



MUNICIPAL NEWSLETTER

Town of Carlisle

NOVEMBER 2025

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website to
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on the next
edition!*

Welcome Jessica Ritenhouse!



We are pleased to welcome Jessica Ritenhouse as Carlisle's new Finance and Human Resources Assistant. Jessica joins us from the City of Amesbury, where she served as Payroll Clerk and Benefits Coordinator. She holds a Master's degree in Human Resource Management from Northeastern University and brings several years of experience in payroll, benefits administration, and financial operations. Be sure to say hello!

Special Town Meeting & Election Results

Carlisle voters gathered on November 2 for the 2025 Special Town Meeting, with 524 residents (12.7% of voters) in attendance. Voters approved the creation of a Multi-Family Overlay District at Kay's Walk, along with its associated zoning bylaw amendment. Funding for Fire Station renovation design work also passed with a strong two-thirds majority. No action was taken on the proposed Demolition Review Bylaw.

A follow-up Special Town Election was held on November 13, with 301 ballots cast (7.3% turnout). Voters approved the Proposition 2½ debt exclusion needed to move forward with design funding for the Fire Station renovation, with 246 voting YES and 54 NO.

Residents can find additional details on the Town's website or by contacting the Town Clerk's Office.



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carlislema.gov

ESC's Eagle Scout Project – Water Chestnut Composting Bins

Each year the Environmental Sustainability Committee undertakes a number of outreach efforts with some of them focused on the younger portion of Carlisle's residents. In the most recent example, the ESC, with technical support from the Carlisle Conservation Foundation (CCF), engaged with a Carlisle Troop 135 Eagle Scout candidate to design and build composting bins to aid Carlisle's effort in controlling the spread of invasive water chestnut. Luke Gettings, as part of fulfilling his Eagle Scout leadership requirements, took on this effort in the late spring / early summer.



Luke, working in close collaboration with members of ESC and CCF, visited neighboring town examples of these types of bins, combined that with some research, added a dose of plain old common sense, and came up with a design tailored for composting water chestnut. Some additional fine tuning was done to minimize cost of materials while also taking into account environmental considerations. For example, we decided to forego pressure treated wood, which contains toxic chemicals that are not great for the folks handling and cutting the wood, or the environment. Instead, we purchased untreated wood that would be coated with linseed oil to help extend the service life of the bins in a more environmentally friendly way.



Luke organized his fellow Scouts for a number of group 'build events'. Four bins were built – four feet on each side – with all six sides being a rigid frame with screen mesh used to retain the water chestnut seeds while allowing air drying. And that was a lot of effort! Luke led



the build events and organized them in logical steps – cutting the individual frame components, coating them with linseed oil with time to dry, and final assembly. Thanks to all of the Scouts' efforts, specialty composting bins are now ready for deployment to handle invasive water chestnut harvested in Carlisle.

Great job Scouts!

6 Nov 2025

Submitted by Eric Balles,
Co-chair, Environmental Sustainability Committee

Travel Greener This Holiday Season!

Simple Steps for Reducing Your Carbon Footprint

With holiday travel just around the corner, it's a great time to consider how small changes can make a big difference for our environment. Here are practical tips to help you travel more sustainably—and enjoy the journey while you're at it:

1. **Pack Light:** Every extra 10 pounds of luggage adds fuel use. Packing only what you need reduces weight—and saves space in your car or on the plane.
2. **Make Your Home Energy-Smart Before You Leave:** Before you lock up, unplug electronics, turn down your water heater, and lower the thermostat to around 55°F. The Department of Energy estimates that lowering your heat by 10–15°F for eight hours a day can cut heating bills by up to 10% a year.
3. **Eat and Shop Locally Once You Arrive:** Support small local restaurants and farmers' markets instead of chain stores. Local sourcing reduces freight emissions and boosts the host community's economy.
4. **Offset What You Can't Avoid:** Even with good planning, travel leaves a carbon mark. Consider purchasing verified carbon offsets through programs like Gold Standard or Cool Effect, which fund renewable energy or forest restoration projects.



Small Steps Add Up

You don't have to skip the trip to make a difference, just travel a little smarter. A carpool here, a lighter suitcase there, and one direct flight instead of two can reduce your holiday carbon footprint by up to 25–40%, according to the International Council on Clean Transportation (ICCT).

