



BARNSTEAD BANNER

Good News from a Small Town



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NEWS**

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SUBMIT
AN EVENT OR CLASSIFIED FOR
THE BARNSTEAD BANNER,
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Aging Disgracefully

by Kristina Schram

They say 55 is the new 35. Well, they're wrong. 55 is still 55, just ask my joints. Sure, you've got your aberrations (like that dancing singer/actor whose name rhymes with K-Flo), who look like they participate in unsavory rituals on the night of the full moon, rituals that involve blood-letting and chanting. But looking twenty years younger than you really are isn't the reality for most people. I, for one, look like I'm the one the rituals are being performed on, after the ritual is done, that is.

Unfortunately, these days society believes we should pretend aging isn't a real thing. Like skin doesn't wrinkle, flesh doesn't sag, weight gain doesn't happen, chins don't double or blend into our necks, and hair doesn't go gray, or disappear altogether. But most of us can't look like that. We don't have the genetics; and more importantly, we don't have the money to pay for plastic surgery, anti-aging creams, personal assistants, personal trainers, tanning sprays or beds, ~~monthly sacrifices~~.

Plus, it sounds like so much work and torture for so little reward. I'd rather age gracefully. Though nowadays, we'd probably call it aging disgracefully.

Now here's a thing: three of the four Golden Girls were supposed to be in their 50s. Ha! Can you imagine if people in their 50s nowadays tried to pull off that look? We'd be shipped off to a retirement home, stat. (We are a hurtful species.) But people looked older back then. Due to a variety of reasons, like poor nutrition and health care, previous generations aged more quickly than later generations. But I think them wearing old people clothes from birth onwards, plus living at a time when the world was in black and white, might be the more likely culprits. Gen-X, my generation, supposedly aged quickly early on, because we were left to be feral, but then the aging process slowed way down for us in adulthood when we learned that being raised feral has its advantages.

On the other hand, I'd rather not look old for my age. I always worry that once people hear how old I am, they're going to say, "You don't look your age!" and mean, you actually look older, ma'am. Like I could have been Lincoln's wife, or something. That's when they discover this old lady can still deliver a relatively painful kick to the shin, but no higher, mind you. Wouldn't want to dislocate my hip. You can call me vain all you want, I don't care. I don't know anyone still breathing who wants to look like they've been dug up six months post-mortem.

On the plus side, I can now join a retirement community, which is sweet. We once visited my mother-in-law at her place in Florida, and it was great. They had a golf course, alligators on the golf course, a pond, alligators in the pond (keep the alligator joke going for the rest of the list, all right?), a swimming pool, golf carts, tennis courts, a Walmart right next door, plus everything was all within easy walking/carting distance. The worst part of living there would be that you're surrounded by old people. Well, actually, the worst part would be when you discover you're one of those old people.

I don't know what my original point was...something about how it's unfair for people to expect we elderly folk to look young, but also we elderly folk don't want to be seen as old? Or was it that I don't want people to expect too much of me since I'm not some young whippersnapper who can climb stairs with abandon, but don't you dare take away my driver's license even though I think stop signs are for sissies! Anyhoo, I'm sure there was a brilliant point in there somewhere, it's just that, dagnabbit, I can't remember what it was.

“The older you get, the better you get, unless you’re a banana.”

-Rose, The Golden Girls-



JANUARY LIBRARY HAPPENINGS

Good to Know Info: We are closed for staff training on the second Thursday of every month until 3:00 (Jan. 8). We are closed Thursday, 1/1/2026, for New Year's!

“Pets of OFML” 2026 desk calendars are for sale for \$8! Proceeds from our desk calendar sales go to fund library programs. This would make a great gift for all the pet lovers in your life, and support literacy at the same time. Supplies are limited, so hurry in or get your copy today!

Home School Group: Run by group members and takes place at the library meeting room on Fridays from 10:30–12:30. Involves a mix of stories, simple science/learning activities, and a creative art/craft activity that all go along with a theme for the week. The activities are geared towards kids ages 4 and up, and younger siblings are welcome to come along. There will be an event posted ahead of time on the group's Facebook page (Barnstead NH Library Homeschool Group) for each weekly meet-up, so you'll always know what to expect and if you need to bring anything.

