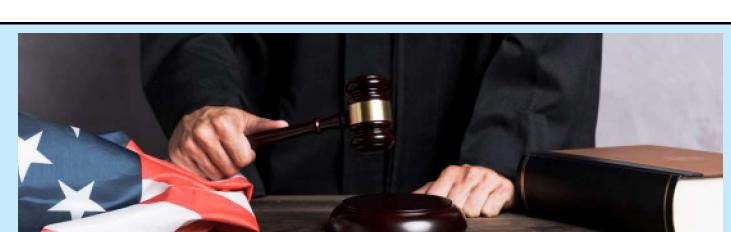
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## COLD-CASE CHRISTIANITY

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For more information, call Alan at 860-550-3454.

# Senior Center & Mini Bus News

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

## Supporting Seniors in Suffield Through Community Transportation

By Bethany Sullivan,  
Community Services

As Suffield continues to value community, independence, and quality of life for residents of all ages, one important service often goes unnoticed: town-supported and donation-funded mini-bus transportation for our senior citizens.

For many of our older residents, driving is no longer a safe or realistic option, especially when traveling to an unfamiliar destination. Without reliable transportation, access to medical appointments, grocery shopping, senior programs and social activities can become limited—impacting both health and well-being. Suffield's Mini-Bus Transportation service provides meaningful benefits.

**Access to Essential Services:** Reliable transportation helps seniors attend medical appointments, run errands and stay connected to local resources.

**Independence and Dignity:** Seniors can remain active and engaged in the community without relying solely on family or caregivers.

**Reduced Social Isolation:** Transportation enables participation in programs at the Senior Center and other community events, helping combat loneliness.

**Affordability for Fixed In-**

comes: Donation-supported and town-funded services offer a cost-effective alternative to vehicle ownership.

**Support for Families and Caregivers:** Reliable transportation eases the burden on families balancing work and caregiving responsibilities.

**A Stronger Suffield Community:** Shared transportation reduces traffic and emissions



while helping seniors continue to support local businesses.

Senior transportation is more than a convenience, it's a vital community service that supports aging in place and reflects Suffield's commitment to caring for its residents. Continued awareness, community support, and engagement help ensure these services remain available for those who need them most.

You can help make a positive difference in many ways: become a part-time paid retiree driver, volunteer for cleaning or donate to help fund services. If you are interested in helping in any of these ways, please reach out to Peter Leclerc at: 860-668-3322 or email, [pleclerc@suffieldct.gov](mailto:pleclerc@suffieldct.gov)

### Senior Center Lunches

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, Feb 3 - Tuna grinder with lettuce & tomato, chips, pickle, carrots & dip

Wed, Feb 4 - Old fashioned goulash, salad, roll

Thurs, Feb 5 - Swiss chicken bake, roasted red potatoes, vegetable

Tues, Feb 10 - Sausage rigatoni, garlic bread, cucumber salad

Wed, Feb 11 - Chicken stew, salad, bread

Thurs, Feb 12 - Meatloaf, cheesy ranch oven roasted potatoes, vegetable

Tues, Feb 17 - Vegetable soup, grilled cheese sandwich, chips

Wed, Feb 18 - Baked cream cheese chicken, baked potato, vegetable

Thurs, Feb 19 - Brown sugar pineapple ham steak, mashed potato, vegetable

Tues, Feb 24 - Ham, mushroom, and cheese quiche, fruit cup, muffin

Wed, Feb 25 - Baked spaghetti, salad, roll

Thurs, Feb 26 - Chicken tetrazzini, Caesar salad, roll

### Mini Bus Trips

Mini Bus trips require five

passengers and are weather permitting. Reservations for February trips will open on January 20. Call (860) 668-3844 to make a reservation. Please call to cancel or reschedule your ride if you are experiencing any symptoms of illness.

**Lunch at Cheesecake Factory** - Tuesday, February 3 - Pickups begin at 11:30 a.m.

**Shopping at Walmart** - Thursday, February 5 - Pickups begin at 8:30 a.m.

**Shopping in Holyoke** - Tuesday, February 10 - Pickups begin at 9 a.m.

**Lunch at the Nutmeg** - Friday, February 13 - Pickups begin at 11:30 a.m.

**Shopping at Trader Joe's** - Tuesday, February 17 - Pickups begin at 8:30 a.m.

**MGM Casino in Springfield** - Tuesday, February 24 - Pickups begin at 9 a.m.

**Lunch at Suffield Pizza** - Friday, February 27 - Pickups begin at 11:30 a.m.

### February Activities

#### Family Feud

Tuesday, February 3 - 12:45-1:30 p.m.

Free! We have the buzzers, the questions, and the prizes!

#### AARP Tax Aide

Thursdays, by Appointment

Call (860) 668-8830 to make an appointment.

#### Art Hour

Thursdays 10—11:30 a.m. FREE!

Feb 5 — Decorate a Valentine's jar and fill with candy

Feb 19 — DIY Magnets

Feb 26 — Galaxy Paper Lanterns (dress for a mess)

**Indoor Cornhole** - Wednesday, February 11 10:30-11:30 a.m. Free!

**Valentine's Day Lunch** - Thursday, February 12 Included with lunch

sign up on this day. We're celebrating with a spin the wheel game, photo station, and Valentine's candy from Cupola Hollow!



### Mardi Gras Mask Decorating

Tuesday, February 17 9:30-11 a.m. FREE!

### Mardi Gras Pass the Beads Game

Tuesday, February 17 12:40-1 p.m. FREE! The person left holding the beads wins a prize!

### Open Mic Night

Friday, February 20 - 5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m. FREE! All ages welcome! Sign up to show off your talents!

### Armchair Travel to Italy

Monday, Feb 23 - By Bethany Sullivan

11 a.m.—12 p.m. FREE! We will be virtually traveling to Italy while trying Italian food.

