



MUNICIPAL NEWSLETTER

Town of Carlisle

DECEMBER 2025

Sign up for News Flashes on the Town website to stay updated on the next edition!

Facilities at Work!



Facilities Director Stephen Connearney

Our Facilities team has been busy maintaining and improving town buildings, keeping them safe, efficient, and cost-effective.

Brick Building Weatherization

The Brick Building is now weather-tight thanks to the efforts of Tom Kiersy, Steve Munroe, custodians Mark Tripoli and Rick O'Neill and myself. Old siding and damaged planking were removed, insulation and new sheathing were installed, and the building was wrapped and secured. By completing this work in-house, the town saved thousands of dollars.

Gleason Library Gutter Cleaning

Steve Munroe also recently cleaned the gutters at Gleason Library, preventing potential water damage and avoiding the cost of hiring outside contractors. These projects reflect the ongoing hard work of our Facilities team in keeping town buildings in good condition.



carlislema.gov

Cut Your Holiday Food Waste: Practical Tips from Carlisle's Environmental Sustainability Committee



This November, the Carlisle Environmental Sustainability Committee (ESC) joined the Council on Aging & Human Services for its annual Thanksgiving luncheon, offering residents hands-on ways to reduce food waste and improve food storage habits during the holiday season. Food waste is a major national challenge—**30–40% of all food in the U.S. is wasted each year** (USDA/EPA), and holiday weeks are among the worst offenders.

Above: The Carlisle Environmental Sustainability Committee tabled at the Council on Aging & Human Services Thanksgiving Lunch, sharing tools, tips, and low-waste product options for reducing holiday food waste.

Here are the ESC's top strategies for a lower-waste, lower-cost holidays:

Plan Ahead

- **Shop your pantry first.** Most households overbuy items they already have—broth, spices, canned vegetables.
- **Calculate portions realistically.** Most families cook far more than needed. Aim for ~1–1.5 lbs. of turkey per adult including bones.
- **Choose multipurpose ingredients** that can be reused in several dishes.

Store Food to Last

- **Airtight containers** keep leftovers fresher longer.
- **Freeze early.** Don't wait until food is about to spoil—freeze rolls, gravy, and cooked vegetables the same day.
- **Label everything** with dates to keep organized. The average family wastes over **\$1,200/year** in edible food simply because it gets forgotten.

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Cut Your Holiday Food Waste, Continued from Page 2

Cook With Waste Reduction in Mind

- **Use the full vegetable.** Herb stems, carrot tops, and celery leaves make excellent broth.
- **Repurpose scraps** into soups, stuffing, bread puddings, and roasted-veg frittatas.
- **Serve smaller portions.** People can always take seconds; wasted plate-scraps cannot be recovered.

Leftover Ideas

- Turkey → tacos, soups, pot pies
- Stuffing → waffle-iron “stuffing waffles”
- Cranberries → yogurt add-in or muffin base
- Veggies → grain bowls or omelets

Compost What You Truly Can't Eat

- **Backyard composting** works for vegetable scraps, coffee grounds, and eggshells.
- **Get Tips from Transfer Station Action Committee (TSAC):** [Compost & Source Reduction | Carlisle, MA](#)
- Composting prevents methane emissions—**significantly more potent than CO₂**—from landfills.

A More Sustainable Holiday Starts at Home

The ESC's display featured reusable storage options, compostable packaging, recipes, and tips for smarter planning. Even small adjustments—buying only what you need, storing food effectively, repurposing leftovers—help reduce Carlisle's environmental footprint.

This season, consider adopting one or all new low-waste habits. Your wallet, community, and the planet will all benefit.



From the DPW Director

Ho-Ho-Howdy folks!

First and foremost, I would like to give a huge thank you to the Carlisle Fire Department for helping us setup and redo the Christmas tree lights on the town common. Thanks guys!!

As we roll in to November, here are a few things we've been working on. The fall paving project is now complete. There is now fresh pavement on Acton St., Pheasant Hill In, and the end of Berry Corner Rd., and a new track surface at Banta Davis.

Lastly, we have finished installing all of our sanders in our trucks, just in time for the first snowfall of the season! Just a reminder to please drive carefully and Don't crowd the plow!!!

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

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all!

Jim



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

As we close out 2025, December offers a chance to gather, reflect, and look ahead together. The holidays can be a time of light and connection, but they can also be complicated—especially for those who are caregiving, living alone, or feeling the strain of rising costs. At COAHS, our goal is to make sure every Carlisle resident knows they are seen, supported, and welcome.

