



**Volume 3, Number 12 - December 2022**

## Conway Electric Rates

by Bob Armstrong

Every day our mail, email, and newspapers are filled with warnings about the rise in energy prices this coming winter caused by the war in Ukraine and the resulting worldwide shortages in natural gas. Scary. Our electric utility, Eversource, has recently published the rate increase they believe they need in order to purchase power on behalf of their customers. In western Mass that's a 40% increase, from 15.35 to 21.9 cents/kWh. Oil and gas for home heating will see a similar rise. Fortunately, Conway created a municipal electricity aggregation with other Franklin County towns, allowing it to go out to bid for future power contracts. Almost two years ago we signed a three-year contract for power at about 9.3 cents/kWh, and we still have more than a year on that contract. Until January 2024 our price for electric supply will remain at about 9.3 cents. That means a typical Conway resident will save more than \$460 over the next six months.

We surveyed the town for their preferences for the power we purchase. Almost unanimously, our residents were willing to pay a bit extra for power if it contained more renewable energy than the law requires (what Eversource supplies). For about a penny more than the 9.3 basic price, we can purchase 25% additional renewable energy, and for a few pennies more we can purchase power that is 100% renewable. Note that this is still less than Eversource charges for "no extra green" today. About 90% of Conway residents are members of the aggregation, and almost all of them purchase our "25% extra" product. Conway is saving money while reducing the carbon impact on our atmosphere.

You can verify that you are a member of our aggregation by looking at your electric bill where it says "Your electric supplier is." Below that, it should say "DYNEGY - CONWAY AGG." If not, you may be purchasing your power from a private competitive supplier or from Eversource. You can switch to our aggregation by calling our supplier, DYNEGY, at 866-220-5696, or go to our broker's (Colonial) webpage

<https://colonialpowergroup.com/conway/>. If you have a contract with a private supplier, you should verify that they will not charge you a penalty for leaving them. Any questions? Please call our town office at 369-4235 or me at 413-522-7617.

## A Christmas Carol Returns!

Friday, December 16, 7:00 p.m.

At the Conway Firehouse

Come to a "radio broadcast studio" and enjoy seven professional actors playing multiple roles in a reading of Charles Dickens's classic, *A Christmas Carol*. The radio show also includes commercials and music. Any donation at the door will go to the Conway Fireman's Auxiliary scholarship fund. Seating is limited, so come early. Questions? Text Mike Haley at 413-537-9149.

## The Gift that Keeps on Giving

by Kathy Llamas

In an era in which the country feels divided and callousness toward fellow humans seems to be the norm, there is one who defies that idea right here in our own backyard! If you know Deb Craven, you will expect to find her with a set of knitting needles in hand, whipping up gifts of beauty, always for someone else's benefit. She is a woman with a huge heart, who is always willing to give 100% to any task at hand.

Deb grew up on the family's 300-acre farm that the Burnett family has called home since 1781. This farm is located in both Conway and Ashfield. Since the family home itself was on Ashfield land, Deb attended Sanderson Academy and later Mohawk Regional.

With an older sister and younger brother, there was always work to be done. Her family owned a wood business, the garden always needed tending, and the seasonal haying at the farm was yet another task she helped with. At the age of seven Deb was taught the basics of knitting by her mother. That set Deb off on a journey of self-learning as she honed those skills making hats.

As a child, Deb often observed her father answering calls for the Ashfield Fire Department. After a call she and her siblings would climb up onto the firetruck and help recoil the hoses. It is only natural that after high school Deb herself was recruited by the Ashfield fire chief. While working as an Ashfield firefighter, she met her future husband, Walt Craven of Turners Falls. They married in 1986 and moved into what was once her grandmother's home on the Conway parcel that same year. Thus began her life as a Conwaysan. She joined the Conway Fire Department, a volunteer organization, but promised the Ashfield fire chief that she had no plans to leave that group. This commitment has never wavered, and recently she was awarded a 40-year pin in recognition of her service to the town of Ashfield.

Deb, who had been raised with a sense of duty to help others, took a custodial position for the Town of Conway. She maintained the town offices and Town Hall. She took care of the walkways and steps. She dedicated herself to her work. She also took on similar duties at the Field Memorial Library. Through all winds and weathers, Deb was there. In a winter storm she would be up at 5:00 a.m. shoveling to make walking both easier and safer. During snowstorms when the road crews would be out all night, Deb always made sure that there was warm stew and fresh bread waiting for them. One year she made the Highway Department matching vests and embroidered their names on them. She jokes, "After a hard day of work, the crew would be so tired that they couldn't think straight. At least," she added with a twinkle, "they would get their name right!"

She had given Conway twenty years of service by the time she retired in November. Although retired, she can still be found working at the polls on Election Day and always contributing to the benefit of others.

