

The Dublin Advocate

To Encourage and Strengthen Our Community

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Dublin, NH 03444

“Breaking Roads” in Days of Old

BY LISA FOOTE

As wintry conditions plague our travel in January, we have come to take for granted driving on bare pavement within hours of frozen precipitation falling. It is fascinating to look back on how roads in Dublin were cleared of snow as far back as 140 years ago.

Before the advent of automobiles, horses and oxen pulled wheeled carriages and carts in inclement weather, and sleighs and sledges on snow-covered roadways. Notes in the selectmen's records from the 19th century show residents being paid for “breaking roads” year-round, presumably using their own livestock and equipment. The records are silent on what methods were used to render the roads passable in winter before the 1880s.

By 1885, the town had purchased two snow rollers like the one pictured here. Instead of moving snow aside as plows do now, they compacted the snow into a smooth surface upon which sleigh runners could glide. An early photo of a road treated by a snow roller shows two parallel lanes of smooth snow separated by a ridge of loose snow. Dublin even owned a “winter hearse,” equipped with two pairs of short sleigh runners for transporting caskets to the cemetery vault to await burial the following spring. The winter hearse



“The Road Roller” by Rockwell Kent, 1909

and its wheeled counterpart, both from the 1870s, are at the Dublin Historical Society's 1841 Schoolhouse Museum.

In March of 1895, a warrant article for Dublin Town Meeting read, “To see if the town will instruct the highway agent to purchase a snow roller and appropriate the sum of \$70 to pay for same.” The same month, an article in the *Peterborough Transcript* stated, “So satisfactory have the snow rollers proved that the matter of buying a third will be voted upon at the upcoming [Dublin] Town Meeting. The sidewalk made by these machines is a great convenience to pedestrians.” As it is highly unlikely that the town owned any draft animals, the highway agent presumably contracted with local residents to supply up to nine teams of draft animals to pull the three rollers after a storm.

A Dublin snow roller would take center stage in a 1909 painting by

Dr Burton Russell with two teams pulling his sleigh, circa 1910. Note his commentary written in pencil at the time, “Our Winter Motor.”



Photo courtesy of Foote Family

Rockwell Kent. Kent had become good friends with Gerald Thayer during the summer of 1903, when Kent studied painting here with Gerald's father, Abbott Thayer. In the winter of 1909, Rockwell Kent and Gerald Thayer joined George deForest Brush's son, Gerome, at his family's farm on Brush Brook Road for a period of time. The inspiration for Kent's painting “The Road Roller” is attributed to that stay in Dublin.

When the snow roller in the painting is compared with the actual snow roller in the photo, Kent's depiction clearly exagger-



One of Dublin's snow rollers in front of the M D Mason Store, now the Dub Hub, in the 1890s.

ates the size of the roller. It is silhouetted against a turbulent sky as it surges through a snowy landscape, and the scale of the figures atop the teams of draft horses is diminished. The painting celebrates the power of the machine traveling through nature, a countryside devoid of human habitation. The painting's background is not meant to depict Dublin, yet the dog in the foreground resembles the Thayer family's dog, Hauskuld. Perhaps the three figures supervising the driver atop the roller represent Kent, Thayer, and Brush, commemorating their time together.

Snow rollers probably had close to 40 years of continuous use in Dublin. Brian

Continued on page 3

Photos courtesy The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C.; Dublin Historical Society

News from the Dublin Public Library

BY VOLKERT VOLKERSZ

We are excited to begin the new year with a new library team, including a new library director and three library assistants. While I never expected to be doing library work again after retiring from school libraries in Washington State in 2016, I've had a great time meeting the challenge of keeping the Dublin Public Library open, while unraveling numerous operations and technology mysteries. My goal was to pave the way for the new director, and, for the most part, I think I've succeeded.

Some of the things we've accomplished ("better together" with our library trustees) are checking out and checking in many books; providing Inter-Library Loans to our Dublin patrons (as well as patrons across the state); providing a welcoming space for both regular patrons and visitors to Dublin; assisting patrons with tech questions; reviving story times for children; ordering and process-

ing new books; having the building re-keyed; getting the fireplaces going to provide warmth and ambiance on cold winter days; connecting with the Toadstool Bookshop; upgrading computers, updating software, and resolving many tech issues, thanks to volunteer Charlie O'Riordan; restarting our email newsletter; welcoming community groups to our Program Room; and opening our doors on a cold, damp night for cookies and a holiday singalong after the Dublin Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony.

With our new team in place, we will be ready to expand our open hours and add programs in January. Please check our website, Facebook page, or newsletter for updates. If you are not sure whether you are a current subscriber to our restored newsletter, please sign up at eepurl.com/iFWY2w.

Since I've enjoyed doing library work again, I plan to stay on in a reduced role for the foreseeable future. With our new staff in place, our library is in good hands as we start the new year, 2024!

VOLKERT VOLKERSZ is the circulation librarian at the Dublin Public Library.

Trustee's Corner

Relaunching the DPL in January

BY CHRIS SPRAGUE

Check out our new winter hours, the latest programs, and more at dublinhpubliclibrary.org. We've come such a long way in the last three months. On September 23, we had no director and no staff. The state even recommended closing the library through year-end. The trustees disagreed. We felt we needed to "keep the lights on," so we implemented fall hours, prioritized gaps, and rolled up our collective sleeves. We have many to thank for where we are now.

Top of the thank-you list is Volkert Volkersz. He was "busy as a one-armed paper hanger!" Just read his accompanying column sitting down. Partnering with him was the work of the trustees, town, volunteers, and Friends of the Library.



Clockwise from upper left: New Director Karen Madigan, and library assistants Emaline Bergeron, Elizabeth Moore, and Victoria Reynolds.

The library facility is in great shape. Come see for yourself!

All that was missing was a director and assistants. Despite statewide shortages of librarians and staff, Dublin is too attractive a community to go unnoticed. Emaline Bergeron and Victoria Reynolds have joined Elizabeth Moore. Meet them in person or on our website.

The trustees joked, "All we want for Christmas is a librarian." Our wishes were granted. In the third week of November, Karen Madigan introduced herself to us. With 25 years of library experience in Wyoming, she had just moved to Hancock, following her daughter and family.

The timing is perfect as we look to 2024. So stop by to review our new programs, sit by the fires, drink warm beverages, meet with friends, and find your home away from home.

CHRIS SPRAGUE is the chair of the Dublin Public Library Trustees.

