

INSIDE: Celebrate 20 years of the Contemporary Theater Company.

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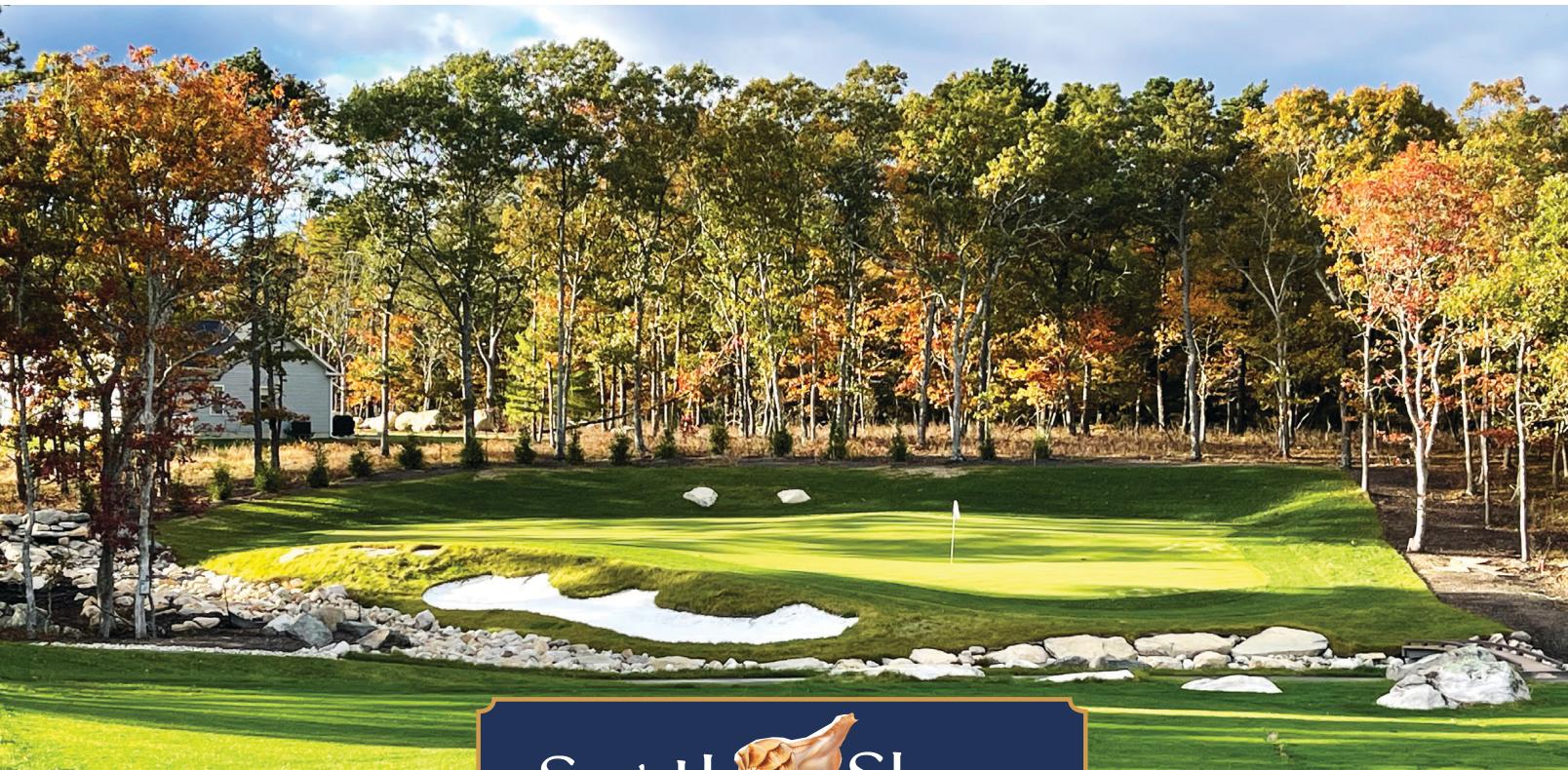
life
MAGAZINE



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A gift that keeps on giving

No matter how old we get, the holiday season brings us a childlike sense of joy and wonderment. Maybe it's because this time of year is the one time of year we all collectively settle down, relax and honor the traditions of the past while taking stock on the people, places and things that make our lives special year-round. Or maybe it's just because we really like singing Christmas Carols.

Either way, every holiday season, this magazine strives to shine a light on some of the local businesses we think deserve your attention during the most wonderful time of the year and we love nothing more than finding the local families and underrated businesses whose roots in the community are so strong, we couldn't imagine celebrating the sights and sounds of the season without them.

That's why, when we started planning this holiday issue of the magazine, we knew we needed to venture down to Charlestown and spend some time with the Durning family at Riverside Tree Farm.

The Durnings represent everything we love about the holiday season. Not only is their farm a must-visit for those looking for the perfect tree to celebrate the season but the Durnings think about the holidays for most of the year and their sense of community spirit shines brightest when the temperature drops and Old Saint Nick is getting ready to make his annual visit across the world.

In our cover story "The Family Tree," reporter Morgan Rizzo talks to the Durnings about their farm and what it means not only to them, or to their family, but to Southern Rhode Island as a whole.

In many ways, the Durning's tale mirrors that of the subjects of Morgan's second story in this issue, a feature on the Chorus of Westerly titled "Sounds of the Season."

For the past 65 years, the Chorus of Westerly has helped Southern Rhode Island ring in the season with the songs we all know and love and its success begins, and ends, with the dedication of its members, all of whom have deep ties to the area.

Music and art, in general, hold a special place in our hearts as a community this time of year so it was only fitting we finally told the Chorus' story. And it was even more fitting that we took a look back at another pillar this month with reporter Bill Seymour's look at Contemporary Theater Company and its 20th anniversary.

CTC has, in many ways, been the catalyst for downtown Wakefield's growth since its inception two decades ago and in "Beyond the Stage," Seymour reflects on its rich history, humble roots and promising future.

Rounding out our features this month are special looks at two very similar businesses that truly stand out for what they offer the community. In "Make It Special," reporter Mara Hagen talks to Bosgraaf Studio owner Peggy Corcoran about her dream in opening her business and how it's changed over the years. Reporter Rachel Phillipson does the same in "Home Sweet Home," a special look at Sweet Marie's Tea Cottage, where you'll find plenty of warmth this winter.

And, with that, we bid you adieu for 2025. It's been a wonderful year and we wish you and yours all the best for a happy, healthy and safe holiday season. See you in 2026!

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If it's the holiday season, that means it's time for the Chorus of Westerly to come to life.

from the publisher of
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© Southern Rhode Island Newspapers

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South County Life magazine is distributed for free, eight times per year (March, April, May, June, July, August, September, November) by The Independent / Southern Rhode Island Newspapers, P.O. Box 232, Wakefield, RI 02880. For editorial or advertising guidelines, visit SouthCountyLifeMagazine.com, call 401-789-9744, or email sclife@independentri.com

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ON THE COVER

Kevin and Jane Durning, owners of Riverside Christmas Tree Farm, pose with some of the props they provide for photographs on the farm. (Photo: Michael Derr)

local catch

TIMELESS WONDER

For 40 years, Wickford Village has brought the holidays to life and it all begins with a beloved tradition: The Festival of Lights.