For example, Deb recently gifted the road crew with fresh, warm muffins as they worked on one of those blustery days. She has many hobbies aside from knitting: sewing, cross-stitch, cooking, and gardening (both as a hobby and a necessity) represent a small fraction of her many gifts.

Perhaps you did not know that Deb has single-handedly knitted more than 60 pairs of mittens for people in need this year alone, using yarn that she has on hand, often donated by community members. She takes the fiber through its paces, needles moving back and forth, creating intricate designs and patterns, each one as unique as the person who is going to receive the end result.

As her needles flew with purpose, she donated these 60 plus pairs to the Greenfield Savings Bank mitten tree. A whole year in the making, this gift has been the case for more than ten years now. She does this not for fame or even recognition – but one hopes that the appreciation of the recipients returns to the loving heart that made them! It is that love she carries for the world around her that fuels each and every pair of mittens she knits.



An assortment of Deb's colorful handmade mittens!

When asked what she loves about living in a small town, Deb replied, "The best part about living in a small town is reflecting on how much the two communities have changed, the growth of housing for example, sharing space that was once unoccupied. However, the spirit of helpfulness and community of support remains unchanged."

## Holiday/Christmas Giving Tree

The Friends of the Field Memorial Library in Conway announce their annual Holiday/Christmas Giving Tree. No dumb gifts this year: Give the gift of helping others!

We invite Conway residents to start thinking now about supporting the Friends of the Field Memorial Library Holiday/Christmas Giving Tree, which again will support the Hilltown Churches Food Pantry and provide items to local families that are struggling. The food pantry is requesting that we especially supply them with the following:

- Books for ages 2 to 18.
- Gift cards that parents could use for children's gifts. They prefer Walmart gift cards and hope to provide \$100 per child for holiday gifts.
- Food items that could help families make cookies and sweets for the holidays (such as flour, sugar, vanilla or almond flavoring, sprinkles, chocolate kisses, jams, coconut flakes, candied fruit, marzipan filling, etc.) These are usually too expensive for people to buy on their own.
- Basic toiletries but with a seasonal flavor and maybe a bit special.

The tree will be in the library through December 19 and is located in the beautiful Italian rotunda. It will be decorated with envelopes in which you can leave gift cards, donations, notes of support, etc. for the people who use the food pantry. In addition, there will be colorful gift bags available in which you can place donated items and/or take to fill and bring back. The library is open to receive donations each Monday 3:00-6:00 p.m., Wednesday 2:00-7:00 p.m., and Saturday 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

NOTE: Since the food pantry will distribute most holiday items on Tuesday, December 13, we will try to get the early donations to them

in time to distribute during these pre-holiday weeks. For more information go to <https://ashfield.org/2391/Hilltown-Churches-Food-Pantry>; for the library <https://fieldmemoriallibrary.org/>.

Please be generous. Instead of a tie, tell him you donated to help others. Instead of one more perfume, tell her you helped someone bake Christmas cookies. And please: No more holiday sweaters! Buy and give great books for kids!

## Conway Historical Society Program Rescheduled

by Peter Engelman

On Tuesday, December 6, at 7:30 p.m. Professor Emeritus Richard D. Little will give a presentation – rescheduled because of weather – on Armored Mud Balls at the Historical Society Museum, 50 Main Street, Conway. Visit our website [conwaymasshistory.org](http://conwaymasshistory.org) for updates including cancellations due to weather.

Richard Little, author and Professor Emeritus of Geology, will tell the story of the origin and meaning of the rare Jurassic-age sedimentary rock features known as armored mud balls. Some of the best examples of these sedimentary structures have been found near the Connecticut River in several Western Massachusetts towns. Professor Little will bring samples and discuss their importance in understanding local geology. This presentation is free and open to the public Refreshments will be served.

As the society closes what has been an unpredictable and eventful year, we hope you'll take this opportunity to join the Society or renew your membership: \$10 for individuals and \$18 for families. Please also consider making a gift. The Society is a nonprofit 501(c) (3) organization and is not funded by the town. Our officers and board members are unpaid volunteers. We rely on the generosity of our members and friends and are grateful for your support. Our mailing address is PO Box 174, Conway, MA 01341. Thank you and happy holidays!

**Reminder:** The NEW town website is [conwayma.gov](http://conwayma.gov). *Conway Currents* welcomes input from the community! Do you have a story to tell, a column we might publish or a suggestion for something you'd like to see included as a regular feature? If so, get in touch with Kathy Llamas at [newsletter@conwayma.gov](mailto:newsletter@conwayma.gov).

We welcome advertisers! Ads are limited to 150 words maximum; for longer ads please contact Louise at [lmbeckett@crocker.com](mailto:lmbeckett@crocker.com). Give-aways, lost-and-found items, and noncommercial notes are always free.

