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Marlborough Mirror



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Ryan Recommends: Media to Inspire a New Year

By Ryan Malyar, Executive Director, WMCT-TV



January is a natural time for reflection and renewal. As the cold sets in and many of us make New Year's resolutions—hoping to be better for ourselves and for those around us—I like to turn to books, music, and media that offer inspiration and perspective. I'm no expert, but as someone who consumes a lot of media, I wanted to share a few recommendations that might keep you motivated and curious this winter.

One book I highly recommend is *That Will Never Work* by Marc Randolph, co-founder and first CEO of Netflix. Many of us now take streaming for granted, but this engaging memoir takes readers back to the early days when Netflix was a risky idea involving DVDs mailed to your home. Randolph's behind-the-scenes look at innovation, persistence, and failure makes for an entertaining and encouraging read as we ease into the new year.

As we stretch the holiday season just a bit longer, January 6 marks Three Kings Day, also known as the Epiphany. One of my favorite musical works tied to this story is *Amahl and the Night Visitors* by Gian Carlo Menotti. Commissioned for television and first broadcast on December 24, 1951, it was the first opera written specifically for TV. The story of a poor, disabled shepherd boy visited by the Three Kings is deeply moving, and there are several recordings available online, including the original album conducted by Thomas Schippers. It's a beautiful entry point for anyone curious about opera.

I'll round out this month's recommendations with two biographies of remarkable women who couldn't be more different—both of which also have excellent audiobook editions.

Madam: The Biography of Polly Adler, Icon of the Jazz Age by Debby Applegate explores the life of Polly Adler, a Jewish immigrant who rose from poverty to become one of the most infamous and influential madams in New York during the Jazz Age. Drawing on extensive research, the book paints a vivid portrait of an era defined by glamour, corruption, and contradiction.

In striking contrast is *Chasing Beauty: The Life of Isabella Stewart Gardner* by Natalie Dykstra. Published in 2024, this biography traces the life of the visionary art collector behind Boston's Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, revealing how art, travel, and collecting helped her reinvent herself in the face of personal loss.

I hope one—or all—of these recommendations keeps you inspired, curious, and warm this January.

Quotes

"Be the change you wish to see in the world."
Mahatma Gandhi

"A journey of a thousand leagues begins beneath one's feet."
Lao Tzu

"Your own self-realization is the greatest service you can render the world."
Ramana Maharishi



Join our Steering Committee

Help shape the future of Marlborough Public Schools! The steering committee is a leadership team of 16-18 members - students, employees, family members, residents, etc. - that will meet regularly, virtually or in person, from January through June to guide the development of our Portrait of a Learner and strategic plan. To join, complete the interest form at www.mps-edu.org/strategicplan by Jan. 7.



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Winter Months Bring Critical Need at Marlborough Community Cupboard

By Mike Lawton, Assistant Executive Director, WMCT-TV

While the holiday season brings an outpouring of generosity, the Marlborough Community Cupboard says the greatest need often comes after the celebrations end. January and February are historically the most challenging months for the local food pantry, when donations decline but demand remains high, or increases.

The Marlborough Community Cupboard serves hundreds of local families every month, providing free, confidential access to food and essential resources. In October alone, the pantry served nearly 1,000 families, including more than 200 new households, an increase driven by economic uncertainty, rising food and utility costs, and disruptions to federal assistance programs.

During the holidays, food drives, corporate donations, and community efforts help keep shelves stocked. Once the new year begins, however, those donations slow significantly. At the same time, families face higher heating bills, tighter budgets, and ongoing food insecurity.

In addition to its food pantry, the Marlborough Community Cupboard offers a wide range of wraparound services. These include assistance with SNAP applications, fuel and rental assistance, connections to healthcare and dental services, help with utility bills, and support for individuals experiencing homelessness. The Cupboard also partners with local agencies and city departments to ensure residents can access the help they need in one location.

Monetary donations are especially impactful during the winter months, allowing the pantry to purchase food in bulk and stretch each dollar further. Food drives, hygiene products, diapers, and other essentials are also in constant demand.

As the new year begins, community leaders are encouraging residents to remember the Marlborough Community Cupboard beyond the holidays, when the need is often greatest.

To learn more, see a current list of pantry needs, or make a donation, visit uwotc.org/mcc or call the Marlborough Community Cupboard at 508-370-4902.

1. Friends Scott Key 2. A Toque 3. Red and White 4. "You've Lost That Lovin' Feeling" 5. Atoil

ANSWERS

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January City Events

Learn to Skate

Begins Saturday, January 3rd | Navin Arena

The Marlborough Recreation Department offers fun, introductory skating classes designed to help young skaters feel comfortable and confident on the ice. Step 1 classes are 25 minutes long and use songs, games, and toys for age-appropriate learning.

mrd.recdesk.com

Portuguese Storytime with Mrs. Lilian

Saturday, January 10th | 11 AM - 11:45 AM | Marlborough Public Library

Venha participar conosco de uma experiência especial de contação de histórias em português! As crianças ficarão encantadas com histórias que celebram a língua e a cultura brasileira em um ambiente acolhedor e divertido para toda a família. Inscrições necessárias.