By Mara Hagen

On a special day in Wickford in December, the truism "Santa is coming to town" gets a new meaning. This year, The Wickford Village Festival of Lights celebrates its 40th anniversary as a pillar of Holiday cheer in South County. For four days from Thursday, December 4th-Sunday, December 7th, the town shuts down and turns into the north pole; with Santa arriving on a fleet of kayaking "reindeer", an elf parade, and an unique, personalized shopping experience that emphasizes the connection between local businesses and the citizens that support them.

Julie Beebe is the owner of Yes! Gallery in the downtown area and has been volunteer director of the Wickford Festival of Lights for over two decades. Beebe has worked tirelessly to make sure the festival goes on every year, and says "it has been exhausting at times, while also running a family business, and raising a family, but the rewards are so worth it." Beebe believes that once the festivities begin an "old-fashioned holiday vibe fills the streets of the Wickford Village, and I am reminded about what the holidays are about and why I adore this town." The festival is a tradition, and it is important to Beebe to keep traditions alive, as they are a crucial part to creating and keeping closeness in a community.

When Beebe started working with the festival 40 years ago, she was barely in middle school and had just moved to

Sisters Molly and Eloise Geoghegan, of North Kingstown look at an ice sculpture during the tree-lighting event held in Wickford to kick off last year's Festival of Lights celebration.





Santa arrives by boat at the Town Dock in Wickford as part of the village's Festival of Lights celebration last year. This holiday season is the 40th anniversary of the annual North Kingstown event and festivities will take place from Thursday, December 4-Sunday, December 7.

North Kingstown. She recalls, "I was dropped off with friends to shop in all of the cute Wickford boutiques and carefully selected gifts until every last penny of my allowance was gone. I felt like I was in a movie setting; beautiful lit trees everywhere I looked, windows decorated to the nines, the air scented with cocoa, spice and seaside salt. The sound of happy shoppers, no stress, just joy and wonder." The way Beebe does recall it makes it sound like a Hallmark movie, and that's exactly what the Festival of Lights aims to represent: the simple joy of being together and enjoying the beauty of the holidays.

Beebe knows that community is the heart of the festival. Her favorite part, she recounts, is "getting to dress up like an elf and load all of the families into the horse-drawn hayrides with Santa. I have gotten to know so many wonderful people in our community by doing this and have watched kids grow up from infant to college-age. If you can get even teenagers to come back with their families year after year, including my own, you must be doing something right!"

Doing something right she is, as all the stores that constitute Wickford's charm enjoy participating in the festival just as much. Melissa Beckwith, owner of Serendipity, loves

the nostalgic aspect of the festival. Beckwith reiterates, "It's just like stepping into a Hallmark movie. Seeing the children's faces light up when Santa comes to town and getting to be a part of people's special gift giving, hearing their stories and laughs while they shop, truly warms my heart." Beckwith thinks the festival is a famous part of South County culture.

Kate Fusaro owns Flatfish Cottage, and also finds the nostalgic element of the festival alluring. She recalls her own childhood, "When I was a little girl in the 70s in Hyannis, MA, the drive down our Main Street was pure magic. Stretched across the road and all along its length were giant ornaments, Santas, snowflakes, and tin soldiers. My little girl's heart is always searching for the feeling the journey down that street gave me, and the Festival of Lights gives me that same feeling. I see the village through that little girl's eyes; it is magic and joy that helps me remember what really matters during the holidays."

Many people seem to agree that the festival is all about magic, involving others and themselves. Alana Almonte from Anchored Soul says, "the Festival of Lights always seems to awaken another kind of light within myself, and the village itself. It is a contagious, warm, and vibrant energy we need to get us through

the season of winter."

Cheryl Fonseca, owner of the Pink Parasol, believes that the festival is an antidote to modern life. She says, "Our lives are so fast paced and everything is constantly changing, to be able to go back to something year after year that you can count on is rare. Festival of Lights is that type of tradition. My favorite part is the window competition, to see the whole time illuminated and all dressed up and everyone using their creative talents to decorate and welcome customers is amazing."

The festival starts Thursday, December 4th, with the official tree lighting at Updike Park and the window displays from the shops that are part of an awards-competition. Then Friday evening with the advent of Santa from the sea, followed by a horse-drawn hayride through the Village. On Saturday is the Elf parade, where people are invited to dress in their "elfiest" costumes. There will be shopping and hot cocoa throughout the weekend, reminiscent of a Dickens-esque holiday experience. Most shops will be open until 9 p.m. Friday and Saturday night.

For a full list of all Festival of Lights events and more information, visit the "I Love Wickford Village" page on Facebook at facebook.com/ilovewickfordvillage.



Cast members act out their roles during a dress rehearsal for "Peter and the Starcatcher" at the Contemporary Theater Company earlier this year. The production, based on the play from Rick Elice and the 2004 novel from Dave Barry and Ridley Pearson, recently wrapped at the Wakefield theater, which is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. CTC's final show of 2025, "Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley," opens for previews December 5-6 and runs December 7-21.

BEYOND THE STAGE

As Contemporary Theater Company wraps its 20th anniversary, it's become much more than a theater. It's defined a community.

By Bill Seymour

A simple 2009 statement has rippled through the years to show the power of ideas and reality.

"I want to fill a need in the community and to help people find a means for self-expression in their everyday lives," senior Chris Simpson told the Princeton Weekly Bulletin at the time.

The soon-to-be graduate said in that interview that he also hoped that a theater company he started back home in South Kingstown would demonstrate "that high-

quality art is attainable on a local level, and can be available for everyone to enjoy, not just the wealthy and the elite."

And he wasn't wrong.

A few years earlier, freshman Simpson had returned home where he had lined up a part-time job at a hotel. But when he learned that a local art center was going to sit vacant all summer, he gathered some high school friends and, in a moment of impetuosity, said to them, "Let's do a play!" he told the bulletin's Jennifer Greenstein Altmann.

The production of Neil Simon's "Rumors," which Simpson directed, was so successful that he established the nonprofit Courthouse Theater Company at the center and, serving as its artistic director and CEO, spent subsequent summers directing plays there, she recalled in 2009.

A \$30,000 fellowship brought this pledge "to devote the year following graduation to an independent project of extraordinary merit that will widen the recipient's experience of the world and significantly enhance his or her personal

growth and intellectual development."

Now his Courthouse Theater Company is called the Contemporary Theater Company, has a sprawling campus in downtown Wakefield and is celebrating its 20th anniversary.

Simpson said recently about the theater's milestone that he was proud to see how history unfolded his idea.

"As the years pass, it's amazing to watch the mission expand and evolve as the company becomes ever more finely attuned to its community's needs. The fact that the theater is still growing and rediscovering itself so successfully, years after all of the original founders have moved on, is a tremendous testament to every person who has participated and contributed, even only for the briefest of times," he said.

"The theater is a living thing, and for me it is truly beautiful to watch it reinvent itself and thrive," said Simpson who is no longer part of the day-to-day theater operations.

A small-town stage can cast a long shadow — and for two decades.

Just recently "Peter and the Starcatcher" dropped anchor at the CTC's 327 Main Street stage in Wakefield, bringing with it a perfect blend of adventure, humor, and heart — a mainstay in most of the productions at the CTC over these two decades.

It's a story about origins, courage, and the magic of storytelling — fitting themes for a theater company celebrating its own origin story: two decades of transforming downtown Wakefield through creativity, community, and live performance.

What unfolds onstage is everything CTC productions have shown us the organization cherishes: a nimble cast's wit, make-believe made tangible, and the quiet joy of neighbors gathering in the dark, united by story and community.

It's the right play at the right moment — a tale of beginnings, identity, and wonder — just as CTC marks its own remarkable beginning in a Peter Pan sort of way with CTC founder Simpson.

