THE WITHERELL TIMES

FEBRUARY 2026 VOL. 131 NO. 2

CAN YOU BELIEVE IT? IT'S 2026!

It wasn't just about celebrating the new year - it was about celebrating each other.

Residents, staff and families came together to welcome the new year.

We had our own "mid–day countdown" with a cheerful toast of sparkling cider to ring in the new year.

KICK OFF THE NEW YEAR WITH A LAUGH

Goodbye, 2025. Hello, 2026!

And what better way to kick off 2026 than with a little humor? Here are a few New Year's jokes to give you a laugh or most probably, a groan.

What was Dr. Frankenstein's New Year's resolution?

To make new friends.

What do you call someone who says they know all the words to "Auld Lang Syne"? A liar.

What did Adam say to Eve on Dec. 31?

It's New Year's, Eve.

What do farmers give their wives on New Year's Eve?

Hogs and kisses.

What do New Year's parades have in common with Santa Claus?

No one is ever awake to see them.

Why should you stand on just your left foot during the New Year's Eve countdown? So you start the New Year on the right foot.

Why did the dad start making breakfast at 11:59 p.m. on December 31?

Because he wanted to make a New Year's toast!

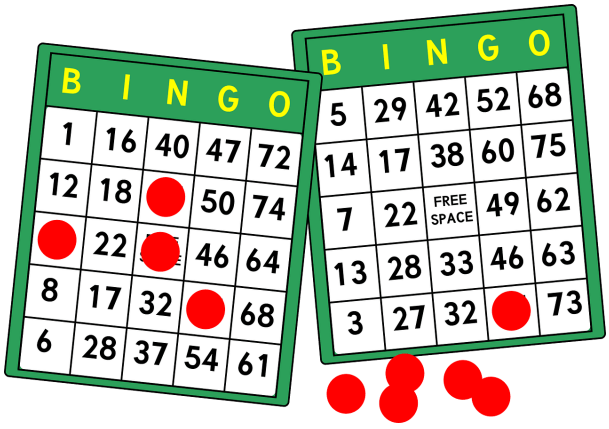
A guy who had too much to drink decided to walk home on New Year's Eve. A policeman stopped him and asked where he was going. "I'm on my way to a lecture," said the man. "Who gives a lecture on New Year's Eve?" asked the policeman. The guy answered: "My wife."

I had resolved to quit all my bad habits in the new year. Then I realized that it was a bad idea, as no one likes a quitter.

GAME ON! TEENS JOIN BINGO

Greenwich Junior United Way is a teen-led volunteer organization comprised of local high school students. Their mission is to positively impact the Greenwich community through action, foster the next generation of community leaders and improve the lives of everyone in Greenwich. These Greenwich High School teen volunteers recently spent a Saturday afternoon helping our residents with their Bingo cards, calling numbers and celebrating the winners of each game!

Teens giving back, one Bingo call at a time.



NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS

Our facility hosted a local Blood Drive this past month in our auditorium facilitated by the Greenwich office of the American Red Cross. Pictured here are NW Admissions Liaison, Nancy Marshall, and Red Cross volunteer, Ross Ogden. Little known facts: One donation can help up to three people; blood can't be manufactured - it only comes from donors; and blood has a short shelf life - it must be constantly replenished. Our thanks to those who rolled up their sleeve and donated to this Blood Drive - truly a worthy effort.

WELCOME TO THE TEAM

Joining our Chaplaincy team is Jenny Byxbee. Jenny is also a Minister at Second Congregational Church here in Greenwich. She is a graduate of Chicago Theological Seminary and completed her CPE Internship at Norwalk Hospital. Jenny and her family live here in town. Great to have you on our team, Jenny!

NURSING & NON–NURSING STAFF: MANDATORY TRAINING

As of January, there are three required e-classes via *Health Stream*: COVID-19 Infection Control, Influenza Prevention, and Emergency Preparedness. Contact Tanie in our Education/Training office for further assistance. We need 100% compliance for such courses.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY ELVIS - A TRIBUTE IN SONG

Mike Rinaldi, our NW musician, may not look like Elvis, but he can certainly sing like him. Mike celebrated the King of Rock & Roll by performing songs like: “Hound Dog”, “Jailhouse Rock”, “Love Me Tender”, “Heartbreak Hotel” and “Don’t Be Cruel”. For our residents who grew up as Elvis fans, it was a concert full of memories — lots of Burning Love and All Shook Up!