**The deadline for articles and advertisements in the newsletter is 11:59 p.m. on the 20th of the preceding month.** Please send your content by email to [newsletter@conwayma.gov](mailto:newsletter@conwayma.gov). Thank you!

## Notes from the Town Administrator

By now likely everyone in town knows that the second bridge from Route 116 on North Poland Road was closed abruptly after an inspection by MassDOT deemed the bridge unsafe for travel. The bridge was already on the state list for replacement, with construction scheduled to begin in the spring of 2024. Given the hardships this closure is causing, the town has sent a letter to MassDOT requesting a temporary bridge be installed as soon as possible. This letter was signed by me; the Selectboard; Fire, Police, Ambulance, and Highway Departments; and the Conway Grammar School and Frontier Regional School.

Did you receive the call, email, or text about the bridge closure? If not, that means we do not have you listed in our Emergency Alert System. This system can alert you only if you sign up for it – the town does not have access to your information *unless you provide it*.

If you would like to be informed directly, please sign up on the town website, [www.conwayma.gov](http://www.conwayma.gov), under “Emergency Alert System.”

Please do join us for the Special Town Meeting on December 10 at 10:00 a.m. at the Conway Grammar School. The warrant has been mailed to every household and is posted on the website. Your voice matters!!!

A very happy and healthy holiday season to all.

Véronique

## Pickleball in Conway!

Come play pickleball! After December 1 our outdoor equipment will be stored away, but our indoor court is now available. It's located in the Town Hall gym.

We have set up a couple of free-play time slots to encourage people to play or learn how to play. Free-play time is for players of all levels. Beginners are welcome. Pickleballers are a friendly group and love to teach others the game. We ask that to participate in free-play time, you use the sign-up genius below so that you can see how many players may be coming and any other announcements. Bring a friend or two and pass the link along if you like, and HAVE FUN!

You can find a slot and sign up on the town calendar [www.conwayma.gov](http://www.conwayma.gov), which will then direct you to the sign-up genius app.

If you would like to host a regular indoor play session, scheduled weekly, or have any questions, please email Jan Warner at [ConwayMAPickleball@gmail.com](mailto:ConwayMAPickleball@gmail.com). At present the indoor court is not available for private party reservations.

## Update from the Field Memorial Library

The “Barcodathon” of the FML collection continues, with more than 10,600 items already coded! We are closing in on completing the routine barcoding with several stacks of problem cases remaining for

which we must decide whether to create a new record (which can be an involved process), discard the item, or replace it with a newer version.

With most of our main collection barcoded, we are beginning to code our “vintage” collection of older items. These items date from content from the 1600s to publication dates around the 1950s, with some apparently part of the FML’s original collection. Vintage items will be for library use only, but they will be searchable through CWMars and form a historical record for the library that can also be browsed onsite. We are so grateful for our volunteers who have made these resources possible.

We are excited to report that we can now offer patrons a new, first-edition FML library card, the first in over 121 years! These cards seem like instant collector’s items, so stop by the library and complete a Library Card Registration form to secure your card and access to all CWMars resources through the FML. The process for now is that you complete your form and leave it for us to enter into the CWMars patron database. We will then email or call you (your preference) to let you know that your card is ready to pick up any time the library is open. We plan to have an event focused on the cards and our entry into the vast network of CWMars, so watch these pages for notice when we get it scheduled.

Beyond barcoding and continuing the FML library card distribution, we will complete required circulation training that will lead to opening the FML collection to “holds,” or requests placed by any patron in the 157 libraries in central and western Mass. This will be a major escalation of our circulation and in the ease with which you can search the collection and request items. This will be the last phase of joining and becoming fully operational in CWMars. This project has been underway since early 2020, so we are excited to see it coming to fruition.

We are grateful for the continuing support of the Friends of the Field Memorial Library. In December they will provide seasonal atmosphere at the library with their holiday giving tree to offer

support for the Hilltown Churches Food Pantry, located in Ashfield, which also serves Conway and surrounding towns. A flyer with details is on our website and there is a notice elsewhere in this issue.

Please continue to order all items for Inter-Library Loan through the FML until we are fully operational in CWMars. If ordered through your card at another library, they arrive at the FML without any identifying information, and we must send them back. This will change when our membership in CWMars is fully operational.

The FML collection of new titles, classics, and hidden treasures awaits you. Stop by or search us online through [cwmars.org](http://cwmars.org), where you can choose to search only the FML collection. The library is normally open Mondays 3:00-6:00 p.m., Wednesdays 2:00-7:00 p.m., and Saturdays 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. We will be closed Saturday, December 24, but we will be open Saturday, December 31.