Anniversaries ask us to pause in gratitude. This one asks us to show up, to lean in, and to take part in keeping this theater a unique part of South County for the many ways it weaves together — on and off stage — what South County is all about.

Two decades ago, South Kingstown High School graduate Simpson and a handful of artists huddled in borrowed rooms and on friendly patios, passing the hat, improvising light plots, and trusting the kindness of local businesses to open their doors after hours.

Today, those same instincts — resourcefulness, hospitality, audacity — have built a full campus downtown: the cozy black box where the permanent home began; a three-story rehearsal studio; and an outdoor performance patio that, on summer nights, glows with Shakespeare and the sound of the river.

As State Rep. Carol McEntee (D-South Kingstown and Narragansett) put it, "I can barely remember Main St. in Wakefield before the Contemporary theater existed. Why you ask? Because 20 years ago downtown Wakefield was a sleepy town whose sidewalks closed up early and there was very little night life."

"Over the years, there have been many positive changes, including new restaurants, shops and the Contemporary Theater Company located in the heart of downtown," she added about its influence in building and reviving downtown Wakefield.

The arc from itinerant troupe to beloved institution is a South County success story, and it comes with a simple ask to attend performances and support the company with donations, whether \$2 or \$2,000.

With no money, the CTC grew from the imagination and steady hands of founding artistic director hometown actor Simpson and later Maggie Cady — both Princeton classmates — who have guided the enterprise with equal parts logistical genius, creative nerve, and a marriage in love for theater and each other.

The early years were as scrappy as theater gets: stage a Neil Simon farce in a multipurpose room, load props into a hatchback, rehearse where you can, perform where someone will let you.

Those of us who remember the first seasons remember goodwill as much as any one set or costume. "We should put on a show" was both a plan and a promise. Culture does not descend from elsewhere; it rises from a place where people believe they can make it.

What followed is a master class in civic arts and community leadership.

CTC found a permanent home on Main Street and set about proving what a small nonprofit can mean to a walkable and struggling downtown before the renaissance seen today. As productions came out as fast as bread from the oven, show nights meant restaurant specials, full sidewalks, and the sound of lobby chatter spilling onto the street.

Investments in space — rehearsal rooms, a lobby that invites conversation, a riverside patio expanded into a community plaza — became investments in Wakefield itself. There is no simple metric for "vibrancy," but you know it when you feel it — that quick lift in a business district where the lights stay on just a little later because a curtain is about to rise.

And there is the repertoire — both the scheduled and the serendipitous.

CTC produces scripted and improv plays, musicals, book readings, content creation, and much more all year long. These range from the offbeat (Black and Funny Improv and 24-hour play festivals) to hosting author talks and gems like a holiday bash revue at the historic and famed Narragansett Towers venue along the Atlantic Ocean.

Favorites, often with design flourishes that turn constraints into magic occur without public request. CTC is filled with originals who have other full-time jobs and simply want to give from within, whether performance, unique sets, costume designs, constructing actual theater buildings, and building camaraderie.

A Widened Doorway

They know the local audience and deliver to them. The company's genius also lies in how it widens the doorway.

"People get so passionate about this place they will throw all themselves into it. Because we don't have a lot of money, you have to get people who will work from a place of passion," said Tammy Brown, who sits on the theater's board and is also its former artistic director following Simpson.

"It's not just about a bunch of friends hanging out, it's also about being ambitious," she added about qualities — also embracing

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inclusive, playful, kind, and supportive — that make it thrive.

Wakefield Idol did not have to be hosted by a theater. It had to be hosted by this theater. A singing contest could have been a one-off novelty. Here it became a tradition — a place for brave debuts and second chances, for voices that might otherwise go unheard to be amplified by a room that listens with kindness.

To watch a nervy teenager become a confident soloist over a season is to witness evolution and revelation at the same time and in real time.

That commitment to young people extends far beyond microphones. CTC has spent years treating elementary and high school students not as future audiences, but as present artists. The company's classes, internship-like opportunities, and side-by-side productions with master actors offer students more than stage skills.

They offer vocabulary for collaboration, resilience, and joy. It is hard to overstate the value of a rehearsal room where adolescents learn to take direction, to give feedback, to risk embarrassment, and find a triumphant laugh.

In an era when so much teenage life is lived online, a black box of a theater becomes a sanctuary: a place to look up, lock eyes, and be fully human — all together.

Crucially, "together" at CTC means everyone, as also in Come Together Community.

Long before diversity statements were standard, this theater treated inclusion as practice rather than posture. It has welcomed LGBTQ+ youth and adults, not as tokens but as co-creators, equal and

respected for talents and humanity. CTC has given space to stories and bodies that don't always find a home in more brittle institutions.

It has built evenings where veteran theatergoers sit next to first-timers, and nobody feels like a guest. The patio, in particular, has become a civic commons — a place to play, to mourn, to celebrate — where families push chairs together and strangers share blankets when the breeze off the Saugatucket turns cool.

Sustainable Art and Evolution

Anniversaries also ask us to honor the unflashy work that makes art sustainable.

The steady expansion from one room to a campus happened because the company kept its promises — to audiences, to artists, to partners, to funders. Budgets balanced somehow.

Leaky roofs were patched. Volunteers were thanked. When roles evolved — new artistic leadership, new executive capacity — the through-line remained: mission first, people always.

South County has learned to trust that when CTC announces a season, the shows will materialize. When a fundraiser needs support, the results are visible, and when a young person needs a place to belong, a staffer with a ring of keys will be waiting by the door.

Which brings us back to Peter and the Starcatcher, a prequel about how wonder begins, and the courage it takes to hold onto it. The production's conceit — actors conjuring worlds with chalk and wit — captured how CTC has always worked: make do, then make magic.

The show, which just ended a month-long run, also suggests something more. Communities choose their future. CTC has been quietly authoring for 20 years the story of creative people, treated with trust and given room to try, changing a town's sense of itself.

What does that change look like? It looks like a Thursday preview with pay-what-you-can tickets and a line that includes students, retirees, and a family clutching pajamas to donate to a local drive.

It looks like a cast list dotted with names you recognize from school concerts, coffee shops, open mics, and improv get-togethers. There's a public who never forgets waiting outside the door for a performance to begin and to say "Thank you" afterward.

It looks like the late-night laughter after an improv set when someone from out of state wonders aloud, "How is this happening here?" and the answer is obvious to everyone: Because that is an endearing characteristic of South County.

"I think the success of the CTC over its twenty years is based on some special quality in the people of South County. We are surrounded by brilliant artists which keeps us ambitious in the work we produce," said Stephen Fox, the theater's current executive director.

"On top of that, we're in a town full of people who really care about each other, which keeps us focused on growing and improving our community. That combination of art and community is where the CTC thrives and plans to continue for the next twenty years," he said.

Contemporary Theater Company will wrap 2025 with its holiday offering "Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley." The production opens for previews December 5-6 and runs December 7-21. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit contemporarytheatercompany.com.

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Peggy Corcoran, second from left, owner of Bosgraaf Studio leads a class in her stained glass studio in Peace Dale. Corcoran's studio is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year and gearing up for its 10th annual holiday sale, which will feature the work of over 60 of its students. This year's sale runs December 6-7.

MAKE IT SPECIAL

Peggy Corcoran took a chance by opening Bosgraaf Studio and, every holiday season, is reminded of the power of imagination.