For more information visit [suffieldseniorcenter.com](http://suffieldseniorcenter.com) or call (860) 668-8830. ♫

## Please Join Us

### Planning Ahead with our Aging Parents



Thursday, March 19, 2026

from 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM

11 High Street, 2nd floor, Ste. 204

Hosted by: Path To Progress: Jeannie Miller, CLC

Special Guest: Cheryl Demko-Morello; Heritage Funeral Home: Health Educator & Funeral Director [SuffieldFuneralHome.com](http://SuffieldFuneralHome.com)

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# Book Review

By Jane Shipp

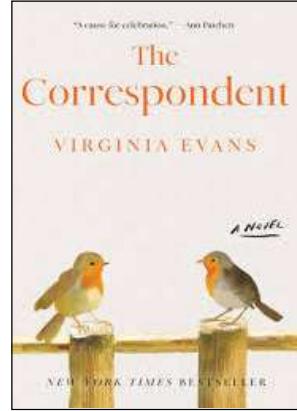


*The Correspondent*  
By Virginia Evans  
2025 304 pgs. Crown Publishing

This is an extraordinary book, one that will appeal to any reader, but particularly to readers in what the author calls the "fourth season" of life--that is to say, the winter season. The book is a series of letters written by Sybil, a retired lawyer, to family members, friends, and various other people in her life. Sybil is outspoken and tenacious, sharp tongued with others, but also honest with herself and willing to explore the mistakes she has made and the regrets she holds.

There are other interesting characters whose personalities and relationships emerge through the letters: Sybil's two adult children Bruce and Fiona; her brother Felix; her best friend Rosalie; her neighbor Theodore Lübeck; her half-sister Hattie; and multiple other less major characters. The pattern of the content of the letters often has to do with the way Sybil is able to turn potentially confrontational exchanges into warm encounters, although some of them show raw anger and injured feelings on one or both sides.

Throughout the correspondence there is a trail of unexplained guilt. There are also a number of letters un-sent, a kind of mystery. Sybil's inner life is clearly one of professional success but also failure in some (not all) per-



sonal relationships, causing hidden sorrows. In addition to what is going on internally, she knows that she is losing her eyesight, slowly going blind by degrees. Since reading and writing are of enormous significance to her wellbeing, this is a fearful phenomenon in her life, but one that she faces bravely.

Old age--Sybil is in her late seventies--is a season of loss, universally: loss of physical abilities once taken for granted; loss of strength; loss of health, often loss of home; loss of friends and family members; even, as with some minor characters in the book, loss of mental health. Sybil, to her credit and with

help from various others, finds herself able and willing to take on startling new experiences even as her eyes fail her. Finally, she confronts the guilt that underlies this plot, confessing its cause in a long letter to a person relatively new in her life. It is a catharsis of sorts, and one suspects, a healing one.

It is hard to convey the impact of this book, its meaningfulness, its effectiveness in conveying emotion. It is skillfully written, not through particularly elegant language or poetic descriptions, though there are some of those, but through unspoken nuances that allow the reader access to Sybil's inner life. The overall sense the book offers is that these are real people, genuine human beings, a family not perfect--a family you could say is dysfunctional--described by a member of the family immersed in its contradictions, in its giving and taking, in its ups and downs, in its joys and sorrows. *The Correspondent* is unforgettable. ♫

## The Play That Goes Wrong, and So Right!

Continued from page 21

many lines. "I've never felt so lucky to be able to perform with the people who were with me," affirmed junior Kaylee Barnes, who acted as the character Sandra for the Teal Cast. "Our chemistry made it very easy to act with each other and make such a beautiful and hilarious performance. I couldn't ask for anything more from being with them."

With 3 weeks left until production, the Purple Cast welcomed members into new roles, Ashley Legg and Victoria Jacobs! Ashley stepped into the role of Dennis, and Victoria into the role of Trevor. With only three weeks to learn their lines, they worked hard to succeed and helped to make the Purple Cast's show an awesome production. "I knew that taking on the role of Dennis would require a lot of blocking. One thing I really struggled with is memorizing my lines since I went from a role (Trevor) who says almost nothing to someone who speaks during half the show," stressed senior Ashley Legg. "My cast was really great to work with. In the end, we were able to get it together and have a great show." The determination and resilience of the cast was evident on production night as they made the audience laugh and cheer.

As one of the actors in the production, I had the unique opportunity to have an inside

look at how the show came to be what it was. I will be forever impressed with the unique set design - from having a working rotating bookcase, to framed photos dropping to the floor on command, and even to specialized falling walls. "Tech is always a vital component to prepping the show," states student construction manager Jack Ryan. "Set design and construction starts in the beginning, drafts, plans and trial and error is common. Specifically for this year we had many little bits and elements that had to be carefully built to be properly pulled off. For example, when the walls fell, we had many plans on how they fell but eventually nailed down exactly what optimally worked for us. Our tech team is really proud of this set."

With a two-month time frame, these two casts put together productions that will be forever remembered by those who acted in it and those who saw it. "One of my best experiences of drama I think I have ever had. (Everyone) truly became a family for me that I will never forget," junior Lilian Macsata, who acted as the character Sandra for the Purple Cast, declares. "We always supported and helped each other even when it was a stressful time for everyone. I don't think I can ever find friends like that again." ♫



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# SHS Fall and Winter Athletics

By Amy Muska, Director of Athletics and Student Activities  
Suffield Middle/High School

The fall season ended strong with many athletes recognized for North Central Connecticut Conference (NCCC) All Conference, All State and qualified for state tournament play. The following players made NCCC All Conference and All State Honors.

**Boys XC:** Nathan Peskin NCCC All Conference, All State

**Field Hockey:** NCCC All Conference: Amelia Shanks, Marie Conley, Nuvia Torrez Flores

All State: Amelia Shanks, Nuvia Torrez Flores

**Girls Soccer:** NCCC All Conference: Hazel Qua, Madealyn Couchon, Mackenzie Fay

All State: Hazel Qua

**Boys Soccer:** NCCC All Conference: Carter Gnatke, Cole Tkacz

All State: Cole Tkacz

**Volleyball:** NCCC All Conference: Evangelina Plano, Makenna Sattan, Lauren Lawson

Girls XC and girls swim ended the season with a strong performance at the NCCC XC conference meet and state meet for girls swimming.



Girls soccer and field hockey qualified for the state tournament, Girls soccer played Joel Barlow and Field Hockey played Immaculate.

Both teams played hard but unfortunately didn't advance beyond the first round. Immaculate advanced to win the Class S State Tournament.