David Whittier, Director, Field Memorial Library  
[director@fieldmemoriallibrary.org](mailto:director@fieldmemoriallibrary.org) 413-369-4646  
<https://fieldmemoriallibrary.org>

## A Look into Conway History

*Creators of the Field Memorial Library*

by Patricia Ann Lynch

We all know that Marshall Field gave the Field Memorial Library to Conway as a memorial to his parents, who worked a subsistence farm up on Fields Hill. But this stunning example of classical architecture, with its domed rotunda and Italian marble, didn’t spring full-grown from the soil of 1 Elm Street as the goddess Athena sprang from the forehead of her father, Zeus. Someone had to design it, and someone had to build it. To perform these tasks, Field turned to prominent professionals in their fields.

To design the library, he commissioned a leading Boston architectural firm: Shepley, Rutan, and Coolidge, which operated between 1886 and 1915 and had extensive commissions in civic, religious, and

college architecture. The firm was comprised of architects G. F. Shepley (1806-1903), C. H. Rutan (1851-1914), and C. A. Coolidge (1858-1936), all of whom trained in the office of Henry Hobson Richardson, a leading figure in nineteenth-century American architecture.

Richardson was known, among other things, for large public buildings of stone, usually in what came to be known as the “Richardsonian Romanesque” style. Following Richardson’s death in 1886, Shepley, Rutan, and Coolidge continued his legacy by forming their own partnership. Among their more impressive projects were the design of Boston’s South Station (1898) and Harvard Medical School (1906), the Chicago Public Library (now the Chicago Cultural Center) (1892), and the Art Institute of Chicago (1893).



Marshall Field's Wholesale Store at Franklin Street, between Quincy and Adams Streets, designed by H. H. Richardson, built 1887, razed c. 1930, view taken around 1890

The actual construction of our library was carried out by Norcross Brothers Contractors and Builders of Worcester (builders of the New York Public Library and the Executive Office Building in Washington). The hugely successful company was known for its work – mostly in stone – and its ability to handle large, complex structures. In 1869 Norcross Brothers contracted to build a new Worcester high school building designed by H. H. Richardson. From that point on the brothers became Richardson's primary contractors, building more than thirty of his designs, including three that are considered his best work: Trinity Church in Boston, the Marshall Field & Company building in Chicago, and the Allegheny County Courthouse in Pittsburgh. *Worcester's Best: A Guide to the City's Architectural Heritage* (1996) stated: “It is thought that the firm and its ingenuity in masonry

construction was partially responsible for the development of Richardson’s unique Romanesque style, and indirectly for the popularity which heavy masonry achieved during the late nineteenth century.”

Shepley, Rutan, and Coolidge continued Robinson’s legacy not only by embracing his Romanesque style of architecture but also by continuing the firm’s association with Norcross Brothers. And who better than these two firms could Marshall Field choose to design and build his memorial to his beloved parents?

## Correction

We regret an error in the list of Festival of the Hills raffle winners that appeared in the November issue. These are the correct donated items and winners:

Hand Woven Blanket *Lisa Hill*: Julie Clark  
Handcrafted Pottery *Megan Hart*: Susan McCarthy

## Volunteers for Invasive Species Removal

Volunteers are wanted for round two of removing invasive species from the Fournier property trail on Saturday, December 3, 10:00 a.m. to noon (rain/snow date December 4). The Fournier property trail, located adjacent to the Conway Grammar School, needs care to allow for safe and enjoyable access from the school grounds.

In November we made some progress removing Asiatic honeysuckle at the trail entry, and there’s more work to do removing invasive, nonnative plants. The Forest and Trails Committee is sponsoring a second invasive plant removal party. Guidance and a few tools will be available. You’re invited to also bring your own tools: loppers, hand cutting tools, pruning saws, root saws, pry bars, shovels, wheelbarrows.

We will meet at the Conway Grammar School in front of the playground area. If you want to help, please contact Cynthia at 413-230-7185.

# From Conway's Kitchens

Recipes from the kitchen of Deb Craven

## Pumpkin Bread – makes two loaves

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

2/3 cup vegetable oil  
2 cups brown sugar  
4 eggs  
1 16-oz can pumpkin puree  
1/2 cup cold water  
1 tsp vanilla  
3 1/3 cup flour  
1/2 tsp baking powder  
2 tsp baking soda  
1 tsp salt  
1 tsp cinnamon  
1 tsp ground cloves  
1 cup raisins

Mix vegetable oil and sugar. Beat in eggs. Stir in pumpkin. Sift together the dry ingredients. Gradually add water, vanilla, and the dry ingredients. Stir in raisins. Pour into two greased bread pans. Bake for 60 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean.



