

>>> HILLTOP PLACE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION <<<

HILLTOPPER

HPCA Community Newsletter



Photo by George Edwards

WINTER AT HILLTOP

WELCOME TO THE DECEMBER HILLTOPPER

By George Edwards

The annual Christmas Party was held on Saturday, December 6th at the Hilltop House. There were about 60 people in attendance. Good food and cheer were shared by all.

HILLTOP CHRISTMAS PARTY

Season's Greetings! Welcome to the December edition of the Hilltopper! This Hilltopper is truly a community effort. We want to thank everyone who contributed and once again remind the community that this newsletter belongs to all of us. We view this as a community newsletter and a community effort. Please share your thoughts, your writing, your photographs, and any other contributions for future editions. Our next edition will be in March so you have plenty of time to get your creative juices flowing. Send your contributions to hilltopnhnewsletter@gmail.com.



Photo by Brian Stillson

LIGHTS AROUND HILLTOP



Photos by Mae Edwards

HOLIDAY TRADITIONS

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Photo by Sara Harkins

OUR FAVORITE CHRISTMAS TRADITION IS THAT ON CHRISTMAS MORNING (NOW THAT KIDS ARE GONE - WHATEVER AM THEY ARE HERE FOR) WE OPEN OUR STOCKINGS AT BREAKFAST AND HAVE A CHRISTMAS CRACKER. AND EVERYONE DOES WEAR THE PAPER HAT! ONE YEAR MY SON HID AN ENGAGEMENT RING IN THE ONE FOR HIS GIRLFRIEND.

BIDDY IRWIN

FOR MANY YEARS I MADE FRUIT CAKE LIKE MY MOTHER AND GRANDMOTHER DID AS A HOLIDAY TRADITION.

CLARE BENSLEY



Our Polish Christmas Tradition



As Christmas approached, the members of the Ladies Guild at our Polish church in Manchester, NH would get out their aprons in anticipation of the annual “Pierogi Making” days. For two days the beginning of December, they would assemble in the church basement and prepare the ingredients for the cabbage as well as the potato and cheese pierogi, stuff and “pinch” the fillings into the dough, and then boil them all; ending up with thousands for the annual “Wigilia” (Christmas vigil) dinner held for the congregation and friends. This tradition is still held at the church and my sis and I head on down to do our part (as do three others of our grammar school class) remembering my mom and others who labored so tirelessly for many Christmases. This year we made 3450 in two days and enjoyed the celebration with almost 200 other folks sharing opiatek (a Christmas wafer) and a meal of the pierogi, mushroom borscht, rice pudding, pickled herring, kapusta (cabbage) and delicious desserts. Wishing everyone Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year – or, as they say in Polish: *Wesołych Świąt i Szczęśliwego Nowego Roku.*

by Barbara Dziura

SOME OF OUR BEST TRADITIONS ARE THOSE WHICH TRANSPORT US BACK TO OUR CHILDHOOD....THOSE SWEET MEMORIES THAT SEEM TO ONLY GET BETTER WITH THE PASSING OF TIME. AND WHEN WE ARE FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO RELIVE A CHILDHOOD MEMORY YEAR AFTER YEAR, IT IS THEN THAT WE UNDERSTAND WHAT IT MEANS TO BE TRULY BLESSED.

OUR FAMILY HAS BEEN BLESSED INDEED— EVERY DECEMBER ON THE SUNDAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS, FOR AS LONG AS WE CAN REMEMBER, OUR FAMILY HAS BEEN GATHERING FOR OUR BELOVED “SUTTON CHRISTMAS”.

THIS BEAUTIFULLY SIMPLE, AND QUINTESENTIALLY NEW ENGLAND CELEBRATION OF CHRISTMAS HAS BEEN A CORNERSTONE FOR OUR FAMILY AND MANY OTHERS WHO LIVE IN THE QUANT LITTLE VILLAGE OF SOUTH SUTTON AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES.

SO EVERY YEAR WE BUNDLE UP, CLIMB THE HILL TO THE SOUTH SUTTON MEETINGHOUSE, AND SNUGGLE IN NEXT TO FAMILY AND FRIENDS FOR A TIME OF SONG, STORY AND BELONGING.