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Seeking Dublin's 2024 Boston Cane Recipient

Dublin was saddened by the recent passing of Dublin's 2018 Boston Post Cane recipient, Mary Alice Fox, who led a long and adventurous life. We need your help in finding the next recipient, who will be awarded the Boston Post Cane in March of 2024 at Town Meeting. If you know of someone who might qualify as the oldest Dublin resident, please submit their name and information to Kate Fuller at townadminis-trator@townofdublin.org, or call her office at 603-563-8544. We appreciate your help in locating this very special person.

Snow Rolling continued from page 1

Barden, Dublin's former road agent, believes they were supplanted by tracked bulldozers mounted with plows and wing plows that threw most of the snow to the side of the road. It is likely that vehicles still traveled on a packed snow surface, not bare roadway, since sleighs were still in use as late as 1929, when the town held a sleighing party in March of that year.

LISA FOOTE is on the staff of the *Advocate*.

News from the Town Clerk/Tax Collector

Public Notice: Filing Period for Town Offices

Residents interested in declaring their candidacy for the following town offices may do so at the town clerk/tax collector's office beginning on Wednesday, January 24, and ending on Friday, February 2. On Friday, February 2, the office will be open solely for that purpose from 3–5 pm.

Select Board	One position for 3-year term
Town Moderator	One position for 2-year term
Supervisor of the Checklist	One position for 6-year term
Library Trustee	Two positions for 3-year term
Water Commissioner	One position for 3-year term
Budget Committee	Two positions for 3-year term
Cemetery Trustee	One position for 1-year term
Planning Board	Two positions for 3-year term
Trustee of the Trust Funds	One position for 3-year term

Federal Presidential Primary on January 23, 2024

Residents planning to vote in the Tuesday, January 23, 2024 primary, please take note of the following:

- Voting will take place upstairs on the third floor of Town Hall.
- Hours are 8 am–7 pm.
- Please bring a photo ID when you come to vote.

If you are unable to vote in person, go to the website at townofdublin.org/town-clerk-tax-collector, or call the office at 603-563-8859.

Please note corrected OFFICE HOURS

Monday: 7:30 am–2:30 pm

Tuesday: 11 am–3 pm & 4–7 pm

Wednesday: Closed

Thursday: 9 am–1 pm

Friday: Closed

Monthly 2nd Saturdays: 9–11 am

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News from Dublin Consolidated School

BY NICOLE PEASE

Happy New Year! As I reflect on 2023, I am so grateful to be working at DCS again. It is a wonderful school with a cohesive staff, and I feel fortunate to be a part of that. I am also thankful for our very generous and caring community that continues to offer support in many ways.

December was a very busy month filled with lots of fun activities and traditions. The annual Round Robin Craft Day was held on December 21. DCS staff member Vicki Brown, with support from others, planned

and coordinated the amazing variety of crafts to create a magical morning for students to enjoy. It is such a joy to see the children's engagement as they make gifts for their families. Learning the importance of doing things for others is one reason this event is so special. The afternoon brought a newer tradition to DCS. Students and staff participated in a Candy Cane Walk through the woods to Yankee Field and collected candy canes along the way. We had hoped for a bit more snow on the ground, but we will have to be patient!

We are really hoping our snow dances will encourage Mother Nature so students can take full advantage of "Winter Fun Days" held each Friday. Some of our students will travel to Crotched Mountain for a ski program, coordinated by our wonderful PTO, while those at school will enjoy some extra time outdoors as well as other fun winter activities.

We are excited to welcome author Marty Kelley back to DCS in mid-January. We thank the Dublin Community Foundation for the support that allows this humorous author to visit – and we hope the program inspires some creative writing from our students.

We are also starting to plan for the next school year. If you know anyone who will have a child 5 years old by September 30, please have them get in touch at 603-563-8332. Kindergarten screenings begin in February.

NICOLE PEASE is the principal teacher at Dublin Consolidated School.

ConVal School Board – Financial Updates

BY ALAN EDELKIND

It's budget season again. In addition to the annual budget development process, we are also in the middle of other decisions that could impact future budgets and property taxes: the Reconfiguration/Consolidation Project and the Contoocook Valley School District *et al v. The State of New Hampshire* lawsuit (recently decided in our favor but subject to appeal).

Here's a list of the issues we'll present in upcoming *Advocates* before the vote in March:

- 2024 property tax bills and funds "retained" and "returned" to towns in the school district
- Details of proposed FY25 school budget and other warrant articles (subject to voter approval in March 2024)
- Proposed revisions to the current Col-

lective Bargaining Agreement directed at improving the recruitment and retention of teachers, service professionals, and paraprofessionals.

All of this information will be available on the ConVal School Board website: <https://schoolboard.convalsd.net/budget/>.

FY24 ConVal School Budget Schedule

January 2024 – Board finalizes and approves proposed FY25 budget

January 9, 2024 – Public hearing on proposed budget (snow day: January 16)

January/February 2024 – Board-sponsored community forum on the budget (date TBD)

February 6, 2024 – Deliberative session

March 12, 2024 – Voting day

July 1, 2024 – First day of FY25

The most significant changes that will impact district finances this budget cycle include:

- The retention of unused funds from FY23 (prior to this year, all unused funds were returned to towns)
- A warrant article to address issues associated with the recruitment and retention of staff
- A larger increase in the operating budget, due to inflation, than the 1.35% increase proposed and approved for the current year (FY24)

Every year, the budget process begins with school board guidance provided to the superintendent, who uses it as the proposed budget is developed, reviewed, modified, and finally approved by the board. When we develop the budget, we acknowledge that costs are going to be higher, but just how much higher? The fact that the FY25 school year will run from July 2024 through June 2025 makes it more difficult.

However, salaries and benefits for district staff account for more than 70% of our costs. District voters approved a three-year contract for teachers, paraprofessionals, and specialized service professionals in March 2022. The FY25 school year will be the third and final year of the contract, which establishes the FY25 salary increase

continued on next page

A Message About the Reconfiguration/Consolidation Project

Although I am leading this study for the ConVal School Board, I want to make it clear that I will not necessarily agree with the majority conclusion. It is my responsibility to ensure that the process is run fairly and that all information is accurate and obtained in the proper sequence. I may not agree with the outcome, but as one of 13 school board members, I will support the majority decision. That is my duty and responsibility to our community, the school board, and the school district.

