

## December Tax Bills Again Delayed this Year

*(Editor's Note: The Selectboard anticipates tax bills will be mailed December 29 or 30. Taxes will be due 30 days later. See page 17 for "IRS Implications").*

The Selectboard recognizes that the late mailing of tax bills may have caused concern for some residents, and we sincerely apologize for any inconvenience this delay may have created.

The setting of Walpole's tax rate by the Department of Revenue Administration (DRA) requires financial information from multiple entities, including the Town of Walpole, North Walpole Village District, Walpole Fire District, Fall Mountain Regional School District,

and Cheshire County. A delay in receiving complete and accurate information from any one of these entities prevents the DRA from establishing the tax rate.

In order to submit Walpole's required information to the DRA, the Town must have its annual financial audit and MS-535 form completed, which is normally scheduled for completion in April. Each year, the Town's auditors allocate a specific block of time to perform this work. If the audit cannot be completed during that scheduled period, it must pause and resume when the auditors have availability in their workflow.

During this year's audit, it was discovered that the Town's accounting treatment of inter-fund transfers was incorrect. This issue required resolution before the audit could be completed and the MS-535 finalized. Addressing this accounting matter removed Walpole from the auditors' workflow for several months, contributing to the overall delay.

The Selectboard has taken steps to strengthen oversight and prevent this type of issue from occurring in the future. We regret the inconvenience this situation has caused and appreciate the community's patience as we work to ensure accurate and timely financial reporting going forward.

-Steve Dalessio - Selectboard Chair

## Hooper Centennial

This year 2026 we will celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the receipt of the real estate left to the Town of Walpole by John H. Clifford, Trustee of the Will of Mary D. B. Hooper, who had received all the real estate at the death of her husband George Levi Hooper. The Town of Walpole accepted the gift September 21, 1926, with specific conditions to establish a school for young men and women for the "teaching of ...agriculture, forestry, botany, the development of

- Continued Page 10

## Ruggiero Waste Expansion Planned


Ruggiero Processing Facility (RPF) is a solid waste transfer station located at 32 Industrial Park Drive in Walpole. RPF currently processes approximately 200 tons per week of solid waste and sends it out of state for disposal. On February 12, 2025, at 6:00 pm, the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services and the management of RPF will hold a public hearing at Alyson's Orchard. The purpose of the

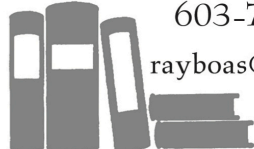
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-Waste from Page 1

public hearing is to discuss RPF's plans to expand from 200 tons per week of processing capacity to 800 tons per week. The expansion will allow RPF to install state of the art equipment for recovering recyclable materials from trash and reduce the amount of waste that ends up in landfills. RPF will also add a system for baling and wrapping waste to make the waste easier to ship out of the state and to address concerns regarding odors.

New Hampshire has a waste problem, with the amount of waste increasing at the same time disposal capacity at landfills and incinerators is decreasing. According to the 2021-2022 Biennial Solid Waste Report, New Hampshire's annual waste disposal needs will grow by approximately 30,000 tons between 2025 and 2030. Disposal capacity is projected to shrink by 94,000 tons per year at the same time, which creates a 124,000 ton per year gap between increased waste and decreased disposal capacity. The state's waste disposal needs will grow by approximately 123,000 tons per year between 2025 and 2045, while disposal capacity is projected to decrease by 1,650,000 tons over that time period ([2021-2022 Biennial Solid Waste Report, p 5](#)). The state has a clear and growing mismatch between the need for disposal and available disposal capacity.

RPF's proposed changes are intended to help Walpole and New Hampshire address the waste problem. The changes at RPF will make the transfer station one of the most advanced in the United States and will help the state of New Hampshire achieve its solid waste management goals. RPF's internal goal is to reduce the amount of material sent to landfills by 25% by 2030 and RPF's management believes a 70% reduction is eventually possible. In addition to being good for the environment, recycling reduces the costs of waste handling and can help keep costs

down for everyone served by RPF. The estimated impact on daily traffic on Highway 12 [based on 2024 data](#) is approximately a 1% change.

Anyone with interest in or concerns with RPF's proposal is welcome to join the public hearing on February 12 at 6:00 pm at Alyson's Orchard in Robert's Hall at 57 Alyson's Lane, Walpole, NH 03608.

The RPF team is also available to field your questions and comments. You can email Tim Williams at [Tim@ruggierotrash.com](mailto:Tim@ruggierotrash.com) with your questions and comments.

-Kyle Teamey  
 Valorize Industries



The annual meeting of the Walpole Players will be held January 4, 2026, 4:00 pm in the Helen Miller Theater, second floor of the Walpole Town Hall. Anyone who is interested is welcome to attend and participate to share their ideas. We have an upcoming Junior Players play, the annual Radio Follies, and a spring production to discuss.

-Jeff Miller

**Town Elections**  
**Filing period**  
**January 21 - January 30, 2026**  
**Positions on Ballot**  
**3 Year Terms**  
  
**Selectman - 1**  
**Moderator - 1**  
**Supervisor of Checklist - 1**  
**Town Treasurer - 1**  
**Trustee of Trust Funds - 1**  
**Planning Board - 2**  
**Zoning Board - 1**  
**Cemetery Trustee - 1**  
**Library Trustees - 3**  
  
**File at Town Clerk's Office**  
**Wednesday through Thursday**  
**January 21 - 20**  
**normal office hours**  
**Friday, January 30 - 3-5 pm**

# WALPOLE SOCIETY

FOR BRINGING TO JUSTICE  
HORSE THIEVES  
AND PILFERERS

ORGANIZED IN 1816. INCORPORATED 1835.

The Horse Thieves will hold their 2026 annual meeting Saturday, January 17 at 7:00 pm in the Walpole Town Hall. We will be starting our 211<sup>th</sup> year, and 2026 will be our 191<sup>st</sup> annual meeting. The major activity at this year's annual meeting will be the election of officers. Horse Thieves officers and committee often serve two consecutive one-year terms, and so at our 2026 annual meeting we will probably elect a new president to replace Trevor MacLaughlan who has served with distinction for the last two years. If you are a member of the Horse Thieves and would like to serve, please contact Steve Dalessio at the Town Hall or David Westover, our nominating committee for our 2026 annual meeting; they'd love to hear from you.

The "Walpole Society for Bringing to Justice Horse Thieves and Pilferers of Clothes Lines and Hen Roosts" – or "Horse Thieves" - is probably one of the oldest in country, and attending our annual meeting may take as little as nine (yes, 9!) minutes of actual meeting time! If you are interested in joining, contact Lewis LaClair (details in the last paragraph).

In addition to electing new officers and Committee, the annual meeting will receive reports from the 2025 officers. We encourage all members to attend and to be on time for the meeting . . . as mentioned above, in 2025, the annual meeting lasted only 9 minutes!

The "Horse Thieves," was organized in 1816. At that time "Horse Thieves" societies were needed be-

cause horses were valuable and therefore a target of thieves, because sheriff departments were less robust (or nonexistent) and most horse thieves promptly fled town. Against all odds, the Walpole organization has survived 210 (almost 211!) years and is now probably the second oldest surviving Horse Thieves society in the country . . . and probably the world!

