



# COMMUNITY NEWS

April—May 2026



*Published by:* Kensington Congregational Church

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*Community News* is also available on our website

## NURTURE & NATURE COMES TO TOWN

Courtney R. Johnson

We are excited to share that Nurture and Nature Children's Center will soon be joining the Kensington community. This spring, we will be breaking ground on our new location at 98 Amesbury Road and look forward to welcoming local families through our doors.

For more than 25 years, Nurture and Nature has provided high-quality, nature-based early childhood education for children ages six weeks to six years. Our program is rooted in the belief that children learn best through play, exploration, and meaningful connection with the natural world. We celebrate each child's individuality while fostering curiosity, confidence, and a lifelong love of learning.

Our new Kensington home will offer thoughtfully designed classrooms and outdoor spaces where children can grow, discover, and thrive in a nurturing environment inspired by nature.

As a nonprofit organization, we

are grateful for the warm welcome we have already received. Community members who would like to support our mission — whether through sharing resources, materials, or simply helping spread the word — are invited to connect with us.

We look forward to growing alongside Kensington families and becoming a vibrant part of this wonderful community.

To learn more, visit [www.nurtureandnature.org](http://www.nurtureandnature.org). Please send questions to [nurturenatureboard@gmail.com](mailto:nurturenatureboard@gmail.com). Thank you!



## HERITAGE COMMISSION

Lynne Monroe, Chair

March madness? First the most snow in twenty years, and now, suddenly, it's nearly gone leaving us with a squishy brown mud season. But the views through the are spectacular before things begin to grow. Our ancestors in Kensington would have been readying their farms for plowing and planting and the bounty that summer will bring. Here's what the Heritage Commission is planning.

## Walking Tours of the Town Center.

There are self-guided walking tours of the National Register Historic District available in the Library, but it's even more fun to do it with friends. So once the weather gets beautiful again, why not ask some friends to join you and a guide (s) from the Heritage Commission for an informative stroll. We can even explore the interiors of many of the sites. Call Lynne Monroe to arrange your excursion, 603-867-5255 or email [lemonroe@comcast.net](mailto:lemonroe@comcast.net), and she with other members of the commission will take you on an adventure.

## Historic House Markers

The Commission has been working on putting together a program to offer Markers for your historic house. The company we'd planned to work with fell through, but we have discovered someone even better at the Old House and Barn Show last weekend. So stay tuned for more information.

And finally, thank you, Bob Gustafson! Our selectmen's representative has needed to resign. He has been an enthusiastic member of the Commission and we will miss him. Thanks and well wishes, Bob!



## NEXT DEADLINE

Our next issue is our June-July-August summer issue. Deadline is Friday, May 15. See the back cover for how to get your news to us!



### FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Recently in church, we tried a simple exercise. About forty of us were asked to break into pairs—to find someone we didn't know. You could almost hear the collective groan. People reluctantly left their pews, thinking, *Why did I come to church today?*

But within a few minutes, the atmosphere had completely changed. There was laughter, conversation, smiles, even joy. When the exercise was over, no one wanted to stop talking or sharing their stories.

I found myself asking why it is so difficult for us to engage with one another, to desire to 'see' one another. Why is it that as humans, we are hesitant to reach out to our neighbor, to start a conversation, to cross the even small barriers between us?

The US Surgeon General has announced loneliness and isolation as a national public health concern. Our teenagers and young adults tell us that they often feel unseen, misunderstood, or disconnected from others, and those on the margins admit 'unseen' as a way of life. This human experience of social invisibility is not new, and

we know it is not good.

The Bible tells a powerful story in John 9 about a man "born blind from birth." He is reduced to a problem to solve; a debate to win. To his community, he is just a beggar. To his parents, he is a risk to their reputation. To the religious authorities, he is a theological problem—a controversy about rules.

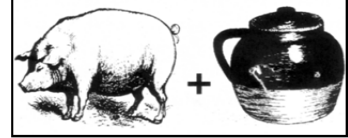
But, to Jesus he is a human being endowed with inherent dignity. Jesus stops. He notices him. He heals him. You would think this would be a catalyst for joy but it is not. It is a cause for conflict revealing that this 'miracle' is not the true focus of the story. Rather the miracle reveals the blindness of those around this man.... those who think they can see, but cannot. The man's neighbors argue amongst themselves, his parents disown him, and the authorities twist the facts and bully witnesses to favor their own power and privilege. All of this causes division, isolation and broken relationships.

We may not be 'blind from birth' as this man was, but then again... we might be. Could it be that Jesus recognizes this 'human condition' and its roots, and offers us a way out? Jesus stops, he notices, and he heals. Could the solution really be that simple? We need to get out of our pews and go to another one? Hear the stories of those we don't know? Sit and listen.... even if it makes us groan.

Church, at its best, is a place where we learn how to do this—to love, to connect, and especially to truly see those who may be different. It isn't always easy. God, put the mud and holy saliva on our eyes!

Peace and Blessings on your journey,

Pastor Sherry



### HAM & BEAN SUPPER

Join us at KCC for a traditional ham & bean supper the 3rd Saturdays of April and May! For a suggested donation of \$12, \$5 for kids 5-12, and free for under 5, you can enjoy a home-cooked meal. Two kinds of beans, ham, potato salad and cole slaw, rolls and brown bread, choice of home made desserts and a beverage. Next suppers are April 18 and May 16, 4:30-6pm. See you there!

### KCC BOOK STUDY

What is our faith? Many of us profess to believe in God but can't really articulate much more than that. And while we might be hesitant to admit it, there are things about our faith that we don't agree with, downright deny or are confused about.

Join in the conversation as we look at Rachel Held Evans' book *Wholehearted Faith*, a "gathering place for our questions, a place to find safety in our doubts, and permission to believe in new ways" New York Times. Tuesdays 4:00-5:30 May 5 through June 16. All welcome. Call Pastor Sherry at 603-828-5234 to pick up a book.

