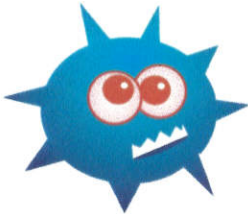


Hilltop Events

House Committee News:

COVID CONCERNS CONTINUE



Our House Committee Chair Linda Colby, regrettably announces that due to the rise in the number of COVID cases the programs that were scheduled for January 12th and February 9th have been cancelled. Please look for a more positive announcement for upcoming events in the next month's issue! Until then, Linda and the Committee wish you all the best of health in 2022.



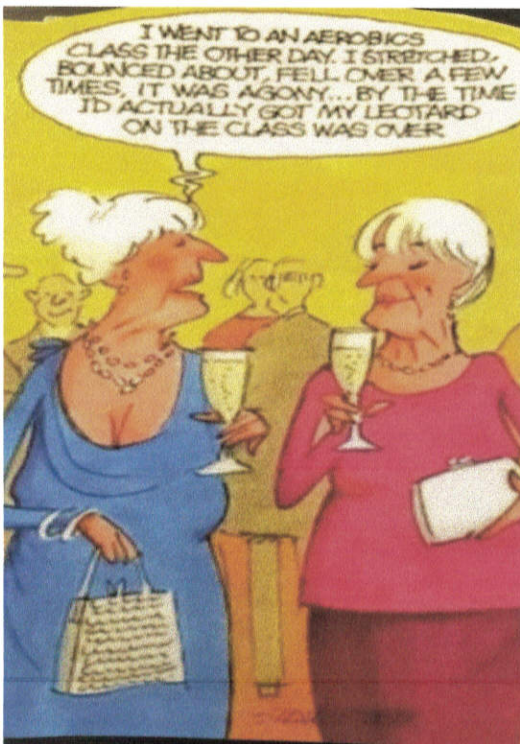
“ Let our New Year’s resolution be this: we will be there for one another as fellow members of humanity, in the finest sense of the word.”
Goran Persson

The New Year marks the end of 2021. In January we clear the clutter of the holidays and the previous year. We take a deep breathe in silence and look out on to the cold icy landscape that seems both intimidating and invigorating. This transition time elicits the myth of the goddess Ishtar, who dropped seven veils on her journey into the Underworld, facing her truest self—the darkness and the light—in order to succeed in her journey. Our 2021 journey was rough in ways we never expected, but there was beauty in it also. We can’t control all of what 2022 brings, but we can prioritize our own mental and physical wellbeing and give ourselves some TLC.

We move forward into 2022 with a much needed fresh start. Not a calender, a watch or any mechanical device is necessary to make positive changes in our lives. Walking softly and living with intention brings strength to our being. We may not control the situation around us, but we can control ourselves. Showing love of ones neighbor, fellowship, compassion and kindness make these difficult times easier for all of us. Using this kindness creates positive energy to reach out to others, therefore, increasing spirited feelings within oneself.

“Everyday is a renewal, every morning the daily miracle. This Joy you feel is life.”

Gertrude Stein, novelist, poet, playwright.

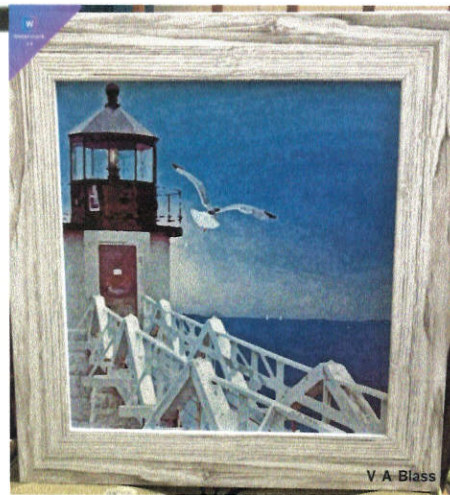


THANK YOU

Thank you to to all those folks who have contributed to the HILLTOPPER to make each issue so special. Many, many thanks to the photographers, Ann Paulson and Joan Ebberson, who continue to walk the streets to feed the editor with such fine photos of our beautiful Hilltop community.



Virginia Blass



Member of the New Hampshire Council of the Arts (Visual)

Photography has always been apart of my life, beginning in Junior High School when I signed up for an elective class in the midst of all of the required courses. Mr. Meehan greatly influenced the lives of many, including my own, through his teaching of the basics of photography. My love of black and white portraits and color landscapes developed!

Most recently, I used photography to document aspects of my sister Joan's journey in her senior years. She had cerebral palsy and was unable to walk or talk from birth. As her advocate and one of her Guardians, I shared key photographs and short video clips with her medical doctor and staff to better identify patterns of behavior, especially relating to pain. It's true—"a picture is worth a thousand words."

Photography has not only been an most enjoyable hobby, but has brought me many opportunities to meet wonderful people, appreciate earth's natural beauty, and has been instrumental in helping my sister. I'd say, taking that elective class on photography with Mr. Meehan, has greatly enriched my life, too. I am ever grateful.

I welcome you and hope you enjoy my photography display at Hilltop House. It is a collection from nature and landscapes. Several are shots taken locally. Can you identify the location?!

Sincerely,

Virginia Blass

BOOK NOTES by FAY BRONSTEIN

I had an unusual reaction to Jonathan Franzen's novel **CROSSROADS**. Franzen is a prolific novelist and National Book Award Winner who writes intense family drama. **CROSSROADS** generated so much emotion that I felt compelled to take periodic breaks and read it in installments—a few chapters at a time, then a reading vacation to restore my equilibrium, then back to drama.

CROSSROADS, the first of a trilogy is about a midwestern, seemingly average family. Make no mistake, however, this is not a typical family drama. Consider the cast of characters: Russ Hildebrandt is the pastor of a midwestern church struggling to balance his religious demands with his sexual desires. His wife Marion has a checkered past unknown to her husband, and revealed to the reader through her therapy sessions. Clem, the first-born, is about to leave college to join the Vietnam War. Perry, their third child, is a brilliant but emotionally disturbed teenage drug dealer.

Mix the religious pressures for morality with bad family decisions and throw in the post-sixties cultural changes. The result is chaos and crises. The *New Yorker* calls **CROSSROADS** "an imperfect novel that is nevertheless a great one." If you haven't already put this on your must read list, then surely this seeming contradiction will arouse your literary curiosity.