So pack your bags—and your eco-awareness—for a more sustainable holiday season!

Environmental Sustainability Committee

From the Veteran Services Director

Starting November 14th, the Veteran Services Office will be switching office hours from Tuesdays to Fridays, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM.

From the Carlisle Council on Aging & Human Services (COAHS)

As the holidays approach, November reminds us to slow down, take stock, and care for one another — especially as colder weather and shorter days settle in.

Earlier this month, we were proud to host our annual Veterans Breakfast, where residents gathered to honor Carlisle’s veterans and active service members. It was a moving morning filled with conversation, stories, and gratitude. Thank you to everyone who attended and to our speakers for helping us pay tribute to those who have served our nation.

Supporting Residents Affected by SNAP Reductions

COAHS is aware that some residents may experience temporary reductions or interruptions to their SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits this month due to federal budget delays. We understand that even a small disruption in food assistance can create significant hardship.

We can help connect residents to local food resources, emergency grocery support, and other assistance programs to ensure no one goes without. If you or someone you know is impacted, please reach out to Kathleen Bond, Social Services Manager, at 978-759-7621 or kbond@carlislema.gov.

Caring Through the Holidays

The holiday season can bring both joy and stress — especially for caregivers or those supporting loved ones with dementia. Join us on **Monday, November 17th, 12:00–1:00 p.m. in the Clark Room** for Caring Through the Holidays, a free lunch-and-learn presentation by Bridges by Epoch at Westford. This session offers practical ways to simplify gatherings and create meaningful moments while reducing stress for everyone involved.

COAHS also hosts an ongoing **Caregiver Peer Support Group**, meeting monthly at Town Hall to provide a welcoming space for caregivers to share experiences, exchange ideas, and connect with others who understand their journey.

If anyone needs assistance attending the group — including **respite care or transportation during the meeting** — please contact us. We’ll do our best to help ensure every caregiver has the opportunity to participate and find support this season.

Warmly,

Geoffrey Kotowski
Director, Council on Aging & Human Services

From the DPW Director

Howdy folks!

We here at the DPW, hope you all had a very "ghoulish" Halloween. October has also been a very busy month for us. We had a few unexpected emergency tree removals that were a serious public safety hazard. We have also been busy with cemetery and town building beautification projects cleaning up leaves and getting ready for Jack Frost to come calling!!

As always, we thank you for your patience and support!

Jim



From the Fire Department

Thank you to everyone who stopped by our annual Open House! We had a great turnout, and it was especially awesome to see our future firefighters helping us knock down a blaze and learning how we keep Carlisle safe. A special shout-out to our friends at Acton Fire for helping to get the Fire Safety House (SAFE trailer) rolling so we could deliver hands-on fire safety education in a fun, memorable — and smoky! — way.

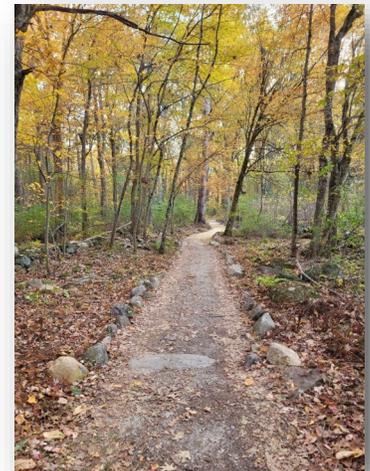


Post-Thanksgiving Walk November 28

The public is invited to join the Carlisle Trails Committee for a post-Thanksgiving walk. Here's your chance to work off some of that turkey and stuffing! Starting at Malcolm Meadows, the walk will cover about 3.5 miles on the Malcolm, Two Rod Road, Davis Corridor, and Woodhaven farm trails, taking approximately 2.5 hours. A shorter 1-mile version will be available if there is interest. We will be showcasing the new boardwalks at Malcolm Meadows and the rebuilt section of Two Rod Road, both completed this fall. The walk departs from the Malcolm Meadows trail parking lot on Stearns Street at 1:00 p.m. on Friday, November 28. As always, there will be refreshments at the end. Heavy rain cancels the trip. For more information, contact the Carlisle Trails Committee at carlisletrails@comcast.net.