### HOLY WEEK & EASTER SERVICES

KCC welcomes all to celebrate the good news of Easter with us at any of the following services:

**March 31—Palm Sunday** marks the beginning of Holy Week

**April 2—Maundy Thursday**, an Agape meal of foods like those Jesus would have eaten, followed by a Tenebrae "service of shadows"

**April 5—Easter Sunday** we celebrate with a 6am sunrise service at 42 Stumpfield Rd. and an 11:30am worship service at KCC.

The **Escape Room** at KCC has been  
 moved to:  
**Sunday, April 12<sup>th</sup> at 4 pm.**  
**CAN YOU ESCAPE???**  
**TEST YOUR PUZZLE SKILLS!!!**



Games, Puzzles, Surprises,  
 Pizza & Birthday Cake!

**UPCOMING KCC EVENTS**

**CHURCH OF ANOTHER CHANCE—April 19** - Members of The Church of Another Chance, a church that works exclusively with incarcerated and recently released individuals, will lead our service and share their experiences.

**NEW MEMBER SUNDAY—May 31** - Got questions about the church? Where did it come from? What denomination is it? How does the United Church of Christ (UCC) differ from other organizations? Why should I even consider becoming a member? Three classes are being scheduled to answer these and other questions about you...and the church. Please feel free to come to one or more, bring your questions and your curiosity:  
 Wed. May 6 6:00-7:30  
 Tues. May 12 6:00-7:30  
 Friday May 22 3:00-4:30

**VETERANS FOR PEACE—**  
 May 16 is Armed Forces Day. We welcome Veterans for Peace to speak at our KCC service on Sunday, May 17 @ 11:30am.

**IN MEMORIAM**

Pastor Sherry Stromski



It is with great sadness and respect that we inform the community that Elizabeth Bodwell (Betty) passed into eternal rest on Friday, Jan. 30, 2026. She passed peacefully, in her home, surrounded by her family and loved ones. Betty was a devoted and long-time member of the Kensington Community Church and we enjoyed the times we had together over the years, even right up to the last few months of her life. She loved the church and the community of Kensington and felt deeply connected to both, giving of herself freely, tirelessly.

Her last days were filled with prayers, gentle touch and tears. These carried her, in a spirit of deep and confident peace to a place where she is once again reunited with God and all of those who have gone on before.

We hold Betty's family in our prayers as they grieve the loss of their beloved mom, grandmom, great-grandmom, aunt, and great-aunt.

A Memorial Service is being planned for the spring.

As people of faith, we are united in the hope that God's love is unending and bears us through life and in death and well beyond. We are not alone in life, or in death. Thanks be to God.

## TOWN CLERK

Sarah Wiggin

Thank you  
Kensington for  
the amazing voter  
turnout on March 10th!



Please remember ALL DOGS need to be licensed by April 30th. Fines and Penalties begin June 1.

As always, if you have any questions, please call the office 603-772-5423 x 1.

## C R O W N E D H A W K N E W S

*5th Grade Reporters: Levi, Maddy, Oliver, Emerson, Alaina, Ben, Austin*



### KES's Extraordinary Kindergarteners

In Kindergarten, students have been exploring the science of hibernation. They recently held a "Celebration of Learning," where they shared why hibernation is vital for animal survival. In math, these young scholars have been mastering numbers 0-10, while in Literacy, they are practicing identifying different sounds within words. Between their STEAM projects and classroom discoveries, our Kindergarteners are having an amazing year!

### The Famous First Graders

The First Grade might not be "world-famous" yet, but they certainly play the part! Our First Graders have had a very busy winter. This is the time of year when all their hard work begins to pay off and new skills become second nature. They are currently blending words in reading, developing a strong sense of numbers in math, and learning how to use transition words to connect the beginning, middle, and end of their stories.

They also recently held their own

KES Olympics! In STEM, students studied Olympic physics—learning how to weight a bobsled for maximum speed and how to minimize friction on the curling ice. These First Graders are truly amazing!

### What's Happening in Second Grade?

The 2nd graders recently reached out to the local community by sending their first round of penpal letters. They were thrilled to receive responses and are already busy writing back! There is even some hopeful talk about a future "meet and greet" with their new friends.

Second grade also celebrated the 100th Day of School with a series of hands-on stations alongside the Kindergarten and 1st-grade classes. Activities included building structures with 100 pieces, tracking 100 coin flips, and a school-wide scavenger hunt. In writing, they are exploring similes focused on kindness, such as: "*Kindness is like a bright light because it spreads positivity.*" Keep up the great work, 2nd grade!

### The Amazing 3rd Graders

Our 3rd graders are diving deep into mathematics! They are currently mastering multiplication and division facts up to 100, while also learning to represent fractions as specific points on a number line. In Literacy, the students recently completed a unit on poetry. They explored three distinct styles—Haiku, Acrostic, and Free Verse—using figurative language to bring their ideas to life. To wrap up the unit, they composed impressive multi-stanza poems about what it's like to grow up in New Hampshire.

### History in Wax

The 4th-grade class is hard at work preparing for their "Living Wax Museum." This project brings history to life as students research and portray important figures from

around the world. We invite the community to come learn from these historical icons on **April 23, 2026.**

In other subjects, the 4th grade is tackling 4-digit by 1-digit long division and studying the power of volcanoes in science. As a reward for their hard work, the class is earning "stars" toward a viewing of the movie *Night of the Twisters*. Also, a quick shout-out to the class pet, Leo the turtle, who remains a fan favorite!

### 5th Grade: A Trip to the Past

After weeks of practice and determination, the 5th graders successfully performed their play, "*Red, White, and Revolutionary,*" for students and parents. The performance featured original scenes written by the students themselves and ended with a celebratory cupcake reception.

A huge thank you to Mrs. Curley, Mrs. Kilcoyne, and all the teachers and parents who assisted with lines, costumes, and decor. Now that the curtain has closed, 5th graders are focusing on math, specifically long division and converting fractions into decimals.

### KES Retirement

Finally, it is with heavy hearts that we announce **Nurse Heather** will be retiring at the end of the year. We are so grateful for the many years she has spent keeping the Kensington community healthy.