## Yeast Rolls – makes two dozen

3/4 cup milk	2 pkgs dry yeast
1/2 cup shortening	1/2 cup warm water
1/2 cup sugar	2 eggs
1 tsp salt	4-5 cups flour
1 tsp ground cloves	

Scald milk and add shortening, sugar, salt, and cloves. Cool to lukewarm. Sprinkle yeast onto the warm water to dissolve. Add 1 1/2 cups flour to the milk mixture. Beat in eggs and yeast. Gradually stir in enough flour to make a soft dough. Turn onto a floured surface and knead for 5-8 minutes. Place in a greased bowl. Turn to grease the top. Cover and let rise until double, 1-1 1/2 hours. Punch down. Shape into 24 rolls. Let rise for 30-45 minutes. Bake at 375 degrees for 15-18 minutes until golden brown.

## Holidays and Health

*from the FRCOG Public Health Team*

For many, the winter holiday season has a complicated relationship with the word *healthy*, either because we think we are not doing enough to maintain our health or because we avoid thinking about health until January. Instead, we could ask ourselves, “What steps can I take today to manage my health?” Each of our answers may look different, and that is the point: We can add our own ways to manage stress, move our bodies, and eat healthfully. Each day is an opportunity to practice healthy options.

**Healthy Eating** Many resources focus on nutrition around the holidays. Most offer this basic advice: act in small steps and remove the guilt. The Mayo Clinic’s holiday nutrition tips [mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/](https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/) include adding extra veggies, drinking more water, limiting soda and alcohol, and to “choose your splurges” – to eat portions of seasonal food and actually enjoy it!

**Exercise** Focus on movement throughout the day. One resource – [mass.gov/orgs/mass-in-motion](https://mass.gov/orgs/mass-in-motion) – lists ways to exercise in ten-minute chunks. Add in walks or create active TV time by using hand weights or simply marching in place during commercial breaks. Setting timers to limit screen time – TV, computer and/or phone – is an easy way to purposefully make time for other things, like a self-care activity or getting to bed on time.

**Managing Stress** It's important to find low-cost ways to manage stress during a busy and often expensive time. Examples include taking a walk or bath, calling a family member or friend, getting outside during daylight, and writing in a journal. Starting or ending your day with a few minutes focused on breathing can feel grounding. While we often let go of routines, keeping ongoing support groups and meaningful connections as priorities can help us manage, relax, and enjoy the season.

## COVID Testing Information

Curative PCR testing sites are open to the public. Tests are free and no one will be turned away for lack of insurance. Bring your ID and insurance card, if you have one. Walk-ins are welcome or schedule online at <https://book.curative.com>.

*Have symptoms? Been exposed? PCR tests are available here:*

- Deerfield: South County Senior Center, 67 N. Main Street. Monday, Wednesday, Friday 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
- Greenfield: Greenfield Community College, 1 College Drive. Monday, Wednesday, Friday 1:00-4:00 p.m.
- Shelburne Falls: Greenfield Cooperative Bank Community Room, 33 Bridge Street. Tuesdays 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. and Thursdays 12:00 noon-4:00 p.m.
- Walgreens: Sign up online.

*Where to find rapid tests to have on hand at home:*

MassHealth, Medicare, and many private insurances cover rapid antigen tests to have at home (up to eight tests/four boxes per month). Private insurance may allow online orders or reimburse the cost of the

tests with a purchase receipt or allow you to purchase for free at the pharmacy counter. Check with your insurance company or ask at the pharmacy about your coverage.

For MassHealth and Medicare, the pharmacy needs to create and fill a “prescription” so that the tests get covered. Bring test kits to the pharmacy prior to purchase in order to bill MassHealth and Medicare directly at Big Y, CVS, Rite Aid, Stop & Shop, Walmart, and Walgreens.

An up-to-date list of local places to get a COVID test or vaccine in Franklin County can be found at <https://frcog.org/covid>.

## Thanksgiving Dinner Thank You

On Thursday, November 10, more than thirty of Conway's seniors enjoyed an abundant pre-Thanksgiving feast at the Conway Sportsman's Club. This could not have taken place without the help of many volunteers and the anonymous donors who contributed toward the cost of the turkeys. Gail Connelly's table decorations of fall flowers in pumpkin “vases” added a festive feel to the club's dining room. The meal featured turkey, stuffing, what seemed to be countless side dishes, and a multiplicity of pies. The main meal was prepared by Patsy Kocot and Carolyn Thayer. Pies came from the kitchens of Lois Vight, Judie Manzer, Chris Pinney, and Carolyn Thayer. Jane Recore made rolls and a delicious pumpkin dessert. Hank Horstmann did duty as the turkey carver and all-around kitchen helper.

The Conway Council on Aging sends a big thank you to Ken Ouimette and the Sportsman's Club for letting us use their facility. The meal could not have happened without the use of their great kitchen. Special thanks to Ken and Ron Hawkes, who washed most of the dishes.

A huge thank you from Patsy, Hank, and Carolyn to all who helped, came, and enjoyed. We are already planning for next year!

## Conway Council on Aging

Council on Aging meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month at 9:00 a.m. in Town Hall. Next meeting will be December 7.