This fall has been one of our busiest seasons yet, from vaccination clinics and educational programs to social gatherings and day trips. I am deeply grateful to our staff, volunteers, town partners, and donors who make this work possible, and to each resident who reaches out for services or joins us for a program. You are the reason we do what we do.

Holiday Programs & Ways to Connect

December's calendar is full of opportunities to share a meal, enjoy music, or simply be with others. Our Winter Solstice Lunch on December 17 at Carlisle Congregational Church will feature a festive meal and live harp performance, "Harpy Holiday," and our Community Holiday Breakfast on December 22 at Town Hall offers a warm, relaxed start to the day with neighbors.

We're also hosting a Caroling & Ugly Sweater Party at Benfield Farms, holiday craft workshops like centerpieces and ornaments, and an evening Holly Jolly Journey trip to New Hampshire's walk-through light display for those who'd like a little extra sparkle this season. These programs are designed for all comfort levels—from quiet gatherings to lively celebrations—and transportation support is available for many events.

Support Through the Winter

Even as we celebrate, we know that food, fuel, and other essential costs can weigh heavily on residents, especially with recent and ongoing SNAP benefit changes. Our Social Services team can help connect you to emergency grocery support, fuel assistance, rental assistance, and other resources so that no one has to struggle alone this winter. If you or someone you know could use a hand, please reach out to us—earlier is always better.

Free local rides for residents 60+ or adults 18+ with a disability remain available through June 30, 2026, making it easier to get to medical appointments, shopping, errands, and COAHS events. If transportation is keeping you from a program or service, let us know and we will work with you on options.

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Recent improvements at the Brick Building!

Sarah Wasserman, Land Use and Sustainability Coordinator

The home of Carlisle’s Recreation Department, also known as the Brick Building, has seen some upgrades! In early November, Facilities Manager Stephen Connearney oversaw the addition of high-quality insulation to the attic, roof, and the rear wall. This work was made possible by a grant from the Green Communities program through the Department of Energy Resources. Additionally, a new heating and cooling system, including a gas furnace and an all-electric air source heat pump, are being installed, making the building more comfortable for everyone who uses it!



From the COAHS, Continued from Page 5

Looking Ahead

As we move into the new year, COAHS will continue strengthening both our traditional senior services and our broader human services role—supporting residents of all ages through crisis, transition, and change. Your feedback is essential in shaping that work. Please don’t hesitate to call, email, or stop by Town Hall to share what you need and what you’d like to see from us in 2026.

Warmly,
Geoffrey Kotowski
Director, Council on Aging & Human Services



Help Us Keep Carlisle's Culture Vibrant!

This past year, the Carlisle Cultural Council helped create **34 cultural events** in town and the surrounding area, and proudly organized the **4th Carlisle Music Festival** and the **2nd Open Studios**.

We also organize the independent from state funding **Winter Grant program**, supporting locally inspired cultural projects outside the state's fall grant cycle—because great ideas don't wait for deadlines!



Your generosity makes this possible. **The more donations we receive, the more programs we can seed, and the more Carlisle becomes a lively, connected community.**

Please consider donating today to help us bring even more music, art, and culture to Carlisle.

Our guide to the list of events the Cultural Council has helped in the past 13 months.

Month	Program	Organizer
November 2024	Curtains the Musical:	Savoyard Light Opera
	Bollywood Dance Party	DEI Carlisle Public School
January	Concert	Carlisle Community Chorus
February	WWII Anthology Project: interviews	Nancy West
March	Spring on the Wing	Carlisle Garden Club
	250 Anniversary of the American Revolution	Celebration Committee
	American Heritage Concerts	Concord Orchestra
	Prom School Edition:	Open Door Theatre
	WWII Anthology Project: interviews	Nancy West
	Twiggy Workshops	Friends of Center Park
April	Route to Sustainability Day	Environmental Sustainability
	Native American Speakers	Carlisle Public School
	Crafting wee felted mice	Gleason Public Library
May	Concert	Carlisle Community Chorus
	Still Heard around the world -Music written and	Concord Women Chorus
	10th Anniversary Concert	Carlisle Chamber Orchestra
	Carlisle Poetry Festival and Poetry Contest	Friends of the Gleason Library
	Beginner Alcohol Ink Class	COA+HS

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Cultural Council, Continued from Page 7