### Popular P.E.

Physical Education remains a highlight of the week at KES, with most classes attending twice a week. Throughout the winter, students have been focusing on gymnastics, body control, and balance.

### The Sky High Skippers

Our jump rope program, led by Mr. Stamel and Mrs. Siegel, is

*(Crowned, cont'd. on p. 5)*

(Crowned, cont'd. from p. 4)

thriving with 67 participants from K–5. Skills range from push-ups in Kindergarten to the "Irish Fling" in 4th grade, while the 5th grade is working on a very special routine to celebrate. This team has been a part of Kensington for 20 years!

Cultural Passport Reminder  
March marks the return of the Cultural Passport program! Now in its 22nd year, this program teaches students about global cultures through Art, Music, PE, and the Library. This year, we are traveling to Haiti! We are especially excited to celebrate the culture of our very own Guillaume family. Please join us for our closing ceremony on Thursday, April 2nd at 6:00 pm.

SAVE THE DATES:

**Cultural Passport Closing**

**Ceremony:** Thursday,  
April 2, 6:00 pm

**Coffee with Kindergarteners:**

Wednesday, April 15,  
10:00 am (KES Art Room)

**4th Grade Wax Museum:**

Thursday, April 23

**Memorial Day Breakfast:**

Stay tuned for more details!

## KENSINGTON SCHOOL BOARD

Cheryl York McDonough

### Measure What Matters

I am currently teaching a graduate course called *Measure What Matters*. And it struck me when listening to Principal Ruel's report at the March 9 board meeting, how many and varied opportunities KES gives students for showing that they know and can apply core understanding of curriculum and respectful norms for interacting with others. The activities from the last weeks mentioned here are genuinely designed to measure what matters! I have included the following excerpts from Principal Ruel's report:

*In honor of our country's 250th birthday celebration, our 5th grade class recently performed the amazing musical Red, White, and Revolutionary for our school community! Students were actively engaged in history, script preparation, memorizing lines, practicing songs and adding original scenes to draw local New Hampshire connections to the performance. To ensure historical accuracy, the class hosted a local historian, Sarah Jaworski, who helped students better understand different perspectives of the revolutionary time period. Former KES students who are now more advanced actors in high school, returned to help our 5th graders grow stage and vocal skills. A community parent shared her expertise about marketing allowing students to gain skills in designing a flier and branding! By the time the students took the stage, they hadn't just learned about the birth of our nation—they had mastered the art of teamwork, the discipline of rehearsal, and the technical savvy required to bring a large-scale project to life.*

*The PTO recently hosted its annual **BINGO Night**. It was a stellar turnout spanning generations - students, former students, future students, parents, grandparents, aunt, uncles and even community members enjoyed the fun of yelling "BINGO!" Families enjoyed pizza and desserts and all looked forward to winning the prizes which included gift cards donated by local restaurants and businesses. Bingo raised just over \$700 with an event intended to bring our school and neighbors together to laugh, play, and build community. Restorative Circles were introduced this fall into 4th-grade in an intentional shift towards building a culture of empathy and mutual accountability. At this pivotal age, students are developing deeper social awareness, making it the perfect time to implement a practice where every voice carries equal weight in the circle. Each Tuesday morning, students meet in their circles and attempt to actively listen, be honest, and share their thinking. These sessions provide a safe space for 9 and 10-year-olds to share their perspectives, identify what they need as a learner in their classroom and take ownership of their impact on others. Ultimately, the goal of Restorative Circles is to ensure that every child feels seen, heard, and valued within their learning community.*

Thank you to our outstanding teachers for being the classroom mentors and supports as we continue to live our core values: Equity, Academic Excellence, Well-Being, Growth Mindset, Belonging, and Connection. When our students are given opportunities to demonstrate what truly matters, they rise to the occasion in remarkable ways.



*Red, White and Revolutionary cast*



## HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Meghan Gross, President

Greetings friends and neighbors!

We're ready to come out of hibernation after all that snow this winter with some exciting news! We now have our very own website dedicated to the Historical Society. On the site, you can expect to find information about who is on our Executive Board and Board of Directors, a nascent blog with some interesting articles, links to historic resources so you can peruse historical records at home, and eventually a link to our recently digitized collections and oral history interview highlights. You can expect more information to be added to our blog as we are able to put together interesting stories for you. We are so excited to have this new platform to share our work with the community. You can now visit the new website at [www.kensingtonnhhistory.com](http://www.kensingtonnhhistory.com).



In other news, this spring we have a special project planned with a class at KES to help us update some of the interpretive signage displayed in the North School, and will again host 4<sup>th</sup> grade students who are learning about New Hampshire history to teach them about what it was like to attend a one-room schoolhouse in rural NH.

Check the new website or our social media pages for other upcoming events as they are planned for spring and summer.

As always, we welcome your feedback and comments. Please connect with us on our Instagram page (@kensingtonhxsociety) and on Facebook, via email at [kensingtonhxsociety@gmail.com](mailto:kensingtonhxsociety@gmail.com), or now on the contact form on our new website! We hope to hear from you!

## FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Cindy Heal

We are just beginning to get ready for our Annual Book Sale which will be held during Old Home Days. More information will follow in the next newsletter but it's never too early to think about what books you might want to include in the sale. All proceeds benefit the library's adult and children's programs.

National Library Week this year is April 19-25. It is an American Library Association event celebrating the essential role of libraries and library workers in strengthening communities. It highlights literacy, free access to resources, and community programs. You can participate by visiting our library, joining social media campaigns, and advocating for funding. This week highlights the transformative, educational, and community-strengthening roles of libraries and their staff. In addition to many areas of expertise, our library staff selects new books and

helps patrons navigate web sites and learn new technology. They also preserve historic documents and local records (Sawyer Room). Whether they are helping you track down an obscure 19th century document or just showing you how to navigate a web site without losing your mind, they deserve all the credit. Thank you to all our staff for your dedication and hard work. Remember, Google can give you 10,000 answers but a librarian can give you the right one!