Two Rod Road trail repair project, Phase 2

With help from many volunteers, the Trails Committee rebuilt a 110-foot section of the historic Two Rod Road trail on Oct 17-19 and Nov 8. This follows up on the 60-foot section we rebuilt last fall. The trail surface is now crushed stone rather than mud and should provide good all-season footing for decades. A total of 30 people worked on the project, contributing 152 hours and moving 14 tons of crushed stone. The project was a whole lot easier thanks to the DPW picking up and delivering crushed stone, Bob Goldsmith's power wagon, Jason Suderman operating John Merz's Kubota loader, Bryan Sorrows operating his backhoe and picking up and delivering the second load of crushed stone, and a volunteer crew from National Grid.





NOVEMBER 2025 UPDATE

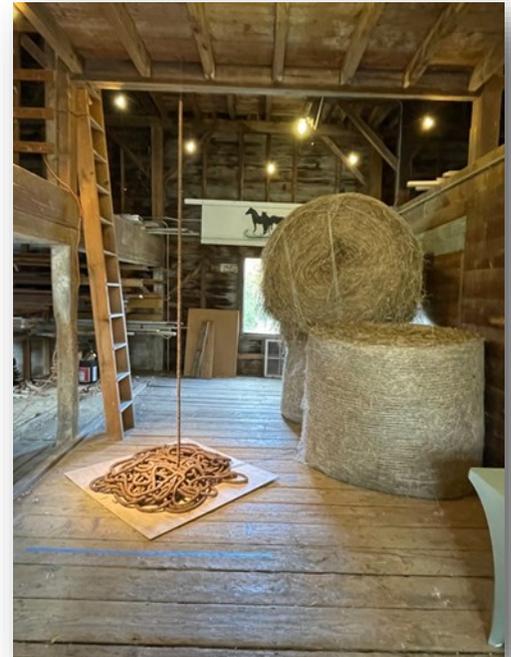
Open Studios Event a Resounding Success!

The 2nd Annual Open Studios took place over two beautiful autumn days and was a tremendous success! More than 20 Carlisle artists and artisans showcased their work across nine different studios, offering visitors a rich and engaging experience.

The event also featured the Grand Re-opening of the Carlisle Artisans Gallery, highlighting even more local talent and creativity.

Visitors enjoyed a variety of interactive programs, including, yarn dyeing demonstrations, a fleece exhibit, an embroidery workshop, fun children's activities

This initiative, created by the Carlisle Cultural Council, celebrates and supports our vibrant creative community. Planning is already underway for next year's event—stay tuned!



Record-Breaking Grant Applications

This fall, the Cultural Council received 36 LCC/ MCC grant applications, including a record-breaking 22 proposals from Carlisle-based programs—the highest number ever! We also received several applications from neighboring towns whose programs benefit Carlisle residents.

We are currently reviewing all submissions and expect to notify applicants by the end of the year.

Support Carlisle's Cultural Life

This year, the Cultural Council received \$5,700 in state funding, but the total grant request for Carlisle-based events alone reached \$11,420, with overall requests nearing \$20,000.

To continue supporting beloved events like the Music Festival, Open Studios, and many other culturally enriching programs, we need your help.



Please consider donating through our online donation portal. carlisleculturalcouncilfund.org Your support helps ensure that Carlisle continues to thrive as a hub of creativity and culture.

Healthy Carlisle - *Carlisle's Opioid Abatement Funds*

In 2021, attorneys general across the United States **reached a settlement with opioid manufacturing companies** and Johnson & Johnson over legal claims about their actions fueling the opioid epidemic. Massachusetts is receiving more than \$900 million of these settlement funds to use for substance use prevention and treatment efforts. **Local municipalities will receive 40% of these funds** while the State will receive the other 60%. Additional information about the fund distribution is available on the [Board of Health website](#). In 2025, it was announced that an additional \$117 million will come from settlements with Purdue, the Sackler family, and other opioid manufacturing companies.