**Story by Mara Hagen,
Photography by Michael Derr**

Inside the building of an unassuming storefront off the Peace Dale Rotary is an exuberant myriad of tools, glass, and scraps of artist's work. There are long work tables cluttered with what will soon be one of South County's premiere holiday shopping bazaars: The Bosgraaf Studio's Glass Art Holiday Sale. This holiday season, the sale celebrates its

tenth year, on top of the studio itself celebrating its twentieth year in business.

Owner Peggy Corcoran began apprenticing for a glass artist when she was 18 years old, while going to school. She enjoyed it, but the circumstances weren't quite right for her to pursue it fully. She began woodworking as her trade until her 30's, when she took a class of glass artistry and began working for the teacher. This is when Corcoran had an epiphany; she wanted to work with glass

for the rest of her life. As any artist does, she began fervently searching for other opportunities to learn more about the work. Corcoran recalls, "I was doing stained glass church restoration work, really anything I could think of. I was working for 10-15 years for other people before I bought the studio."

Corcoran buying the studio is a particular and kismet story: She picked

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Peggy Corcoran, left, owner of Bosgraaf Studio helps her student Amy Abramson-Denhoff make holiday ornaments in her stained glass studio in Peace Dale. While Corcoran may have been worried about its success when she first opened it, Bosgraaf Studio has become a lesson in community and creativity in its two decades in Southern Rhode Island.

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up a South County Independent and saw in the classifieds that there was a spot for rent next to, what is now, Bosgraaf Studio. The spot she went to visit was no longer for sale, but her friends clued her into the knowledge that the place next door was going up for rent in a few days.

"I contacted the owners, gave them a check for the deposit, and that was it," Corcoran said. "I was so nervous when I gave them the check that I almost passed out and they had to get me water. I panicked all night, thinking 'What am I doing?'"

She was also nervous thinking about going into her job at Mancini Hardware the next morning and telling them that she had to quit. Serendipitously, the hardware store was struck by lightning that same night. Corcoran says, "so yeah, that pretty much sent me on my path. I had to really do it now."

Every holiday season the studio celebrates the artists that make-up its



These ornaments were created by a student at Bosgraaf Studio for the studio's annual holiday sale, the proceeds of which will benefit the Jonnycake Youth Center.

classes by selling their work at the annual Holiday Sale. Most of the artists' work on their pieces all year round and in between work on other projects, but there's always

those artists who are putting up last minute creations. Corcoran says, "it gets really chaotic in here. We have to shut down the studio a week before the sale to clean it out,

and start decorating. We have a lot of women helping out and putting in long hours."

When the studio is cleared out for the sale, all the various flotsam of works-in-progress disappear and are replaced with a beautiful, hanging display of stained glass figurines. Some of these are traditional class Christmas items, but most of them reflect the various aesthetic preferences of the artist who makes them. They are aimed to be unconventional gifts that can speak to certain personalities and preferences to make the perfect unique gift.

Buying local art and handmade gifts are something that Corcoran believes is essential to the Holiday Sale, "people are coming in here and choosing something with someone's personality in mind; they know that person is going to enjoy that piece."

Throughout the 20 years of business, and the 10 years of the sale, Corcoran has seen a lot of change and growth. She says, "It feels really good to be celebrating this year with everyone. You never know what is going to happen, but the classes have really taken off more than anything; more than 95 students take classes here." When it comes to the show, Corcoran laughs about its effort, "every year at the end we say 'This is the last year', and then we say 'Well wait, we can't stop now we have to do the fifth year, or the tenth year. Our sales have quadrupled in 10 years, and each year a portion goes to a local charity. This year it goes to the Johnnycake Youth Center."

The Bosgraaf Studio Holiday Sale has become a tradition for shoppers in South County. It is a tradition that doesn't stop giving, because it's also a gift to the artists who are creating the pieces. Corcoran speaks about her students, saying "The studio has become a family; our stained glass family. A lot of people come in here thinking 'I can't draw. I can't do this, I can't do that.' Although this hobby is not easy, it's very forgiving. I think all people who come in here to learn come away with something that they feel really good about. They can look at something they made hanging up in the window, with the sun streaming through, and say with pride that it's something they created."

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THE FAMILY TREE

At Riverside Tree Farm, picking your Christmas Tree is more than an activity, it's a chance to create the perfect holiday memory.

**Story by Morgan Rizzo,
Photography by Michael Derr**

Jane Durning's backyard is nothing short of unique. She has fond childhood memories of riding her horse through the trees and spending afternoons with friends playing games in the fields. It's the place she grew up and still calls home. "I love this farm," reflects Jane Durning, who owns Riverside Farm in Charlestown with her husband, Kevin. "I've grown up here my entire life, and I look out here knowing this is the place to be."

Riverside Farm began as a hobby farm in 1905, purchased by Jane Durning's great-great grandfather. The family lived on the property, raising livestock — cows, chickens, pigs and sheep — to support themselves. Over the years, they grew a five-acre strawberry patch, and Jane's grandfather sold the berries at his workplace, the former Bradford Dyeing Association. Each year, her mother planted a garden and canned the vegetables they grew or integrated them into the night's dinner.

"Everything we ate came from the garden," says Durning. "We all took the farm to heart."

Over several decades, the land was passed down through the generations, remaining a self-supportive farm with each family member caring for it until it was time to pursue their own paths. Now in its fifth generation, Jane and Kevin have inherited Riverside Farm and love the family history embedded in the land.

"When Kevin and I got married, he was the one who came up with the



Kevin and Jane Durning, owners of Riverside Christmas Tree Farm in Charlestown, were dressed for the season on a recent fall afternoon. The holidays are one of the busiest times for the Durnings and the farm begins its preparations for the Christmas tree season in April and May, planting up to 1,800 new trees every year depending on the weather.

idea of planting Christmas trees," says Durning. "I never knew Christmas tree farms existed because when I was growing up, my Dad and I would go out to the woods to cut down our tree."

With Kevin's encouragement, the first planting of Christmas trees occurred in 1988 with 1,000 balsam fir trees. He knew it was something he wanted to do one day for his retirement — becoming a full-fledged Christmas tree farmer. The Durnings opened Riverside Farm to the public for tree cutting in 1995. "From that point on, it's grown immensely, and we now have over ten acres of trees planted across the farm," explains Durning.

The couple starts the Christmas tree planting process in mid April and May with seedlings around six to eight inches tall that take approximately eight to 15 years to grow to its fullest height of around seven feet. Today, Riverside Farm has approximately 12,000 trees in the ground as Kevin continually plants about 1,800 trees every year depending on mother nature's plans.

Riverside Farm focuses on sustainability and is committed to organic farming practices aimed at preserving a healthy environment for generations. Their ultimate goal is to increase the amount of trees each year to continue the family's legacy and create Christmas memories for more families in the local community.

With years experimenting with various trees, the Durnings found that balsam fir, concolor fir, fraser fir, white spruce, scotch pine and white pine thrive best on their land. Balsam firs with their dark green appearance retain its lovely fragrance throughout the Christmas season, while the white spruce is a popular choice for landscapes and can withstand various conditions.

"When people come to the farm to look for a tree, we're hands-on with them," says Durning. "We love to walk with them, asking what they're looking for and where the tree will be put to help find the perfect one."

Using the excess evergreen materials, Durning creates outdoor holiday decorations available for purchase. She focuses on making hand-made wreaths,



Josh and Alyssa Litman, of Coventry search for the perfect Christmas tree with their children, Lucy, 11, Lucas, 9, and Laken, 3, at Riverside Christmas Tree Farm in Charlestown.

garland cemetery baskets, porch pots and special winter gnomes. Alongside the farm sits a small gift boutique where she sells artisanal products with a personal touch including ornaments, wooden plaques of painted red trucks carrying Christmas trees, plush Santas wearing

festive poinsettia sweaters and snowman mugs, perfect for hot chocolate. "I try to create and find different items every year keeping everything classic and unique where you couldn't find it at the big-box

Continued on page 14

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EAT FISH! LOVE LIFE!