The boys soccer team and girls volleyball team advanced to the quarter finals. The boys soccer team lost to Tolland in a close game.

Tolland advanced to win the Class M State Title. The volleyball team played strong but lost to a strong Nonnewaug team.

The winter regular season has begun. The teams are looking strong and ready to tackle the winter season.

**Girls Ice Hockey:** Played in two jamborees and then opened with Simsbury at

the ISCC on Wednesday, 12/10.

**Boys Ice Hockey:** Played in several scrimmages before opening on 12/19 with a game away against Shepaug Valley. They played at home on Saturday, 12/20, against Masuk @ the ISCC.

**Girls Basketball:** Opened the season with Simsbury, Monday, 12/15, home

**Boys Basketball:** Opened with Coventry, Thursday, 12/18, home

**Wrestling:** The team hosted a tournament on Saturday, 12/13 and opened with a match on Wednesday, 12/17, home against Granby.

**Indoor Track:** The boys and girls team competed on Saturday, January 3, for their first meet.

Follow our Suffield HS winter sports on the SHS Athletic webpage or through our Suffield Wildcats app. ☺

## SHS Grad Presents at National Education Conference

From a press release

Suffield resident and Suffield High School Class of 2023 graduate Mandy Young-Guzman was a selected speaker at the 2025 National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Annual Conference, held November 19-21 in Orlando, Florida.

The conference was attended by over 7,000 teachers, administrators and other early childhood education professionals from across the country and internationally. Mandy, 19, presented on contemporary understandings of neurodivergence, challenges neurodivergent students face in traditional classrooms and strategies educators can use to better support diverse learners. Her session drew more than 170 attendees and has since received invitations to be shared in several states and in Mexico.

A current student at Hampshire College, Mandy has focused much of her academic work on disability advocacy

and education. After identifying a disconnect between existing research and what is commonly practiced in classrooms, she submitted her findings to NAEYC's annual call for proposals. Her proposal was selected through a competitive, peer-reviewed process.

Crucial messages she shared included challenging a negative, deficit-based view of neurodivergence and that providing choice, sensory-friendly environments, flexible learning and assessment options and validation of student contributions will empower and benefit all learners. Drawing on both academic research and lived experience as a neurodivergent youth, Mandy centered the perspectives of neurodivergent children, who represent a growing percentage of today's classrooms.

Mandy has credited professors Dr. Torre and Dr. Wenk for their guidance. Those interested in her work may contact her at 860-461-3477. ☺



Photo by Malden Guzman Young  
Mandy Young-Guzman speaks at the National Association for the Education of Young Children Annual Conference.

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# The Final HOOT

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## Historic Houses

Photos from [www.historicbuildings.com](http://www.historicbuildings.com)



Elihu Kent, Jr. House (1786)

This house was built in 1787 for Elihu Kent, Jr., who lived here with his wife Elizabeth and their four children, Rebecca, Betsy, Samuel and Azel. Elihu was a farmer and tavernkeeper, and he also served in the American Revolution alongside his father, Elihu Kent, Sr. He was captured at the Battle of Long Island and subsequently spent a long time in one of the infamous sugar house prisons in New York City, where, according to historical records, he "suffered greatly."



Charles Kurvin House (1912)

Although Charles Kurvin inherited the Elihu Kent, Jr. House, he wanted a more modern house and built this Queen Anne house next door between 1912 and 1914 leaving the Kent House vacant for 50 years. He added a carriage house to the new house which is similar to the one at the Kent House.



Terrett House (1750)

The Terrett House can be found at the intersection of Mountain Road and South Grand Street. It is a building consisting of two attached structures with the oldest building dating back to 1750. For many years the building was the Terrett House Hotel and tavern. In 1837, the first post office in West Suffield was operated out of the Terrett House, the tavernkeeper serving as the postmaster.



Elihu Kent's second home.



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## 2026 Grant Opportunity Announced

From a press release

Applications are being accepted through Friday, March 6.

The Greater Hartford Gives Foundation, formerly the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, is accepting applications for grants of up to \$25,000 each through the Amiel and Mary Anne Zak Public Service Fund. Approximately \$80,000 will be awarded to community-based organizations, civic associations, volunteer groups, and public agencies. Over the past 23 years, more than \$1.6 million has been awarded through 199 grants from the fund. Grants will be considered for a broad range of civic needs that benefit the public and specific populations, such as youth and the elderly.

The successful project will demonstrate two or more of the following elements:

- Expand resources for Suffield residents.
- Improve the quality of life for Suffield residents.
- Promote community service in Suffield.
- Inspire community spirit by motivating citizens to feel connected to, and responsible for, their community.

Proposals are encouraged for capital needs and specific items, and for program needs that are finite in duration or will become self-sustaining over time. Requests that will leverage other support are encouraged. Proposals for funding planning activities, salaries, and gen-

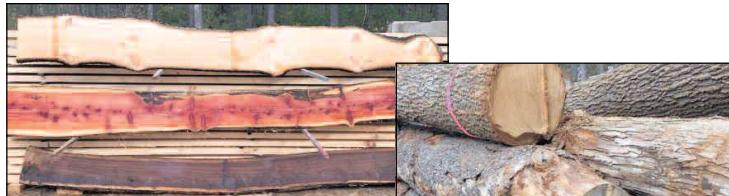
eral operations are not encouraged. Projects that are viewed as the Town's responsibility will generally not be considered for support. This fund is not intended to replace governmental funding of projects or needs that properly should be funded through the municipal appropriations process.

An informational session will be held on Wednesday, February 4, at 1 p.m. via Zoom. To register, follow this link or email [CommPhil@greaterhartfordgives.org](mailto:CommPhil@greaterhartfordgives.org) for the registration link.

Please email [CommPhil@greaterhartfordgives.org](mailto:CommPhil@greaterhartfordgives.org) for access to the online application or if you have any questions about your organization's eligibility. If you have technical questions about the Grants Portal, please email [GrantsAdministration@greaterhartfordgives.org](mailto:GrantsAdministration@greaterhartfordgives.org).

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## Festivities for Suffield Rotary

By Natalie Donais, Rotary President and Jay Presser, Rotary Board member

So, what does a Suffield Rotarian do in December to close out the year? They do what they always do—have fun and serve the community. In spades!