– Alan Edelkind



Bonnie's Barn Comes to The Friendly Farm

BY JULIE RIZZO

Bruce Fox, owner of The Friendly Farm in Dublin, is watching a dream come to life. The new post-and-beam barn under construction on Route 101 will be a special addition to The Friendly Farm, guaranteed to delight the young and young-at-heart who visit. Bonnie's Barn will be a place for sheep and llamas to sleep at night and for children and their adults to experience the joy of a hayloft on a summer afternoon.

Bonnie's Barn was made possible by a generous bequest from Bonnie Bowman of Harrisville. Bonnie and her partner, Joan Dunning, lived in Harrisville since 1994 and were devoted protectors of animals. Although Bruce had never met Bonnie before she died in 2022, he knew of her through Joan's brother, Dick Dunning, former principal at South Meadow School, where Bruce taught for 10 years. Bruce wants to honor Bonnie's generosity by naming the new facility in her memory.

Bruce has great plans for Bonnie's Barn, which is being built by Greg Moore of Dublin. Bruce remembers how much he loved as a child to go up in the hayloft when visiting his grandfather's farm in Dalton, Massachusetts. So Bonnie's Barn will have a hayloft, where children can sit on hay bales while they listen to animal stories read by Bruce's older grandchildren or other employees. From the loft windows, families can look out over the farm and watch the animals (with awesome photo ops).

To top off the experience, Bruce is building an interior slide from the loft to the barn floor, wide enough for parents of the youngest future farmers to accompany them. He also envisions

ConVal School Board

continued from previous page

for the majority of the district's employees. This reduces some of the uncertainty associated with estimating the effect of inflation. Several other multiyear contracts also help.

The board recently asked the superintendent to maintain the status quo – in other words, not to initiate significant new programs but to include planned upgrades to technology and curriculum.

ALAN EDELKIND is Dublin's representative to the ConVal School Board.

a 30-foot mural of farm life painted along the length of the barn facing Route 101 and has enlisted farm employee Sam Silegy, graduate of Rhode Island School of Design and art teacher in Keene, to coordinate this project, which will be painted by young visitors to The Friendly Farm.

The pine wood used to create the barn came from trees harvested on the property. Bruce cut some of them himself, limbed all of them, and had them cut into building timbers and boards in Swanzey. He expects the structure to be complete by the first of the year and is planning a dedication event in May, open to the public, to honor Bonnie Bowman. Dick Dunning will speak at the event.

The Fox family legacy continues. Already, generations of children have treasured memories of feeding goats and holding baby chicks at The Friendly Farm. With the opening of Bonnie's Barn, visitors will now be able to share some of Bruce's own most special memories of rural life.

JULIE RIZZO is on the staff of the *Advocate*.

The skeleton of the barn holds the weight of the post-and-beam structure. The red galvanized roof was installed in December.

Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. Remembrance 6th Annual Celebration

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Monday, January 15, 10 am–noon

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All are welcome!

*If I cannot do great things,
I can do small things in a great way.*

– The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

This event is hosted by the Hancock Conversations on Race Group.

For more information: HancockConversations@gmail.com

Ice Skating Then and Now

BY TOM WARREN

With the passage of Thanksgiving, which often provides the first opportunity to ice skate on the natural ice of Monadnock area ponds, a few references from historical figures are timely.

John James Audubon first skated near Mill Grove, Pennsylvania, about 20 miles northwest of Philadelphia in the early winter of 1803 on the Perkiomen Creek. He regarded the months of winter and skating as among the happiest days of his life. His neighbors were awed by his athletic skills on the pond, especially the girls who admired his flowing locks of hair!

An observer at the time recalled, "Today I saw the swiftest skater I ever beheld; backwards and forwards he went like the north wind, even leaping over airholes 15 feet or more across and continuing to skate without an instant's delay. I was told he was a young Frenchman, and I soon discovered him at a church dance, where his dancing exceeded his skating. His name was Audubon, and skating was one of his most stylish accomplishments and almost killed him as once he fell through an airhole but managed to safely reach shore."

Henry David Thoreau, a distinguished American known to the Monadnock Region, once observed, "Some little boys 10 years old are as handsome skaters as I know. They sweep along with a graceful, floating motion, leaning now to this side, now to that, like a marsh hawk beating the bush."

A few safety warnings for modern skaters: The ice is not safe for skating until it has a thickness of four inches; select smaller ponds are safer than deep lakes; it

is safe to skate on Dublin Lake only after several nights of below-zero temperature. One night of zero degrees will generate one inch of ice. So you should wait for four consecutive nights of cold as well as daytime temperatures below freezing. Black ice is safest, as it is similar to carbon steel. Safer ponds in our area include Howe Reservoir in Dublin and Tolman Pond in Nelson.

Some novice skaters bring metal crampons should they fall through the ice, but they may not help you to escape. If you fall through, you should pretend you are a seal, spread your arms and legs, and breaststroke your way to safety on solid ice. Then, quickly head home for a soak in a bathtub of warm, not hot, water.

One of the benefits of ice skating is being in touch with the natural world, as you may observe soaring bald eagles and otters swimming in open airholes, espe-

Quick Ice Safety Tips

- Always test the ice.
- Beware of wind and currents that break up the ice.
- **Do not** gather in large groups.
- **Never** skate on a river.

cially on Dublin Lake. You may also see the Aurora Borealis as you look to the north at night during night skating.

After several hours of skating, you will burn off hundreds of calories and can look forward to a post-skate treat of cookies and hot chocolate. In Norway, Sweden, and Finland, this treat is enhanced with peppermint schnapps and called a "Heidi." Nothing like hot chocolate with peppermint schnapps for adult skaters!

TOM WARREN is Dublin's resident ornithologist and an avid skater.

Get Outside This Winter

The Nordic Center at Dublin School, a state-of-the-art cross-country skiing facility, is also a great community resource in the winter months. It is free and open to the public when conditions are safe for skiing and when not being used for school and regional events. The center welcomes donations to help pay for grooming. Go to dublinschool.org/athletics/nordic-center for updates on conditions, grooming reports, and announcements of events and weather closures. To use the center, skiers must fill out a Nordic Center waiver found on the website, follow all safety guidelines at the center, and ski in the designated direction of travel. The entrance to the trails is located on Dublin Road, about a mile from Route 101 on the left. Suggested donations are found on the website.