Based on the original settlement, **Carlisle is projected to receive \$198,348.81 over 18 years**. Of the \$60,746.72 received so far, the town has spent \$3,705.15. In 2024, the Carlisle Select Board signed an inter-municipal agreement with the Great Meadows Public Health Collaborative (which includes Bedford, Carlisle, Concord, Lincoln, Sudbury, Weston, and Wayland) to pool settlement money to support a Regional Substance Use Prevention Coordinator. The money Carlisle has spent so far has contributed to funding this position.

The coordinator is responsible for assisting the partnering communities with spending the remaining funds and bringing **substance use prevention, treatment, recovery, and harm reduction programming** to the region. The Carlisle Board of Health, in partnership with the Great Meadows Public Health Collaborative, is **gathering community input on how to best spend the remaining funds** that are not committed to the coordinator position. Please use the links below to share your feedback!

Carlisle Community, Let Your Voice Be Heard!

The Town of Carlisle Board of Health wants to hear from YOU as we work to address opioid use in our community.



Take Our Survey

Help shape how Opioid Settlement Funds are used in Carlisle.

Scan the QR code or visit this link:
<https://forms.gle/xvYMcG7gPToRjbbb6>



Join a Focus Group

We're looking for Carlisle community members to share their thoughts on opioid use prevention. Participants will be compensated for their time.

Scan the QR code or visit this link:
<https://tinyurl.com/2s4ebrbh>



From the Town Administrator

Happy Veterans Day to the more than 277 veterans and their families who live in Carlisle. Our Town is also proud to have several veterans among our dedicated staff, including Chief of Police Andrew Amendola (Army), DPW Director James Hall (Army), Firefighter Matthew Herweck (USMC), Firefighter Steven Frey (USAF), Patrol Officer Bill Burgess (USAF), Patrol Officer Rob Ludwig (USAF), Traffic Safety Officer Tom Whelan (USN), and Veteran Services Director Karen Tyler (Army). We thank them for their military service and for their continued service to our community.

Carlisle is known for its meaningful tributes to veterans—especially our Patriots Day and Memorial Day observances led by Veterans and Celebrations Committee Chair Scott Evans—but our commitment extends beyond those annual events. Every day, we work to ensure our veterans receive the support and recognition they have earned.

Veteran Services Director Karen Tyler is a trusted expert in navigating VA benefits, helping residents access healthcare, disability compensation, and other federal services. Her office also assists qualifying veterans through Chapter 115 benefits, tax abatements, and local community aid programs. Director Tyler holds office hours in Carlisle every Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and welcomes all who seek assistance.

Our Council on Aging and Human Services Department (COAHS) also plays a vital role in supporting Carlisle's veterans—hosting events such as the Veterans Day Breakfast and connecting those in need with the right local, state, or federal resources. If you know a veteran who could benefit from our help, please reach out to the COAHS staff for immediate support.

This year, Carlisle also adopted a key provision of the Massachusetts HERO Act, which potentially doubles the local tax abatement available to eligible veterans—an effort championed by Director Tyler and our dedicated assessing team, Brian and Frank.

In Carlisle, we strive to do more than simply thank our veterans—we work to ensure they are supported, respected, and cared for by the community they once served.

Pictured: Veteran Services Director Karen Tyler speaking at the Veterans Breakfast, sharing information about her office, the services they provide, and how they help veterans access the VA benefits they've earned.



Carlisle Recreation

Make Life-Long Learning Fun



If you haven't noticed it yet... check out the 10 NEW BENCHES located in different areas at the Banta Davis Playing Fields. We would like to send a huge Shout Out to Teddy Watters who completed the benches as his Eagle Scout project.

Assisting with the project is Michael Scott, Matthew Evans, Ted Watters, Luis Falcone, Marco Rivero, Casey Comperchio, Tyler Abrams, Teddy Watters, Mason Scott, Daniel Arsiwala, and Jacob Gettings, Daniel Hurley, Daniel Gonzalez, Gwen Watters, Brayden Hamilton.

Thank you for enhancing the Banta Davis Playing Fields with places for residents to rest.



From the Carlisle Public School and School Committee

Dear Carlisle Community,

As the days grow shorter and the air turns colder, we welcome the month of November and all it brings. The Cross Country and Field Hockey teams wrapped up their respective seasons. Congratulations to all our student athletes on a great fall season. Winter sports will start up in a few short weeks. Visit the [district calendar](#) on our website for the athletics schedule.