December kicked off with Suffield Rotary's 10th Annual Sand and Salt for Seniors event. This initiative supports seniors who need help keeping their walkways and driveways safe during snowy winters. Seniors in need reach out to the Suffield Rotary, and on the designated Saturday morning, December 6—fittingly accompanied by snowfall—Rotarian volunteers and their families gathered at Ffyler Place.

The Department of Public Works, led by Lee Corbet, provided essential support by using their equipment to fill buckets, which had been sourced by the Rotary with a sand and salt mixture. Each bucket was topped with a lid to keep its contents dry throughout the winter. Volunteers then delivered

these buckets to seniors at no cost, receiving heartfelt thanks in return. On this snowy morning, sixty-six buckets were distributed, helping to ensure the safety and comfort of older residents.

Four days later, Rotarians gathered for a purely festive occasion: a holiday dinner at the beautiful LaNote Waterside Grille in Windsor, Connecticut. The evening featured delicious food, laughter and a lively Yankee Swap, creating a joyful atmosphere and lasting memories for all who attended.

Just three days after the holiday dinner, on December 13, Suffield Rotarians and their supporters braved "chilly" weather to participate in Suffield Alight. Rotary volunteers served 33 gallons of hot chocolate—topped with mini marshmallows and whipped cream—to warm attendees. The hot chocolate was offered free of charge, and any offers to pay were redirected to the nearby iconic red kettle benefiting Suffield Community Aid (SCA).



Photo by Natalie Donais  
Helped by the Grinch, one Elf, and one very cute puppy, Rotarians "Ring the Bell" during the holiday season to raise money for the SCA.

## A Craft Kitchen

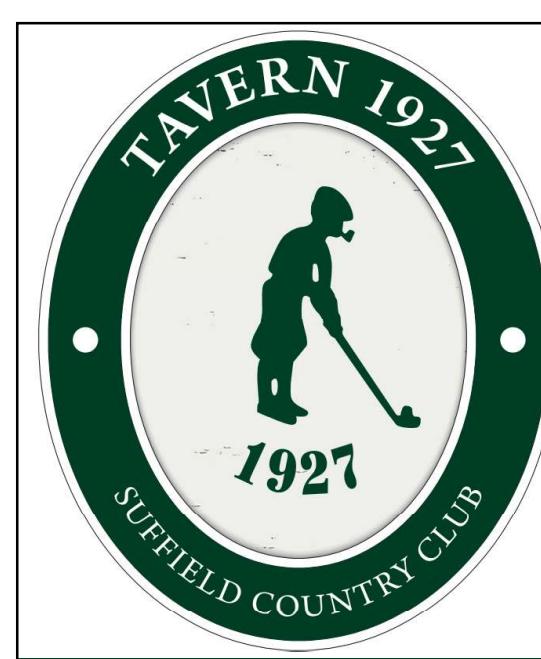
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When a local family suffered a devastating house fire, the Rotary partnered with other community groups—including the Firefighters Association, Suffield Police Department, and Suffield Volunteer Ambulance—and coordinated with SCA to provide a substantial donation for the family. The community united to ensure the family received the support and kindness they needed during a difficult time.

The tradition of "Ring the Bell" to benefit Suffield Community Aid and the Salvation Army continued throughout the holiday season. Rotary volunteers took on the final weekend before Christmas, determined to finish strong. With enthusiastic participation from Suffield Rotarians, SHS Interact Club members, the Assistant District Governor, the Grinch, a sparkly elf, and some adorable pups, the team rang the bell at both Dunkin and CVS from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on both Saturday and Sunday. Their efforts spread holiday cheer and encouraged generous donations, which will benefit the community throughout the year.

As Suffield Rotary continues its commitment to "Service Above Self," several new projects are planned for the coming year. Community members are invited to join or learn more about Suffield Rotary. Meetings are held on the first and third Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. at Tavern 1927 and Suffield Country Club. For more information, reach out to any Rotarian or email [ndonais@snet.net](mailto:ndonais@snet.net).

# PARKS & RECREATION NEWS

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

## Bowling Buddies Celebrate a Holiday Season to Remember

By Donna Carney-Bastrzycki, Director of Special Programs

The holiday season sparked brighter than ever this year for the Suffield Parks & Recreation Department's Bowling Buddies Group, whose calendar was filled with joy, friendship and unforgettable celebrations—culminating in a truly magical New Year's trip to Bright Nights in Springfield.

The Bowling Buddies celebrated throughout the season in many special ways, including a fun-filled Holiday Present Making Party, a Fiesta and Pizza with Santa Night, and a Fellowship and Game Night at Second Baptist Church with a special visit from Santa. The group also enjoyed their annual Holiday Party at the Suffield Senior Center, where special guest DJ Kevin Landolina spun everyone's favorite music, transforming the Senior Center Great Room into a lively dance party. Families danced the night away following a delicious catered meal from Suffield Pizza, making the evening one filled with great food, music, and holiday cheer.

To cap off the 2025 season, Bowling Buddies participants and their families experienced a simply unforgettable trip to Bright Nights in Springfield to celebrate the New Year. While the annual outing is always very special, this year it was extra meaningful as members of the Bowling Buddies and their families traveled VIP-style on a chartered luxury bus from Post Road Stages. The tour bus was incredible, and one participant



Photo by Greg Mark

**Bowling Buddies** enjoying a bite to eat at McDonald's in Agawam, Mass. even shared, "It was like being in a rock star tour bus!"

Every seat on the beautiful tour bus offered a fantastic view of the dazzling lights at Bright Nights, making the experience truly magical. The Bowling Buddies group would like to extend a special thank-you to the terrific staff at Post Road Stages for being wonderful to work with and helping make the evening run smoothly. A special shout-out goes to driver Manny, who was fantastic and ensured an enjoyable ride for everyone. It was especially meaningful to be able to include parents and caregivers on this special pre-New Year's trip, creating lasting memories for all involved.

This special Bright Nights experience was made possible through the generous donations of community members, along with the hard work and dedication of the dancers and supporters from the previous Dancing with the Suffield Stars fundraising event.