Three photographs are displayed. The left photo shows a plate of salad with a large scoop of white cream. The middle photo shows a blue plate with a dish of rice and vegetables. The right photo shows a green cocktail in a glass with a straw and garnish.

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Continued from page 13

stores," says Durning.

Each year, the Durnings look forward to the holiday season and the joy it brings to not only their family but many others.

"We've had a great clientele for a number of years," explains Durning. "We might only be able to see their family once a year, but it's always great to see kids growing from strollers to heading off to college."

Walking through the rows, families can feel the love the Durnings have sharing their farm with the community.

"The season isn't about the trees; it's about the experiences we create together with family and friends," says Durning.

With children and grandchildren of their own, Jane and Kevin now watch them run throughout the fields among Christmas trees just like Jane once did. Visitors might even spot their grandchildren out on the farm selling warm Christmas cookies and snacks, perfect for tree hunting.

"It's hard for a farm of this size to pass from generation to generation," says



Kevin Durning, co-owner of Riverside Christmas Tree Farm in Charlestown, talks to Josh Litman, of Coventry and his son, Laken, 3, on a recent afternoon.

Durning. "But, I love it and everything about the Christmas season. It brings so much good."

Riverside Farm is located at 80 Burdickville Road in Charlestown and opens the weekend before Thanksgiving. The farm accepts walk-ins and is open

Thursdays and Fridays from 12 to 4 p.m., and Saturday and Sundays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The Durnings additionally accept appointments during the week and require them for professional photography sessions. To learn more about the farm, visit riversidetreefarm.com.

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With nearly 200 members, the Chorus of Westerly has served as a place for Southern Rhode Island's musically-inclined residents to find a sense of community since its inception in 1959. But while the group performs at various events throughout the year, it is best known for its Christmas Pops concerts, which will take place this year on Saturday, December 20th at 6 p.m. and Sunday, December 21st at 3 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.

SOUNDS OF THE SEASON

While the Chorus of Westerly fosters community through music all year, the holidays are where it shines biggest and brightest.

By Morgan Rizzo

The holiday season connects loved ones near and far through heartfelt traditions. For the 196 members of the Chorus of Westerly, music is what brings the community together, especially during this special time of year. "Community is the driver, music is the tool, and connection is the goal—every path at the Chorus of Westerly leads us there," says Ryan Saunders, executive director of the Chorus of Westerly.

Since its founding in 1959 by George Kent, the Chorus of Westerly has brought music and arts programming of the highest level to the community. Over the past 65 years, the Chorus of Westerly has presented around 800 performances to more than 1.7 million people, singing in venues including Smetana Hall, Westminster Abbey and St. Peter's Basilica. This multigenerational choral organization offers multiple programs outside of the main symphonic ensemble. Along with a full season of classical masterworks, The

Chorus of Westerly also performs community favorites like the annual Summer Pops and Christmas Pops concerts.

"The Chorus is unique in the sense that its membership included a mix of both adults and children singing together at major concerts, and the intergenerational nature of it allows it to be a wonderful family affair," says Saunders.

Saunders' own journey with the Chorus of Westerly began when his parents signed him

Continued on page 16

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up at seven years old to be involved in the arts at an early age. This group quickly became a central part of his life, and many of his closest friends were formed there. After pursuing a career in music and arts management, he returned to the Chorus of Westerly in 2009 as executive director. "Having the chance to help nurture and run this amazing organization and allow it to continue having an impact in the community during my professional career was special to me," reflects Saunders. "Using music and arts as a tool to make the community better is why I do what I do."

As executive director, Saunders oversees the business side of the organization that helps produce the concerts, and allows the singers directed by The Marion & Bill Palm Music Director, Andrew Howell to lead his artistic visions.

The Chorus of Westerly offers a multitude of artistic programs for anyone with an interest and passion in music to participate. Its Symphonic Ensemble is the main performance choir, rehearsing, preparing and performing in an artistically demanding environment. Children as young as eight may



This year, the Chorus of Westerly's Christmas Pops concerts will feature a new piece from resident composer John Tafone titled "A Year Without Christmas."

sing as full members of this ensemble and will be trained to develop their skills. The Foundation Chorus is a non-auditioned group, allowing a pace for varying abilities to use their voices.

Additional opportunities include the Westerly Threshold singers, providing music

to those at the ending stages of life and the Encore Choir, bringing music to the residents of the Stroneridge Senior Living Community. The Chorus of Westerly also runs an educational after-school program in the Westerly and Stonington elementary schools that provides children the opportunity to have



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BAD COMPANY

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a concert in the George Kent Performance Hall. "If you want to sing and have a good experience, it doesn't matter your musical background, we will find the appropriate path for you," says Saunders.

Although the Chorus of Westerly performs around six concert series every year, the group looks forward to the holiday season the most and their tradition of the Christmas Pops that is celebrating its 67th season. "The holidays for us have always been a busy but wonderful time to prepare and create great music to present to the town," says Saunders.

With just a month to prepare, the Chorus of Westerly organizes this holiday musical spectacular of singers and a professional orchestra performing traditional reimagined holiday favorites. Audience members might hear their favorites including, Sleigh Ride, Winter Wonderland, White Christmas along with arrangements of the songs in new settings. In years past, arrangers reset classic songs from the movie, "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" with guest vocal artists and actors.

"It's meant as a kick off for the holiday season," says Saunders. "For many The Christmas Pops has opened that door and been the first step of joy and warmth of the Christmas season."

This year, resident composer and arranger, John Tafone will premiere a new piece he's titled, "A Year Without Christmas" featuring a guest narrator with accompanying songs in the background portraying a story about Christmas not happening. Saunders encourages those who haven't experienced a performance at the George Kent Performance Hall to come visit them this season to enjoy an evening of music.

The Chorus of Westerly looks forward to looking out in the audience to see smiling generations of families coming year after year.

"We're an organization, but most importantly, we're a family including not just the singers on the risers, but the people in the audience," says Saunders. "It's a beautiful tapestry of everyone who lives, works and plays in our town."

This year's Christmas Pops performances at the George Kent Performance Hall take place Saturday December 20th at 6 p.m., and Sunday December 21st at 3 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. To learn more about the Chorus of Westerly and to purchase tickets, visit chorusofwesterly.org.

13TH ANNUAL **SOUTH COUNTY *life*** **PHOTO CHALLENGE**

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There's nothing quite like settling in to for a nice, warm cup of tea on a cold Winter's day and, at Sweet Marie's Tea Cottage in North Kingstown, that idea is one that led to an entire local business centered on providing customers a relaxed, comfortable place to enjoy more than a beverage. In fact, for owner Lindsey Andrews, the appeal of the Main Street locale is providing a place to go to feel the warmth of family and to feel like you're right at home.

HOME SWEET HOME

Need a place to find warmth and comfort this holiday season? Sweet Marie's Tea Cottage is here to serve you more than a drink.

**Story by Rachel Philipson,
Photography by Laura Paton**

Growing up, Lindsey Andrews, owner of North Kingstown's Sweet Marie's Tea Cottage, felt the most serene sitting around the dining room table with her family. She now wants everyone who steps into Sweet Marie's Tea Cottage to feel like they are becoming a part of one big extended family.