This year's National Mah Jongg Day is celebrated April 30th. It's a day dedicated to the rhythmic "click-clack" of tiles, and the deep-rooted social connections that this ancient game fosters. While the game has roots dating back to 19th-century China, this specific day honors its massive popularity in the West, particularly the Ameri-



can version of the game. For many players, Mah Jongg is a weekly social ritual. It's a time to catch up on life, share snacks, and engage in "table talk" while keeping a sharp eye on the discard pile. The game is essentially a workout for the brain. It requires memory, pattern recognition, and strategy, all of which are celebrated as ways to keep the mind sharp at any age.

Our group meets every Tuesday 1p-3p at the library. Whether you're a seasoned pro or a beginner, we would love new players. We offer instructions and encouragement to help you learn a new skill. It's fun and relaxing and a great gathering of friends who have all learned this compelling game. Come every Tuesday or whenever your schedule allows.

Our next Friends of the Library meeting will be held on Tues. April 7, 11a-1p at the library. Please join our group as anyone is welcome to attend.

## KENSINGTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

Susan Gilbert, Director

### ADULT EVENTS

**Saturday, April 11<sup>th</sup> 11 am -1 pm.** Julie Cyr returns for a needle felting workshop. She'll show us how to make a fun spring project. This is a popular activity and there is only room for 12 participants, so let us know if you want to attend.

**Wednesday, April 15<sup>th</sup>- 7 PM (virtual).** *From Tiffany to Chihuly: Masters of Glass Art.* Discover the luminous world of glass art, where molten sand transforms into breathtaking works that capture and refract light in ways that seem to defy the very nature of solid matter. From Louis Comfort Tiffany's jewel-toned stained-glass windows that turned churches into cathedrals of color, to Dale Chihuly's explosive blown glass sculptures that bring the ocean's mysteries to museum galleries, to Kensington's own Dan Dailey's whimsical figurative pieces that blend fine art with storytelling magic. This program illuminates how fire, breath, and imagination combine to create some of the most spectacular and ethereal art forms known to humanity.



Tiffany & Northrup Daner Memorial Window, 1913. Private collection.

**Wednesday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> 3 -4 PM (at the library).** Lisa Doherty from M&T Bank . **our Credit Score and Credit Reports.** Join Lisa Doherty for an informative credit workshop open to all. Lisa has worked at M&T Bank for over 27 years and enjoys helping her customers with their Credit questions. We will explore the importance of your Credit Scores/Reports and go over ways to access information on your credit score/report. An emphasis will be placed on strategies to build and improve your credit and help you identify how to protect your credit from incorrect claims/fraud. Your Credit worthiness is important and hope to see you there. Please register with Lisa at 603-772-7730 x3 or by email, [ldoherty@mtb.com](mailto:ldoherty@mtb.com). Drop ins are also welcome!

**Wednesday, May 6<sup>th</sup> 2-3 PM—Mason Jar luminaries .** Join us for this fun activity!! Perfect for Mother's Day or just a nice porch accent for spring. All supplies provided. Call Kensington Library to sign up.



**Saturday, May 16<sup>th</sup> 9AM – 1 PM.** Our annual Heirloom Tomato Seedling Sale!! On the library's front lawn.



**Wednesday, May 20<sup>th</sup> 5:30 -6:30 PM.** Jeffrey Zygmunt returns to Kensington Library for his new presentation: **AMERICA'S BIRTH IN STIRRING WORDS: Revolutionary War battles and poems they inspired.** Patriots went to war to win freedom. Poets went to work to praise them, and to express the spirit of independence and the valor that created our nation. We review some key battles of the American Revolution – the people, the tactics and outcomes – and close each battle review with a historic poem that expresses the emotion and devotion of the soldiers. Thus, alongside facts, we experience the energy and enthusiasm that made America.

### KIDS EVENTS:

Our weekly after school activities for kids continue in April and May. All of the activities are currently filled, with the exception of the Scavenger Hunt, scheduled for May 28th. Please call or e-mail the library if interested.

Preschool story times are Tuesday mornings at 10:30 and Thursday afternoons at 1:00.

Children's Librarian Kristin Berardino announces our annual Summer Reading Program starts in June. We will have an entertainer at KES's Field Day on Monday, June 8<sup>th</sup>. Signups for the reading program for all ages start on Tuesday, June 16<sup>th</sup>. More information will be in the next issue of the Community News and on our website.

**BOOK CLUBS:** Wednesday, April 29<sup>th</sup>...12 noon at the library

**Ladies of Liberty** by Cokie Roberts. New York Times bestselling author and renowned political commentator Cokie Roberts brings to life the extraordinary accomplishments of women who laid the groundwork for a better society. Recounted with insight and humor, and drawing on personal correspondence, private journals, and other primary sources, many of them previously unpublished, here are the fascinating and inspiring true stories of first ladies and freethinkers, educators and explorers. Featuring an exceptional group of women; including Abigail Adams,

(Library, cont'd. on p. 8)

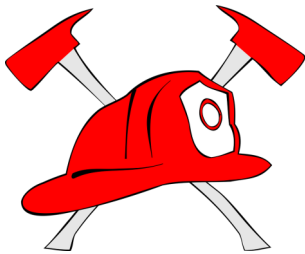
*(Library, cont'd. from p. 7)*

Dolley Madison, Rebecca Gratz, Louise Livingston, Sacagawea, and others; Ladies of Liberty sheds new light on the generation of heroines, reformers, and visionaries who helped shape our nation, finally giving these extraordinary ladies the recognition they so greatly deserve.

Wednesday, May 20<sup>th</sup>. (Book to be determined as the group is interested in reading more about "First Ladies" during this 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary year.)

No book club during the summer months.

**ONGOING:** Mah Jongg! Tuesdays at 1 PM. Please join us!



## **KENSINGTON FIRE & RESCUE**

Ben Cole

Thank you to our neighbors for supporting our public safety warrant articles. This support will allow us to undertake important deferred maintenance to fire ponds, to acquire a new tanker to replace Engine 1, and to pay for ALS intercept service following Exeter Hospital's closure of its ALS intercept service program last year. We appreciate your support!