The Suffield Parks & Recreation Department, in partnership with Fred Astaire Dance Studio of Suffield, will host the

3rd Annual Dancing Stars of Suffield Spectacular on Saturday, March 28. This popular fundraiser pairs local celebrity dancers with professional instructors from Fred Astaire Studios, culminating in an exciting evening where each pair takes the stage to perform for a panel of judges and a live audience.

All proceeds from the event will benefit Suffield Parks & Recreation's Bowling Buddies program and our Special Olympics team, supporting inclusive recreational opportunities for individuals of all abilities. Tickets are expected to sell out quickly, and community members are encouraged to attend, sponsor a dancer, volunteer or donate in support of this meaningful cause. Tickets and donations are available through Eventbrite at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2026-dancing-stars-of-suffield-tickets-1975027603729>.

A heartfelt thank-you goes to PeoplesBank, the event's Title Sponsor, for their generous support.

In addition to Dancing Stars

of Suffield, Suffield Parks & Recreation invites the community to attend our very popular Open Mic and Talent Show Night on Friday, February 20, from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the Suffield Senior Center. This fun and welcoming evening showcases a wide variety of talents, including singing, dancing, comedy, poetry, instrumental performances and karaoke. Whether performing on stage or cheering from the audience, attendees can expect a night filled with creativity, laughter, delicious food and community connection.

Another highly anticipated Parks & Recreation event is the Roaring 20's Casino and Bingo Night Fun, taking place on Friday, March 6, from 5:30-8 p.m. This special evening invites families to step back into the dazzling 1920s while also celebrating America's 250th Anniversary — Suffield Style.

This unique event honors a pivotal era in American history — the Roaring 1920s — a time of innovation, cultural change and community spirit, as part of our town's recogni-

tion of 250 years of American history. Guests will enjoy a mock speakeasy-style atmosphere, casino-style tutorial games, lively music, dancing, and exciting rounds of Bingo with plenty of prizes to be won. Guests are encouraged to dress in 1920's-inspired attire such as flapper dresses, pearls, fedoras and bow ties, or come as they are and join the fun.

Adults can try their hand at casino-style games in a relaxed, playful setting, while children will enjoy games, crafts and activities in the Youth Service Game Room. This all-ages event celebrates our nation's past, community traditions, and shared experiences — 250 years strong. The event will be held on Friday, March 6 from 5:30-8 p.m. at the Suffield Senior Center. The event is for all ages and the cost is \$10. Children two and under are free!

Looking ahead, Summer Programs and Camp Registration will open at 9 a.m. on Monday, March 16. Residents are encouraged to register early, as programs and camps fill quickly each year. We are also accepting applications for summer staff positions, including camp leadership roles, lifeguards, counselors, and event staff. The application deadline is Friday, March 13. For more information, visit [suffieldrec.com](http://suffieldrec.com).

Suffield Parks & Recreation looks forward to welcoming participants to upcoming programs. Wishing everyone a wonderful and memory-filled 2026! ☺



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## Deadlines for March 2026 Issue

**Submissions for articles** should include the author's name, address, telephone number and email. If applicable, include photographer's name. Please send by email to: [inbox@thesuffieldobserver.com](mailto:inbox@thesuffieldobserver.com)

**Submissions for ads** should include the contact person, business name, billing address, telephone number and email All ads must be submitted as high-resolution images in .pdf (preferred), or .tif format. Please send by email to: [ads@thesuffieldobserver.com](mailto:ads@thesuffieldobserver.com)

For either articles or ads, if unable to use email, submit a flashdrive or hardcopy (articles only) to the office on the lower level of the Suffield Village or mail it to our post office box. For articles, please use MS Word. All submissions will be considered to be property of *The Suffield Observer*.

Op-Eds	Email	Deadline:	February 12
Articles	Hard-copy only	Deadline:	February 10
Articles	Email	Deadline:	February 12
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Photos	All Photos	Deadline:	February 12

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## The Suffield Observer

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**Our Mission:** To build a sense of community throughout the town of Suffield and to provide a forum where all sides of issues may be addressed.

**Our Organization:** The *Observer* is written by, for and about the people of Suffield. We are an independent, non-profit, non-partisan organization seeking to provide information and news about the town of Suffield.

**Donations:** There is no charge for the *Observer*, but we welcome donations to help pay for our rent, printing and mailing costs.

**Advertisers:** To advertise in *The Suffield Observer*, contact our advertising manager, at 860-668-7442, and we will be glad to help. We thank our advertisers for their support. We feel strongly that one way to build a sense of community is to support our local businesses.

**Volunteers:** If you would like to be a part of publishing *The Suffield Observer*, you would be most welcome. No previous experience necessary. Call Ray Dalrymple, 860-668-7711.

**Guidance for all submitted articles:** All *Observer* submissions must conform to the following criteria: They must be reasonable and civil, free of libelous or slanderous content, timely and of community interest. Any criticism must be directed at ideas, actions or decisions, not people. When writers don't adhere to the criteria, the *Observer* will attempt to contact them. If writers do not agree to make necessary changes, the *Observer* reserves the right to reject the article. Articles attacking the actions of an individual or organization must be submitted by the 9th of the month to allow for the affected parties rebuttal, or that party is allowed a rebuttal in the following issue. The choice is up to the affected party. Responses must be in kind.

**Letters to the Editor/OpEds:** The *Observer* accepts letters/OpEds that are factual and of interest to the community. We strive to print a balance of all sides of an issue. Letters should not exceed 250 words, OpEds should not exceed 500 words. Only one letter /OpEd per writer is allowed every three months. We do not accept Letters to the Editor endorsing political candidates.

**Business Articles:** *The Suffield Observer* does not accept articles written by owners of a business that could be considered self-serving. Advertising space is available for such purposes.

**Political Ads:** In the interest of maintaining a level playing field, we accept no political ads but do print at election time a Suffield Voters' Guide with input from the local candidates.

**Articles:** We look forward to content on community issues or topics which would contribute to the benefit of residents of the community. Contributions include poetry, community interest articles, short stories, personal profiles, etc. Article length typically ranges from 100 to 600 words depending on the subject.