Music and Movement Storytime, aka Littles Love to Learn! Join us on Tuesdays at 10:30 for an interactive storytime filled with stories, songs, and loads of sensory play designed specifically for toddlers.

Every Wednesday at 10:30 is Children's Storytime. Visit us at the library for stories, crafts, and singing. Then experience the cozy ambience in the children's area, which has all sorts of neat things to do. Make new friends. Set up playdates. Check out books, movies, and games, play with the trains, Legos, and puppets. Come for the learning, stay for the fun!

Start your week off with Yoga Monday! Gentle Hatha-Flow runs from 10:15–11:40, Senior/Beginner/Chair Yoga is 12:00–1:00, and Intermediate Hatha-Flow lasts from 5:30–6:50. Classes are by donation (suggested \$8). All are welcome and encouraged to attend, regardless of ability to donate.

Jamming Tuesdays at OFML: 6:00–8:00 (ages 18+). Do you play a string instrument? Well then, dust it off and come make music with us! On the first (Jan. 6) and third (Jan. 20) Tuesdays of the month, join us for jam nights at the library (in the meeting room). No need to be an expert—just bring your instrument and a love of music. Share a few tunes, trade chords, get feedback (if you'd like), and most of all, have fun!

Our Read the Room Book Club (ages 18+) takes place on the first Wednesday of the month (Jan. 7), from 6:00–7:30, in the library. This month's book will be “Thursday Murder Club” by Richard Osman. Next month's book will be “Before We Were Yours” by Lisa Wingate. Books are available at the library. Bring food, bring thoughts, bring a friend!

This month we are doing a Gilmore Girls theme for our adult events! Starting on Wednesday, Jan. 14, from 12:00–1:00, we are hosting a Knit-a-thon at the library. Whoever can knit the most rows in the given time will be presented with a mystery prize! Please come with your own knitting needles and yarn.

Begin your 2026 reading journey with a beautifully designed Book Tracker—your personal logbook for every story you explore. Start from scratch or use a template. We will be meeting at the library on Thursday, Jan. 15, at 5:30. For ages 8-100+.

Family Crafternoon is a family-focused event that happens every third Friday of the month (Jan. 16), at 3:30. Join us this month for karaoke! Stop by OFML and belt out your favorite tunes! Light refreshments will be served.

On Saturday, Jan. 17, at 11:00, we are hosting a Children's Tea Party! Children (and their grown-ups) are invited to join us for a delightfully good time. Be sure to dress up in your finest, then bring your awesome self and we'll provide the rest! Space is limited, so please call or email the library to sign up.

On Friday, Jan. 23, from 6:30-8:00, join us for Books & Banter. This lively book club is open to everyone and invites you to share and explore a wide range of genres. Come ready to discuss up to three books you've recently read, giving a brief synopsis to spark conversation. Don't miss out on the fun—come share your thoughts, learn about new books, and enjoy a cozy evening of discussion.

In keeping with the Gilmore Girls theme, on Saturday, Jan. 24, we are hosting a Screen to Table event from 10:30-12:30. Bring a dish from everyone's favorite comfort show to share while we watch "Gilmore Girls" in the library meeting room. We even have a Gilmore Girls official cookbook here at the library for you to peruse for culinary ideas!

It's trivia night! Our last event celebrating Stars Hollow involves a test of your Gilmore Girls knowledge. On Thursday, Jan. 29, from 6:00-7:30, join us in the meeting room for a night of fun competition. Light refreshments will be served.

Let's Write a Novel! Join us in the library's meeting room for a series of structured classes on the how-to's of writing a book. This class runs from 6:00-7:30 on the last Friday of the month (Jan. 30). Budding writers, 16 and older, ignite your passion for storytelling, discover how to build your hero's journey, and take your novel from concept to can-do!

For events that require registration, please contact us at 269-3900 or ofmlstaff@gmail.com to reserve your spot!