With the current challenges we face across the country, we recognize that some families may be experiencing increased financial or personal stress. Resources are available within our community to assist with essential needs. If you would like help connecting with these supports, please feel free to reach out to your school principal or superintendent.

This month we continue town-wide budget planning, and our team has been diligently preparing the initial FY27 budget proposal, which was shared at the November 12th School Committee meeting. The Public Budget Hearing for the FY27 district budget will take place at the December School Committee meeting. We encourage community members to attend the public hearing to learn more about the district's financial planning and priorities.

The Carlisle School is pleased to be one of many community and parent groups sponsoring a community conversation and panel discussion on Wednesday, November 19, 2025, at the Concord Library, titled "[The Anxious Generation: Supporting Teens in a Tech-Driven World.](#)" Inspired by Jonathan Haidt's book *The Anxious Generation*, this event will explore how smartphones and social media are shaping childhood and adolescence as well as how families and communities can work together to restore balance. Building on last year's staff and community book clubs, this conversation aims to support parents and teens as they navigate the challenges and opportunities of today's digital world.

The Thanksgiving holiday offers us a time to reflect on our blessings and express gratitude. For the Thanksgiving Break, there will be an early release on Wednesday, November 26th, and school will be closed on Thursday, November 27th, and Friday, November 28th.

Wishing everyone a joyful November and a warm, Happy Thanksgiving!

Warm regards,

Brian Waterson
Carlisle School Committee Chair

Jim O'Shea
Superintendent of Schools

From the Gleason Public Library

Welcome, Miss Jill!

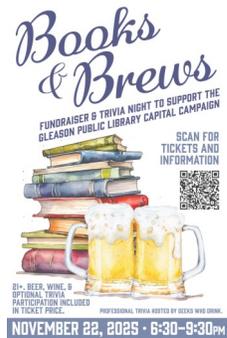
The Gleason has welcomed a new Children's Librarian, Jill Sirois. Jill comes to Carlisle from the J. V. Fletcher Library in Westford and the Weston Public Library, and she is completing the final semester of a dual master's program in Library & Information Science and Children's Literature at Simmons. If you haven't met her yet, say hi next time you're at the Library. She is thrilled to be here, and we're thrilled to have her!

Books & Brews

Saturday, November 22, 6:30-9:30 p.m.

<https://gleasonlibrary.assabetinteractive.com/calendar/books-and-brews-2/>

Join the Gleason Endowment for a fun fundraiser including trivia, beer & wine, live music, and a silent auction.



Panama Canal with Barry Pell

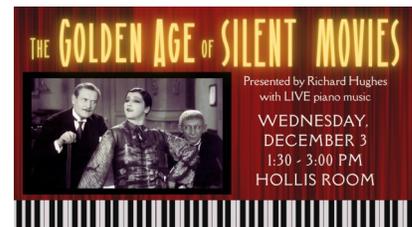
Wednesday, November 19, 1:30 p.m.

<https://gleasonlibrary.assabetinteractive.com/calendar/panama-canal-with-barry-pell/>

The Golden Age of Silent Movies

Wednesday, December 3, 1:30 p.m.

<https://gleasonlibrary.assabetinteractive.com/calendar/the-golden-age-of-silent-movies/>



Nutcracker Reading with Commonwealth Ballet Company

Saturday, December 6, 10:30 a.m.

<https://gleasonlibrary.assabetinteractive.com/calendar/nutcracker-reading-with-commonwealth-ballet-company-2/>



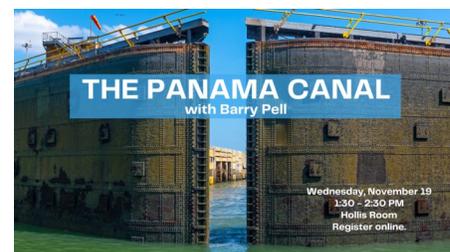
Gingerbread Houses

Monday, December 15, 4 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. sessions

<https://gleasonlibrary.org/events/>

Library Hours

The Gleason Public Library will close at 5 p.m. on Wed. 11/26 and be closed on 11/27 and 11/28. We will be open regular hours on Sat. 11/29.





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