We try to cover as many costs of running the fire rescue department through grants as we can, and this spring we are proud to announce we were successful in acquiring a major grant through a joint effort with Hampton and East Kingston, to cover the cost of replacing *all* of our SCBA packs. With our portion

of the award valued at over \$200,000, this is an enormous savings for Kensington taxpayers, and allows us to replace our entire set of airpacks just as they are reaching the end of their service life. We have since taken delivery of our 21 new SCBA units, 21 masks, and an additional 21 spare air cylinders, and we will be putting the new equipment in service soon. The old packs will be returned for a credit, which will be used to pay for life-saving communications and rescue equipment, reducing strain on the town budget during what is likely to be a challenging default budget year.

As we move into spring, we start seeing more calls for brush fires, although we are hopeful that this winter's snowpack will relieve recent years' drought conditions. The most convenient way to acquire a burn permit is to use the online permit system. Always remember to check fire conditions and restrictions before you burn. When you set your clocks forward, we hope you checked that smoke detectors and CO detectors are working and have fresh batteries. If not, it's a good time to check now! If yours are older than ten years, we recommend replacing your old detectors with modern, interconnected detectors with internal ten-year batteries. If you need help with these, call the non-emergency number at 603-772-5751.

We are still recruiting for new members! If you're interested in serving your community as part of a great team, contact Chief DiBartolomeo or any member of the department, or drop by the station on any Tuesday night. We need good people who are willing to serve their neighbors in moments of crisis. We provide all the training you need to make a difference!



## **ENERGY COMMITTEE**

Susan Varn

### **Town Hall Improved heating, ventilation, and cooling**

In late 2024, the heating, ventilation, and cooling (HVAC) system serving the Police Department at town hall failed. Due to the age of the equipment, replacement components were no longer available and installation of a new outdoor system was not feasible. An initial \$2,000 effort to rehabilitate the system was unsuccessful. It was clear that much needed improvements to the building's HVAC system were needed.

Working with town leadership, the Energy Committee conducted a comprehensive review of

*(Energy, cont'd. on p. 9)*

*(Energy, cont'd. from p. 8)*  
replacement options. After evaluating lifecycle costs, operating performance, maintenance requirements, and occupant comfort, we concluded that a geothermal HVAC system was the most economically and operationally sound solution. Compared with air-source heat pump alternatives, the geothermal system offers: comparable payback period; approximately 50% lower operating costs; superior indoor air quality control, significantly reduced maintenance requirements, and the elimination of outdoor mechanical equipment.

The project is now under construction and estimated to be operational in May. It is being financed through tax credits and rebates. Its estimated \$116,000 cost will be closer to \$66,000, to come from special-use appropriations from the town's reserve funds. Upon completion, this system will provide decades of stable operating costs, improved occupant health and comfort, and long-term budget protection.

### **Community Power Update**

Unfortunately, new state regulations resulted in lower pricing for Unitil in this rate period than for the Community Power Coalition of NH (Community Power, or CPCNH). While fluctuations with pricing will vary periodically, this change prompted the Energy Committee to advise residents seeking lower pricing to opt out of Community Power. Our video on the town website and Facebook has step-by-step instructions if you choose to opt out. Our goal always is to research and offer the town and residents the best energy efficient ideas and opportunities. We'll keep you posted to help you make the energy choices best for you. Our contract with CPCNH is ongoing as a free service for

residents for several good reasons that are enumerated on our website, including:

- Opting in and re-enrolling in Community Power for best pricing are free
- Participation can be changed at any time
- No penalties or fees apply
- Customers can enroll in plans with greater energy efficiency at higher rates

### **Kensington Elementary School and the SAU16**

The Energy Committee is working closely with the SAU16 to help shape their longterm HVAC equipment plans.

### **The Grange**

We continue ongoing conversations with Grange trustees about ways to make the structure more energy efficient and usable year-round. We are researching which buildings are considered "municipal" in town, and by what criteria to help us determine what grants and incentives may be available to the Grange and other projects in town.

### **SolSmart**

Our new solar voltaic installation checklist guidance, developed in partnership with the SolSmart organization, has been posted on the town website. SolSmart provides free technical assistance to help local governments streamline solar processes, and is awarding Kensington a Bronze Designation plaque to recognize our solar guidelines.

Many thanks Kensington for your continued interest in and support for the Energy Committee's work. We welcome your questions, ideas, and participation. Visit us at: [kensington.town.energy@gmail.com](mailto:kensington.town.energy@gmail.com)



## **A Walk on the Wild (life) Side**

George W. Gavutis, Jr. Wildlife Biologist

### **DEER RADIO**

Well, it looks like I spoke too soon about the deer avoiding my Christmas trees due to the broadcasting of human voices from the recording of Winston Churchill's about World War II. I actually think it may have worked for a month or so before it began snowing and the younger deer of the year (fawns) got hungry enough to ignore his speeches.

I guess I will have to try stringing monofilament around the plantation next year. I had a friend up in Maine who said that worked every year for keeping the deer out of his vegetable garden. That garden was very close to his house in a large open field though—and he had a large dog that needed to be let out every evening before they retired for the night. He used two strands of 50 lb. test monofilament fishing line—one strand set about knee high on a deer and another about shoulder or chest high. Evidently the deer got upset because they couldn't see the monofilament at night and when they pushed against it, it wouldn't give.

The large, dark colored buck I reported last year did show up again this year, but it was late in the season and this time he had shed his antlers by late February and didn't need to spar with, and ruin, any of the trees. The one or two yearling bucks that were causing all the damage in the

*(Wildlife, cont'd on p. 10)*

*(Wildlife, cont'd. from p. 9)*

winter of 2024-25 were still around but for some reason they left the Christmas trees alone—and one of the deer got harvested just before the end of the deer season.

