



BARNSTEAD BANNER

Good News from a Small Town

A Peaceful Christmas



by Sam McKeen

Christmas is almost here! Like many, you may have an idealized picture of the perfect Christmas. Perhaps you envision a Christmas similar to a romantic and tranquil Currier & Ives Christmas scene that depicts fallen snow on rolling hills, horse drawn sleighs, and restful trees. Unfortunately, this calm and peaceful ideal of Christmas is often far from the reality. The Christmas season is usually anything but peaceful. In fact, during this time of year there is actually an increase in anxiety, loneliness, chaos, and emotional pain.

During the Christmas of 1863, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow reflected on his life and all that was happening around him. The nation was in the midst of a Civil War. He was caring for his oldest son who had been seriously wounded in the fighting. Two years prior he had lost his wife in a tragic and horrific accident. His heart was heavy with grief as he heard the Christmas bells ringing and the singing of “peace on earth” outside his home. How could anyone celebrate peace on earth in a world so full of violence and injustice? Longfellow’s deep reflection into his own brokenness, the tragedies of his life, and the harsh reality of war bore a poem that would become a much loved Christmas carol.

I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old, familiar carols play,
and wild and sweet
The words repeat
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

When one considers the idea of peace in the world today, it seems like an unimaginable dream. Everywhere you look we see chaos and conflict. How can peace on earth be possible? This question is what Longfellow also wrestled with:

“There is no peace on earth,” I said;
“For hate is strong,
And mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!”

The repeated refrain in Longfellow’s poem “Of peace on earth, good-will to men!” is a direct quote of what the angels spoke to the shepherds on the night Jesus was born (Luke 2:14). Longfellow understood that the angel’s proclamation was not about peace in the way that we typically think of peace, as the absence of conflict. Instead, the angel’s proclamation had to do with the fact that once Jesus accomplished what he came to do, it would be possible for mankind to experience the peace of God. An inner peace, a calm assurance, that exists despite external circumstances or even emotional turmoil.

Longfellow recognized that true peace originates with God and that it is a peace that “surpasses all understanding” (Philippians 4:7).

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
“God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;
The Wrong shall fail, The Right prevail,
With peace on earth, good-will to men.”

My prayer and hope is that we will all experience that peace, not just at Christmas but throughout the year. Have a blessed Christmas!



Barnstead Historical Society

Christmas Sale

Saturday, December 2, 2023

9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Barnstead Town Hall

108 South Barnstead Road

MJ Michael Photography (cards, canvas's, eclectic gifts)

Kiley/Tiede Family Crafts (turned wood items, baked goods, cards)

Jeannie Terry (holiday decorations)

Barnstead Old Home Day (t-shirts)

Made with Love Custom Quilts (mug rugs, bowl cozies, place mats)

Savannah Fifield (earrings, horseshoes, stickers, ornaments)

Judy Forsyth (embroidered towels, table runners)

Ann Watson (holiday bows, kid's games, painted seashells)

Mary Conton (hand-quilted items)

Tiede Farms Smokehouse (breakfast sandwiches)

Historical Society Books available for purchase

Raffle Prizes Donated by Friends and Businesses

Soup, Chowder and Other Edibles

Time Is Not Infinite...Or Is That Mortality?

By Kristina Schram

I'm having a hard time. With most things, yes—I'm getting old, folks—but more specifically with the passage of time. I'm having a hard time with time. I can't seem to bring myself to believe we're in December already. How did an entire year pass so fast? What did I actually do during that time? I'd love to tell you, but I can't remember (though again, being a bit long in the tooth, I can't even remember what I had for breakfast this morning, or if I had it). Sigh.

Lately it's not just the end of the year when I feel this fleeing of the hours. I often find myself saying, "It's Thursday already? Where did the week go?" (Or more likely, "It's Monday already? Where did the weekend go?") "[Insert child's name here] is graduating? Weren't they just born?" Or you feel like you just took down last season's holiday decorations (though maybe in reality, you big procrastinator, you just did), and it's time to put them back up again. But seriously, you blink and a decade has passed. Every experience, every emotion, every action, here and gone. Frankly, I don't like it.