BARNSTEAD'S 300 YEAR ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE!

Our beautiful town turns 300 in May of 2027!

We are searching for residents who want to be a part of this committee to help celebrate this milestone event. Come join the party and be a part of planning for this fun celebration! Our next scheduled meeting is December 8th at 6:30PM at the Barnstead Town Hall.

Help us plan a great event to remember for years to come. See you there!



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**

BARNSTEAD PARADE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH



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



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Facebook - page: [sugarslocal](#) or visit the Barnstead
Business Uncensored group for updates!

Thank You for Supporting the Barnstead Historical Society!

The Barnstead Historical Society extends heartfelt thanks to everyone who helped make our annual Christmas Sale a success. We are grateful to our local crafters, raffle donors, the Barnstead Fire Rescue Department, the Oscar Foss Memorial Library, and the staffs of The Baysider and The Laconia Daily Sun—this event would not have been possible without your support.

A special thank-you to Donna Tiede and Rita Kiley for the much-enjoyed breakfast sandwiches, and to Tiede Farm Smokehouse and The White Buffalo for their continued generosity and support of the Historical Society. We also sincerely appreciate everyone who braved a snowy Saturday morning to stop by and visit with us.

As we look ahead to 2026, we wish you all a joyful and happy holiday season.





First-Generation Farmers: Why America Needs Us More Than Ever

By Erin M. Stone — The Fox & Crow Farm, Barnstead NH

When you grow up without farmland in your bloodline, every acre feels like a victory. Every fence you build and seed you plant represents a belief that it's still possible to feed a community and make a living doing it. That's what it means to be a first-generation farmer — no inheritance, no family tractor waiting in a shed, just grit, faith, and persistence.

At The Fox & Crow Farm, we started with a rundown property and a dream bigger than our bank account. We rebuilt barns, cleared fields, and learned by doing — and by failing. We didn't come from farmers. We became them.

Across New England, many old farms have vanished under housing developments and asphalt. Yet a new generation is emerging — people planting heritage seeds in rocky soil, learning through trial and error, and reclaiming the meaning of self-reliance.

Farming from scratch isn't easy. Land prices climb, feed and fuel double, and many of us take second jobs to keep the lights on. But the reward is unmatched — watching life return to a pasture, serving a meal grown by your own hands.

The average American farmer is nearly sixty. If new farmers don't step forward, much of our farmland will be lost forever.

First-generation farmers prove that hope still grows in the soil. When you buy local, you're helping preserve open land, nourish community, and ensure that America's next chapter is still written in the fields.

(Erin and Jared own The Fox & Crow Farm, a 100-acre working farm in Barnstead, NH, specializing in heritage livestock, agritourism, and handmade goods that celebrate rural resilience and community.)

Community Events

Board of Selectmen Meeting is weekly on Tuesdays starting at 6PM.

Alcoholics Anonymous meetings are held Tuesday evenings at the Center Barnstead Christian Church and Sunday at the Barnstead Town Hall at 7PM.

Barnstead School Board Meeting is Wednesday 1/21 at 6:00 PM.

JMA School Board Meeting is Tuesday 1/20 at 6:00 PM.

Planning Board Meeting is 1/1 and 1/15 at 6:00 PM.

Parks and Rec Commission meets 1/8 at 6:00 PM.

OSCAR FOSS MEMORIAL LIBRARY

is are excited to announce that our **fourth annual Volunteer Appreciation Day** will be held this February! We invite community organizations and community members to submit nominations recognizing individuals who generously give their time and talents to make Barnstead a better place.

Nominations should be emailed to **dhintonofml@gmail.com** and include **the nominee's name, contact information for both the nominee and the person submitting the nomination, and a brief paragraph explaining why the nominee deserves recognition.** All nominations must be received no later than **February 1, 2026.**

Help us celebrate the volunteers who make our community shine. ❤️



**CENTER BARNSTEAD
CHRISTIAN CHURCH**

Worship Service - Sundays @ 10AM

www.centerbarnsteadcc.org



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