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New Piano Bar at The DubHub

BY RUTH BLAIS THOMPSON

For several years now, the old piano sat silent in the corner of the South Room of the Dublin Community Center. It could no longer be tuned or played. No one wants old pianos anymore; you can't even give them away (especially ones that can no longer keep a tune). This piano was awaiting its fate: removal to the recycling center (most likely in pieces, due to its weight). I had been looking at pictures of upcycled pianos transformed into desks and coffee or wine bars, so I thought maybe this could work – if we had someone who could do it!

We decided to begin by “deconstructing” it. Board member Laura Elcoate asked her husband, Will, to give Frank Rizzo a call to lend a hand. Frank, Will, and I met, and the work began. We labeled all the keys and put them into a paper bag. Frank took off the top and disconnected everything that was possible, using his dad's old piano-tuning kit and wrenches. We uncovered the beautiful embossed brass backing plate inside the piano that reads “Henry F. Miller, Boston, Massachusetts.”

Will offered to take the pieces home and see what he could do. He said he's always been handy and enjoys construction, and in the past, he had done a lot of restoration of old houses. Working with his hands has long been his interest and provides him with stress relief and relaxation.

I sent him a picture of a transformed piano I'd seen online. Will's handiwork to create the piano bar included removing the keyboard and creating

a frame to put it back in at the correct height; removing, cleaning, and leveling all the piano keys; adding depth to the surface to give more usable area for the tabletop; fitting a tempered glass top for the surface; cutting and fitting a piece of plexiglass to protect the open brass strings and plate, adding an iridescent blue backing light for ambiance and illumination; and cleaning and staining the exterior wood.

Within a few months, we were presented with a classy piano bar! When

the project was finished, Will shared that he thought the transformation was a great idea and a fun and interesting project.

Henry F. Miller has been an American piano brand name since 1863. We now have a repurposed Henry F. Miller spinet dating to 1953. It is a service bar for food and beverages, and is another little piece of American history that remains at the DubHub. Stop by and see Will's work and have a cup of coffee or a glass of wine from the piano bar!

RUTH BLAIS THOMPSON is a member of the Dublin Community Center board.



Will Elcoate with the repurposed piano.



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January 2024 Events at the DubHub

Song Circle, Sunday, January 7

All are welcome, musicians and audience alike, at Song Circle, which meets the first Sunday of each month from 3–5 pm. Musicians can share favorite songs with the group and are asked to bring sheet music of songs with chords (10 copies) and your instrument if you have one, including your voice! If you don't have a printer, please send a printable version by the

previous Friday to David Mueller at dmueller55146@gmail.com.

Herbal Class with Katherine Gekas, Tuesday, January 9

This month, 'tis the season for another herb class focused on the respiratory system! Class members will make an herbal cough & sore throat tea & throat spray. Each participant will go home with resources and samples of the herbal products created in class. Class starts at 7 pm. The fee is sliding scale, pay as you'd like: \$10–\$40. To sign up or for more information, email katherinegekas2@gmail.com.

A TREE-mendous Treat, Saturday, January 13

Are you ready to toss or recycle your Christmas tree? Please save it, and bring it to the DubHub between 10 am–noon to donate to the animals at Amazing Grace Animal Sanctuary, who are eager to help you get rid of your green-stemmed yuletide leftovers! Donna and Daryl Waterson, who run the farm, say that Christmas trees are like candy to the animals on the farm and are actually a healthy snack loved by the goats, pigs, and alpacas. Bring the kids to meet and greet Buddy, their traveling goat mascot. Please make sure that the trees are free of hooks, tinsel, and any kind of ornament. We will have hot coffee, cocoa, and donuts for you while you unload your tree and visit with some of the “amazing” animals from the farm!

Calendars are always evolving. Please be sure to check out our Facebook page, facebook.com/dublinhub, and subscribe to our weekly newsletter, *Hubbub from the DubHub* (which can also be found on our Facebook page), for updated information about events. Email info@dublincommunitycenter.org if you would like to be added to the *Hubbub* weekly mailing list.

Ongoing Activities

Coffee & Conversation on Mondays & Wednesdays

Coffee & Conversation from 10 am–noon. All are welcome.

Adult Yoga on Mondays

Adult Yoga is taught by Gwir Huddleston Llewellyn from 3–4:15 pm. The cost is \$54 for six weeks or \$11 per class for drop-ins. Classes will resume in January. For information, email info@dublincommunitycenter.org.

Early AM Yoga with Meenakshi on Tuesdays

Early Morning Yoga with Meenakshi Moses is held at the DubHub, 6:30–7:30 am. Start your day with breath-centered hatha yoga to stretch and energize. All levels welcome. \$40 for four classes prepaid, or \$12 to drop in. Please bring your own yoga mat. For information, email meenakshi@namarupa.org.

DubHub Open Hours on Tuesdays

The DubHub is open from 9 am–3 pm for residents to study, use the Internet connection, check out the art, play a game, or meet friends.

Qigong on Wednesdays

Qigong class taught by Ginnette Groome is held from 12–1 pm. \$12 for a single class, and \$10 per class when paying for the month up front.

Knit with Nancy on Fridays

Knit with Nancy via Zoom at 10 am. Email npcayford@myfairpoint.net for information.

Monadnock Storytelling & Spoken Word Circle, Wednesday, January 17

On the third Wednesday of every month from 6:30–8:30 pm, the DubHub hosts the Monadnock Storytelling & Spoken Word Circle, an open mic for participants to share stories, poetry, rap, comedy, or truly any kind of spoken word. The organizers are Sebastian Lockwood and Papa Joe Gaudet, both of whom have 20-plus years of experience as professional storytellers. All are welcome, participants and listeners. For more information, contact Papa Joe at papajoe-storytelling.com and Sebastian at bit.ly/slockwood.

DubHub Community Lunch, Thursday, January 18

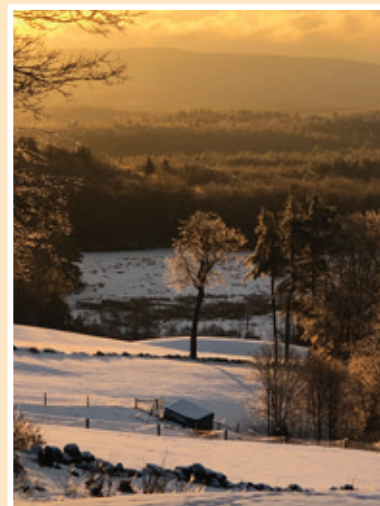
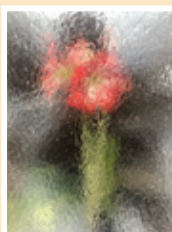
All are invited to the DubHub's delicious, free Community Lunch, held on the third Thursday of most months from noon–1 pm. On the menu this month: chili, bread, and dessert. For more information, contact info@dublincommunitycenter.org.