June	Carlisle Pride 2025 Community Festival	Gleason Library, COAHS and
	Carlisle Music Festival	Cultural Council
	Outdoor Summer Concert with the Party Band	Gleason Public Library
	Concerts at Clark Farm	John Roberts
	Insect for beginners	Carlisle Conservation Foundation
	Carlisle Race Amity Day	Race Amity Day Committee
July	Music Augmentation	Carlisle Farmers Market
	Peter and the Wolf with the Storytime Quintet	Gleason Public Library
August	Music Augmentation	Carlisle Farmers Market
	WWII Anthology Project Publication	Nancy West
	Outdoor Summer Evening Concert	Gleason Public Library
	Creating Sea Turtle Mosaics	Gleason Public Library
September	Music Augmentation	Carlisle Farmers Market
	Love Letters Play	COA+HS
	Concerts at Clark Farm	John Roberts
October	Carlisle Open Studios	Cultural Council
Throughout the year	Color Issues of	The Carlisle Mosquito
	Open Doors Connections	Discovery Museum

From the Gleason Public Library

Middle School After-School Hangout

Come play games, have a snack, and hang out after school, at the Gleason Library’s third floor Hollis Room on Fridays from 2:30 to 4 p.m. Activities each week will vary. This event will not be held during school vacation. This is a drop-in event for grades 5-8. Please call 978-369-4898 or email tshamlian@gleasonlibrary.org with any questions.

Library Hours

The Gleason Public Library will be closed on Wednesday, December 24th, Thursday, December 25th, and Thursday, January 1st. The Library will be open from 1 to 5 p.m. on Wednesday, December 31st. Regular library hours are in effect all other days.

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Gleason Public Library, Continued from Page 8

Winter Story Times

Enjoy expanded story time offerings starting January 6th!

- Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m.: Once Upon a Baby (ages 0-2)
- Tuesdays, 11 a.m.: Wiggle Giggle Storytime (ages 3+)
- Thursdays, 10:30 a.m.: ABC Learn with Me (ages 2-5)
- Fridays, 10:30 a.m.: Tots and Tales (ages 0-6)

Holiday Library Hours

The Gleason Library's holiday hours will be:

Wed. 12/24: closed
 Thurs. 12/25: closed
 Wed. 12/31: open 1 - 5 p.m.
 Thurs. 1/1/26: closed

AFTER-SCHOOL HANGOUT

FRIDAYS 2:30-4 PM
 GRADES 5-8

WINTER READING CHALLENGE 2026

JANUARY 5-FEBRUARY 28

READ BOOKS TO WIN PRIZES!
 PICK UP YOUR CHALLENGE BOOKLET AT THE LIBRARY
 STARTING MONDAY, JANUARY 5

GLEASON PUBLIC LIBRARY

2025 RECAP

25 WRAPPED - 2025 WRAPPED - 2025 WRAPPED

TOP KIDS' CHAPTER BOOKS

- Peter Brown: *The Wild Robot*
- Jeff Kinney: *Big Shot*
- Katherine Applegate: *Dogtown*
- Ana Punnet: *Learning to Fly*
- Rosid Dahl: *Fantastic Mr. Fox*

TOP FEATURE MOVIES

- Wicked*
- Ex-Husbands*
- The Return*
- Conclave*
- The Wild Robot*

TOP ADULT BOOKS

- Kristin Hannah: *The Women*
- Ariel Lawhon: *The Frozen River*
- Jonathan Haidt: *The Anxious Generation*
- Elizabeth Strout: *Tell Me Everything*
- Perceval Everett: *James*

TOP TEEN NOVELS

- Megan Freeman: *Alone*
- Jennifer Armentrout: *From Blood and Ash*
- Suzanne Collins: *The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes*
- Linda Sue Park: *A Long Walk to Water*
- Sarah J. Maas: *Heir of Fire*

TOP PICTURE BOOKS

- Alison Schmitt: *Little Blue Truck and Racer Red*
- Stephan Lerner: *Buddy Beautiful Kitty-Corn*
- Sara Raff: *A mermaid girl*
- Ross Burach: *Make Way for Butterfly*
- Brenda Li: *Pig in Jeans*

91,841 items in person

You checked out:

321 new cards

23,507 Digital Downloads

And registered 321 new cards

Thank you for being an incredible community!

This year's trending format was...

Audiobooks! With 9,254 checkouts on Libby, Hoopla, and CD, it was their biggest year in our history.

And we're just getting started.

Thank you for being an incredible community!

From Carlisle Public School and School Committee

Dear Carlisle Community,

As 2025 draws to a close and the days grow shorter, our school remains full of activity and excitement. We have a busy few weeks ahead and hope you will join us for some of the events taking place across our campus.