For more information, contact Patricia Ann Lynch, COA chair, at 369-4284 or email [patricialynch@earthlink.net](mailto:patricialynch@earthlink.net).

### Senior Calendar for December

**Durable Medical Equipment Loans** The COA has items of durable medical equipment available for loan, including wheelchairs, transfer chairs, walkers, crutches, canes, tub and shower chairs, commodes, and raised toilet seats. Call Hank Horstmann at 369-4405 to borrow equipment

**"First Friday" Walk-in Wellness Clinics** Clinics are held on the first Friday of the month in Conway Town Hall from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Regional public health nurses Lisa White, RN, and Meg Ryan, RN, staff the clinic. There are no out-of-pocket costs to residents for this service, which is provided through the town's membership in FRCOG Cooperative Public Health Service. For more information, call 413-665-1400 x 114.

**Healthy Bones & Balance Classes** Classes meet on Tuesday from 9:00 to 9:45 a.m. and Friday from 9:00 to 9:30 a.m. on Zoom. Contact leader Gary Fentin at 369-0001 for information and the Zoom link.

**Monthly Foot Care** Foot clinics are usually held on the first Monday of the month in Town Hall BY APPOINTMENT ONLY. The next clinic will be December 5. There is a \$20.00 fee. For information or to schedule an appointment, call Peg Tiley at 369-4010.

**Senior Meals** In most months meals are held at Town Hall on the second and last Thursdays of the month. For December, we are holding a special holiday dinner at noon on Thursday, December 8, at the Whately Inn. The per-person cost is \$23.00. The COA will pay the tax and tips. For more information and to be added to our email or phone list for announcements, call Carolyn Thayer at 369-6948.

**Walking Group** The walking group meets at 10:00 a.m. in front of the library on Mondays, weather permitting. For more information, call Phylis Dacey at 369-4326.

**Yoga for Seniors** Led by Jody Fontaine on Wednesdays in person at the library and on Zoom. Class times: mat yoga 10:00-11:00 a.m.; chair yoga: 11:15 a.m.-12:00 noon. Call Jody at 413- 824-9435 for information or for the Zoom links.

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## Currents Advertisements & Notices

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Rates for ads up to 150 words are: one month \$7.75, three months \$15.75; six months \$25.75, twelve months \$44.75. For cost of longer ads or to include images (limited), call or email Louise at 413-559-1180 or [lmbeckett@crocker.com](mailto:lmbeckett@crocker.com).

Pay by checking account or credit card through the town's website <https://conwayma.gov/> > How do I . . . ? > Pay for > Newsletter Advertising; or send a check to **Conway Currents, PO Box 240, Conway, MA 01341**. Please send the text of your advertisement to Louise by email at [lmbeckett@crocker.com](mailto:lmbeckett@crocker.com). **Deadline is the 20<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month.** If you want to discuss your ad or have any questions, please call or email [lmbeckett@crocker.com](mailto:lmbeckett@crocker.com).

**Folk Music** - Open Session. Mostly Irish, but also Old Time, French Canadian, Cape Breton, Scottish, Scandinavian, English . . . Next Open Session, December 29<sup>th</sup>, at the Conway Inn 43 Main Street, Conway MA. Beginning in January 2023, we'll be there on the third Thursday of each month. 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. - Slow Jam; 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. - a Little Faster! Come learn some tunes or teach us some new ones. Email Jeff for more details - [kovars00@gmail.com](mailto:kovars00@gmail.com) - All welcome!



**Get your holiday shopping done early** - and support your local church by shopping for Rada Cutlery! All cutlery is made in the USA and includes a lifetime guarantee. This fine cutlery is in high demand – the stylish design makes it attractive but still retains quality that will last a lifetime. Choose from many options, sure to help you in performing any kitchen task and creating all your favorite recipes. And your purchases will support the United Congregational Church! Items are available for ordering and viewing at Tea at Two on Thursday and Friday 1-5 p.m.

and Saturday from 10-5 p.m. Paper catalogs available by request. To order, call Tina Burnett at 369-8035, or use this simple link: [bit.ly/3mTpO18](http://bit.ly/3mTpO18).

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**Wreath Making Open House** - at Wilder Hill Gardens! Saturday Dec. 3, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. and Sunday Dec. 4, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Drop by any time to learn the traditional art of weaving a wreath, swag, or garland from fresh, mixed greens from Wilder Hill Gardens; materials provided. Dress warm! Hot drinks and snacks provided. \$20/wreath, \$15/swag. Garlands: \$10/yard. Shop our annual Wilder Hill Press seconds sale for original prints and pottery. One of a kind gifts: limited edition letterpress books, original prints, carved porcelain platters, red clay sculpture, and Herbal Hydrosols. Contact: Lilian Jackman, 351 South Shirkshire Road, Conway, MA. 413-625-9446. [wilderhillgardens.com](http://wilderhillgardens.com). Email [lilianjackman@gmail.com](mailto:lilianjackman@gmail.com)