Maybe time flies so fast for me, not because I'm having fun, but because I spend so much time marking it. I'm deliriously happy when lunchtime arrives, but as soon as it's over I'm thinking about/anticipating supper. I can't wait until Friday, so I want to fast forward through the rest of the week (when I'm working and doing chores and not living it up like a boss like I do on the weekends) to get there. The iconic song "Working for the Weekend," which I find myself singing quite often at work (which my boss might not appreciate), captures my experience perfectly. Even Groucho Marx had something to say about it: "Time flies like an arrow; fruit flies like a banana." He totally gets it. But anyway, in the past, I felt like I was hiking up the mountain, slow and steady, but these days I feel like I'm flying down the other side, on greased wheels, with a sail and a hurricane-force wind at my back.

Anticipation is good, and sometimes better than the actual event, but I really need to work on living in the moment, even if it's a boring one. Soon I'll be dead and I don't want all the memories I relive, as I sit in a rocking chair petting my cat and reminiscing about my life, to be about food. The problem is, I'm a born organizer and I love accomplishing tasks and marking them off my list. It's just so darn satisfying. Tick, tick, tick! It's a bad habit, though, and a great destroyer of enjoying the process. It also sounds like a bomb about to go off. (There's a lesson in there somewhere, I'm sure.) I guess what I'm trying to say is that one has to at least try to make the most of where you are right now. Yes, it's hard, and, honestly, it can be a little tiring, but it can help slow down the relentless march of time.

Then again, what do you do for the moments when you really do want time to speed up? You know, teeth cleanings, painting walls, reading this article? If you figure it out, let me know because I have no idea. While you work on that, I'll be working on living in the moment as I set up those holiday decorations, for the hundredth time. Or maybe I could hire someone to do it for me and watch them work while eating warm, gooey cookies and drinking a big mug of hot choccie. I get to enjoy the process and the end product, but without the effort. That sounds like a twofer: living it up, while living in the moment. So here's the big question: Who wants to help me make this happen?

FISH TAILS



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December Events at Oscar Foss Memorial Library

Library Hours: Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 10:00AM-6:00PM, Thursdays and Fridays from 12:00PM-8:00PM, and Saturdays from 10:00AM-1:00PM. We are closed for staff training on the second Thursday of every month until 3:00PM.

****We will be closed for the holidays on Friday, 12/22, and Saturday, 12/23, and on Thursday, 12/28 through Saturday, 12/30. There will be no Yoga on 12/25/23 and 1/1/24.****

Make a stop at the OFML Propagation Station! There will be plant cuttings available to take from the library, and people can drop off their own as well. (But please leave Audrey II at home!) While supplies last.

Krampus on Campus! Krampus will be hanging out in the teen section for the entire month of December, so come see what he is up to!

Fri. 12/1 @ 6PM Writers Forum: Due to the upcoming holidays, we are making a temporary schedule change for our group. We will be meeting Friday, Dec. 1. Our next meeting will be in the new year (on the 4th Friday of the month). For ages 14+ and all levels of writing experience/expertise. Write on!

Wed. 12/6 @ 6-7:30PM Mead and Read: ALERT! We are changing our meeting location this month to the library's Meeting Room (and we will be here until spring and better traveling weather). We will be discussing the classic Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol on Wednesday, Dec. 6, from 6:00-7:30. Feel free to bring food for yourself or to share. Don't forget some for Tiny Tim! Next month's book will be the haunting tale Rebecca by Daphne Du Maurier.

Thurs. 12/7 @ 5-6:30PM Teen/Tween Cookie Decorating: Leah Whitney from Cookie Bear Baking LLC will be offering a guided class on the art of cookie decorating. She will give a quick lesson on icing consistency and have a practice session controlling an icing bag. Learn about piping transfers, piping, outlining, and flooding for holiday-themed cookies! There is a 10-person limit so register ASAP!