Our Drama Club will present its production of Matilda Jr. this month, with public performances on Friday, December 12th at 7:00 PM and Saturday, December 13th at 2:00 PM. More than 40 students are involved in this lively show, which promises fun for the whole family. Tickets are \$10 each and can be purchased at the door.

Also in December, the Preschool's Annual Solstice Celebration will take place on the afternoon of Tuesday, December 16th on the Plaza. This year's celebration includes participation from the preschool's third grade buddy class. December also marks the start of our interscholastic basketball season. Please check the [district calendar](#) on our homepage for game dates and locations. We hope to see many of you at an event over the next few weeks.

In the spirit of giving, as a community we are working to spread warmth to families in need. Our second and fifth graders have launched the 16th Annual Pajama Drive. The entire community is invited to donate warm, brand-new pajamas for children in need. Donations are welcome through Monday, December 15th. The fourth and seventh grades, along with the Student Council, DEIB Committee, and PTO, are collecting gently used winter coats of all sizes as part of the Coats for Kids and Families initiative. Coats may be dropped off in collection bins around the school through Wednesday, December 17th. Looking ahead to January, our Kindergarten classrooms will be hosting a mitten drive to align with each classroom's performance of "The Mitten."

We are pleased to announce that Deb Bookis has joined the Carlisle Public Schools as Interim Assistant Principal. Dr. Bookis comes to us with a great deal of experience and expertise. She has more than 25 years experience as a classroom teacher, building administrator, and district administrator, with more than 20 years experience in the Acton/Boxboro Public Schools. Most recently she served in the capacities of Director of Curriculum and Assessment and Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning. Earlier this year she worked in the Lunenburg Public Schools as the Director of Teaching and Learning. We hope you will join us in welcoming her to the Carlisle community.

Please note that winter break begins at the close of school on Friday, December 19th. School will be closed for two weeks, and students will return on Monday, January 5th.

We hope you enjoy the season and find time to relax with friends and family.

Warm regards,

Brian Waterson
Carlisle School Committee Chair

Jim O'Shea
Superintendent of Schools

**TOWN OF
CARLISLE**

Help Shape the Future of Our Schools

Brian Waterson, Chair, Regional School Representative

In the New Year, Carlisle residents will have two opportunities to share their voice and help shape the future of local education at Carlisle Public School and Concord-Carlisle High School.

Carlisle Public School Strategic Plan

Carlisle Public School is beginning a district-wide strategic planning process and the community’s input is essential. As part of this work, community members are strongly encouraged to share their thoughts in a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) survey to share perspectives on what is working well and where improvement is needed. This feedback will directly shape the district’s priorities and future direction.

In addition, the District is forming a Strategic Planning Steering Committee made up of parents, guardians, educators, administrators, town officials, and community members. The committee will meet four to five times between January and April and will work closely with an educational consultant to guide the process. Residents who are willing to contribute their time and perspective are encouraged to volunteer. If you would like to be part of the Steering Committee please register your interest or reach out to Superintendent Jim O’Shea for more information. The first meeting will be on Thursday, January 8th at 4:00pm.

Concord-Carlisle Vision of a Graduate

Concord-Carlisle High School is inviting community members to help shape its new Vision of a Graduate—a shared statement defining the skills, attributes, and dispositions every graduate should possess to thrive beyond high school. This initiative seeks broad participation from parents, students, alumni, educators, business owners, civic leaders and other community members to ensure the vision reflects the values and aspirations of the entire Concord-Carlisle community.

Community members are encouraged to participate in one of the upcoming Vision of a Graduate input sessions being held at CCHS from 6:30–8:00pm on Tuesday, January 20, 2026, and Wednesday, March 11, 2026. These sessions are focused specifically on collaboratively defining what success looks like for all CCHS graduates. If you’re interested in joining, please RSVP in advance.

From the Town Administrator

Ryan McLane, Town Administrator

Happy Budget New Year!

Carlisle's Fiscal Year 2027 budget season officially begins on December 16, when I present the first draft budget to the Select Board and Finance Committee. This early look gives Town Officials an initial sense of the work ahead as we shape an efficient, transparent budget for voters to consider at Town Meeting.

While the first public draft arrives in December, much of the foundational work began this fall. The Finance Committee engaged in forecasting and capital-planning efforts, and every department submitted a five-year financial plan. These long-range projections help place the FY27 budget in a broader context.

Departments then received formal budget guidance and prepared their FY27 requests—together forming the foundation of the draft budget.

Following the December 16 presentation, the Finance Committee will begin its annual "marathon meetings," sitting down individually with each department. These conversations allow the Committee to understand service levels, evaluate needs, and compare issues across the full range of Town operations.