The Walpole Horse Thieves is open to any man 18 years or older who lives in Walpole, who pays a \$2 lifetime fee and signs the membership book. If you are interested in joining contact Lewis LaClair, Clerk ([LLaclair@Advancedrisk.com](mailto:LLaclair@Advancedrisk.com) or 756-0001).

-Lewis LaClair, Clerk

## Fanny Mason Forest Management Activity

The Walpole Conservation Commission wishes to inform residents of the planned harvests on the Fanny Mason forest this winter and early spring. The first harvest on the east side of Route 12 will occur after the new year for approximately two months. The harvest follows the Fanny Mason forest management plan and extends the harvesting that occurred in 2012. Approximately 36 acres will be

harvested with the goal to regenerate oak, white pine, and birches as well as grow some of the nicer trees larger. Our town forester, Alex Barrett of Long View Forest will be overseeing the harvest.

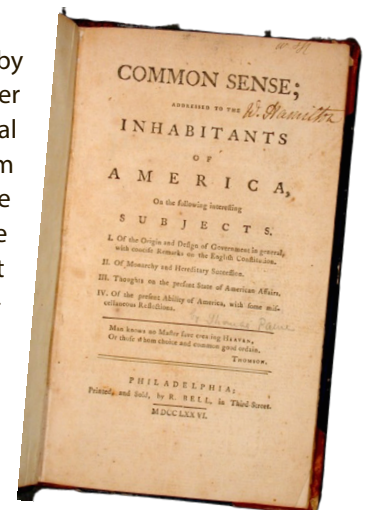
In early spring, the red pine on the west side of Route 12 behind the south bound rest area will be cut. The Commission is harvesting this planted pine in anticipation of the invasive red pine scale insect which has been found in Keene and has been killing red pine in our region for some years now. The red pine was planted as a forest crop by the Mason Family and will now be marketed for telephone poles or saw-timber. A substantial view to the west will likely be opened in this area. It will be a big change for Route 12 traffic, but the Commission feels that the harvest is a wise and proactive move. If there are any questions contact Alex Barrett at 802-359-4505 or speak to a member of the conservation commission.

-Peter Palmiotto, co-Chair WCC

**2026 Walpole  
Budget Hearing**  
**Thursday, February 5, 2026**  
**5:30 pm**  
**Snow date**  
**Thursday, February 12, 2026**  
**5:30 pm**

## 250th Countdown

**COMMON SENSE**, was a 47 page pamphlet by Thomas Paine published January 10, 1776. Over 120,000 copies were sold in three months. A pivotal work, it argued for American independence from Great Britain. Its clear and persuasive language rallied public support for revolution solidifying the colonists' rejection not just of King George III, but of all kings. Paine presented a vision for an independent, self-governing republic. **COMMON SENSE** shifted and galvanized public opinion convincing many colonists that independence was not only necessary but achievable.





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**Walpole needs your help filling important school district volunteer positions in March 2026. The positions are:**

**School Board Representative  
Elected**

**School District Budget  
Committee — Appointed**

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## Fall Mountain Social Studies Teacher Josh Beer

Walpole resident and Fall Mountain Regional High School social studies teacher and department chair Josh Beer was recognized on December 13 at the Ashuelot Chapter meeting of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR) in honor of his nomination for the Outstanding Teacher of American History Award.

The NSDAR Outstanding Teacher of American History Award recognizes notable full-time educators in grades 5–12 who demonstrate deep knowledge of American history, foster patriotism and civic responsibility, maintain high academic standards, and connect historical study to modern life.

A graduate of Fall Mountain himself, Beer has dedicated his career to educating students in the same community where he was raised. As a teacher and department chair, he is known for cultivating rigorous historical inquiry, critical thinking, and a strong understanding of the nation's founding ideals.

Beer's classroom emphasizes primary sources, debate, and meaningful connections between historical events and contemporary issues. His

leadership of National History Day has resulted in students repeatedly advancing to the national level, highlighting his ability to engage students in high-level scholarship while inspiring a lasting appreciation for American history.

Beyond the classroom, Beer was recognized for his service to the community through youth sports, local organizations, and civic initiatives. The Ashuelot Chapter noted that his commitment to education, service, and patriotism closely aligns with the Daughters of the American Revolution's core mission.

Beer has received numerous honors throughout his career, including being named New Hampshire's Senior Level National History Teacher of the Year, further affirming his impact as an educator.

The Ashuelot Chapter expressed pride in supporting Beer's nomination, describing him as a teacher whose dedication, scholarship, and character make him highly deserving of this recognition.

-Kim Chandler



**New Hampshire State Regent and  
Ashuelot Chapter Member Marilyn  
Huston with Josh Beer.**

**Photo by Jessica O'Connor.**

Martin Luther King, Jr.  
Born January 15, 1929  
Assassinated April 4, 1968.  
Martin Luther King Day  
This year celebrated  
Monday January 19, 2026.



**"I have decided to stick with love.  
Hate is too great a burden to  
bear."**

**"In the end, we will remember not  
the words of our enemies, but the  
silence of our friends."**

# Walpole Worships

First Congregational  
Sunday, 10:00 am

Bible Study - Wed. 4-5 pm on Zoom  
<https://walpolenhucc.org/>

St Peter's Church - North Walpole  
Mass Schedule: Friday 8:30 am  
Saturday 4:00 pm - Sunday 8:30 am

St. John's Episcopal  
Sunday, 10:00 am  
<http://stjohnswalpole.org>

Walpole Unitarian  
Sunday, 10:00 am  
<https://walpoleuuchurch.wixsite.com/walpoleunitarian>

River Valley Church  
Sunday  
9:00 am and 10:30 am  
38 Elm St., Walpole  
[rivervalleychurch.com](http://rivervalleychurch.com)

For Service Schedules  
visit the church websites.

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## Sending Sunshine

a local movement to connect with others  
by sending greeting cards through the mail.

### Schedule:

at the Flat Iron Cooperative - 51 Square - Bellows Falls, VT  
Wednesday, January 28 - Friday, January 30  
11 am - 3 pm all three days

at The Gathering Place - 14 Westminster St., Walpole, NH  
Wednesday, February 4 - Thursday, February 5  
11 am - 4 pm both days

**Bring** names and addresses of people to whom you would like to send greetings.

**Select** cards designed by local artisans or **Create** a card. **Write** greetings.

**Walk** to the Post Office and **mail** your cards.

Host: Priscilla Reyns — Questions may be directed to [preyns@yahoo.com](mailto:preyns@yahoo.com)

## First Congregational

**Bible Study** will resume on January 8 and meets Wednesday afternoons, 4:00 pm.- 5:00 pm on Zoom led by Pastor Richard Malmberg.

Our first **Community Potluck Supper** of 2026 will be held on Saturday, January 10, 5:30 pm, in the Fellowship Hall. Bring a main course, a side or dessert. We will supply the beverages.

## Age in Motion Going Strong

Are you having trouble getting up from the floor or out of a chair? Is it getting difficult to lift things up to the top shelf? Do you feel unsteady when you are stepping in and out of the tub? This class could be just what you need.