Fri. 12/8 @ 4-7:00PM Oscar's Elves: Oscar's Elves are in the house! Our local teens will be here at the library to help with all of your holiday wrapping needs. (If you're especially lucky, the Elves will rap while they wrap.) We will have wrapping paper, tags, bags, and ribbon for all of your presents. Bring in your gifts to have them wrapped while you take a break to browse the library. The wrapping is free, but you're more than welcome to give a donation to the library to be used to fund future programming. If you are a teen interested in volunteering please contact the library to sign up!

Sat. 12/9 @ 10:30AM Wizard of Oz Matinee: We are off to see the wizard, the wonderful Wizard of Oz! Get transported over the rainbow into the whimsical world of Oz at our Saturday matinee. The library meeting room will be decorated with cutouts of the characters (perfect for photos!), and we will also be offering light refreshments and Wizard of Oz-themed crafts. Admission is free, and all are welcome. We look forward to welcoming you to this magical journey down the Yellow Brick Road!

Fri. 12/15 @ 4-5PM Family Crafternoon: Where everybody can be an artist! All ages are welcome. Join us for a fun afternoon of making holiday ornaments/decorations! Light refreshments and supplies will be provided. Space is limited, so registration is required.

Wed. 12/20 @ 10:30AM Storytime with Santa: Come to the library for a special story hour with the big guy! Grown-ups, if you can, please bring a wrapped new or gently used book to exchange after story time. But in case you forget, don't worry, we will have a few extras on hand!



Community Events and Resources

Christmas Candlelight Service

Center Barnstead Christian Church will be hosting a Christmas Candlelight Service on Friday, December 22nd from 6pm – 7pm.

Alcoholics Anonymous

The Barnstead “There Is A Solution” group will be celebrating their third anniversary on Tuesday, December 12th from 6pm – 8pm at Center Barnstead Christian Church. For more information contact Jimmy Seiler at (603) 309-7010.

Storer Ranchers 4-H Club

The “Storer Ranchers 4-H Club” will be having their inaugural meeting on Wednesday, December 6th at 6:30pm at the T.L. Storer Reservation Dining Hall. For more information go to <https://storerranch.org/>.

Christmas Origins Presented by Sam McKeen from the Center Barnstead Christian Church

Join us for an interactive presentation that will explore the origins of Christmas and discover how the traditions and festivities that we celebrate came about. Together we will unravel the many myths and mysteries around how Christmas began and evolved into the holiday that we are familiar with today. You may be surprised by what you discover! Event will be held at the Oscar Foss Memorial Library on 12/15 at 7:00 PM

Harvey Reid and Joyce Andersen Family Holiday Concert

Saturday, December 9, 2023, 4:00pm at the Congregational Church of North Barnstead, 504 North Barnstead Rd, Center Barnstead, NH 03225 (phone: 603-776-1820; leave message). Tickets at the door, by donation (suggested donation \$15/person, \$25/family).

Need help with getting food stamps or other food resources?

Call our Barnstead Satellite Family Resource Center for assistance. Open Tuesday and offering drop-in hours to meet with Kaya Beland, Family Support Specialist, from 8:30-11:30 at Locke Lake, 43 Colony Drive, Ctr. Barnstead. Or call Kaya Beland at (603)998-7532 or by email, Kaya.beland@lrcs.org



Barnstead Parks and Recreation

SANTA MAIL

It's that time of year again! The Santa mailbox will be back at the library from December 1st through December 18th. There will be letter templates available at the library for the children to write to Santa and even some images to color if they wish. Then they can simply drop the letter in the mailbox, and it will be sent to the North Pole.

ICE RINK

We are hoping that the weather this winter will be better for ice skating than it was last winter. However, to keep the rink open, it takes a lot of work, especially if we get a lot of snow. We will be looking for volunteers who are willing to lend us a hand throughout the winter for rink snow removal, shoveling of the walkways, helping out at rink events, or other rink-related tasks. If you would like to be added to the volunteer contact list for this winter, please send your name and contact information to us via email or Facebook Messenger, letting us know. When we need help, we will send a message to all of the contacts with what we need and when, and if you are available to help, you can reply and let us know.