After these reviews, the Finance Committee will seek additional guidance from the Select Board, refine its analysis, and develop its FY27 recommendations. This work typically extends through February and March and is fully open to the public—an important opportunity for residents to advocate for services or follow the process in real time.

When the review period concludes, the Finance Committee presents its recommendations to the Select Board, and together, the two Boards agree on the budget articles that will appear at Annual Town Meeting. The consensus budget is presented to the public at the Finance Committee's April Public Hearing and again at Town Meeting to ensure all residents understand the proposal and have the chance to offer feedback.

As is New England tradition, Town Meeting has the final say. Carlisle's Annual Town Meeting will be held Monday, May 18.

All meetings referenced above are open to the public, and recordings are posted afterward. Staff will also highlight key steps in the process through our ongoing podcasts, and The Mosquito will provide full coverage throughout the season.

Updated budget materials will be posted on the Town's website here:
<https://www.carlislema.gov/1083/Budget-Information>

As always, I'm happy to meet with any resident who would like to discuss the budget in more detail. Your priorities and perspectives help shape this process—please stay engaged and let us know what matters most to you.

Healthy Carlisle - Winter Safety Tips

The Board of Health wishes everyone a **HAPPY HOLIDAY AND SAFE WINTER.**
 Below are some safety tips on Fire Prevention and Driving Safety.

WINTER FIRE SAFETY

Did you know? Half of all home heating fires occur in December, January and February.

Smoke Alarms

- Install smoke alarms on every level of your home.
- If your smoke alarm uses alkaline batteries, replace them twice a year when you change the clocks.
- Replace alarms that are more than 10 years old.
- Many fire departments can help through their Senior SAFE Programs. Contact your local fire department to learn if assistance is available.

Space Heaters

- Make sure the device is not damaged - for example: is the cord hot when you plug it in?
- DO NOT leave space heaters unattended.
- Make sure the heater is at least 3 feet away from curtains and bedding.

Other Tips

- Keep anything that can burn at least 3 feet from any heat source like fireplaces, wood stoves, or radiators.
- Keep portable generators outside, away from windows, and as far away from your home as possible.
- Install and test carbon monoxide alarms at least once a month.
- Plug only 1 heat-producing appliance (like a space heater) into an electrical outlet at a time.
- Have a qualified professional clean and inspect your chimney and vents every year.
- Store cooled ashes in a tightly covered metal container, and keep it outside at least 10 feet from your home and any nearby buildings.

For more information on how to prevent winter fires, visit www.usfa.fema.gov/winter and www.nfpa.org/winter.

WINTER EMERGENCY CAR SAFETY KIT

Avoid driving during winter storms unless it is absolutely necessary. If you must travel, here are driving tips to keep you safe.

Before driving during harsh weather do the following:

- Always fill the gas tank before a long trip or even for a short distance
- Clear all windows and lights of frost and snow
- Ensure that your headlights are on
- Warm your car battery ahead of time if possible, as the battery can provide a lot more power when warm

For more information on safe winter driving visit: mass.gov

70% of winter deaths related to snow and ice occurs in cars. Assemble an emergency car kit to stay safe during the winter season. Your winter emergency car kit should include the following items:

<h3>Emergency Warmth & Survival Needs</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blankets or sleeping bags • Extra clothes (rain gear, boots, mittens, socks) • High-calorie non-perishable foods • Container of water • Necessary medications • Manual can opener 	<h3>Critical Communication & Signaling Gear</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charged cellphone & car charger • Flashlight with extra batteries • Road flares/reflectors • Brightly colored cloth to use as a flag • Road maps
<h3>Essential Tools for Vehicle Emergencies</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic tool kit (pliers, wrench, screwdriver) • Pocket knife • Battery jumper cables • Fire extinguisher • Tow rope 	<h3>Winter Hazard Response Equipment</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Windshield scraper and brush • Shovel • Sand, road salt, or cat litter • Tire chains or traction mats

Bedford • Carlisle • Concord • Lincoln • Sudbury • Wayland • Weston

OPIOID SETTLEMENT FUNDS

How should they be spent in Carlisle?

Please take this survey sponsored by the Board of Health.

<https://forms.gle/xvYMcG7gPToRjbbb6>

Coming Soon in January!

Great Meadows Public Health Collaborative is excited to bring “The Opioid Project: Changing Perceptions Through Art and Storytelling” to the Gleason Public Library. This project is funded through Emerson Hospital’s Christine Gallery Community Benefit Grant Program.



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