There are many benefits of exercising. It is good for heart health, weight management, improving mood and reducing the risk of falls to name a few. Start the new year by improving your strength and bal-

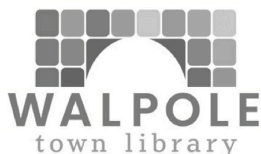
ance. We work out with light weights and have fun while doing it. Join this dedicated group that meets every Tuesday and Thursday from 9:00 to 10:00 am downstairs in the Town Hall. The class is cancelled if the Town Hall is closed or Fall Mountain Schools are cancelled. This is a drop-in class and the cost is a reasonable \$3.00 per class. I hope to see you in there!

- Janet Chamberlin

## Walpole School Site-Based Meeting

The Walpole School Site-Based Team will hold its next meeting on Wednesday, January 7 at 6:00 pm in the Cafeteria of the Walpole Elementary School. Members of the public are welcome to attend. The Site-Based meetings provide an opportunity for staff, parents, and members of the community to engage in discussion and stay informed on school-related topics. Information regarding the issue of withdrawal will be available for discussion during the January meeting.

-Gretchen Markiewicz



For more information,  
visit the library website -  
<https://walpoletownlibrary.org>  
or call 603-756-9806.

Links may also be clicked from the  
**Clarion** On-Line Resources page.

## January at the Library

Brattleboro author Deborah Luskin discusses her memoir, ***Reviving Artemis: The Making of a Huntress***. Monday, January 12, 5:00 pm. At sixty, longtime writer, gardener, and teacher, Deborah Luskin felt a wild new calling: to leave the safety of her garden and learn to hunt deer. *Reviving Artemis* is the story of her choosing to age on her own fierce terms.

**Lunch and a Movie:** *The Naked Gun*. Thursday, January 15, 1:00 pm. Bring your lunch and come in from the cold to enjoy a movie in our Community Room. Note: This program is moving to once a month, on the third Thursday.

**Visit with local children's author/artist, Louise Wannier.** Tuesday, January 27, 4:00 pm. Louise will read from her interactive picture book series *Tree Spirits*, followed by a fun activity.

**Library Book Club.** Meets on the last Thursday of the month at noon. January's book is *On The Hippie Trail* by Rick Steves. Copies are available at the library. All are welcome to join.



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**Happy New Year**

As the calendar turns the page, we wish you the very best in the year ahead.

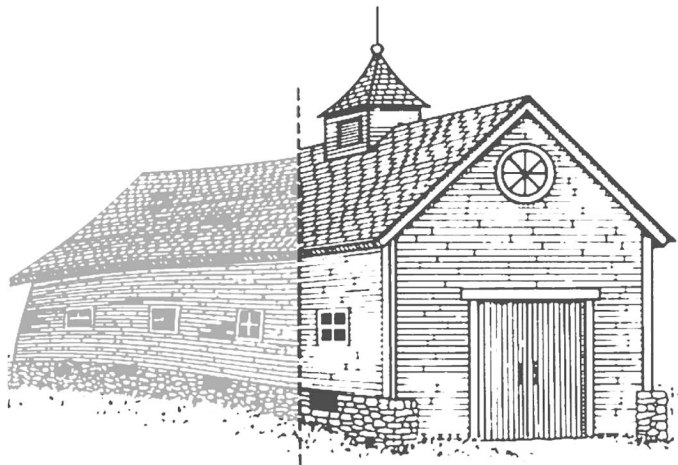


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## Did You Know That...?

Explorations into Walpole People, Places & History with Ray Boas

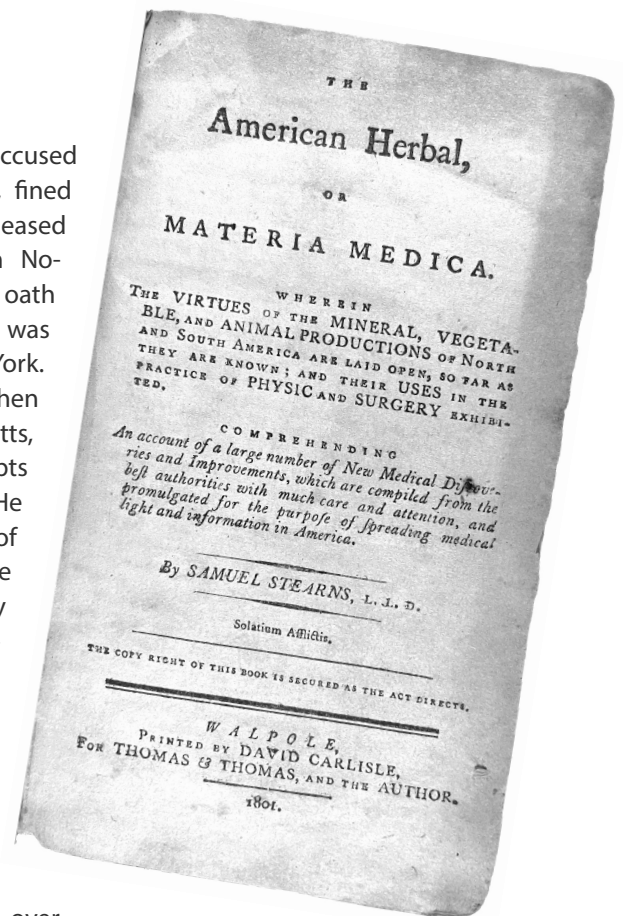
...besides the newspaper *THE FARMER'S MUSEUM*, over 140 books were published between 1793 and 1816 in Walpole at the famous press established by Isaiah Thomas? Most notable were the first Bible printed in New Hampshire in 1815 (see *CLARION* "Did You Know That..." February 2022) and Samuel Stearns' *THE AMERICAN HERBAL OR MATERIA MEDICA*, published in 1801, and which is considered the first such "herbal" book written and printed in America.

Samuel Stearns (1741-1809) was "A Man of Brilliance with a Troubled Life" wrote Jeremy Paulus in *The Walpole Gazette*, June 25, 1993, the *CLARION*'s predecessor by a few years. Paulus published the *Gazette* from 1986 through 1993. A number of Paulus' writings were historical in content, and he was fascinated with Stearns, passing on to me, with his archives, two binders of information on Stearns.

As a young man, Stearns was "instructed in the various branches of grammar, arithmetic, algebra, geometry, trigonometry, navigation, surveying, astronomy, music and medicine." At age 25, he began compiling an "American Dispensary" (similar to what today is the Physician's Desk Reference, or PDR). For nearly three years he traveled in the Colonies, England, Scotland, Ireland and France to collect medical information for his book.

As a Tory, Stearns was accused of aiding the British enemy, fined and jailed, but was soon released instead of being hung. On November 15, 1781, he swore an oath of allegiance to the King and was allowed to practice in New York. Following the war, in 1784, when he returned to Massachusetts, he was thrown in jail for debts and old wartime charges. He suffered in jail just short of three years. To start a new life after the Revolution, as many did, he relocated to the "frontier" in Vermont. Settling in Dummerston he announced his "American Dispensary" was ready to be printed. But after 28 years on the project, money was lacking for publishing.

David Carlisle had taken over operation of the Walpole print shop by this time. With Walpole known as a literary center attracting men of learning and creativity, Stearns made the trip to Walpole to discuss with Carlisle his project. Having served his apprenticeship in Worcester, Massachusetts, Carlisle was aware of Stearns and his incarceration there. Stearns' entire work requiring a number of expensive copper plates, so it was put aside to begin instead with one part of the "American Dispensary," the herbal section, which was complete unto itself. Its publication would bring no-



tice to Stearns and hopefully funding for his entire project.