WHETHER YOU ARE A SMALL TOWN KID (LIKE ME) OR AT HOME ON CITY STREETS—I INVITE YOU TO JOIN US FOR THE SUTTON CHRISTMAS EXPERIENCE AND DISCOVER, OR REDISCOVER WHAT IT FEELS LIKE TO BE HOME FOR CHRISTMAS.

SEE YOU NEXT YEAR!

BEST WISHES FOR A BEAUTIFUL CHRISTMAS SEASON!

by Mae Edwards



A NEW LONDON GEM

Photo and article by Don Ostler

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The Natural Gem of New London – Philbrick Cricenti Bog Project Complete

The last board of the Philbrick-Cricenti Bog Walkway Upgrade Project was laid down during the week of October 6. This marks the completion of the project which began in June of 2022. The work was performed by volunteer members from New London Conservation Commission (established in 1965) as well as the trail maintenance team but most notably, by local resident Don Bartlett who was the chief engineer, carpenter, and laborer. The aluminum walkway was installed by High Country Aluminum Products.

Robert Brown, the Chairperson of the New London Conservation Commission, identified the need to upgrade the walkways so that people of all ages and abilities can access the “Natural Gem” of New London. Brown is quick to point out that the project was completed with privately donated funds totaling almost \$230,000.00. A big thank you to all who donated.

The need for the upgrade was due to the increase in visitation to the bog, in fact, the log book identified visitors from 28 states and five countries in just one year. Further evidence that the walkways needed a safety upgrade was mentioned by writer Nicole Whitley in an article in the July/August 2019 edition of the New Hampshire Wildlife Journal. She wrote about the qualities of the bog and encouraged people to visit. However, she stated that the trail “is not suitable for very young children” and visitors should have a “good sense of balance” to navigate the two board walkways. The completed Walkways Project now makes the P-C Bog safely accessible to families and visitors of all ages. The wooden sections are now 32 inches wide and the aluminum sections are 36 inches wide, with a hand railing in many locations.

In addition to the upgraded walkways, 15 interpretive signs have been installed along the walkways describing the unique plants and animals that thrive in this “kettle top” bog.

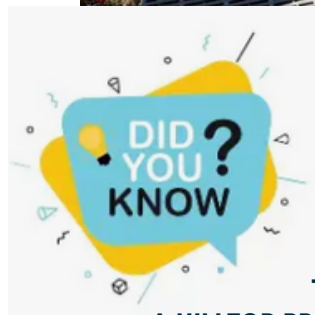
The Philbrick-Cricenti Bog is a wonderful natural experience and has been recognized by VisitNH.gov – Hidden Nature Trails in New Hampshire - as one the six most biodiverse landscapes to visit; right here in New London.

www.nl-nhcc.com

ODE TO THE HILLTOP MAINTENANCE CREW

**HAVE YOU SEEN THE SILVER STREAK TODAY?
HAVE YOU GLIMPSED THE ORANGE OR GREEN?
OH YES, THEY'RE ON THEIR WAY TO
FIX, FASTEN, DIG, CUT, COLLECT, SPREAD, INSTALL, REMOVE
SOLVE
WITH EXPERTISE, KINDNESS, PATIENCE, WARMTH AND POSITIVITY
AND LOTS OF LAUGHTER
FROM 1 TO 147 HEARTS ARE LIGHTER
LIVES ARE FULLER
GRATITUDE AND APPRECIATION ABOUND
HOW FORTUNATE ARE WE**

BY ANNETTE EPREMIAN



**THERE IS.....
A HILLTOP PRIVATE GROUP - FACEBOOK
PAGE [FACEBOOK PAGE](#)
AND
A WEBSITE THAT BRINGS ALL KEARSARGE
REGION ACTIVITIES TOGETHER IN ONE
PLACE.
[HOME | KEARSARGECALENDAR](#)**

STARTED BY LAURA HALKENHAUSER GUION



HPCA CONTACT INFORMATION

OFFICE HOURS: 8:30 – 4:00

TELEPHONE: 603-526-4244

MANAGER: JEAN MOLLOY

HILLTOPPLACECOMMUNITY@GMAIL.COM

SECRETARY: LINDA DOWNES

HILLTOPPLACE@COMCAST.NET

MAINTENANCE TEAM: KEVIN, ANDY

GROUND: JOSH

HILLTOP MAINTENANCE EMERGENCY

TELEPHONE NUMBER- IF YOU HAVE A

MAINTENANCE EMERGENCY, THE HILLTOP

EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBER TO CALL IS

603-526-2573.