### **TOO MANY DEER?**

It may be hard to believe but it was only about 50 years ago when here in NH there were practically no deer in the southern part of the State. You had to go up north if you wanted to hunt them. When we moved here from a National Wildlife Refuge named Great Swamp in northern NJ in the early 1970s there were so many deer there (estimated at 60 per square mile), that I proposed a hunt to cull them down to about 20 per square mile (still a lot of deer—but the maximum you wanted to have to avoid winter die-offs and damage to native vegetation, etc.)

To illustrate the problem that too many deer can create, we rigged up a public display of a dozen native white pine trees. We had to go to a nursery to get them—because there were none left in the then 5,000-acre refuge. The deer had been eating the white pine seedlings and saplings for decades. We planted the twelve 5' high trees in a row and fenced off the first six trees and left the second six unfenced. In the first winter the deer cooperated and ate the six unfenced trees to death and we worked up a very effective display for the public to see. The fenced trees also had a robin nest and a song sparrow nest in their branches to further the message.

When the public learned about the planned deer hunt on a National Wildlife Refuge, some of them who were anti-hunters wrote to Washington to protest. They didn't realize that despite the name "refuge", hunting was an accepted method of control of wildlife populations on National Wildlife

Refuges so I had to spend several days in Federal court justifying the proposal. The public, especially in thickly settled NJ, often confuses Wildlife Refuges with National Parks—where hunting is prohibited by law. This works pretty well in most cases where there are natural controls of deer populations in the form of wolves, coyotes, bears and mountain lions—but of course not in suburban NJ. We won the case and annual deer hunts became the rule at Great Swamp.

Getting back to southern NH, we now probably have about 20 or more deer per square mile in many towns. Back in the 1970s, I had a friend who owned beagles. He loved to hunt rabbits and snowshoe hares with his dogs here in Kensington. After a few years, he began to see some deer tracks—especially in the snow, and soon his beagles began to pursue them. For a couple years he would just go to another cover but the next year the other cover had deer in it too. The beagles were persistent—always preferring to chase deer instead of rabbits. Finally, one day in the huge Great Meadows area, where there are hundreds of acres, the dogs took off on deer that would make circles that were miles in length. Cottontail rabbits on the other hand, would only run over a few acres and take 5 or 10 minutes to return to where they started. We tried all day to outguess the deer and intercept the beagles but by the end of the day we had to give up and so we left the dog crates open with a hunting jacket and some water and food inside, near the place where the deer had started. The next morning, before going to work, we checked the crates. No beagles, so we returned after work and checked them again. At times we could hear the beagles in the distance and after at least a couple days we finally found the beagles curled up, sound asleep and exhausted in their crates. There

was no point in chastising the dogs. They had had the time of their lives—but my friend never hunted in Kensington again. He decided to stay in Massachusetts where the deer hadn't returned yet—and then in Alaska—where his next assignment took him. Then there were lots of other stories he told me about.

Getting back to NH, here we are, 50 years later. This past winter was the coldest and probably even the snowiest, in many years. Our deer normally go about six miles west of here whenever the first significant snowfall occurs, in recent years it was often late December. They go to the Kingston area where there are extensive stands of Atlantic white cedars around Country Pond and the Pow-Wow Ponds which provide shelter and their favorite winter food. Up north, it is common for the deer to travel up to 25 miles to a deer yard area. But increasing numbers of coyotes have replaced the wolves of old, and sometimes find those deer. They can decimate the herd which sometimes reaches 100 animals—and dwindles to just a few survivors by spring. Maybe something similar happened in Kingston this year? Or maybe it was just the crazy snow pattern. Our local deer finally headed west after the late February blizzard, and seemed to return a week or so later. I was upstairs in my office/observatory about an hour before dusk when I noticed a deer crossing the field out back. It was going east and was followed by several more. I seldom see the deer crossing that field in winter, so I stopped what I was doing and kept looking. I counted at least 17 deer following that first one, walking in the same track. When I do see deer there, it is never more than half a dozen and there is no snow. I'm

*(Wildlife, cont'd. on p. 11)*

*(Wildlife, cont'd. from p. 10)*

sure it was the rest of the Kensington herd returning from the Kingston area. I walked up onto Cottage Hill the next day and found the trail across the field but when it entered my land the snow had melted and the only fresh tracks remaining were going up the Hill. A couple years ago a friend said he saw about 50 deer in the field behind the former US Post Office building (now an antique shop). They were all heading this way and later that day I saw about a dozen deer behind my house heading East as well. I saw similar groups in the early spring headed in the same direction.

It was an incredible winter for deer damage here this year—the likes of which I had never witnessed before. I had snapped a photo of a deer beginning to browse on a rhododendron at Great Swamp in NJ. I had always been told that the mountain laurel family, including the rhododendron, were poisonous, or at least toxic to deer. I have a couple wild mountain laurel growing out back in the woods, and I have to keep them enclosed in a fence or the deer will eat it, so maybe it is only toxic if eaten in large quantities. This winter my backyard fence I used to enclose the area to contain my dogs had fallen down in a couple places and the deer were able to access the rhododendrons and completely decimated them up to 6'. I'll let you know if they survive. Several of our neighbors in both directions on South Road also experienced severe deer damage to foundation plantings. So maybe all the posted properties and new houses are the cause? The deer do learn quickly and find they are safe from hunters if they stick close to houses and outbuildings—so they do. There are also a lot less hunters these days. Kids are all indoors playing video games.

## APRIL & MAY AT ALNOBA

Justin Scarelli

Spring programming at Alnoba includes a hands-on floral arrangement workshop with Sarah Pellerin, a nonprofit open house highlighting Pinnacle leadership programs, and Kids Playtime on April 27, perfectly timed for school vacation. In May, we begin another season of Nature Therapy with Rooted Rose Recreation, along with Tea House Yoga, a Wim Hof workshop, and ongoing guided art tours of our outdoor sculpture collection.

View the full schedule at [www.alnoba.org/events](http://www.alnoba.org/events).