In this volume, Stearns' purpose was to describe the medicinal properties of plants found in North America, thus offering a self-help medical guide for common illnesses for everyone's use at a time when access to professional medical care was limited. It was printed in a small size to "...be of great utility to students, who can easily carry it in their pockets, to refresh their memory when they travel." In his introduction to "the Masters and Mistresses of Families," he wrote, "Every man and woman ought to be their own physician in some measure, because it requires much care and attention to keep the tender organs of the human machine in repair..." Further, "...They ought to wear proper clothing, keep clean, avoid intemperance, sloth and idleness, use gentle exercise, a nutritious diet, and to keep the passions of the mind in a state of tranquility." Still useful advice 225 years later.

## FLORENTINE FILMS

Making films in Walpole  
for 40 Years.

# The Nature of Walpole

Eloise Clark

January is a month of crystalline beauty. We admire the various forms of frozen water from delicate snowflakes to filigrees of frost on our windows. These crystals catch and refract the light, splitting it into tiny rainbows of color. We also have crystals of other substances deep beneath our feet. They are part of the bedrock we build our lives upon.

Just as a snowflake needs the right temperature to form its hexagonal crystal in a stratus cloud, rock crystals must also have specific conditions to form. Chemical composition, temperature and pressure determine the outcome. Diamonds, for example, began as atoms of carbon heated deep beneath the earth under intense pressure. Other atoms of carbon with less heat and pressure produce graphite, a soft and slippery rock we use for pencils and lubricants.

Geologists classify minerals based on their chemical composition and crystalline structure. Silicates are the most abundant class and include many of the minerals found in our area such as beryl, tourmaline and muscovite. Quartz is an oxide. Crystalline structure refers to the geometric pattern or shape of the crystal.



Quartz is hexagonal and comes to a point like a pyramid. Pyrite or "fool's gold" is cubic.

If a mineral is pounded, it fractures along a predictable cleavage plane. White mica cleaves in only one direction, revealing sheets known as "books of muscovite". Feldspar cleaves in two directions and calcite in three. Hardness is an important clue, as it measures the ability of a mineral to resist abrasion. Ranked one to ten, nothing is harder than a diamond (10), nor softer than talc (1).

Color can also be a defining criteria. Clear crystals can be tainted with mineral impurities. Ferric iron gives amethyst its purple hue. Rose quartz is tinted with titanium. Luster refers to whether a mineral looks metallic or not. Biotite (black mica) does. Is the mineral transparent, translucent or opaque? Pure halite (salt) is colorless and transparent. Quartz is translucent and feldspar opaque. Minerals can be brittle (quartz) or malleable (copper). Does it react when a drop of acid is applied? (limestone fizzes) Magnetic is our only magnetic mineral.

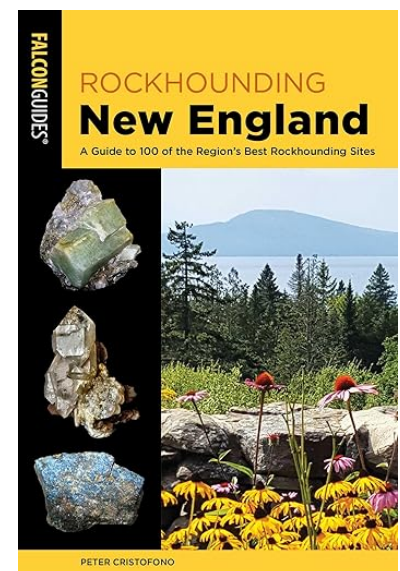
Our area has a rich mineral history. Dozens of abandoned pegmatite mines dot the ridgelines of the Connecticut Valley. These "mica mines" were primarily mined for the minerals quartz, feldspar and muscovite from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> to mid-20<sup>th</sup> centuries. These minerals are the same ingredients found in granite. However, pegmatites have much larger and coarser crystals.

Incidental to these mines, other showy minerals have been found. Uncovered at Beryl Mountain in Acworth were crystals of beryl four feet long. Specimens began to be acquired by museums in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. *Rockhounding New England: A Guide to 100 of the Region's Best Rockhounding Sites* by Peter Cristofono,



lists several mines in our area, including the William Wise Mine in Westmoreland. It produces a rich green fluorite, whose crystals are on display at museums around the world.

Perhaps you've visited the Chickering Mine in Walpole? The original pit has been filled in, but you may know it as the rock dump at Hoge Base, the Boy Scout camp. The guidebook lists fifty minerals from A (albite) to Z (zircon) found there, including beryl, gypsum, opal and tourmaline. With this dazzling cornucopia of crystals, our area is a rock hound's paradise!



**LEFT - Blue Tormaline from Walpole's Chickering Mine**

**ABOVE - Fluorite from the William Wise mine in Westmoreland**

**as illustrated by Peter Cristofono**

- Hooper from Page 1

the soil by planting and reaping ... to be named the Frederick H. Hooper Institute." The Hooper Institute opened across the street from the Mansion House in 1928 where it remains today, recently celebrating a major renovation.

On October 8, 1926, the Town of Walpole signed an Indenture with the Hooper Golf Club for ten years, granting the Golf Club the right to lease the buildings on the land and create a nine-hole golf course designed by Wayne Stiles and John Van Kleek. The lease stated specific conditions of the potential needs of the Frederick Hooper Institute, which was yet to be built. The annual rent was set at three hundred dollars, renewable for another ten years. In addition to the three Selectmen (Charles E. Seward, Clarence W. Houghton, and Daniel Moynihan) who signed the lease, it was also approved by John Clifford, the Executor of the Hooper Estate. The nine-hole course opened in 1927.

In 1943, the State of New Hampshire created the Office of Charitable Trusts in the Attorney General's office for the oversight of charitable trusts. The story which has been told many times is that a Director of the Office of Charitable Trust, in reading the file on the Trusts left by George and Mary Hooper to the town of Walpole, discovered the Town was leasing former farmland to a local group who had created a nine-hole golf course with a modest ten-year lease. After many years of objecting to this lease arrangement, the Office of Charitable Trusts, in about 2010, warned the Town of Walpole that if it didn't do something about this "wasting asset", the Office would take the Hooper Trust away from the Town.

In 2011, the Walpole Selectboard appointed a committee of local citizens - The Hooper Study Committee - and charged them with finding a solution to save the Golf Club while also saving the Hooper Trust.

In October 2012, the Committee presented a proposal to the Town to

establish a Conservation Easement on the Golf Course property with the Monadnock Conservancy, survey the property and call for an appraisal of the land and ultimately sell the golf course property, once it had a Conservation Easement, protecting it from future development. The group raised the necessary funds, \$450,500, from within the Walpole Community to buy the easement.

It took several years to sell the Golf Course. There were numerous possible buyers - some who made deposits - but not until 2018 did it actually sell to Fred Dill. Mr. Dill, in turn, sold 132 acres of the Conservation to a group of local investors ensuring the future of the Hooper Golf Club.

The Hooper Golf Course and the Hooper Institute stand, at one hundred years, as valuable assets of the Walpole Community. The Hooper Golf Course ranks as one of the top nine-hole courses in the country. George and Mary Hooper's legacy endures.