ELVIS’ BIRTHDAY - DESSERT EDITION

Elvis was known for his love of sweets made with peanut butter and bananas (or as he called them: “nanners’). Our Recreation team added a few extra goodies into their recipe that we think Elvis would approve of. This dessert quickly disappeared with our residents. Thanks Elvis, and Happy Birthday!

ELVIS MEMORIES STILL ROCK OUR HEARTS

Elvis, had he not died at the age of 42, would have been 91 this past January. In 1956 Presley scored his first No. 1 single with “Heartbreak Hotel” and the same year, his first film, *Love Me Tender* (1956), was a box office hit. Appearing on The Ed Sullivan Show, sixty million viewers tuned in to watch Presley, then 21, perform “Don’t Be Cruel” as well as “Hound Dog” & “Love Me Tender”, complete with hip gyrations. For future TV shows, he was censored from the waist down. So many residents here are big Elvis fans – he made a lasting impact.

BRUSHSTROKES OF SPRING

Though it seems like never-ending snow, our residents were inspired by the promise of Spring. With our volunteer artist, Nicole, we created note-cards filled with the joy of the forthcoming season.

TRAVELS WITH VICTORIA

Victoria Hackman is back from yet another exotic trip - this time cruising the Mediterranean. From port to port, Victoria was our travel guide as she shared the beauty of Mediterranean coastlines, stories of the ancient culture, majestic architecture, and good eating along the way. There are no passports needed when Victoria is here. Bon voyage!

HAPPINESS IS A COZY CUP OF COCOA

Who doesn't love a warm cup of cocoa during these days of winter? Our Recreation team, Lily and Gail, shared cups of hot cocoa complete with marshmallows to residents. Hot cocoa is like a “Hug in a Mug”!

From the Desk of: JOHN MASTRONARDI, NW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

We must begin with the severe snowstorm in late January. Many of our dedicated staff stayed overnight here and awoke to find their parked cars buried in snow. Glenn & Dave, from our Maintenance team (who also spent the night here), not only cleared the parking lot but went a step further by driving to Stamford to pick-up employees who were unable to get to work. The snow and ice removal continued with Dave & Steve addressing the ice dams along the exterior gutters. Every employee involved truly went *above and beyond.* Bravo to all for your commitment and teamwork.

December and January were rough months with increased COVID and flu cases throughout the building. My sincere thanks to our nursing staff for their diligence in providing continued care, testing and monitoring of residents during this demanding period. As of this newsletter, all floors are open, and we remain vigilant in keeping everyone healthy and safe.

These past months have been a powerful reminder of what truly sustains us: resilience, compassion & community. In facing weather & health challenges, our staff continued to show up for one another, and most importantly, for our residents. I am deeply grateful for your dedication, kindness and unwavering commitment. It is a collective spirit here — a place of purpose and a place of caring.

ARTIST OF THE MONTH

As a little girl, artist Marilyn Gabriel always had the urge to create, whether it be metal sculptures, clay or paint. Soon she was a full time art teacher in Greenwich public schools, SUNY Purchase college and the Neuberger Museum. At 87 years of age, Marilyn started taking art classes at the Greenwich Senior Center and for the first time, began painting nature. Proceeds from the sale of Marilyn's paintings in our Gallery will go to support NW Recreation activities.

THE FUN STARTS WITH US!

We recently celebrated National Activity Professionals Week and no better team to honor than our Recreation staff here at NW. Take one look at our monthly Recreation calendar and you'll see it is full of music concerts, card games/Bingo, art programs, cooking and exercise classes, birthday parties, holiday events - the fun goes on and on. Our sincere thanks for all that the NW Recreation team does in engaging our residents in fun and caring ways.