**Photos:** Photos enhance articles, and sometimes a stand-alone photo with a good caption beats a short article. Please send photographs as attachments (not embedded in a document). For quality printing send good resolution of 300 pixels per inch or higher.

**Suggestions:** We are a volunteer organization and we truly welcome suggestions that would improve the newspaper.

# Safety Alert Systems for Older Cars

By Tony Peterson

Are you considering trading in an older car or truck that runs well but lacks modern safety warning systems?

There could be a less expensive alternative.

Reliable safety alert equipment can be installed in your older car and work well, though without all the features of new car systems.

Take a forward collision warning system, for example. It can cost about \$450 installed, depending on your car, and alert you with a sound and red light if you're approaching a stopped car or pedestrian too fast. But unlike many new car systems, it won't automatically apply the brakes because it's not integrated with your car's electronics.

Other systems include blind-spot monitoring that alerts you to cars approaching in adjoining lanes, backup cameras, cameras that record drivers around you for proof of unsafe driving in the event of an accident, and front and rear sensors that help you

park without bumping into other cars. Some devices, like the aforementioned forward collision warning system, can combine multiple functions.

For this article, I phoned five Connecticut and Massachusetts installers of car safety warning systems and visited one who impressed me most with his knowledge and willingness to answer questions by phone.

James Smith, owner of Act Audio in Vernon, has been installing car safety monitoring equipment since 2008. He's a low-key professional who said he offers only mid-to high-end equipment and is meticulous about installation, such as safely routing wires. He said many new car dealers bring cars to him for the installation of systems that manufacturers don't offer. His work doesn't void new-car warranties, he stressed.

According to the Mobile Electronics Certified Professionals (MECP) website, Smith's firm is one of only three New England shops that employ certified technicians.



Photo by James Smith

**An Act technician installs parking sensors on a GMC truck.**

cians.

The MECP is a certifying body that offers three levels of certification for technicians: Apprentice, Skilled and Expert. To achieve the different levels, technicians need to take a variety of courses, some lasting eight to 10 hours, and pass tests. Two of Smith's five installers, including him, are MECP certified. He said, "Cars today are very advanced, and most shops don't participate in training or certification programs."

Only one other shop convenient to Suffield residents

employs MECP-certified technicians. It's Innovative Concepts of Wilbraham. Smith knows the owner and endorses his work, even though they are competitors, which speaks to Smith's integrity.

## What you should expect to pay

Backup cameras with an external monitor or special rearview mirror that turns on only when you put your car in reverse can cost about \$500. Replacing an existing radio with a radio/display that shows a rear view while backing up will cost considerably more.

For front- and rear-facing cameras, called Dash Cams, that record drivers around you, expect to pay about \$500 total.

Blind-spot sensors that detect cars in adjoining lanes approaching you require the removal and reinstallation of bumpers. They cost about \$900, including alert lights on the front roof support pillars inside the car.

Front and rear parking sensors are about \$600 in-

stalled.

The prices quoted are rough figures. Depending on your vehicle model, you may pay more or less. Smith said installing equipment on older Toyotas can be in line with the quoted prices, whereas installation in BMWs and Mercedes is typically much more expensive due to their complex electronics.

If you're interested in upgrading your older car with modern safety equipment, I'd visit a store like Act Audio to view their selection and let the James Smiths of the world help you determine exactly what's right for you.

Don't expect the installation of safety warning systems in older vehicles to yield you much savings in car insurance. My insurer, Amica, said they offer only one discount, and that's for forward collision warning systems, as mentioned in this article. It amounts to about \$10 annually.

## Few customer complaints

When I asked Smith about customer complaints, he said they are minimal. He noted that the equipment he installs is reliable and cautioned prospective buyers not to be lured in by prices they see on Amazon, which might be for low-quality systems and don't include professional installation. He said customers occasionally experience false alarms that require sensor adjustment, yet system recalibration is typically needed only when a driver bumps a camera that requires realignment. ♫

## How About a Weekly DVD Adventure?

By Judy Edwards

Are you looking for a fresh and engaging way to enjoy movies with someone?

My grandson and I did this by combining the alphabet with our love for movies. This unique approach involves selecting a movie that begins with each letter of the alphabet from your library or personal collection and watching one film per week. It's been an entertaining adventure each week as we selected the movies beginning with the letter of the week--a fun challenge that not only encourages you to revisit

old favorites but also to discover hidden gems you may have overlooked. We found favorites and duds. One of our favorites was *How to Marry a Millionaire* and a dud turned out to be *Sleeper*. Share the experience by inviting friends or family to join in the fun. They can help pick the weekly movie or watch along, sparking lively discussions about each film. You'll enjoy the popcorn even more.

The concept is simple: begin with the letter "A" and choose a DVD whose title starts with that letter. The following week, move on to

"B," and continue through the alphabet, tackling one letter each week. You may find yourself choosing classics, comedies, dramas or even documentaries. This method adds structure and anticipation to your movie nights, turning them into an unforgettable cinematic journey.

Discover what the library has to offer. After 26 weeks you know the librarians by name, and you'll find yourself getting into a discussion about your picks. This approach encourages you to explore and appreciate the full range of films you have

available including those you may have neglected or forgotten. You'll naturally encounter a wide array of genres and stories, keeping your movie nights fresh and interesting. Planning ahead for each week's letter and movie can create excitement and make your film-watching ritual something to look forward to.

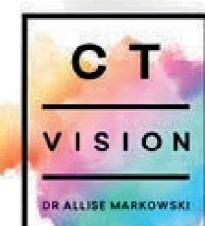
It's time to start your 26-week game ♫

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PRICING STRATEGY ADVISOR

# Love is in the Air

By Abby Wolcott

It is February, so, I have the theme song from *Love Story* circulating in my head and am seeking out that red beret that Ali McGraw wore so well back in the 70s when she and Oliver Barrett broke our hearts. But one does not need to be sporting a red beret in a convertible on Radcliffe's campus to think about love.