Smartphone Photo Contest Display and Opening Reception, January 12

All entries from the DubHub Smartphone Photo Contest will be on display throughout the month of January. Entrants who live or work in Dublin were allowed to enter up to three photos taken between December 2022 and December 2023 of a person, place, detail, or event anywhere in the Monadnock Region.

The opening reception, with announcement of the winners, will be held on Friday, January 12, from 5–7 pm.

L-R: Two entries in last year's Smartphone Photo Contest.



Coffee House & Open Mic, Saturday, January 20

On the third Saturday of each month, the DubHub hosts a combined Coffee House & Open Mic from 7–10 pm. A monthly coffee sponsor provides the java. Attendees are welcome to BYOB. A featured performance takes place for about 45–60 minutes, with open mic slots available prior.



This month, we are delighted to feature Volkert Volkersz. Volkert has been active in the Monadnock acoustic music scene since moving here from Washington State in 2016. He has appeared at the Keene Music Festival, Peterborough's Children and the Arts Festival, the Hancock Depot Cabaret, the "Notes" Series in Jaffrey, the Keene and Peterborough Farmers' Markets, various libraries, and numerous open mics.

Having served as program coordinator at the DubHub for five years, during which time he hosted the monthly Open Stage and several benefit concerts, Volkert is currently the circulation librarian at Dublin Public Library, where he enjoys doing his monthly "Stories & Songs" for children.

Email info@dublincommunitycenter.org to reserve a spot on the open mic sign-up, or just show up that evening to try your luck at finding an available spot on the list.

All Aboard! All Train Songs Concert, Sunday, January 21

The DubHub will be transformed into a train that leaves the station at **4:05 pm** sharp, with some great area musicians performing songs that feature trains. Performers include Wendy Keith, Doug Farrell, Otis Doncaster, Frank Jenkins, Frank Rizzo, White Mt. Rounders, Mulligan Row, and Melancholy Honey, among others. Tickets, which are expected to sell fast at a price of \$10 at the door, can be reserved by contacting info@dublincommunitycenter.org.

Potluck & Projects, January 23

On the 4th Tuesday evening of the month during these cold winter months, come to the DubHub at 5:30 pm with a potluck item to share, and your creative arts or crafts project in hand, to work on in the company of other creative souls!

DubHub Monthly Forum, Saturday, January 27

All are invited to the DubHub at 4 pm for Paul Tuller's movie of Dublin's 250th Anniversary Celebration from July 2002. Afterward, we'll reminisce about that wonderful celebration!

Apply for Conservation Opportunity Funds

BY KATIE FEATHERSTON

Every year, the Cheshire County Conservation District offers an opportunity for owners of small tracts of land to apply for funds (up to \$1,500) that will support projects that promote environmental stewardship and ecological integrity. In the past, these funds have gone to private landowners or stewards of 25 acres or less to build such things as pollinator habitats, wildlife habitats, and rain gardens, and for erosion control, restoring stream banks, and regenerating forest edge. Individuals, businesses, farmers, and foresters of 25 acres or less are eligible, and the deadline for application is February 1, 2024.

Application for funds requires a visit to the website cheshireconservation.org/cof to review the 2024 Request for Proposals. If eligible, you can then submit a 2024 application to include a brief description of your project with expected outcomes,

tasks to be completed and by whom, skills and resources you bring to the project, and a plan for long-term maintenance and sustainability. You will be expected to provide a budget for your project. Funds are not to go toward the landowner's time, research feasibility studies, or efforts that do not support wildlife habitat.

Priority will be given to projects that are informed by an understanding of the regional ecology, with an opportunity to partner with the CCCD in community education. The landowner should show a commitment to their input of time and resources and to the long-term sustainability of the project.

Visit the website to see the list of previous awardees and their projects and to see a sample application and then begin to imagine what you might be able to do with your little piece of Dublin.

KATIE FEATHERSTON is treasurer of the Conservation Commission.

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Is the Fire Station Roof Suitable for a Solar Array?

BY SUSAN PETERS

The Energy Committee and Select Board are exploring whether the Fire Station roof is suitable for a municipal solar array. In making this determination, there are a number of factors to consider, including roof capacity for solar panels; projected panel exposure to sunlight; electricity usage at the building; age of the roof shingles; and cost to install and maintain the panels.

State and federal grants are an important resource for municipal solar and energy efficiency projects. Some grants can cover up to 80% of the cost, with a town's portion being 20%. The Federal Inflation Reduction Act can also offset up to 30% of a town's cost. In New Hampshire, an 80/20 grant opportunity is expected to become available early in 2024 for small municipal solar projects of up to 60 kilowatts.

To initiate the research process for Dublin, members of the Energy Committee and Select Board met with Greg Blake (South Pack Solar) and John Kondos (Circuit Rider for Clean Energy NH) at three municipal sites: the Highway Barn property, capped landfill behind the Transfer Station, and the Fire Station. All three sites

offer the potential for roof and/or ground solar arrays. The capped landfill is considered a brownfield site, and the process for a possible ground array involves extensive engineering expertise.

Greg Blake estimated the size of solar arrays that would fit on the Fire Station and Highway Barn roofs. Using Solar Pathfinder, he determined that the Fire Station roof has a better sun orientation than the Highway Barn roof. The Fire Station came in at a very good 4.14 sun hours per day on average for each day of the year, while the Highway Barn was 3.85 sun hours. Greg noted that 4.4 sun hours per day is about the best you can get in this region, with average daily sun hours varying depending upon the time of the year.

Following the site visits, the Energy Committee and Select Board discussed the reports and concluded that the Fire Station offers the most attractive possibility for a first municipal solar project in Dublin. The Fire Station's current annual electricity usage is roughly comparable to the projected annual solar output. The roof was new in 2018, and the cost is projected to be much lower than for the Highway

Barn. The proposed size of the array is small enough to possibly qualify for an 80/20 grant. These grants are competitive, however, and there is no guarantee Dublin would receive one.