- Peggy Pschirrer

kurnhatten.org



## Meet Erin Beaudry: Building Community, One Connection at a Time

Erin Beaudry knows the power of community. As Kurn Hatten's Individual Giving Officer, she brings energy, empathy, and strategic thinking to building relationships with the supporters who make our mission possible. Erin connects our donors with the work that motivates them most. She shows how their generosity fuels real, lasting change for children and families.

"The kids are what's inspiring," Erin says. "If you come to a sporting event or Visitor's Day, you'll see what happens here. Our work gives children not just stability, but confidence and joy."

This spring, Erin is leading the planning for our first-ever **Bright Futures 5K**, a chance for supporters

to experience the energy of our campus firsthand.

Whether you're a longtime donor or new to Kurn Hatten, Erin's here to help you feel connected, appreciated, and inspired.

*Welcome, Erin. We're so glad you're here.*



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# The History of New Year's Resolutions

The custom of making New Year's resolutions has been around for thousands of years, but it hasn't always looked the way it does today.

The ancient Babylonians are said to have been the first people to make New Year's resolutions, some 4,000 years ago. They were also the first to hold recorded celebrations in honor of the new year—though for them the year began not in January but in mid-March, when the crops were planted.

During a massive 12-day religious festival known as Akitu, the Babylonians crowned a new king or reaffirmed their loyalty to the reigning king. They also made promises to the gods to pay their debts and return any objects they had borrowed. These promises could be considered the forerunners of our New Year's resolutions. If the Babylonians kept to their word, their (pagan) gods would bestow favor on them for the coming

year. If not, they would fall out of the gods' favor—a place no one wanted to be.

A similar practice occurred in ancient Rome, after the reform-minded emperor Julius Caesar tinkered with the calendar and established January 1 as the beginning of the new year circa 46 B.C. Named for Janus, the two-faced god whose spirit inhabited doorways and arches, January had special significance for the Romans. Believing that Janus symbolically looked backwards into the previous year and ahead into the future, the Romans offered sacrifices to the deity and made promises of good conduct for the coming year.

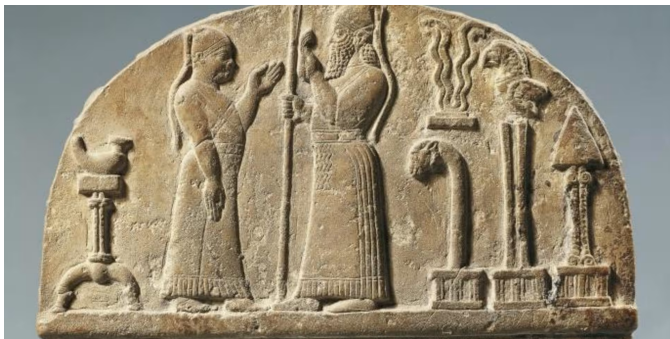
For early Christians, the first day of the new year became the traditional occasion for thinking about one's

past mistakes and resolving to do and be better in the future. In 1740, the English clergyman John Wesley, founder of Methodism, created the Covenant Renewal Service, most commonly held on New Year's Eve or New Year's Day. Also known as watch night services, they included readings from Scriptures and hymn singing, and served as a spiritual alternative to the raucous celebrations normally held to celebrate the coming of the new year. Now popular within evangelical Protestant churches, especially African American denominations and congregations, watch night services held on New Year's Eve are often spent praying and making resolutions for the coming year.

Despite the tradition's religious roots, New Year's resolutions today are a mostly secular practice. Instead of making promises to the gods, most people make resolutions only to themselves, and focus purely on self-improvement (which may explain why such resolutions seem so hard to follow through on). According to recent research, while as many as 45 percent of Americans say they usually make New Year's resolutions, only 8 percent are successful in achieving their goals. But that dismal record probably won't stop people from making resolutions anytime soon—after all, we've had about 4,000 years of practice.

-Sarah Pruitt

May 28, 2025 - history.com



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An illustration of a person using a camera on a tripod, symbolizing photography or media.

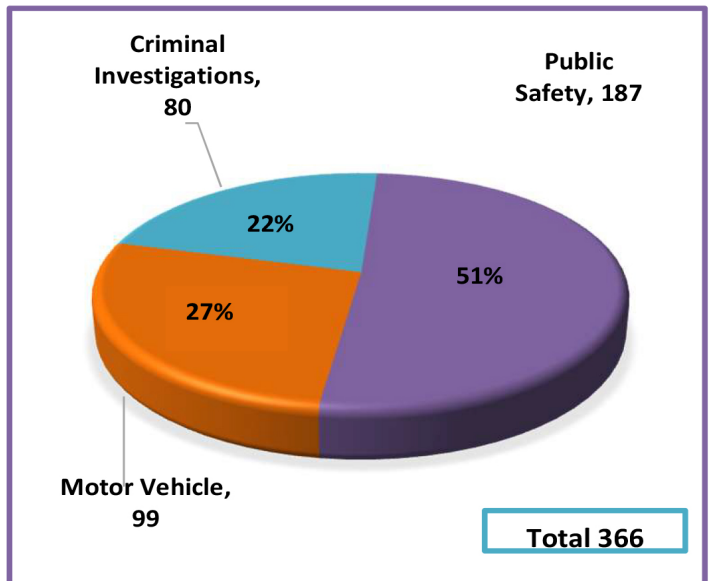
## Walpole Police Statistics

The number of calls to the Walpole Police Department in November was 366, down from 450 in October. Motor Vehicle calls were 99, down from 113; Public Safety calls were 187, compared to 251 in October; and Criminal Investigations were 80, down from 86.

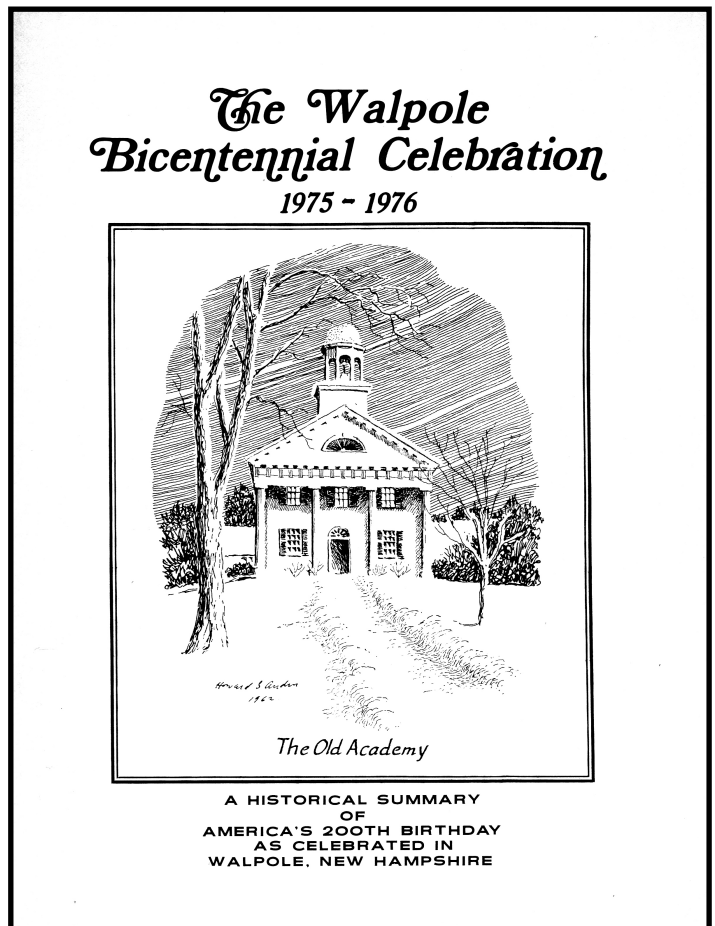
Calls in the Motor Vehicle category include (with November's number): "accidents" - 10; "vehicle stops" - 71 (almost double from October); and "traffic safety" - 18 compared to 62 in October. In the Public Safety category, "emergency calls" dropped from 54 to 20 in November; there were 111 "administrative calls"; and, 56 "citizen assists" compared to 47 the previous month. With Criminal Investigations there were 5 "drug/alcohol" incidents; 53 "crimes against people;" and 18 "crimes against property".