Also, stay tuned for upcoming information on the rink rebuild plans and opportunities.

WINTER ACTIVITIES

Some people struggle through the winter due to the shorter days and less interaction with others. We would like to provide more opportunities for people to get together during these colder, shorter days and are looking for suggestions and input from the community. Send us a Facebook message or email with any suggestions for things you would like to see hosted, and we will see what we can do. Ideas could range from a board game night or adult coloring night to a snow tubing event.

COMMISSION MEMBERS

Being a part of the commission is a great way to become more involved in creating, planning, and hosting activities or programs for our community. There are different levels of involvement, such as leading and coordinating the various components that make an event happen or working behind the scenes. Our motto is "Bringing Community Together by Doing Fun Stuff!" There are various openings on the commission, and we are excited to welcome new members. Please reach out via email or Facebook Messenger if you would like more information.

Please watch our website (barnsteadnhparks-rec.com) and Facebook page (@[barnsteadparks](https://www.facebook.com/barnsteadparks)) for additional details, date changes, cancellations, and pop-up events. You can also reach us at 802-332-3799 or barnsteadparks@gmail.com if you have any questions.



**CENTER BARNSTEAD
CHRISTIAN CHURCH**

Worship Service - Sundays @ 10AM

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RECIPE CORNER

FRENCH MEAT PIE

Ingredients:

- 2 tbsp cooking oil
- 1 large onion, thinly sliced
- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 pound ground pork
- 1 cup mashed potatoes
- 2 tsp ground allspice
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp pepper



- Pastry for double-crust pie (9 inches) (I use Refrigerated pie crust)
- 1 egg beaten (optional)

Directions

1. In a skillet, heat oil over medium. Saute onion until tender. Remove and set aside.
2. Brown beef and pork together. Drain.
3. Combine onion, meat, potato, and seasonings.
4. Line the pie plate with pastry.
5. Fill with meat mixture. Top with crust. Seal and flute the edges. Cut slits in the top crust.
6. Brush with egg if desired.
7. Bake at 375 degrees for 30-35 minutes or until golden brown.

Makes 6-8 servings

I make this for Christmas Eve, my family enjoys this dish —not just for Christmas —I make it often. Serve with coleslaw, maybe some beets or an extra serving of mashed potatoes.

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

J Terry



PMHS Team 319 Booster Club
Presents the 6th Annual

HOLIDAY CRAFT & VENDOR FAIR

Shop from over 50 booths offering a diverse range of crafts, products, and services to visitors!

Saturday December 2, 2023

9:00AM – 2:00PM

Prospect Mountain High School
242 Suncook Valley Road
Alton, NH 03809



For additional information contact Michelle @ mkelley@pmhschool.com

2023 Christmas Fair Childcare!



\$5 per child per hour

3 hour maximum

Ages 2 - 9

Contact

Hkelley@pmhschool.com

with questions

Want to explore all the treasures at the Holiday Craft and Vendor Fair being put on by PMHS Team 319 Booster Club at Prospect Mountain High School on December 2, from 9-2?

The Senior Class of 2024 at Prospect Mountain High School is offering to entertain your children while you shop. For \$5 per hour per kid you can leave your child in a nearby classroom to play Christmas games, sing carols, do crafts, write letters and have supervised trips to visit Santa at the Fair and more for up to 3 hours of fun!



If you would like to submit an event or classified for the **Barnstead Banner**, please email danielle@oscarfoss.org with the details.

To subscribe to the online issue of the banner, go to www.oscarfoss.org/the-barnstead-banner

BARNSTEAD PARADE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Worship Service 9:00 A.M.
Rev. Sandy Pierson—483-2846

BE THE CHURCH

Protect the environment. Care for the poor.
Forgive often. Reject racism.
Fight for the powerless.
Share earthy and spiritual resources.
Embrace diversity. Love God. Enjoy this life.

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF NORTH BARNSTEAD - UCC

504 N. Barnstead Rd. Center. Barnstead, NH
ccnorthbarnstead.com

**Worship with us in-person
or join on Zoom at 10am**