A solar array on the Fire Station could be a great opportunity for Dublin. Over a period of years, the energy savings would pay for the cost. If Dublin were to qualify for an 80/20 grant, the Town portion is currently estimated to be under \$12,000, subject to final pricing through the RFP bid process. The Select Board is considering proposing a warrant article for Town Meeting 2024 to create an energy capital reserve fund. The funds could be used for an energy project such as covering the Town's portion of the cost of a solar array at the Fire Station. The Town will also be exploring grant funding opportunities.

SUSAN PETERS the Select Board's representative on the Energy Committee and is on the staff of the *Advocate*.

New Year's Reminders

Get your fire extinguishers checked and charged, change your smoke detector batteries, and change your passwords!



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Scouts Gear Up for Camp Wanocksett Centennial

In January 2024, the Heart of New England Council, Boy Scouts of America will kick off a year-long celebration of the 100th Anniversary of Camp Wanocksett in Dublin. The celebration begins with an alumni reunion on January 13, from 2:30–7 pm at Billiards Café, 39 Main Street, Ayer, Massachusetts. They will also launch the Wanocksett History Project, a historic archive and oral history of the beloved camp intended to preserve memorabilia and memories from generations of campers and staff. Current and past campers, Scouting volunteers, staff, and alumni are invited to bring their photos, patches, and other memorabilia to the reunion to add to the archive and to participate in a short video interview.

The celebration continues with an alumni service day at Camp Wanocksett on April 27 and a Family Fun Day and Road Race on June 29. The 100th Anniversary dinner will be held on November 9. Details and registration information for the reunion and all 100th Anniversary events can be found at www.campwanocksett.org/cw100, along with information about Camp Wanocksett's current program offerings.

The History of Camp Wanocksett

In 1924, the Wachusett Council BSA purchased 12 acres of what had been the Bullard Farm on picturesque Thorndike Pond in Dublin to create a new Boy Scout summer camp. Since then, the camp has grown to encompass more than 220 acres, and tens of thousands of young people have

spent a week or more of their summers at the camp hiking, swimming, fishing, canoeing, sailing, singing songs, and building friendships. In addition to being a place



Camp entrance circa 1924 and today (below).

of rich history and natural beauty, Camp Wanocksett provides young people with priceless opportunities to develop critical life skills through outdoor programming. Learning things like cooking and first aid; how to keep to a schedule and be on time; how to live in close quarters with people from diverse backgrounds; and how to be responsible and take care of their own and



other's belongings. In a program that heavily emphasizes guided youth leadership, they cooperate, work together, and learn to lead responsibly.

In its hundred-year history, Camp Wanocksett has weathered the Great

Depression, a World War, changing societal norms, an explosion of alternative extra-curricular opportunities for youth, the rapid evolution of technology, three council mergers, and a global pandemic that canceled the 2020 camp season. The late 1960s saw a building boom at the camp thanks to a major capital campaign and support from area businesses.

In recent years, following the opening of BSA membership to all youth, Camp Wanocksett has adapted to be more accessible to Scouts of all abilities, with modernized restroom, showers, and cabins to accommodate all genders, and added programs from water-skiing to robotics to ensure all campers will find activities that capture their interest. Now operated by the Rutland-based Heart of New England Council, BSA, Camp Wanocksett annually hosts more than 1,300 young people ages 10–17 from all over New England and beyond during a seven-week summer season. The camp fields a seasonal staff of 70 mostly older teens and young adults. Hundreds of other Scouts visit throughout the rest of the year. Wanocksett is a popular destination for weekend camping and a base for Scouts hiking nearby Mt. Monadnock.

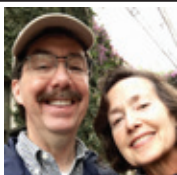
Visit www.hnebsa.org for more information. To find a local Scouting unit, visit www.beascout.org.

Photos courtesy of Heart of New England Council, Boy Scouts of America



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Resolved: To Make My Death Box

BY JEANNE STERLING

This is the month many of us will make our New Year's resolutions, some of which just might continue on through the months, while others fall by the wayside. We resolve to lose weight, stop smoking, do more volunteer work, clean out clutter, etc. We approach them as steps to better health and organizational masterpieces.

I'm not sure what category my resolution for 2024 falls under, but I plan on completing my "death box." I was introduced to a death box one evening after enjoying a lovely dinner with my parents. Coffee was poured, dessert served, and then my mother said to my father, "Jerry, take out the death box." What?! As Bill and I sat there, my dad retrieved from the closet an L.L. Bean shirt box...you know, the one with the pretty Christmas trees printed on it. However, this box had a label on it in my dad's scrawl: Death Box.

The contents were removed one by one, with an explanation of each enclosure. I was amazed at the organization of it all. They had gone to the Cremation Society of New Hampshire to prepay their funer-

als. When needed, all we would have to do was bring the enclosed folder to the hospital, nursing home, or (if the death took place at home) the funeral director on the scene. Their wills were in another envelope. Bank information, insurance papers, birth certificates, passports, doctor



Jerry and Ginny Dubuque, Jeanne's parents.

contacts, and a list of friends' phone numbers so we could notify them — even these were organized by who was to be called first. The last little envelope held the key to their strong box and keys for their clocks to be wound.

They had also purchased their plot in the Henniker cemetery. "A nice corner lot.

I always liked corner lots," said my dad. He also explained that the big tree on the lot had been cut down, so now there was a big stump we could sit on when we went to visit them.

So this year, armed with an article from AARP about what needs to be collected for the survivor, I'm going to gather all the information necessary, enclose it in individual labeled envelopes, and produce our you-know-what for the family. I've witnessed major confusion happening to families attempting to navigate the reams of paperwork, insurance forms, and passwords to devices and financial institutions. Hopefully, I can complete the task of gathering all the information necessary in 2024. And, hopefully, it won't be needed in 2024!

My father died in 2004, so my mother took over the responsibility of seeing things through. When my mother died in 2008 at Cheshire Medical Center, it was around 11 pm. Bill and I showed up with the proper envelope of information needed.

At her burial, the funeral director handed me an envelope that contained an invoice for \$300. I asked, "Why? I thought they had prepaid everything." His answer

continued on next page

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Pay As You Throw

BY AL LYONS

The Town of Dublin Waste Reduction & Recycling Committee (WR&RC) strongly endorses the implementation of a Pay As You Throw (PAYT) program in Dublin. The cost of solid waste disposal has increased from 56 cents per pound in 2021 to 75 cents per pound in 2024, and will increase by an additional 7% a year in 2025 and 2026. To avoid the adverse impact on the town budget, the PAYT program will:

- Mitigate the impact on property taxes of this 25% increase in tipping fees. Typically, neighboring towns have experienced a 25% to 40% reduction in solid waste disposal volume (cost) when they have implemented PAYT programs. This means that a conservative estimate of the annual savings to taxpayers is about \$12,500 (about 25% of current cost). If the town chooses not to act, the cost will increase by about \$12,500 for a total increase of about \$25,000. Several neighboring towns (Peterborough and Keene) have been benefiting from PAYT programs for more than 20 years.