SUBMIT INFORMATION FOR THE NEWSLETTER

TO HILLTOPNHNEWSLETTER@GMAIL.COM



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Chase the winter blues always with an afternoon of
Paint 'N Sip!!!!

Wednesday, January 14th from 12 to 2 PM
Hilltop House

Transfer those winter blues into a lovely watercolor painting of New Hampshire birches at sunset!

Step by step directions and a beverage adds up to a successful afternoon. Everything will be provided but feel free to bring your favorite watercolor supplies if you want. Painting will be 7x11 and fit a standard size frame.

Seats are limited, so sign up soon. Sign up sheet in the Hilltop House.

Cost: \$15pp.

Questions?

Biddy – 603-863-3582

Sally – 774-722-9928

Diana – 603-526-2829

Brought to you by the Hilltop House ARTS Committee.

NB: Snow date to be determined.



MORE LIGHTS

Photos by Mae and George Edwards

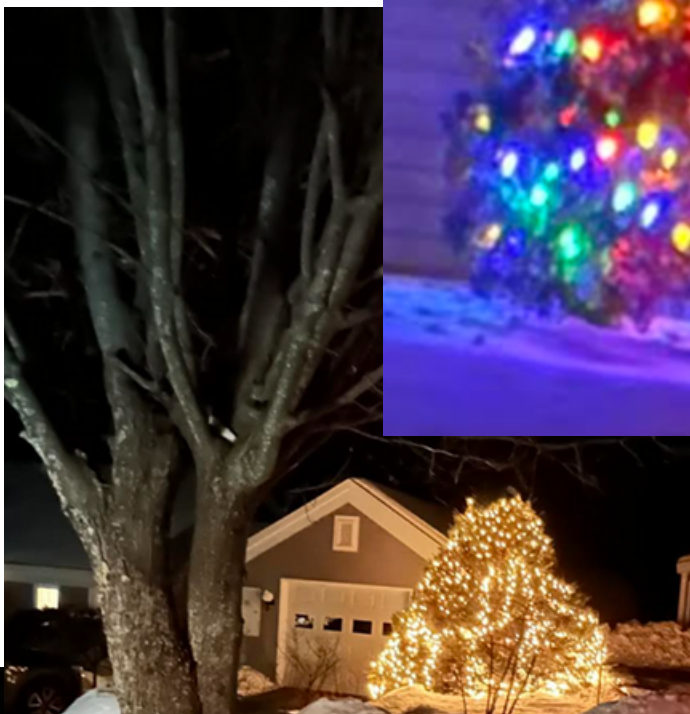
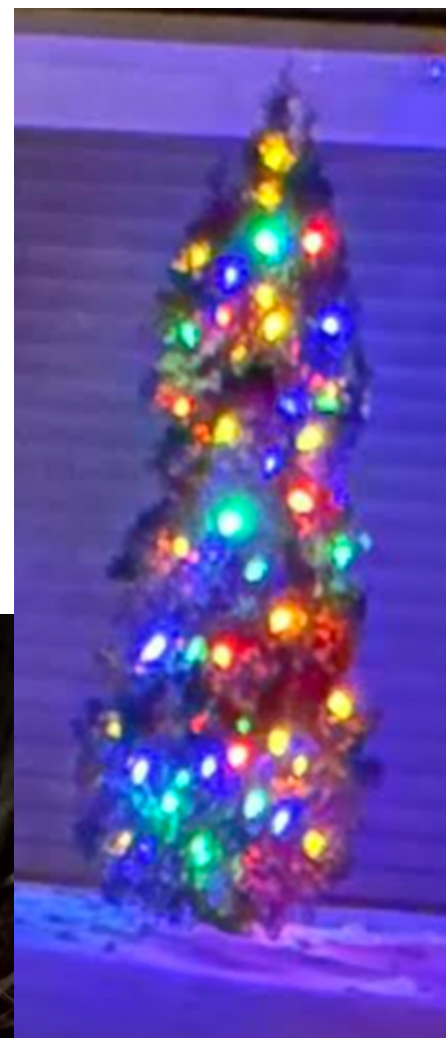


Photo by Mae Edwards



Gift of Lights, Loudon

November 27, 2025 - January 4, 2026

Cruise through 3.5 million lights at New Hampshire Motor Speedway. Featuring more than 500 displays, 80 themed scenes, and a glowing 150-foot Tunnel of Lights, this drive-through spectacle is a must-see Central New Hampshire holiday tradition. Check the schedule for days of operation when planning your trip.