### Recent Highlights

In February, Alnoba welcomed 120 women leaders for its second Women's Leadership Conference featuring Loretta Ross and Porsha Olayiwola. In March, author and forester Ethan Tapper joined us for a program on forest stewardship. We also hosted Friends Forever International, the University of New Hampshire Sustainability Institute, and Leadership Seacoast, supporting their ongoing work in youth leadership, community engagement, and sustainability.



*Author/Activist Loretta J. Ross ALFF Horticulturist, Sarah Pellerin*

### CELEBRATE EARTH DAY APRIL 22, 2026!

**Earth Day** is an annual event first held April 22, 1970. It now includes a wide range of events coordinated globally by [EARTHDAY.ORG](http://EARTHDAY.ORG) including 1 billion people in more than 193 countries.

But you can also celebrate Earth Day on your own. Some ideas:

- Clean up plastic/litter in your neighborhood
- Support our pollinators
- Plant wildflowers and native plants
- Reduce, reuse, recycle
- Stop using chemicals in the gardens

**CELEBRATE!**





# NEW TRASH AND RECYCLING PICK UP INFORMATION

**KENSINGTON, say hello to  
your new Trash and  
Recycling Vendor ELM!**

ELM Services (ELM) is pleased to announce we will be providing the curbside collection of Trash & Recycling for the Town of Kensington commencing in April 2026.

Your home we be receiving a shiny new trash cart thanks to a recently approved agreement between the Town of Kensington and ELM. The following is the schedule for the upcoming transition starting **April 8<sup>th</sup>**! **Please note the new day for trash pickup!**

- Trash will be picked up every **WEDNESDAY** starting **April 8<sup>th</sup>**
  - (That's right, no recycling this week!)
- Recycling will be picked-up BI-WEEKLY on **WEDNESDAYS** starting **April 15<sup>th</sup>**
- Place at curb by 6:00am on Wednesdays to ensure pick-up.
- Each resident will be reissued the same size cart they currently have for TRASH and will continue to place at the curb as they currently do for automated pick-up.
- **\*\*\*NEW\*\*\*** Each resident will be required to provide a clearly marked container of their choice for Recycling. A 65 gallon cart for recycling can be **purchased from ELM for \$95.00** (this is not a requirement). The cart can be pre-ordered by contacting **ELM customer service below by March 6<sup>th</sup>**.
- **\*\*\*NEW\*\*\*** Starting **April 1<sup>st</sup>** Two(2) dumpsters will be placed at the Municipal Lot (across from the Town Hall) for **Corrugated Cardboard ONLY**. Residents can bring their **flattened** cardboard to these dumpsters, anytime 7 days a week, at their convenience. The dumpsters will be scheduled to be emptied 2x per week. This change in how the town is collecting recycling and the dropping off of the flattened corrugated cardboard will save the town roughly 45% of the cost of recycling. This is a huge savings and tax relief for the residents of Kensington.
- Your 'Casella' trash and recycling carts will be picked up following the **Monday, March 30<sup>th</sup>** pick-up. Your 'ELM' trash cart (recycling cart if purchased) will be delivered during the week **March 31-April 3<sup>rd</sup>**.

TO LEARN MORE Call or email **ELM Customer Service** or to order a recycling cart, if you have questions, or just need customer service: Please email [JZelmservices@gmail.com](mailto:JZelmservices@gmail.com) or call/text 781-844-8605.



### **WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE TOWN'S TRASH AND RECYCLING PROGRAM?**

Currently, only KENSINGTON (single-family dwellings, Approved ADU's, duplexes, and apartments with 5 units or less) are eligible to receive curbside trash and recycling services. (no businesses)

### **WHEN IS CURBSIDE RECYCLING COLLECTED IN MY AREA AND AT WHAT TIME SHOULD I PLACE IT OUT FOR COLLECTION?**

**Your recycling is collected every other week on the same day as your garbage collection.** Recycling can be placed curbside for collection no later than 6:00a.m. on the day of collection.

### **WHAT TYPES OF RECYCLABLES ARE COLLECTED AT THE CURBSIDE?**

The town collects the following recyclable items placed loosely in a clearly marked container:

- Plastic and glass bottles, jugs, and jars under 3 gallons. Containers must be empty with no lids or caps.
- Aluminum, steel, and aerosol containers. Containers must be empty, leave the labels on, and discard lids or leave them attached to the can.
- Mixed paper such as cereal boxes, soft/hardback books, newspaper, white office paper, and mail.

### **CAN I RECYCLE HOSES, CORDS, WIRES OR CLOTHES IN MY BIN?**

No. In order to reduce contamination, please place only the accepted items listed above in your recycling container. Items, such as hoses, cords, and wires, are considered "tangles" as they wrap around equipment at the recycling processing facility, which creates a safety hazard for workers and causes facility shutdowns. Hoses and cords should go in the trash.

### **CAN I RECYCLE PLASTIC BAGS OR WRAP IN MY BIN?**

No. In an effort to be bag free by 2023, plastic bags don't belong in your new bin. Plastic bags and wrap cause equipment jams at recycling processing facilities. In order to safely recycle plastic bags, return them to specially marked recycling bins located at the front of most big box stores, large grocery stores and supermarkets.

### **What items are not acceptable for recycling?**

- Plastic bags, unmarked plastic, windows, light bulbs, dishes, ceramics, foam packaging of any kind, aerosol cans (paint, hairspray, cleaners), and recyclables containing food waste

### **WHAT DO I DO WITH MY OLD CARTS?**

Residents should leave them curbside for pickup by Casella the week of March 31<sup>st</sup>. New Trash Carts only will be delivered by ELM later that week into the first of the next week.

### **DO I HAVE TO PUT MY RECYCLABLES IN MY BIN?**

Yes, recycling should be placed loosely/without bags in a container of your choice. Overflow (more recyclables than your container's capacity) can be placed in an additional recycling container. Cardboard should be brought to one of the collection containers across from Town Hall. If there are mobility issues preventing the use of the container, please contact the ELM or the Town Hall for further assistance.

### **WHAT IF MY BIN IS STOLEN OR DAMAGED?**

If it is damaged or stolen, please contact ELM customer service.