**WILDER HILL**  
*gardens*

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**Handmade one of a kind jewelry** - made out of pounded metals, semi-precious stones and glass. I also repurpose materials I come across that need a new life! Reasonably-priced gifts for special gifting: Come see me at my Conway home on Manning Road. Please call ahead 413-387-9297. Denise Dwelley Designs

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**Conway Potter Megan Hart** - Invites you to a Holiday Studio Sale December 10 & 11 10:00 - 4:00. Handcrafted porcelain and stoneware with floral and animal imagery. And on Sunday, December 18 from 1-4 p.m. come paint your own porcelain ornaments! Children and adults invited. Please contact me to schedule a time. Ornaments will be fired next day and be available to pick up Tuesday or Wednesday. This event is free of charge. 192 Academy Hill Road, Conway [hartpottery@gmail.com](mailto:hartpottery@gmail.com) - 413-522-6707.

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**Debra Hoyle Studio and Gallery** - Open Studio Saturday, December 17, 11-3, 46 Main Street. Stop by to discover a special gift for those on your list or even for yourself! Many small collages and paintings available, all 10% off this month. SQUAREUP, check, or cash accepted. Thanks for shopping locally this season. Can't make it to the open studio? Text or call Debra to set up a visit. 'Only looking around' is fine - no obligation! 413-325-5579. IG address: [debhoyle.art.rockpaperscissors](http://debhoyle.art.rockpaperscissors) Thinking ahead: **Mid-Winter Collage**

**Workshop**, Saturday, January 14 from 1-4. **Playing with Collage** is back, for all ages 12+ and all experience levels. \$125. Materials provided. Space is limited so call soon with questions and to register!

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**Open Studio and Celebration** - Saturday and Sunday, December 17 & 18, 11a.m. - 4 p.m., 46 Delabarre Avenue. Artist Hannah Harvester invites Conway residents along with friends and relations to visit her art studio on the banks of the South River. Come see what's shaking in the building that once was the Conway School of Landscape Design! Enjoy the cozy warmth of the woodstove, hot cocoa, tea, snacks, and comfy chairs. Hannah's art, including many Conway landscapes rendered in vivid soft pastel, will be on display and is available for sale. Art also includes block prints, original block-printed holiday cards, and oil paintings. Live music by Conway's own jazz pianist David Braden-Johnson and his trio on Saturday, guitar virtuoso Dan Harvester on Sunday, and door prizes to celebrate Hannah's inaugural open studio. Come and enjoy! [www.hannahharvester.com](http://www.hannahharvester.com) or contact [hannahharvesterfineart@gmail.com](mailto:hannahharvesterfineart@gmail.com).

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**Jan and John Maggs Antiques** - Season's Greetings to all from Jan and John Maggs Antiques - in the black barn in Pumpkin Hollow, specializing in 17<sup>th</sup>-century English oak furniture, Queen Anne and Georgian jewelry, paintings, accessories, and carpets.



Our annual December Gifting Event will begin on Thursday, December 1<sup>st</sup>, with one hundred gift-appropriate antique and vintage pieces, including many stocking stuffers and less costly pieces purchased during the year for this special event. Everything will be posted on our website [jmaggs.com](http://jmaggs.com), and we'll be open on Sundays from 9:00 until 4:00 and other times by appointment. Email [jmaggs@jmaggs.com](mailto:jmaggs@jmaggs.com) or phone 413-369-4256. to arrange a visit.

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**Boyden Bros. Maple** - Our pure maple syrup, candy, cream, granulated sugar, gift boxes and pancake mixes are available to purchase and/or ship for the holidays (or any time of the year!) Select one of our own fresh-cut Christmas trees at the sugarhouse, beginning December 3rd. Visit our sugarhouse on Route 116 across from the Grammar School; call us at 413-369-4665; email us at [boydenmaple@gmail.com](mailto:boydenmaple@gmail.com) or message us on Facebook. Open December pre-Christmas weekends 10

a.m. -3 p.m. beginning Saturday December 3rd, and by appointment or chance anytime. [boydenmaple@gmail.com](mailto:boydenmaple@gmail.com)

**The Conway Inn** - Open for pizza, chicken wings, and breadsticks, Friday and Saturday, 4 - 10 p.m.; Sunday 5 - 8 p.m. Call 413-369-4428 for takeout. Live music jams, second Friday of each month! Look for the blue flag on the porch.