Sure enough, when I peer out at my bird feeder, I am able to witness all kinds of love right before my eyes. The birds are doing their part to show me the sampler platter of styles of affection. Some I am familiar with; some were a fleeting part of my past and some I aspire to. It runs the gamut. My regular visitors, the mourning doves, fan out on the ground and peck away at seeds as they congregate with the gentlest demeanor. There do not seem to be any highs or lows in their affection, but they show up and stay by their friend or mate's side day after day. They are quiet

companions. The nuthatches take in the whole scene and have a feistier interaction. This involves their undulating flight and may be accented by the flashing of wings, gymnastics up and down the tree trunk and staring into their partner's eyes on the far side of the mulberry tree. The blue jays descend with much fanfare. They shout and shake the branches and sure look splendid against the snow. Their markings resemble thick ropey necklaces of bling, and their love is not for the faint of heart. They are loud and brash and always right. It seems like a little of that goes a long way.

In contrast, a pair of cardinals visit each day at dusk. They are shy and quiet this time of year and like the cover of twilight. They seem to remain paired up on every visit, and friends have witnessed them passing a sunflower seed to each other, beak to beak. I have not been lucky enough to see that, but they have plenty of other endearing habits that



Photos by Joan Heffernan

Hanging out at the birdfeeder.

show their understated, devoted love. It is something to behold and frequently stops me in my tracks in my kitchen, and my pb&j's remain unfinished on the counter until the cardinals fly off into the woods to bed down.

My most common visitor for the last month has been a large flock of house finch with their notched tails and rounded heads. The males sport red markings while the females are mostly brown. They crave the safety of the group and

are all about having a big circle of friends and partners, and they can cycle in and out of the group. From my amateur eye, their behavior is reminiscent of the commune lifestyle which was popular a few decades back and apparently never went completely out of style. The group provides great entertainment, and more specifically, brings back the love choices of the band members of Fleetwood Mac or the Mamas and the Papas which were fluid, flexible and ever evolving. It was hard to take my eyes off the couples because once I did, one of them would change partners, and they never missed a beat while they did so. The house finches seem to be able to do the same.

So, as you ponder love this month, think about what the birds are showing you right out your window. Maybe a friend or, even better, a lover can loan you a red beret. I find that wearing one magnifies the feeling. ♪

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By Kathy Werth

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# Suffield Players – *Holidazed*

From a press release

The Suffield Players are proud to present *Holidazed*, a funny, heartfelt play by Enfield, Connecticut playwright Baily Morse, directed by Fa-had Ramat. This lively and poignant comedy runs February 13, 14, 15, 20, 21, 22, 27 and 28 at Mapleton Hall in Suffield.

Produced by The Suffield Players, *Holidazed* is a warm, laugh-out-loud, and deeply relatable comedy that celebrates family, change and finding yourself when life doesn't go according to plan.

When Francine (Jennifer Madison) discovers her two college-aged children (Baily Morse and Ben Cantwell) won't be coming home for any of the holidays, she decides to host a full year's worth of celebrations in one frenzied week before they leave for school. What begins as a loving attempt to hold

on, quickly erupts into hilarious chaos. Her rebellious octogenarian mother (Barbara Gallow) keeps sneaking out, her ex-husband (Mark O'Donnell) arrives unexpectedly with his much younger girlfriend (Krista Krupa), and Francine develops confusing feelings for her handsome handyman (Chris Torizzo). As the holidays spiral into absurdity, Francine must confront the deeper question beneath the laughter: Who is she when her children are gone and the holidays are over?

Blending sharp comedy with emotional honesty, *Holidazed* explores family, identity, aging and the bittersweet transitions of parenthood. The Suffield Players are especially excited to showcase the work of local playwright Baily Morse, whose connection to the region adds a meaningful community dimension to this production.

## Performance Schedule:

Friday and Saturday evenings at 8 p.m.  
Sunday matinees at 2 p.m.  
Subtitled Performances  
February 14, 20 and 22  
Ticket and Seating Information:

Seating is assigned in the order reservations are received. Any requests for special seating must be noted at the time of purchase and are subject to availability. Patrons requesting accommodations for specific needs (such as limited mobility) should complete the "Preference for Seating (Specific issues)" section when ordering tickets.

For ticketing assistance, contact the Box Office at [box-office@suffieldplayers.org](mailto:box-office@suffieldplayers.org) or 1-800-289-6148. ♫



## KML Art Display

By Fran Milliken

As part of the Suffield Arts Council programs, this month the works of Kim Velky will be displayed at the Kent Memorial Library. Kim, a Granville, MA resident, is a self-taught artist, working in acrylics, to paint a variety of colorful subjects, including landscapes, seascapes, trees, plants, flowers, animals, and more.

Inspired early by PBS artist Bob Ross and his "Happy Little Trees", she found supplies and would paint along with him and was fascinated with the results.

She gave up painting for many years, to raise a family of three, while running a daycare. Her husband was away, serving

in the Navy at the time.

She began painting again in 2015 and found new enjoyment in the process. Though she has had no formal training, she enjoys developing her own style, and having more time for painting, as her children are now grown.

Viewers may view this display during February, in the Pinney Gallery of the Library from February 2-28. A "Meet the Artist" Reception is scheduled for Thursday, February 12, from 6 – 8 p.m.

This show is made possible through the joint efforts of the Suffield Arts Council, the artist and the Kent Memorial Library staff. ♫

## Senior Valentine Meals

By Jen Lord

Celebrate Valentine's Day with a cherished community tradition! The Friends of Suffield Senior Valentine's Social is delighted to host its 39th annual event, with Suffield Academy once again providing complimentary, home-delivered meals. We're excited to share a little extra love and cheer this February.

This festive meal will feature grilled chicken with roasted vegetables, potatoes and cookies for dessert. Meals are complimentary and limited in number, so reservations are required by February 5 or while supplies last.

This event is open to Suffield senior citizens. Deliveries will take place on Saturday, February 14, between 12 and 2:30 p.m.