CHAPLAINS CORNER

February arrives, not only with snow flurries, but also with a flurry of red hearts to celebrate Valentines Day!

Did you know that the familiar heart shape we recognize today wasn't inspired by the anatomy of the human heart? Most likely, the origin of the heart symbol points to ancient agriculture and the symbolism of plants, rather than human anatomy. Think ivy, fig and water lily, plant shapes often associated with fertility and love.

Long before modern science defined the purpose of the heart, cultures across the world viewed the heart as the center of emotion, thought, and even the soul. Ancient peoples, feeling their hearts beating rapidly when emotions were heightened, understood the organ's vital connection to life.

In ancient Egypt, the heart was believed to hold a person's essence and it was embalmed with special care. In Greek philosophy, the heart was considered the very source of life. In Jewish teachings, the heart was associated with reasoning and it determined behavior. By the Middle Ages, in Christian art, the heart often represented divine or spiritual love, as in the "Sacred Heart of Jesus", emphasizing God's redemptive love.

Simultaneously, secular interpretations of the heart gained popularity. Eventually, mass-produced cards, adorned with the heart motif, came to represent romantic love celebrated annually on Valentine's Day. No longer tied to anatomy or philosophy, the heart symbol had fully transformed into a visual shorthand for love.

Let's use the decorative hearts to celebrate all those we love and have loved!

Happy Valentine's Day!

Lizzie, on behalf of the Chaplaincy Team

NATHANIEL WITHERELL FAMILY COUNCIL

Family members who have a loved one in a nursing home are encouraged to join a united voice called the Family Council. This group's mission is to support resident life by communicating concerns to facility administrators and work towards resolutions. Our NW Family Council welcomes and supports new family members. To join the Nathaniel Witherell Family Council, email Amy Badini at: abadini06870@gmail.com.

NW RESIDENT COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Resident Council meetings are held monthly in the auditorium and are conducted by resident Officers & a NW Staff Advisor. Meeting minutes are available to residents upon request. For any questions, contact Carissa Ronish in Recreation.

FRIENDS OF NATHANIEL WITHERELL

Friends of Nathaniel Witherell is a nonprofit that enhances the lives of Witherell residents & patients through volunteer services and charitable support for recreation programs and quality of life projects. For more information visit https://friendsofnathanielwitherell.org/ or Lisa.Harding@FriendsofNW.org.

FEBRUARY 2026 HOLIDAYS:

Feb. 2 - Groundhog Day

Feb. 8 - Super Bowl

Feb. 14 - Valentine's Day

Feb. 16 - President's Day

Feb. 17 - Lent begins

The Witherell Times is published by The Nathaniel Witherell.

Editor: Mary Tate/Friends of Nathaniel Witherell

WORD SEARCH: ADVERBS

AGAIN
ALREADY
BEHIND
DOWNWARD
FIRST
FORWARD
HIGH
LOUDLY
NEARLY
NOWHERE
OFTEN
PRESENTLY
GENTLY
QUITE
RARELY
NEVER
SLOWLY
SOFTLY
WELL
SOMETIMES
WEEKLY

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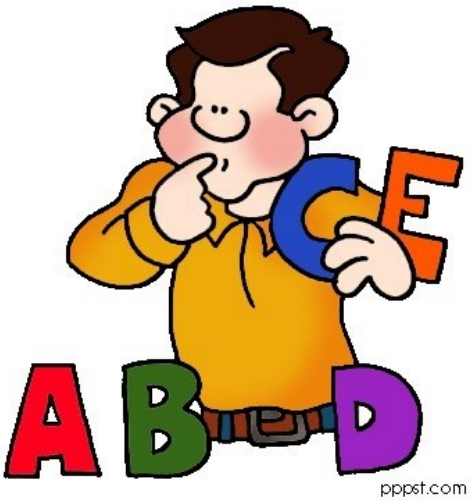
WORD SEARCH SOLUTION:



ADVERBS

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A P J V R Q W Y N O D M L I U S E
A D E O S O C A Y S O Z O E H T F
K N F H L Y L K E E W Y H S R B X
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