**FOR MORE CHRISTMAS
TRADITIONS.....**

**35 BEST CHRISTMAS EVE
TRADITIONS TO ENJOY WITH
YOUR FAMILY**



Holly Jolly Journey, Litchfield

November 28, 2025 - January 11, 2026

A magical holiday transforms Mel's Funway Park into a sparkling wonderland. Walk more than two-thirds of a mile through themed areas like the Zoo of Lights, Candy Cane Forest, and Arctic Adventure. Warm up with cocoa or s'mores as holiday music fills the air.



LaBelle Lights, Derry

November 14, 2025 - January 18, 2025

Stroll through millions of twinkling lights at LaBelle Winery's outdoor show. With fun theme nights like Ugly Sweater or Holiday PJs, this family-friendly experience is bigger and brighter every year. Make holiday memories with family and friends as you explore the stunning displays



Holiday Safety Tips

From the

HPCA Fire Safety and Prevention Committee

The holiday season brings warmth, joy, and festive decorations—but it's also important to keep fire safety in mind, especially when using items like Christmas trees, holiday lights, candles, and fireplaces. Here are essential tips updated for 2025 to ensure you and your family have a safe and happy holiday season.

1. Christmas Tree Safety

- **Choose the right tree:** If you opt for a live tree, select one with fresh, green needles that do not fall off easily. A dry tree is a major fire hazard.
- **Keep it hydrated:** Water your tree daily. A dry tree is a significant fire risk, and watering helps maintain freshness.
- **Proper placement:** Place your tree at least three feet away from heat sources such as fireplaces, radiators, or space heaters.
- **Secure the tree:** Ensure your tree is stable by using a sturdy tree stand and securing it to prevent tipping.
- **Dispose of the tree promptly:** After the holidays, get rid of your live tree when it begins to dry out. Do not leave it in the home. Contact facilities to pick up.

2. Holiday Lights

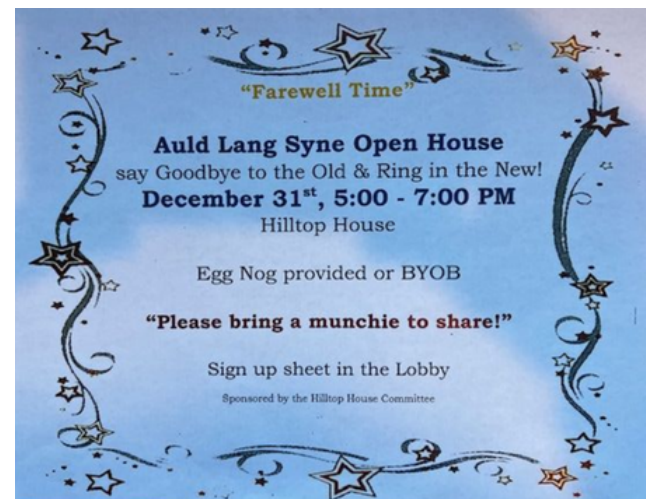
- **Inspect before you decorate:** Before hanging lights, check for any frayed wires, cracked sockets, or broken bulbs. Damaged lights can cause fires.
- **Use the right lights:** Ensure that lights are rated for the location you're using them. Indoor lights should not be used outdoors, as they are not made to withstand wet conditions.
- **Avoid overloading outlets:** Plugging too many lights into one outlet can cause overheating. Use surge protectors and follow manufacturer guidelines for the number of lights per circuit.
- **Turn off lights before bed:** Always switch off lights when you leave the house or go to bed to reduce the risk of fire.