Andrews said the intention of her afternoon tea room and private event space is to not only serve high-quality tea and delectable bites but to create an experience

that people are going to remember.

"Sundays were spent around the dining room table with family. We were so fortunate to have grown up that way," Andrews said. "That is something I wanted to emulate—somewhere that didn't feel stiff or stuffy but really felt like to whoever comes in [that] they feel like they are at home."

The idea for Sweet Marie's Tea Cottage stemmed from Andrew's realization that she got the most joy out of working in the service industry. She knew she wanted to form a gathering space that was less formal than a full-service restaurant but more

formal than a cafe. Andrews landed on establishing an afternoon tea room and has been curating this vision ever since. Sweet Marie's Tea Cottage opened in its original location in August 2021 and moved to its current location in January 2025.

"We are a really beautiful gathering space for friends and family to take about 90 minutes out of their day to transport themselves to somewhere different. Somewhere intimate and cozy," Andrews said. "Whatever is stressing you out, come and sit down right here."

The name "Sweet Marie's Tea Cottage" is in honor of Andrews' grandmother,

Marie Louise Iacobucci. Inside Sweet Marie's Tea Cottage, Andrews has decorated with pictures of Iacobucci and her family to replicate the essence of going to a loved one's house.

"Marie just emulated love and kindness and that's exactly what we want to have people see and what they feel," Andrews said.

Before Iacobucci's passing in June 2024, Andrews and her family were able to celebrate Iacobucci's 91st birthday at the previous location. She said this celebration was an incredible special moment as she realized Sweet Marie's Tea Cottage has been the social hub for her family as well.

Andrews said they are able to honor Iacobucci's legacy in an even bigger way at the new, current location.

"We have grown as a family with the new space – it's become the gathering space for our family too," Andrews said. "Anyone who has a birthday or anything that we are celebrating, people come to the shop and it's awesome that I can provide that for my family. [It's] a space that is still able to honor Marie and she is still with us."

An afternoon tea might sound quite fancy and perhaps daunting to some. But, for first timers and repeat attendees alike, Andrews said she and her team thoroughly articulates the tea service experience to all guests before they begin. This way, everyone can feel at ease and know what to expect.

Sweet Marie's Tea Cottage has two tea services (afternoon and brunch) that are both a 90-minute prix fixe menu by reservation only. At the start of service, everyone is greeted with a pot of English breakfast tea. Guests will then receive their tea towers, filled with tea sandwiches, scones and desserts, at the same time. Throughout the service, attendees can select up to two more teas, including options from Twinings, Harney & Sons and Fortnum & Mason.

The original location sat approximately 20 people for tea service. In the new space, Andrews said she wants to keep it as intimate as possible while allowing slightly more people to join, leading her to often cap tea service at 30.

"Everyone enjoys the experience together, whether it's at your table or the room," Andrews said. "The whole room is moving at the same pace."



One of the ways Sweet Marie's Tea Cottage fosters the idea of family is displaying photos of owner Lindsey Andrews' grandmother Marie Louise Iacobucci, who the business was named after.

Andrews said she is incredibly excited for Sweet Marie's Tea Cottage to celebrate its first holiday season in the new location. Her goal is to host "Tea and Turner Classics" evening events where Sweet Marie's Tea Cottage will screen classical holiday-themed black and white movies during tea service. While she hasn't finalized details yet, she knows it has potential to be a go-to cozy activity for those looking for new ones to feel merry during the festive season.

Going into 2026, Andrews is pleased with how she and her team have settled into the new location. The business has expanded with doing more private events, including hosting bridal/baby showers and birthday parties. She sees a prosperous future with more entertaining celebrations, big and small.

"Every year has been a new learning experience. Every month has been new for us," Andrews said. "Our menu has evolved. The way we run our service has evolved. My staff has moved from just the two of us to ten of us. It's been a big learning curve but everything keeps improving every year."

Regardless of any new ventures, Andrews said Sweet Marie's Tea Cottage will always remain as an inviting place for someone to sit down and have a nice, warm cup of tea.

"We are really happy with where things are," Andrews said. "I am really proud of where we are at."

Sweet Marie's Tea Cottage is located at 7 Main St in North Kingstown. Afternoon tea is offered Thursdays through Sundays at 12 p.m. and 2 p.m. Brunch tea is offered Saturdays and Sundays at 10 a.m. There is also a walk-in à la carte service offering with a light selection of tea, wine, cocktails and confections on Thursdays through Sundays from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, visit sweetmariestea.com.



Among its services, Sweet Marie's Tea Cottage offers Afternoon Tea Thursdays through Sundays at 12 p.m. and 2 p.m.

to do

ONGOING

Ukulele Jam — Event. Monday nights, 6-8 p.m. \$5 suggested donation. Pump House Music Works, 1464 Kingstown Rd, Wakefield. pumphousemusicworks.com.

Old Time Jam — Event. Tuesday nights, 6-8 p.m. \$10 suggested donation. Pump House Music Works, 1464 Kingstown Rd, Wakefield. pumphousemusicworks.com.

Acoustic Lounge Open Mic — Event. Wednesday nights, 6-10 p.m. \$5 suggested donation. Pump House Music Works, 1464 Kingstown Rd, Wakefield. pumphousemusicworks.com.

54th Annual Holiday Pottery & Art Sale — Art Exhibit. On Display through December 19. South County Art Association, 2587 Kingstown Rd, Kings-ton. southcountyart.org.

Holiday Small Works — Art Exhibit. On display through Dec. 21. Wickford Art Association, 36 Beach Street, North Kingstown. 401-294-6840.

Members' Show — The annual Members' Show and a solo-exhibition of Margit Burmeister, Best-in-Show Winner of 2024 Members' Show. On display through January 10. Jamestown Arts Center, 18 Valley Street, Jamestown. 401-560-0979. jamestownartcenter.org.

NOV. 28

Bad Company-Rock Steady — Event. 7:30-10 p.m. \$28.81-\$39.09. Courthouse Center for the Arts, 3481 Kingstown Rd, West Kingston. 401-782-1018. courthousearts.org.

Frankie Lee Another Story — Live Music. 7:30 p.m., Oak Hill Tavern, 565 Tower Hill Road, North Kingstown. 294-3282, oakhilltavern.com.

Al Keith Quartet — Live Music. 8 p.m. \$10. Pump House Music Works, 1464 Kingstown Rd, Wakefield. pumphousemusicworks.com.

Soulshot — Live Music. 9-11:59 p.m. \$19.26 General Admission. 21+. Ocean Mist, 895 Matunuck Beach Rd, South Kingstown. oceanmist.net.

NOV. 29

November Potluck Open Mic — Event. 5:30 p.m. Doors & Sign-Ups. \$5 suggested donation. Pump House Music Works, 1464 Kingstown Rd, Wakefield. pumphousemusicworks.com.

Rolling Stones-Blushing Brides — Event. 7:30-10 p.m. \$30.86-\$36.01. Courthouse Center for the Arts, 3481 Kingstown Rd, West Kingston. 401-782-1018. courthousearts.org.

Tim Sullivan — Live Music. 7:30 p.m., Oak Hill Tavern, 565 Tower Hill Road, North Kingstown. 294-3282, oakhilltavern.com.

An Intimate Evening with The Irish Tenors — Concert. 8 p.m., \$67-\$75. Greenwich Odeum, 59 Main Street, East Greenwich. 401-885-4000. greenwichodeum.com.

Roomful of Blues — Live Music. 8 p.m. \$30. The United Theatre, 5 Canal Street, Westerly. unitedtheatre.org.