The CLARION will continue to ask for additional clarification as to what the numbers comprise, or where the incidents occur in Town. For example, where are the automobile accidents and the crimes against property. Knowing this, Walpoleans can be more cognizant of their surroundings and possibly help avert those crimes and accidents. And, what constitutes an "emergency call" as compared to "citizen assists"? Knowing the focus of "motor vehicle stops" compared to "traffic safety" may explain the switch in numbers between October and November. A better understanding of what Walpole's Police force is up against will help as we move into fundraising for the new police station.

-Ray Boas



Below is the cover of the 46 page booklet published following Walpole's celebration of our nation's 200 anniversary. From the introduction, "...the celebration did not occur spontaneously, all at once, on that weekend in late June. Planning had begun much earlier, as far back as 1974, guided by the Bicentennial Chairman, Guy Bemis. And not all events were confined to one weekend. The first activity took place on August 17, 1975, with the commemoration of the march of soldiers to the Battle on Bennington and continued through the 4th of July, 1976, with the simultaneous peeling of all bells of the town at two o'clock in the afternoon."



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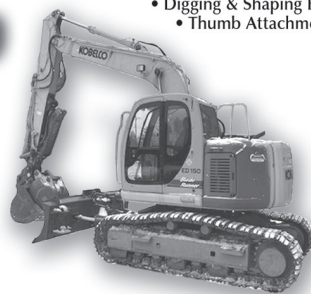


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## Fall Mountain Staff Lead Team NH for USA Games in Special Olympics

By London Swain and McKinley Ruskowski (8th grade)

Kristi Beneat and Amanda Chamberlain, who help students with special needs in their roles within the district, are creating opportunities for people with disabilities to play sports for the USA games. They were asked to lead Team NH for the 2026 games which will be held in Minneapolis, Minnesota in late June.

Kristi and Amanda started as the Local Program Coordinators in 2021. They run the Fall Mountain Wildcats team. This includes organizing the sports, registering athletes for participation in competitions, and sometimes coaching.

For the USA Games, the ages range from 18 to any age above that. When it comes to what the games look like, these players must be gold metal winners in their sport. The sports include golf, bocce, bowling, track, powerful lifting, tennis, and swimming. The players also have to be independent with life skills and everyday things which is a huge deal when it comes to the games.

When asked about the most rewarding part of the whole process, both Kristi and Amanda agree that it was the athletes and the team building. They mentioned how, when they

did the team building exercise, there was no judgment and it was a very heartwarming experience. Amanda and Kristi also shared the surprises that they have had during this process, which includes being able to have stamina for all of the events. As a team they have to walk everywhere they go during these events. Amanda and Kristi have so much work that they have to do during these events such as making sure that they have all athletes accounted for, making sure they are on time, and making sure the people that participate are in the right events.

Amanda and Kristi want all of these people to be successful in life and to share the talent they have. "We have a lot of passion and excitement around people with disabilities and inclusion which came through in our coordination of our local team," said Chamberlain.

## Walpole Schools Host Annual Winter Holiday Concert

By: Reagan Westover (6th grade)

On Thursday, December 11th, after the snow cancelled the original plan, Walpole Elementary School held their annual Winter Holiday Concert to both celebrate the holiday season as well as to showcase the impressive skill and hard work of the 5-8 grade band and chorus. "I was so very proud

of all the students and am always amazed at how far each group comes from September to December. It's a short amount of time to rehearse, but the concert came together really

well," said Band and Choir teacher Anna Dunn.

The fifth grade band played "Reading the Notes," "First Flight," "Rolling Along," and "Hot Cross Buns." The 6-8 grade band played "Ring, Ring, Ring," "Celtic Christmas," and "Hanukkah is Here."

The choir sang "Seasons of Love," "Christmas (Baby Please Come Home)," "Slumberjack," and "What Christmas Means to Me." The finale was James Swearingen's "Songs of Christmas Cheer."

"Some of my favorite songs were 'Ring, Ring, Ring,' 'Seasons of Love,' and 'Rolling Along' because for each group, those were some of the most challenging pieces to perform," said Mrs. Dunn. "I love working on challenging pieces with each group that I know will push them a little bit because they help each group grow musically and it's fun for me to watch the progress and see students get excited about the progress."

If you were not able to make it to the Winter Concert then there will be a spring concert that you can attend in a few months.

## Novel November

By: Reagan Westover (6th grade)

Last month sixth grade, seventh grade, and eighth grade competed in their annual word count race for National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo). Each student set their own individual word count goal and worked the whole month in Mr. Gagnon's class on writing their own novel in whatever genre they chose. Students had the whole November to write as many words as they could to meet their goal. Some people had their goals set as 1,000, 2,000 or even 10,000 words. At the end of the month we read each other's stories and see who has the highest goal.



Several students far exceeded the goals they had set for themselves and most students reached their goal. It was really fun. You should try it for yourself next November if you're looking to push yourself and finally write your novel.

The top four 8th grade Word Count Leaders were Mason Perron with 4,764 words, London Swain with 4,086 words, Emmaline Suozzi with 5,170 words, and Kyle Moffit with 7,017 words.

The top four 7th grade Word Count Leaders were Louie Lakin with 10,088 words, Kelsey Beam with 5,776 words, Cadence Perley with 7,806 words, and Emma Trainor with 5,524 words.

The top four 6th grade Word Count Leaders were Allie Vickers with 6,672 words, Caitylyn McCants with 5,057 words, Ellie Griffin with 6,745 words, and Lily Schoen with 9,261 words.

## **Staff of the Month: Mr. Gagnon**

By Allie Vickers, Harper Rodenhauser, and Juniper Jenkins (6th grade)

Jake Gagnon has been the writing/Language Arts teacher for WES for the last eleven years. We asked him what his job was all about. "I teach writing mostly, but I also teach literary analysis, public speaking/active listening, forming arguments, rhetorical



devices, research skills, and communication." We wondered what his favorite part about his job was. "My favorite thing is joking around with my students, building relationships, and sharing cool things that I'm passionate about with students, like kinds of writing, poems, and stories."