3. Candle Safety

- **Never leave candles unattended:** Always extinguish candles when leaving a room or going to sleep.
- **Place candles away from flammable objects:** Ensure candles are placed on stable surfaces and away from flammable items like curtains, Christmas trees, or paper decorations.
- **Use candle holders:** Make sure your candles are in sturdy holders that won't tip over easily. This helps prevent accidents and spills.
- **Consider flameless candles:** Battery-operated, flameless candles provide the same warm glow without the fire risk.

4. Fireplace Safety

- **Inspect your fireplace:** Before lighting a fire, ensure the chimney is clear of obstructions, and have it cleaned regularly to avoid creosote buildup.
- **Use a fire screen:** A screen or glass door in front of the fireplace will prevent sparks and embers from flying out and starting a fire.
- **Burn the right materials:** If wood burning, use only seasoned hardwoods. Avoid burning wrapping paper, cardboard, or plastics, as they can release harmful chemicals and cause chimney fires.
- **Keep flammable objects away:** Maintain a safe distance between your fireplace and decorations, such as garlands, or tree branches.
- **Extinguish fires properly:** Make sure the fire is completely out before leaving the house or going to bed. Never leave a burning fire unattended.





- **Smoke Alarms:** Ensure that smoke alarms are functioning and placed on every level of your home and near sleeping areas. Replace batteries once per year or designated by device type. Contact the HPCA Fire Safety and Prevention Committee or HPCA facilities for assistance.
- **Carbon Monoxide Detectors:** If you're using a propane heating unit, fireplace stove make sure to have a carbon monoxide detector installed to prevent dangers of this odorless, deadly gas.
- **Fire Extinguishers and Fire Blankets:** Keep a fire extinguishers and fire blanket accessible in case of emergencies. Contact HPCA Fire Safety and Prevention Committee if you need assistance obtaining these items.

By following these holiday safety tips, you can enjoy a warm and festive atmosphere while keeping your family safe. Stay vigilant, and make your holiday season merry, bright and safe!



YOGA CLASSES

CLASSES ARE THURSDAY EVENINGS FROM 5:30 TO 6:30 IN THE HILLTOP BARN.

OUR INSTRUCTOR IS DR. KATIE WEATHERS OF ASCEND YOGA (WWW.ASCENDPTYOGA.COM), WHO IS A REGISTERED YOGA TEACHER AND DOCTOR OF PHYSICAL THERAPY AT THE HOSPITAL. SHE HAS A UNIQUE ABILITY TO MAKE SURE EVERYBODY DOES WHAT THEY CAN TO FEEL THE WORKOUT WITHOUT INJURY OR STRESS.

CLASS IS OPEN TO EVERYONE AT ALL LEVELS. A 5-CLASS PASS IS \$100, OR INDIVIDUAL CLASSES ARE \$25.



GERMAN PASTRIES

THESE FINE PASTRIES WERE BAKED BY KARIN COLLIER OF CLUSTER ONE HILLTOP. SHE THEN SHARED THEM WITH EVERYONE WHO ATTENDED OKTOBERFEST IN EARLY OCTOBER.

KARIN IS A LONGTIME RESIDENT OF NEW LONDON. SHE WAS BORN IN GERMANY AND LOVES TO BAKE.

ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4TH RESIDENTS GATHERED TO CELEBRATE OKTOBERFEST AT HILLTOP HOUSE. RESIDENTS ENJOYED BEER FROM TRAPP FAMILY LODGE, BRATWURST AND SAUERKRAUT AND THEN WAITED ON LINE FOR THESE DELICIOUS DESSERTS.

FOLKS STAYED LATE INTO THE EVENING CHATTING ON THE PATIO AND INDOORS IN THE HILLTOP CARD ROOM. IT WAS A WONDERFUL EVENING FOR ALL.

OKTOBERFEST (GERMAN PRONUNCIATION: [ˈɔkˈtoːbɐ ˈfɛst]; BAVARIAN: OKTOBAFEST/D'WIESN) IS THE WORLD'S LARGEST VOLKSFEST. IT COMBINES A BEER FESTIVAL WITH A FUNFAIR AND IS HELD ANNUALLY IN MUNICH ON THE THERESIENWIESE FROM MID-SEPTEMBER TO THE FIRST SUNDAY IN OCTOBER.