Guess Method — Live Music. 9-11:59 p.m. \$16.02 General Admission, \$41.94 Buy 3, Get 1 Free. 21+. Ocean Mist, 895 Matunuck Beach Rd, South Kingstown. oceanmist.net.

NOV. 30

Jan Brett Christmas Sweater Tour w/ Bank

Square Books — Event. 10 a.m. SOLD OUT. The United Theatre, 5 Canal Street, Westerly. unitedtheatre.org.

The 345's — Live Music, 12-2 p.m. Java Madness, 134 Salt Pond Road, Wakefield. For more information, visit javamadness.com.

Sunday Funday with Heavy Rescue — Live Music. 4-7 p.m. \$5 cover. Ocean Mist, 895 Matunuck Beach Rd, South Kingstown. oceanmist.net.

Just Love Band with Schurman & Choice — Live Music and Food Drive. 6:30 p.m. \$20. Pump House Music Works, 1464 Kingstown Rd, Wakefield. pumphousemusicworks.com.

DEC. 1

Holiday Card Painting — Event. 3:30-5 p.m. Courthouse Center for the Arts, 3481 Kingstown Rd, West Kingston. 401-782-1018. courthousearts.org.

DEC. 2

Ocean Mistrics — Live Music. 5-8 p.m. No Cover. 21+ Only After 8 p.m. Ocean Mist, 895 Matunuck Beach Rd, South Kingstown. oceanmist.net.

DEC. 3

Just Dance-Christmas Inclusion Dance & Pizza Party — Event. 5:30-7 p.m. Free. Courthouse Center for the Arts, 3481 Kingstown Rd, West Kingston. 401-782-1018. courthousearts.org.

Squirrel Nut Zippers: Christmas Caravan — Concert. 8 p.m., \$57-\$63. Greenwich Odeum, 59 Main Street, East Greenwich. 401-885-4000. greenwichodeum.com.

DEC. 5

Holiday Arts Market — Event. 5:30-7:30 p.m. Jamestown Arts Center, 18 Valley Street, Jamestown. 401-560-0979. jamestownartcenter.org.

Elvis-Dan Fontaine & Memphis Mafia Band Xmas Spectacular — Event. 7-9:30 p.m. \$27.78-\$36.01. Courthouse Center for the Arts, 3481 Kingstown Rd, West Kingston. 401-782-1018. courthousearts.org.

Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley — Live Theater. 7 p.m. \$12.50-\$47.50. Contemporary Theater Company, 327 Main Street, Wakefield. contemporarytheatercompany.com.

To Be Continued Band — Live Music. 7:30 p.m., Oak Hill Tavern, 565 Tower Hill Road, North Kingstown. 294-3282, oakhilltavern.com.

The Aimee Mann & Ted Leo Christmas Show — Concert. 8 p.m., \$76-\$86. Greenwich Odeum, 59 Main Street, East Greenwich. 401-885-4000. greenwichodeum.com.

The Empty Pockets with Special Guests The Hopeless Romantics — Live Music. 9-11:59 p.m. \$19.26 Day of Show. 21+. Ocean Mist, 895 Matunuck Beach Rd, South Kingstown. oceanmist.net.

DEC. 6-7

Christmas at the Castle — Event. 12-4 p.m. \$10 adults, \$8 Seniors and Military, \$5 Children 6-12, \$30 Family Cap. Smith's Castle. 55 Richard Smith Drive, North Kingstown. 294-3521. smithscastle.org.

DEC. 6

Holiday Arts Market — Event. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Free.

Jamestown Arts Center, 18 Valley Street, Jamestown. 401-560-0979. jamestownartcenter.org.

Marie Claude — Live Music, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Java Madness, 134 Salt Pond Road, Wakefield. For more information, visit javamadness.com.

Sinatra & More: Jimmy Mazz Holiday Variety Show — Event. 1:30-4 p.m. \$24.69-\$34.98. Courthouse Center for the Arts, 3481 Kingstown Rd, West Kingston. 401-782-1018. courthousearts.org.

Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley — Live Theater. 7 p.m. \$12.50-\$47.50. Contemporary Theater Company, 327 Main Street, Wakefield. contemporarytheatercompany.com.

Van Morrison-Moondance — Event. 7:30-10 p.m. \$29.84-\$38.07. Courthouse Center for the Arts, 3481 Kingstown Rd, West Kingston. 401-782-1018. courthousearts.org.

Paul Vaccaro — Live Music. 7:30 p.m., Oak Hill Tavern, 565 Tower Hill Road, North Kingstown. 294-3282, oakhilltavern.com.

Ring-a-Ding-Ding Christmas w/ Sal "the Voice" Valentinietti — Event. 7:30 p.m. \$47.40-\$52.70. The United Theatre, 5 Canal Street, Westerly. unitedtheatre.org.

Hell's Belles — Concert. 8 p.m., \$41-\$46. Greenwich Odeum, 59 Main Street, East Greenwich. 401-885-4000. greenwichodeum.com.

Rebels - A Tom Petty Tribute — Live Music. 9-11:59 p.m. \$24.66 General Admission, \$67.86 Buy 3, Get 1 Free. 21+. Ocean Mist, 895 Matunuck Beach Rd, South Kingstown. oceanmist.net.

DEC. 7

United Holiday Spectacular — Event. 1:30 p.m. and 4 p.m. The United Theatre, 5 Canal Street, Westerly. unitedtheatre.org.

Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley — Live Theater. 2 p.m. \$12.50-\$47.50. Contemporary Theater Company, 327 Main Street, Wakefield. contemporarytheatercompany.com.

Sunday Funday with Real Weird — Live Music. 4-7 p.m. \$5 cover. Ocean Mist, 895 Matunuck Beach Rd, South Kingstown. oceanmist.net.

It's a Wonderful Life — Film Screening. 7 p.m., \$14. Greenwich Odeum, 59 Main Street, East Greenwich. 401-885-4000. greenwichodeum.com.

Steve DeConti & Dan Moretti Quartet — Live Music. 7 p.m. \$20. Pump House Music Works, 1464 Kingstown Rd, Wakefield. pumphousemusicworks.com.

DEC. 9

Ocean Mistrics — Live Music. 5-8 p.m. No Cover. 21+ Only After 8 p.m. Ocean Mist, 895 Matunuck Beach Rd, South Kingstown. oceanmist.net.

DEC. 10

Judy Collins — Concert. 8 p.m., \$60-\$70. Greenwich Odeum, 59 Main Street, East Greenwich. 401-885-4000. greenwichodeum.com.

DEC. 11

Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley — Live Theater. 7 p.m. \$12.50-\$47.50. Contemporary Theater Company, 327 Main Street, Wakefield. contemporarytheatercompany.com.

Tab Benoit - I Hear Thunder Tour — Concert. 8 p.m., \$58-\$66. Greenwich Odeum, 59 Main Street, East Greenwich. 401-885-4000. greenwichodeum.com.

DEC. 12

Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley — Live Theater. 7 p.m. \$12.50-\$47.50. Contemporary Theater Company, 327 Main Street, Wakefield. contemporarytheatercompany.com.

Journey-Affinity — Event. 7:30-9:30 p.m. SOLD OUT. Courthouse Center for the Arts, 3481 Kingstown Rd, West Kingston. 401-782-1018. courthousearts.org.

Rash Cat — Live Music. 7:30 p.m., Oak Hill Tavern, 565 Tower Hill Road, North Kingstown. 294-3282, oakhilltavern.com.