To reserve a meal, please call Lori Sych at 860-668-5122. ♫

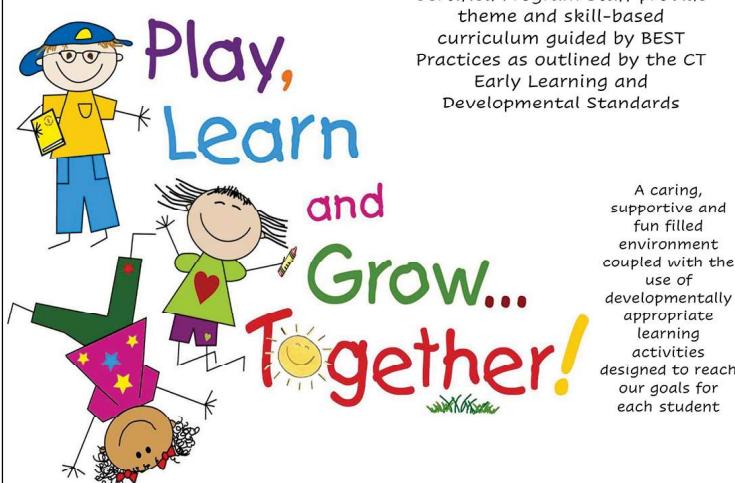


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## McAlister Enjoys a Penguin Visit and an Antarctic Adventure

By Denise Raymond,  
McAlister PE teacher and  
Kris Pryce, principal

Learning came to life for students at McAlister Intermediate School in January thanks to a PTO-sponsored visit from Mystic Aquarium. Through its outreach program, Mystic Aquarium introduced students to African penguins and shared how their dedicated care team works together to protect and preserve this critically endangered species.

Students learned how penguins receive their names, explored the different parts of a penguin's body, and discovered how these adaptations help them thrive both on land and in the water. They were especially fascinated by the unique features that allow penguins to swallow fish



Photos provided by the author

Globe trotting penguin visits students at McAlister.

whole. The highlight of the program was an unforgettable, up-close encounter with a real-life penguin who visited McAlister, creating a truly memorable experience for students.

Complementing the aquarium's presentation, students also enjoyed a presentation by McAlister physical education teacher Denise Raymond, who recently traveled to Antarctica with her husband and son, Lucas. Mrs. Raymond

described the breathtaking landscape of the Antarctic Peninsula, where endless white mountains stretch to the horizon and massive glaciers churn icebergs into the sea. She shared how her family traveled alongside a diverse team of experts aboard a state-of-the-art expedition ship, venturing into quiet channels and coves framed by towering peaks.

Through photos and stories, students learned

about spotting whales from the ship's bow, gliding past enormous icebergs in small Zodiac boats, and exploring the continent through hiking and kayaking. She also explained how the trip offered both adventure and moments of peaceful reflection, surrounded by the beauty and stillness of one of the most remote places on Earth.

This extraordinary journey came about thanks to Lucas, who has been raising money annually for Mystic Aquarium's Run, Walk, and Waddle event. In recognition of his efforts, Lucas was invited to appear on *The Tamron Hall Show* in November 2024 for a segment celebrating children who make a difference in their communities. During the show, Lucas was surprised with the opportunity of a lifetime: a trip to Antarctica with National Geographic Expeditions.

Denise wanted to bring that once-in-a-lifetime experience back to her students, using it as a real-world learning opportunity to teach about Antarctica and the penguins and wildlife that call the continent home.

Together, these two pro-

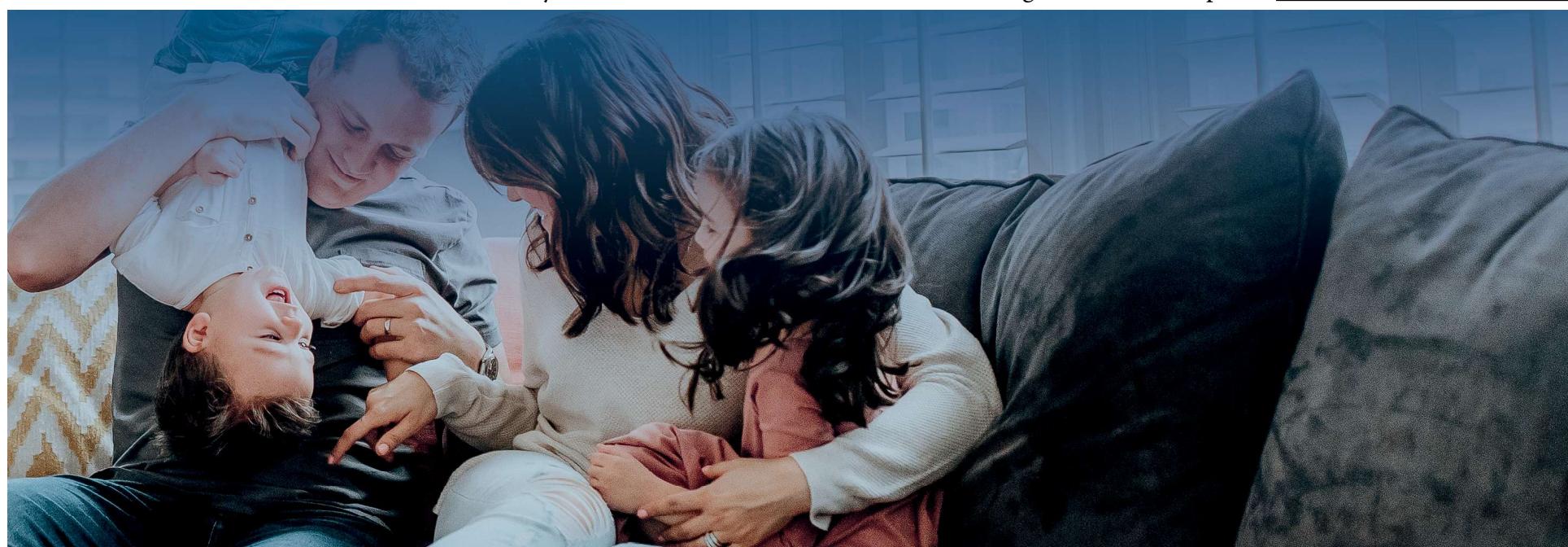
grams supported Suffield Public Schools' initiative for place-based learning, which connects students with local community members and organizations to create meaningful, real-life learning experiences that spark curiosity, deepen understanding, and inspire a love of learning ♫

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### Windsor Federal Bank

Windsor Federal Bank is proud to announce it is starting 2026 with another **5-Star Superior rating** from BauerFinancial, the Nation's Premier Bank Rating Firm.

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