- Encourage residents to reduce the volume of solid waste disposed of at the Transfer Station by composting and recycling more. Currently residents pay the same to throw out 20 or more bags of garbage as they do to throw out one or no bags. The cost is covered by property taxes. In effect, those of us who recycle or do not use the transfer facility are subsidiz-

ing those who choose not to recycle and/or not to compost.

- Offset the costs of disposal of solid waste through the sale of town trash bags. This will reduce the volume and ultimately decrease the budget.

- Generate revenues to offset the ever-increasing cost of solid waste disposal. Some of this new revenue could be used to subsidize the cost of recycling more plastics. Currently, Dublin only recycles plastic types 1 and 2 (the ones that recyclers pay the most for). If the town agrees that it makes sense to recycle all plastics, we could sell or pay the recycler to take types 1 through 7, depending on market conditions. Then the recyclers would separate and process the recycled plastic. This would eliminate the need to educate residents about how to separate the plastics by type and eliminate the need for separate storage places for each type of plastic.

- Create a more fair and equitable way to distribute the costs of managing waste throughout the town. Those who generate more waste and bring it to the Transfer Facility will pay more. Those who recycle and compost will pay less.

- Reduce Dublin's impact on the environment by encouraging more reuse, reduction, and recycling.

- Make everyone happier by doing the right thing!

For more information about recycling and PAYT programs, please visit bit.ly/rcapsolutions.

The Town of Dublin Waste Reduction & Recycling Committee (WR&RC) meets in the basement of Dublin Town Hall at 5 pm on the second Monday of each month. If you would like to get involved, please come to the next meeting on January 8 or any of the future meetings. Current initiatives to reduce environmental impacts of Dublin residents include:

- Recycling of plastic bags and composting at the Transfer Station
- Implementation of a PAYT (Pay As You Throw) policy
- Initiating Styrofoam recycling
- Expanding plastic recycling to include all types
- Educating the community about reducing waste

The WR&RC looks forward to the participation of other members of the community who care about the environment and how their tax dollars are spent.

AL LYONS is on the Dublin Waste Reduction & Recycling Committee.

Resolved: My Death Box

continued from previous page

made me smile. "About a week after your father passed, your mother came to the office and upgraded her urn from the plain bronze to the engraved roses patterned brass." When I told my sister this, our smiles turned into laughter. My mother had also told the monument company not to put a "-" after her birthdate on the stone shared with my father, as it made her feel like she had to hurry up and die.

The priest officiating at her funeral referred to my mother, Ginny, as a "peach and a pistol." Yes, she was.

JEANNE STERLING is on the staff of the *Advocate*.

Harris Center Introduction to Bird Identification

In early February, UNH Cooperative Extension (UNHCE) will open registration for the 2024 Introduction to Bird Identification, Ecology & Habitats course. This is a very popular online and field-based course with field trips offered in a variety of habitats at popular birding hotspots and at less-known birding locations throughout New Hampshire. This course is led by Matt Tarr (Extension Professor & Wildlife Habitat Specialist, UNHCE) and Phil Brown (Bird Conservation Director, Harris Center for Conservation Education).



Phil Brown of the Harris Center is a course instructor.

This course is for anyone interested in improving their ability to identify birds by sight and sound and in learning more about bird ecology and the habitats birds require. This course will improve your ability to:

- Identify common bird species by sight, songs and calls, habitat, and behavior
- Predict what bird species will occur in different habitat types
- Identify things you can do on your land to attract and benefit a variety of birds

Online lessons will be emailed each week March 2–May 24, and optional field trips will be held April 1–June 22 in every New Hampshire county. Email Matt Tarr (matt.tarr@unh.edu) for a complete course outline available in early January. Registration will open in early February.

The cost is \$45 if you don't want a certificate of completion and \$75 if you do. No one will be turned away due to inability to pay the course fee.

Photo courtesy Harris Center

Dublin Remembers Scott Lambert (1961–2023)

BY JUNE BRENING

Scott Lambert had been a postal clerk in Rindge and Milford before becoming a postal clerk in Dublin several years ago. He told me that he had been trying to get a management position for about three years before he got the postmaster job in Greenfield, New Hampshire. While he had that title, he had to do “double-duty,” returning to the Dublin Post Office to help out because our new postmaster, Jason Champney, was recovering from an illness. That was fine with us Dubliners, because Scott was greatly missed. While he was in Dublin, he became an essential part of our community. Scott was liked by everyone and would offer any assistance you might



need while mailing your items, buying stamps, or picking up your packages.

After being in Greenfield for a couple of years, Scott became the postmaster of Harrisville. I visited with him a few times while he was there, shortly after he had cancer surgery. He told me he needed another procedure and that he planned to retire shortly after returning to work following that surgery. Unfortunately, Scott's plans were not meant to happen for him.

Scott passed away at the age of 62 on November 20. He is greatly missed by everyone who knew him – for his wonderful personality, friendliness, and willingness to offer help whenever it might be needed.

JUNE BRENING is a former postal clerk at the Dublin Post Office.

Request from End 68 Hours of Hunger

Dubliners have been especially generous over the holidays, and that means so much to our kids! We don't want your thoughtfulness to go to waste, so as the weather turns colder, it's good to remember that items left in the side entry to the Dublin Community Church are likely to freeze and not be usable. Tuna and chicken are wonderful in the summer, but right now we'd love it if donors could focus on non-freezable items like Ramen noodles, boxes of instant oatmeal, and Ritz and Saltine crackers. Thank you so much!

*Community supper info
for your calendar:*

January 23, 2024

5:30 pm

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Going Mano a Mano with ChatGPT

BY JULIE RIZZO

ChatGBT, Google Bard, generative AI, deepfakes, machine learning – the list of baffling buzzwords is growing exponentially, while this writer happily exists in her cocoon of lined paper and sharpie pens. It's time, I thought, to find out what all the hype is about.