### **HOW DO I PLACE MY RECYCLABLES OUT FOR COLLECTION?**

Recyclables should be placed at a single location where it can be readily accessible and not obstruct the public right of way. Place recyclables no more than five (5') feet back from the traveled roadway or curb and three (3') feet away from your trash.

*The Town is pleased to offer these options for the residents of Kensington to offset some of the tax burden.*

**TOWN BOARD MEETINGS**

Board Meetings are usually held at Town Hall but confirm with Board Chair.

**Selectmen:** 1st & 3rd Monday, 6:30pm

**Recreation:** 2nd Thursday, 5pm

**Conservation:** 2nd Tuesday, 7:30pm

**Planning:** 3rd Wednesday, 6:30pm

**Planning Bd. Workshop:** 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday, 6:30pm

**Zoning Board of Adjustment:** 1st Tuesday, as needed, 7:30pm

**Heritage Commission:** 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday, 7pm

**School Board:** 1st Monday, 6pm

**Community News  
Publishing Schedule**

*Community News* is published 5 times a year. 2026 issues are:

February-March  
(Deadline Jan. 16)

April-May  
(Deadline March 13)

June-July-August  
(Deadline May 15)

September-October  
(Deadline August 14)

November- December-  
January  
(Deadline October 16)

**HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR NEWSLETTER**

*Community News* is a labor of love in so many ways, published by the Kensington Congregational Church to both reach out into our community and to bring the community together. Although we have a great deal of volunteer help with layout, folding, stickering and labeling it for mailing – THANK YOU, VOLUNTEERS! – other costs are beyond our control.

Printing 5 issues a year costs us \$4087. We mail copies to every Kensington household (and to some who live away but still want to keep in touch with Kensington).

We appreciate those who have subscribed in the past to help us cover some of these costs. We are asking again, if you look forward to reading the newsletter, if you appreciate getting news of town committees and groups and happenings, please consider a donation for 2026 to help us continue publishing this newsletter. Your support, both through your comments and through your donations, means a great deal to us!

I wish to support *Community News* at the following level:

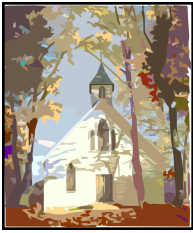
**Friend** (up to \$25) \$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Neighbor** (up to \$75) \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
**Community** (up to \$150) \$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Kensington** (over \$150) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Your Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**We love hearing from you:** \_\_\_\_\_


**Checks should be payable to: Kensington Congregational Church  
108 Amesbury Rd.  
Kensington, NH 03833**

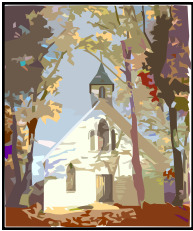


Worship  
Sundays  
11:30 am

# APRIL 2026



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Planning Workshop 6:30pm	2 KPL Story Time 1pm Agape Supper 6pm Tenebrae 7pm  Cultural Passport 6pm	3	4
5 <b>Easter Sunrise Service 6am</b>  Worship 11:30	6 Selectmen Meet 6:30pm  School Board 6pm	7 KPL Story Time 10:30  Mah Jongg 1pm  ZBA 7:30pm	8 Trash pickup begins  School Bd 6pm	9 KPL Story Time 1pm  Rec. Comm. 5pm	10 Church Cabinet 10am	11 KPL Felting 11am
12 <b>Worship 11:30</b>  Messy Church Es- cape Room 4pm	13	14 KPL Story Time 10:30  Mah Jongg 1pm  Conservation	15 Recycling be- gins Coffee w/ Kindergarteners 10am KPL 7pm  Planning Bd 6:30pm	16 KPL Story Time 1pm	17	18 Ham & Bean supper
19 <b>Worship 11:30</b> Church of Another Chance Nat. Library Week begins	20  Selectmen Meet 6:30pm	21 KPL Story Time 10:30  Mah Jongg 1pm	22 Earth Day  KPL 3pm  Heritage 7pm	23 KPL Story Time 1pm  KES Wax Mu- seum	24	25
26 <b>Worship 11:30</b>	27 Alnoba pro- gram	28 KPL Story Time 10:30  Mah Jongg 1pm	29 KPL Book Club 12 noon	30 KPL Story Time 1pm		



Worship  
Sundays  
11:30 am

# MAY 2026



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 	2
3 <b>Worship</b> 11:30	4 Selectmen Meet 6:30pm  School Board 6pm	5 KPL Story Time 10:30  Mah Jongg 1pm  ZBA 7:30pm	6 KPL 2pm  Planning Work- shop 6:30pm	7 KPL Story Time 1pm	8 Church Cabinet 10am	9
10 <b>Worship</b> 11:30	11	12 KPL Story Time 10:30  Mah Jongg 1pm  Conservation 7:30pm	13  School Bd 6pm	14 KPL Story Time 1pm  Rec. Comm. 5pm	15  	16 KPL To- matoes 9am Ham & Bean supper 4:30
17 <b>Worship</b> 11:30 Veterans for Peace	18 Selectmen Meet 6:30pm	19 KPL Story Time 10:30  Mah Jongg 1pm	20 Planning Bd 6:30pm	21 KPL Story Time 1pm	22	23
24 <b>Worship</b> 11:30  31 <b>Worship</b> 11:30 New Member Sunday 	25	26 KPL Story Time 10:30  Mah Jongg 1pm	27 Heritage 7pm	28 KPL Story Time 1pm	29	30

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If you or anyone you know has been overlooked, or if your address is incorrect, call 603-772-5821 and tell us all About it.

The next issue will cover June-July-August 2026.

Submissions due Friday, May 15th.

**THE DEADLINE IS FIRM.**

(Earlier submissions gratefully accepted!)

Call Pam at 603-490-8359 with ideas, information, suggestions or news. Articles, stories, pictures can be dropped off at Kensington UCC Church, or emailed to [kensingtoncommunitynews@gmail.com](mailto:kensingtoncommunitynews@gmail.com).