One Tree Holiday: Tyler Hilton & Kate Voegele — Concert. 8 p.m., \$36-\$48. Greenwich Odeum, 59 Main Street, East Greenwich. 401-885-4000. greenwichodeum.com.

Little Lies: A Tribute to Fleetwood Mac — Live Music. 9-11:59 p.m. \$24.66 General Admission. 21+. Ocean Mist, 895 Matunuck Beach Rd, South Kingstown. oceanmist.net.

DEC. 13

Josh Schurman — Live Music, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Java Madness, 134 Salt Pond Road, Wakefield. For more information, visit javamadness.com.

An Iliad — Live theater, a contemporary adaptation of Homer's epic by two actors and a musician, presented by True North Theater Company. 4-6 p.m. \$15. Jamestown Arts Center, 18 Valley Street, Jamestown. 401-560-0979. jamestownartcenter.org.

Aging Disgracefully-Aging at Christmas — Event. 7-9:30 p.m. \$25.72-\$36.01. Courthouse Center for the Arts, 3481 Kingstown Rd, West Kingston. 401-782-1018. courthousearts.org.

Larry Brown Swinglane Orchestra — Event. 7 p.m. \$5 cover. Ocean Mist, 895 Matunuck Beach Rd, South Kingstown. oceanmist.net.

Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley — Live Theater. 7 p.m. \$12.50-\$47.50. Contemporary Theater Company, 327 Main Street, Wakefield. contemporarytheatercompany.com.

Goldbricks — Live Music. 7:30 p.m., Oak Hill Tavern, 565 Tower Hill Road, North Kingstown. 294-3282, oakhilltavern.com.

Billy Gilman: Home for the Holidays — Concert. 8 p.m., \$61-\$71. Greenwich Odeum, 59 Main Street, East Greenwich. 401-885-4000. greenwichodeum.com.

Pure Prairie League — Event. 8 p.m. \$48-\$58. The United Theatre, 5 Canal Street, Westerly. unitedtheatre.org.

DEC. 14

Grandpa J — Live Music, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Java Madness, 134 Salt Pond Road, Wakefield. For more information, visit javamadness.com.

Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley — Live Theater. 2 p.m. \$12.50-\$47.50. Contemporary Theater Company, 327 Main Street, Wakefield. contemporarytheatercompany.com.

Christmas Tea — Event, 2:30-4 p.m. SOLD OUT. Smith's Castle. 55 Richard Smith Drive, North Kingstown. 294-3521. smithscastle.org.

Sunday Funday with World Premier — Live Music. 4-7 p.m. \$5 cover. Ocean Mist, 895 Matunuck Beach Rd, South Kingstown. oceanmist.net.

Joan Osborne Sings the Songs of Bob Dylan — Concert. 7 p.m., \$60-\$66. Greenwich Odeum, 59 Main Street, East Greenwich. 401-885-4000. greenwichodeum.com.

The Wood Brothers: Puff of Smoke Tour — Live Music. 8 p.m. \$55. The United Theatre, 5 Canal Street, Westerly. unitedtheatre.org.

DEC. 17

Short Films by Fishar Stevens — Film Screening. 7 p.m. \$15. Jamestown Arts Center, 18 Valley Street, Jamestown. 401-560-0979. jamestownartcenter.org.

DEC. 18

Elvis-Award-Winning Dan Fontaine (XMas) — Event. 1:30-4 p.m. \$25.72-\$36.01. Courthouse Center for the Arts, 3481 Kingstown Rd, West Kingston. 401-782-1018. courthousearts.org.

Contemporary Theater Company: Christmas Cocktail Cabaret — Event. 6 p.m. \$70 Standard Ticket, \$100 VIP Cup of Good Cheer. The Towers, 35 Ocean Road, Narragansett. contemporarytheatercompany.com.

The Milk Carton Kids — Live Music. 7:30 p.m. \$47.40. The United Theatre, 5 Canal Street, Westerly. unitedtheatre.org.

DEC. 19

Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley — Live Theater. 7 p.m. \$12.50-\$47.50. Contemporary Theater Company, 327 Main Street, Wakefield. contemporarytheatercompany.com.

Rock N Roll Nashville XMas — Event. 7:30-10 p.m. \$27.78-\$38.07. Courthouse Center for the Arts, 3481 Kingstown Rd, West Kingston. 401-782-1018. courthousearts.org.

Troy Caruana — Live Music. 7:30 p.m., Oak Hill Tavern, 565 Tower Hill Road, North Kingstown. 294-3282, oakhilltavern.com.

Pink Talking Fish — Live Music. 8 p.m. \$35. The United Theatre, 5 Canal Street, Westerly. unitedtheatre.org.

The Uncle Louie Variety Show — Concert. 8 p.m. \$35-\$45. Greenwich Odeum, 59 Main Street, East Greenwich. 401-885-4000. greenwichodeum.com.

DEC. 20

Ed McGuirl — Live Music, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Java Madness, 134 Salt Pond Road, Wakefield. For more information, visit javamadness.com.

Frank Sinatra - A Sinatra Christmas with Rich DiMare & Ron Poster Trio — Event. 1 p.m. \$28.81-\$39.09. Courthouse Center for the Arts, 3481 Kingstown Rd, West Kingston. 401-782-1018.

courthousearts.org.

Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley — Live Theater. 7 p.m. \$12.50-\$47.50. Contemporary Theater Company, 327 Main Street, Wakefield. contemporarytheatercompany.com.

2 Cat Tango — Live Music. 7:30 p.m., Oak Hill Tavern, 565 Tower Hill Road, North Kingstown. 294-3282, oakhilltavern.com.

Almost Queen: A Tribute to Queen — Concert. 8 p.m., \$70-\$78. Greenwich Odeum, 59 Main Street, East Greenwich. 401-885-4000. greenwichodeum.com.

DEC. 21

Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley — Live Theater. 2 p.m. \$12.50-\$47.50. Contemporary Theater Company, 327 Main Street, Wakefield. contemporarytheatercompany.com.

Christmas with the Celts — Event. 7 p.m., \$62-\$72. Greenwich Odeum, 59 Main Street, East Greenwich. 401-885-4000. greenwichodeum.com.

DEC. 27

Simon & Garfunkel - On Bleeker Street — Event. 7:30-10 p.m. \$27.78-\$38.07. Courthouse Center for the Arts, 3481 Kingstown Rd, West Kingston. 401-782-1018. courthousearts.org.

Dan Lilley Duo — Live Music. 7:30 p.m., Oak Hill Tavern, 565 Tower Hill Road, North Kingstown. 294-3282, oakhilltavern.com.

DEC. 28

Peter Rossi — Live Music, 12-2 p.m. Java Madness, 134 Salt Pond Road, Wakefield. For more information, visit javamadness.com.

Sunday Funday with The Senders — Live Music. 4-7 p.m. \$5 cover. Ocean Mist, 895 Matunuck Beach Rd, South Kingstown. oceanmist.net.

DEC. 30

Ocean Mistics — Live Music. 5-8 p.m. No Cover. 21+ Only After 8 p.m. Ocean Mist, 895 Matunuck Beach Rd, South Kingstown. oceanmist.net.

DEC. 31

Neal & The Vipers-10th Annual New Years Eve Party — Event. 9 p.m. \$27.78-\$38.07. Courthouse Center for the Arts, 3481 Kingstown Rd, West Kingston. 401-782-1018. courthousearts.org.

Truckin' Into '26 with Mystic Dead — Live Music. 9 p.m. \$25-42. The United Theatre, 5 Canal Street, Westerly. unitedtheatre.org.



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