Those of you who read the *Advocate* online know that each month, we post a 500-word summary of the entire 14- to 16-page issue at dublinadvocate.com, along with a pdf of the printed newsletter (in color, by the way). It's the last step of a two-week process of pulling the *Advocate* together for the Dublin community. Last month, Paul Tuller suggested to my co-editor, Mary Loftis, "You should have ChatGPT do the summary!"

Challenge accepted. But where to start? I'd learned a few intriguing tidbits from the series on Critical Media Literacy that Dublin School's Sophie Luxmoore presented this fall at the library. When I contacted her for help, she shared the basics of "prompt engineering" that she teaches her students: When asking ChatGPT to write something, give it a goal, an audience, and a format for response, then add stylistic specifics like tone or humor. And be prepared to adjust, refine, and redo the results.

I fed my bot helper the first seven pages of the November *Advocate*, approximately 4,000 words. I asked it to "write a 250-word summary of these articles for a community newsletter." I was amazed to get it back in just seconds – a credible, if a bit stiff, first pass that hit the key points in outline form. I responded, "Rewrite in a friendly tone and no bullets." Again, in just



Julie takes a hands-on approach with ChatGPT.

seconds, my bot produced a rewrite, with a definite sense of humor:

Meet Mike Stanley, a true adventurer at heart. At 91, he's been guiding Outward Bound adventures for 35 years, instilling self-sufficiency in teenagers. What a legend!

Get ready for an evening of turtle tales with Sy Montgomery at the Jaffrey Civic Center. It's a chance to dive into the fascinating world of turtles and animals. Don't miss out – it's going to be a shell of a good time!

And a big shoutout to our Dublin Advocate readers – your donations keep the good news flowing. Thank you for being awesome!

Now, Mary and I would never countenance such wanton use of exclamation points in the *Advocate*, but I give my bot

assistant high marks for a can-do attitude, timeliness, and flexibility.

Next, I used ChatGPT to edit a single article for "clarity, brevity, and style." The response was pretty close to what we did with the article in our own editing pass. But, being a community newsletter, we try as much as possible to preserve the writer's voice, which is no doubt recognizable to friends and neighbors. ChatGPT is a little brutal in that regard, and anything it can't parse, it ignores. It's not quite ready for prime time at the *Advocate*, thank goodness.

So what did I learn from this baby step into the world of generative AI? For starters:

- It's fast. In the time it would have taken me to find a pen and paper, it had turned in its first draft and headed out the door to recess.
- It takes criticism without offense and simply tries again. And again. And again.
- It can be hilarious. After typing "write a humorous 200-word summary for a community newsletter," I inadvertently hit "send" without attaching the text. It responded immediately with a crazy story about a town picnic featuring a mayor and a pie-eating contest, a pie-stealing squirrel, and a breakdancing Granny Jenkins at the talent show. I think that one qualifies as a deepfake...

Despite the novelty and the laughs, I also learned again what I always knew – that the act of writing satisfies a deep need in my soul. For me, no amount of computer-generated verbiage replaces the satisfaction of putting words and sentences together in the spirit of building understanding and community. I hope you, dear *Advocate* reader, can tell the difference.

JULIE RIZZO is on the staff of the *Advocate*.

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JANUARY 2024 Calendar

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
 7 HUB Song Circle 3-5pm	1 NEW YEARS DAY	2 TH Town Clerk Office CLOSED; TH Budget Com 7pm; HUB Yoga 6:30-7:30am; Open 9am-3pm	3 HUB Coffee & Conversation 10-noon; QiGong noon-1pm	4 TH Planning Bd 7pm	5 HUB /Zoom Knit w/ Nancy 10-11am	6
14	8 HUB Coffee & Conversation 10-noon; Yoga 3-4:15pm; TH Select Bd 4:30pm; WR&RC 5pm	9 HUB Yoga 6:30-7:30am; Open 9am-3pm; Herb Class 7pm; ConVal Budget Forum 6pm; TH Budget Com 7pm	10 HUB Coffee & Conversation 10-noon; QiGong noon-1pm; DPL Trustees 5pm	11	12 HUB /Zoom Knit w/Nancy 10-11am; Smartphone Photo Contest Reception 5-7pm	13 HUB Tree/Goat Event, 10-noon; DPL Discussion Town Positions 10-11:30am
21 HUB Train Concert 4-5pm	15 MLK JR. DAY ; MLK Celebration Reynolds Hall , P'boro 10am-noon; TH Town Clerk Office CLOSED; Select Bd 4:30pm; HUB Coffee & Conv. 10-noon; Yoga 3-4:15pm	16 HUB Yoga 6:30-7:30am; Open 9am-3pm; ConVal Budget Forum (snow day) 6pm; TH Budget Com 7pm	17 HUB Coffee & Conversation 10-noon; QiGong noon-1pm; Storytelling Circle 6:30-8:30pm; TH Con Com 5pm	18 HUB Community Lunch noon-1pm; TH Planning Bd 7pm	19 HUB /Zoom Knit w/Nancy 10-11am	20 HUB Coffeehouse and Open Mic 7-10pm
28	22 HUB Coffee & Conversation 10-noon; Yoga 3-4:15pm; TH Select Bd 4:30pm	23 TH NH Primary Election 8am-7pm; TH Budget Com 7pm; HUB Yoga 6:30-7:30am; Open 9am-3pm; Potluck & Projects 5:30-7:30pm; DCC Community Supper 5:30pm	24 TH Candidate Filing period begins; HUB Coffee & Conversation 10-noon; QiGong noon-1pm	25 TH ZBA Meeting 7pm	26 HUB /Zoom Knit w/Nancy 10-11am	27 HUB DubHub Forum 4pm
	29 HUB Coffee & Conversation 10-noon; Yoga 3-4:15pm; TH Select Bd 4:30pm	30 HUB Yoga 6:30-7:30am; Open 9am-3pm; TH Budget Com 7pm	31 HUB Coffee & Conversation 10-noon; QiGong 12-1pm	 DCC Dublin Community Church DPL Dublin Public Library HUB Dublin Community Center TH Town Hall, Dublin		

THE DUBLIN ADVOCATE may be found online and in color at WWW.DUBLINADVOCATE.COM

The Dublin Advocate is written by neighbors, for neighbors. Everyone is welcome to submit articles and/or photographs of interest to the community. Email submissions by the 15th of each month to DublinAdvocate@gmail.com.

Articles subject to edit. The editors reserve the right to refuse any article or advertisement.

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