For book recommendations and/or his favorite writers, Mr. Gagnon said: "Anything by Malcolm Gladwell, Ryan Holiday or, for fiction, Robert B. Parker, Stephen King, or, if you have the patience, Cormac McCarthy or Twain. One of my favorite books is Erik Larson's *The Devil in the White City*." He has a lot of writing units for all the grades that he teaches, but what is his favorite? His favorite 8th grade unit to teach is his Stephen King unit where students analyze a couple of his short stories and use them as a model for how to write suspenseful stories. His favorite 7th grade unit is easily the Edgar Allan Poe unit that students do every October. For 6th grade, he really enjoys the Science Fiction unit as well as the Public Speaking unit where students choose a specific charity in which to persuade the audience to support.

Since it's the holiday season, we asked Mr. Gagnon what his favorite holidays were. Mr. Gagnon likes Halloween and Christmas because his sons like it and they really get into the holiday. He said that it gets him pumped for the holidays too.

With winter quickly approaching, so is the snow. We've had a few snow storms already, and Mr. Gagnon spent his time playing in the snow with his sons, although he prefers longer days and sunshine around mid February.

Mr. Gagnon loves teaching in Walpole. "I think Walpole is a really special place." For 2026, he hopes to laugh a lot with students, friends, and his family, and not just at his own jokes. Thank you Mr. Gagnon for being such a great teacher at WES.

## **Kindest Kid in America**

By Lily Vickers (8th grade)

On November 7 Walpole Elementary School had a presenter come in and talk to us about their mission and how we can bring kindness to America. Her name is Jessie Hansen. She has published 19 books, holds a masters degree in social work and a bachelors in psychology. At 17 years old, she played a lead role in a 36-state Broadway tour of the show *Footloose*.

She and her team started an organization called "Kindest Kid in America." There is a website online about all their contributions and all the things they are doing to spread kindness. They travel around America giving speeches to schools, lifting kids up, and inspiring them with kindness. They pick kids to either write a book with, or they pick a kid to write about what they think will help spread kindness.



During her presentation she talked about her life and how she went through some hard times at school. She said that everyone makes mistakes and her biggest message from the whole presentation was that when we walked out of that room, we should ask ourselves who we want to be, not what others want us to be. Who we want to be. Their mission is to make kindness contagious so even the simplest act of kindness can change a life forever.

# New Hampshire's Snowpack is Shrinking

New England residents know that snow is disappearing from our landscape, and scientists have proven that climate change is to blame. But the effects of snowpack decline go far beyond what's visible, and researchers working in the forests of New Hampshire and the Northeast are learning more about just how far the phenomenon stretches across seasons and landscapes. Their findings reveal how much tracking snow can tell us about the health of our forests and our world, and what is still to learn.

The average amount of snow that accumulates on the ground throughout the winter season, or snowpack, is shrinking from year to year across the Northeast. While data has captured that effect many who live and recreate in the region have noticed it in their own lives — including the researchers who later took up the matter in their work.

"I grew up cross-country skiing with my family," said Emerson Conrad-Rooney, a doctoral student at Boston University whose work focuses on the effects of climate change on northern forests. Conrad-Rooney, who grew up in western Massachusetts, said the places they had grown up skiing through the winter were, in recent years, open only a handful of days all season long.

Eric Kelsey, a meteorologist and researcher at Plymouth State University, also grew up an enthusiastic winter

recreator in Nashua. But as he read more, Kelsey was struck by the relative lack of cohesive, long-term snowpack data, especially compared to other weather datasets tracking things like daily high and low temperatures and rainfall. "We just don't have a climatology of snowpack — that was surprising to me," Kelsey said.

The problem, Kelsey said, was not necessarily a lack of data. For more than a century, people across the Northeast have logged information about snowfall, from dam operators attempting to predict how snowmelt would affect their rivers to farmers and ski slope proprietors ... but the records were also scattered and disparate, making it difficult for scientists to unlock the information they contained.

Now, Kelsey and Plymouth State graduate student David Zywczyński are halfway through a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration grant-funded effort to unify and clean that data, which includes measurements taken over years long periods from more than 400 sites. Then, they hope, scientists will be able to use it to make sense of long-term patterns in local snowpack, from general decline to years of snow drought — or abnormally low snowfall conditions.

Because snowpack plays an important role in replenishing streams, lakes, and aquifers when it melts each



spring, a tool to identify snow drought with more certainty could help forecasters anticipate the dry conditions that will likely persist later in the year.

**Above:** Appalachian Mountain Club employee Maddie Ziomek uses National Weather Service instruments to measure snowpack in the White Mountain National Forest. (Photo by Maddie Ziomek/Appalachian Mountain Club)

**Left:** Researcher Pamela Templer and her team removed snow from this study plot in Hubbard Brook Experimental Forest to simulate the increased freezing and thawing cycles created when snowpack recedes. Snowpack decline in the Northeast stresses trees and can reduce their ability to sequester carbon, Templer said. (Photo by Emerson Conrad-Rooney/Templer Lab)

Adapted from article by Molly Rains, *New Hampshire Bulletin* - <https://newhampshirebulletin.com/> - September 17, 2025. Republished in part under Creative Commons license CC BY-NC-ND 4.0. Full article may be found on Clarion Website from link on the home page.





Happy New Year from the Hooper Institute!

In 2026, we proudly celebrate 100 years of the Hooper Institute! The trust left by George L. Hooper and Mary Hooper was accepted by the town in 1926, and classes at the Hooper School began between 1928 and 1930. While our programs have evolved from our beginnings as a vocational agriculture school, we have continued to teach the community to enjoy, appreciate, and protect the environment and improve their quality of life.

This centennial is truly about you, the community, whose support has made everything we do possible. We are incredibly grateful for your belief in our mission and your generous assistance over the years. As we celebrate 100 years, we hope you will join us in honoring our history, thanking those who have made a lasting impact, and looking forward to the next century of service. Keep an eye out for the February issue, when we will announce our full list of centennial events, including workshops and special gatherings!

In the meantime, we invite you to join us on January 31, 2026, from 1:00 to 4:00 pm for our annual Winter Fun

Day. Spend the afternoon racing cardboard sleds, playing in the snow, and enjoying some hot cocoa. Don't miss our chili cook-off, where you can enter your chili for a chance to win the title of Best Chili in Walpole. Visit our website to register your sled team or submit your chili entry, or email us at [hooper.director@gmail.com](mailto:hooper.director@gmail.com) with any questions.

From all of us at the Hooper Institute, thank you for 100 incredible years of support. Let's make the next century as vibrant and impactful as the last!

- Greta Drager

## IRS Implications

It is expected tax bills for the last half of 2025 will be mailed the last week in December. Taxes will be due 30 days after mailing before any interest for late payment will accrue.

**HOW DOES THIS IMPACT YOUR FEDERAL 2025 TAXES?** - it appears the IRS has situations like this covered. Internal Revenue Code §164(a) states - 'Except as otherwise provided in this section, the following taxes shall be allowed as a deduction for the taxable year within which **paid or accrued**: 164(a)(1) State and **local**, and foreign, **real property taxes**. 164(a)(2) State and local personal property taxes. (bold emphasis added). Do check with your tax accountant to verify and for details.

-Ray Boas

## Walpole International Affairs Discussion Group

A new year, and a great reason to celebrate!