**Baker's Country Store** - open seven days a week for all-day take-out breakfast and lunch: Monday-Friday 6 a.m.-6 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday 7 a.m.-5 p.m. **Closing Christmas eve 3 p.m.; Closed Christmas; Open New Year's 7-3.** Find a variety of homemade desserts and baked goods – freshly baked cakes, muffins, pies, and cookies – and a large selection of

last-minute items. For the holidays we have wreaths, pointsettias, kissing balls and cemetery boxes. Try a hot cocoa bomb! Check us out on Facebook: [facebook.com/Bakers-Country-Store](https://www.facebook.com/Bakers-Country-Store) for today's specials or call 413-369-4936. **Help wanted:** apply in person during regular store hours.

**Join Natural Roots CSA** - for delicious, fresh vegetables grown right here in Conway. We have several CSA share options, including part-time and low-income shares, main season (June through October) and winter shares. Our farm store is also open to the public year-round during daylight hours. We offer eggs from our own pastured hens as well as other local items like beef, chicken, pork, dairy, bread & baked goods, honey & maple products, coffee & tea, ice cream, snacks, beverages and more! Support a horse-powered farm in Conway and enjoy this beautiful, bountiful farm and the vibrant community that we feed.

[www.naturalroots.com](http://www.naturalroots.com). Natural Roots, 888 Shelburne Falls Rd., Conway, MA 01341, 413-369-4269, [farmers@naturalroots.com](mailto:farmers@naturalroots.com).

**Happy Holidays from OESCO!** - Winter's here, so get your firewood ready. We offer a variety of LogRite peaveys, cant hooks and logging arches for ATV's that help move logs with ease. Apple lovers rejoice . . .

*The Apple Lovers Cookbook* has an abundance of delicious recipes for making holiday goodies!

We carry the entire series of Tractor Mac, perfect for your little ones. Winter pruning



season has arrived, and we have the best assortment of professional pruners and pruning reference books around. After an excellent visit with the owner of Castellari, an Italian company on the cutting edge of AG tool technology, we'll be bringing in even more tools to add to our current selection! Have questions? Call or stop by to talk to Gemma, Rebecca, or Tim. Shop where the pros shop and thanks for buying locally! OESCO, Inc., Orchard Equipment, M-F: 7-5; 369-4335.

**Wholey Cow Farm** - Selling raw cows milk, free range chicken and duck eggs, ethically raised meat, Jane's goat milk soap, and a multitude of other local products. Visit our farm store on Wholey Road or contact us at [jwjwholey@gmail.com](mailto:jwjwholey@gmail.com) or by phone at 413-369-4638.

**Quail Eggs for Sale** - Fresh quail eggs from our small backyard flock. They taste just like chicken eggs but are even more nutritious. \$3 for half a dozen and \$5 for a dozen. Call 369-0326 or email Lynn at [lynnpodosek@yahoo.com](mailto:lynnpodosek@yahoo.com).

**Seeking Hilltown Housing** - Couple looking to buy a house in Conway or another hilltown. We sold our house and moved to an apartment in Conway in July but haven't found the perfect place to buy yet. Can pay cash for the right house, ideally 3 BRs, 2 baths, 1800 sf, with privacy, 1+ acre and a view. Able to close right away or at seller's convenience. Excellent credit and local references. Please contact at 781-361-3471.

**We Need to Talk** - Are you feeling ecoanxiety, climate grief, ecodread, environmental despair, or any of the above? The fact that spell check recognizes ecodread as a word means that you are not alone. Come to my cozy barn studio on Monday evenings for community support, guidance, and art practices as we gently work to move from depression/hopelessness/paralysis to engagement/action/and dare I say . . . hope? Let's break the taboo around talking about climate change and environmental collapse so we can get on with the work of healing our world. Monday evenings, beginning January 9, from 6:30-8:00 at 46 Delabarre Ave. Facilitated by Hannah Harvester with monthly guest facilitators. Please contact Hannah at [Hannah.Harvester@gmail.com](mailto:Hannah.Harvester@gmail.com) to let her know you're coming or with any questions. Donations of \$5-\$35/session gratefully accepted to offset costs.

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# Unheard Melodies

by Nicole Braden-Johnson

*"Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard /Are sweeter"*  
– John Keats "Ode on a Grecian Urn"

## Catching Leaves and Snowflakes

It's harder than it seems like it should be,  
Catching the sunset foliage in mid flight.  
The wind twists unseen and unexpectedly,  
And slight variations in currents and undercurrents  
Slip the leaves like quicksilver from your grasp.  
Our wanting hands create some of that very same air pressure  
Which pushes the falling amber out of reach.  
A gentler approach, with hands outstretched  
– As though offering a warm embrace –  
Seems to yield the best results.

Autumn's mirthful abscission thus by and by passes into  
Winter's snowfall.  
There is less art in catching snow,  
Which is more eager to cling to the extremities.  
It affixes itself with glee on hats and mitts,  
It sneaks onto beards and eyelashes,  
And even the tongue for a moment before sublimation.  
But the hexagonal wonder of these ice crystals is elusive,  
And stumbling upon one is a gift of Nature's artistry.