On Thursday, January 15, 2026, The Walpole International Affairs Discussion Group will be treated to another fantastic speaker - Christian Parenti, Professor of Economics at John Jay College, City University of New York, who will speak on Geopolitical Unraveling in the Age of Trump: the future of international political economy including the rise of China, American deindustrialization, the trade wars, and the possibility of American re-industrialization, among other issues.

Parenti is Professor of Economics at John Jay College, City University of New York. He is the author of five books, including *Radical Hamilton: Economic Lessons from a Misunderstood Founder*, (2020), and has reported extensively from Afghanistan, Iraq, and various parts of Africa, Asia, and Latin America for *The Nation*, *Fortune*, *The London Review of Books*, *The New York Times*, and other publications.

The presentation is at the Walpole Town Hall and will begin at 6:30 pm with our social (half) hour, followed at 7:00 pm by the presentation and Q&A. And, as always, first-time guests are free. Bring your family and friends for a warm, welcoming and informative evening. See you there!

- Tara Sad



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## Giving Tree Thank You

Dear Walpole community:


Thanks to so much generosity from so many people, the 2025 Community Giving Tree provided a brighter holiday season for over 50 local children. We would first like to thank the school counselors for recommending families to us. We would also like to thank River Valley Church, The Congregational Church of Walpole, St. John's Church, St. Peter's Church, The Hungry Diner, Diamond Pizza, the Walpole Library, Mascoma Bank, and The Savings Bank of Walpole on Westminster Street for displaying tags and collecting gifts. We would also like to thank the "Toys for Tots" program based at The Savings Bank of Walpole in the Shaw's plaza for providing many extra toys so that parents could choose several more gifts for each of their children besides those that they requested. We also need to thank the Community Fund and many individuals who sent us donations, as we personally purchased over \$800 worth of gifts for tags that were not taken as well wrapping paper for the parents to use. Finally, we want to thank EVERYONE who chose tags and purchased gifts. This whole project is a perfect example of small town holiday spirit. THANK YOU SO MUCH to all who helped in any way!

HAPPY NEW YEAR to you and yours!  
We hope that 2026 brings you peace, joy, and good health!

Thank you again.

Jeanne Cloues and Marcia Weil  
Giving Tree Project coordinators

*(Editors's Endnote: Thanking Jeanne and Marcia for their work and dedication, they replied, "...It's a lot of work, but we really enjoy it...and seeing the parents' faces and expressions of appreciation make it all worthwhile. To-day was "pickup day" and it really warmed our hearts.")*



### FROM THE CLARION

**A sampling of way we've reported in more than 14 years of publication:**

**One Year Ago (January 2025)** - Walpole Recycling began re-cycling plastic film, plastic bags, and plastic caps with Plastic Recycled based in Concord, NH

**Three Years Ago (January 2023)** - "Did You Know That..." Drewsville was an important stage stop and industrial center in the 19th century? The Cheshire Turnpike (chartered in 1804) passed through Drewsville from Charlestown and Langdon, down the Walpole Valley to Surry and Keene, and connecting to Boston.


**Five Years Ago (January 2021)** - Sandy Smith recently retired after thirty-eight years of service as Town Clerk / Tax Collector. Sandy began as a volunteer in the Town Clerk's office before she became an elected official.

**Seven Years Ago (January 2019)** - Rep. Lucy Weber has just been named Speaker Pro Tem(pore) of the NH House of Representatives! Most significantly, Lucy is the very first Democratic Speaker ProTem in the state, ever.

**Nine Years Ago (January 2017)** - Tara Sad, retiring from the NH House of Representatives, has taken a new position as Agricultural Policy Advisor with the Council of State Governments Eastern Regional Conference.

**Eleven Years Ago (January 2015)** - The Walpole Town Library is happy to announce the launch of our Email News Alerts service.

**Thirteen Years Ago (January 2013)** - Twenty-two Walpole residents have filed suit in Cheshire County Superior Court to challenge the Walpole Planning Board's approval last month of a 33,000-square-foot, two-story, 67-unit apartment complex behind Tractor Supply Co. on Route 12, aimed at people age 55 and over. The group alleges that the Board acted improperly in approving the project proposed by the Avanru Development Group of Walpole.



Would you like to read or share your **Clarion** on-line? Would you like to receive **Clarion** reminders of closing dates or events? Then, head to <https://thewalpoleclarion.com> and scroll down on the right to "Follow this Blog" and sign up..

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*"I think, at a child's birth, if a mother could ask a fairy god-mother to endow it with the most useful gift, that gift should be curiosity."*

- Eleanor Roosevelt

## Pinnacleview 4-H

In December Pinnacleview 4-H had a calm month. On Sunday, December 14, Pinnacleview had their holiday meeting at former 4-H leader Tina's house, where they made holiday arrangements to donate to the Sterling House Nursing Home in Bel-lows Falls, and Applewood in Walpole. Then with the remaining materials people made swags to take home. Afterwards they had lunch and held a small meeting to go over the officer reports, and new and old business. They ended the meeting with the annual yankee gift swap and a group picture.

-Alyssa Frederic

## Women of Walpole

The Women of Walpole filled the home of Peg Dion on Wednesday December 17 for our holiday potluck. An abundance of good food, desserts, and holiday cheer was enjoyed by all. The January WOW meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 21 at 2:00 pm at the home of Susan Johnson. Details will be provided in the member email.

A huge thank you to all who visited, supported, volunteered, and especially opened their decorated homes for the Holiday Home Tour; over 250 visitors came through! As always, Women of Walpole welcomes any woman living or working in Walpole to join us. If you would like to learn more, or be put on our email distribution list, please contact Mary Feeney (508-397-2583) or Carolyn LeBail (714-717-4184).

- Mary Feeney

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rayboas@comcast.net

February Deadline - January 22

Tara Sad: Copy-Editing

Ray Boas: Layout & Design

The Walpole Clarion on-line at:  
thewalpoleclarion.com

## PUBLISHER'S CORNER

HAPPY NEW YEAR — In reviewing past years' January issues for compiling FROM THE CLARION... this month I came to realize that as to the reporting of past January events in Walpole, it is a "slow month." In fact, instead of having to "shoehorn" material into the layout for this January issue I was down to the equivalent of about three quarters of a page and a few scattered inches to complete this issue in a pleasing and informative manner. Persevering to round out this issue, I am pleased, and hope you are as well. But, as I have mentioned before, I do like to have non-time sensitive articles and images available in reserve just in case I have some space while finishing a layout. So please keep that in mind and send your submissions along for possible future publishing. And even if you are not a writer or photographer, but have an idea or ideas, drop me a note saying, "Ray here is an idea for something I would like to see on the CLARION pages. Or simply just say "how about?"

Still hard to believe another year has passed. And as the new year starts, this issue is the 172nd CLARION sent your way. This year, 2026, we have our nation's 250th birthday, the Hooper Institute reaches 100 years, and the Hooper Golf Course has a milestone next year. I am pleased that the CLARION is helping to document the history of Walpole, and hope I can continue to do so for many more years.

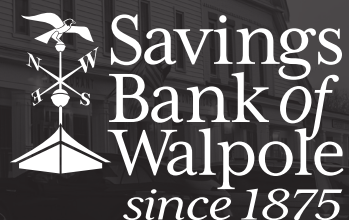
—Ray Boas, Publisher

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