Great Reads Book Club

2nd Tuesday @ 6 PM or Following Thursday @ 11 AM | Marlborough Public Library

January Selection: There There by Tommy Orange

Join fellow readers for a thoughtful discussion of great books. Copies are available at the library's main desk in a variety of formats.

More info: marlborough-ma.gov

VETS TALK - Veterans Discussion Group

Monthly, 4th Thursday | 9 AM | Marlborough Senior Center

A welcoming group for senior veterans from all branches of the service to gather for casual conversation. New ideas and participants are always welcome.

Community Outreach Thursdays with Lisa Martino

Monthly @ 10 AM | 1st Thursday - 240 Main St. | 2nd Thursday - Academy Knoll - Community Room

Learn what's happening at the Senior Center each month and discover programs and services available to you.

Questions or appointments: **(508) 485-6492 ext. 32104**

Winter in Marlborough

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

- 1. Snow
- 2. Ice
- 3. Frost
- 4. Chill
- 5. Cold
- 6. Wind
- 7. Flurries
- 8. Blanket
- 9. Scarf
- 10. Gloves
- 11. Hat
- 12. Boots
- 13. Fireplace
- 14. Cozy
- 15. Sledding
- 16. Hibernation
- 17. Icicles
- 18. Thermometer
- 19. Evergreen
- 20. Shovel
- 21. Inauguration
- 22. January
- 23. Fridgid

Jokes!

What did the buffalo say when his son left for college?
Bison.

What is an astronaut's favorite part of a computer?
The space bar.

Why did the yogurt go to the art exhibition?
Because it was cultured.

What do you call an apology written in dots and dashes?
Re-Morse code.

The Kid Corner

by Lilian Roque

Who Am I at Home?

A game that can be played anywhere and involves both adults and children aged 4 and up.

The game works like this: one participant thinks of a character, an animal, or a family member, while the others ask questions that can only be answered with "yes," "no," or "maybe." The activity stimulates language development, attention, imagination, and respect for taking turns, while also promoting moments of connection among family members.

For younger children, the game can be adapted with simple clues given by an adult. With no cost, no preparation, and away from screens, the game shows that interaction and dialogue remain the most powerful tools for child development and for strengthening family bonds.

Learning Portuguese

Estamos em Janeiro!
It's January!

Feliz Ano Novo!
Happy New Year!

HEY!

Can you find Cam?

They are hidden somewhere
on this edition of
Marlborough Mirror.

Good luck!



Trivia

- Who wrote the National Anthem, "The Star Spangled Banner"?
- What is the name of the tall white hat chef's wear?
- What two colors are on the flag of Austria?
- In the film "Top Gun", what song do Maverick and Goose sing at the officer's club?
- What is the geographical term for a long ring-shaped coral island?

(Flip the bottom of the page for Trivia answers)

Community Connections Spotlight: Thrive Support & Advocacy

By Ryan Malyar, Executive Director, WMCT-TV

On a recent episode of *Community Connections*, host Ryan Malyar welcomed Sean M. Rose, President & CEO of Thrive Support & Advocacy, for an inspiring and wide-ranging conversation about the organization's impact across Marlborough, MetroWest, and Worcester County.

Founded in 1973 by local families determined to keep their loved ones living, working, and thriving in the community, Thrive has grown into a comprehensive continuum of care serving more than 1,200 individuals each year. Sean shared how Thrive now provides residential group homes, in-home supports, adult respite and companion services, community-based day programs, and vibrant social and recreation opportunities.

A major highlight of the conversation was **Flourish at Thrive Food Pantry**, one of the only disability-friendly food pantries in Massachusetts, offering gluten-free, allergen-free, and diet-specific options. This past Thanksgiving alone, Thrive served meals to approximately 750 individuals, with participants themselves playing an active role in organizing and running the pantry—an example of Thrive's philosophy of giving back to the community that supports them.

Ryan and Sean also discussed Thrive's beloved **Prom for All Ages**, returning May 14 at **Polar Park**, where more than 200 participants walk the red carpet and celebrate a true rite of passage. The prom serves as both a joyful tradition and a key fundraiser supporting year-round social and recreational programming.

Looking ahead, Sean shared exciting new initiatives, including **Bosco's Bites**, a participant-led microbusiness producing dog treats, and a new **greenhouse project** that will grow fresh produce for Thrive residences and the food pantry. Both projects focus on skill-building, pride, and meaningful employment opportunities.

The episode closed with heartfelt gratitude for Thrive's dedicated staff, volunteers, partners, and supporters—and an open invitation for the community to get involved through volunteering, donations, or simply spreading the word.

To learn more about Thrive Support & Advocacy or how to support their work, visit icanthrive.org.

The Junior Reporters Latest Investigation

By Zachary Benton, Youth Coordinator/Producer, WMCT-TV

The Marlborough Junior Reporters recently brought their journalistic skills to Wex Rex in Hudson, owned and operated by Gary Sohmers.

Hosts Emery and Josh, as well as team reporters Amelia and Sammy, interviewed Sohmers amidst his pop culture omnium-gatherum. Sohmers, owner of the store for over 40 years, is a collectibles appraiser, fan convention promoter, and Antiques Roadshow alumnus. The reporters discovered that his interest in pop culture, trading, and value began with campaign buttons given to him by his father.

Sohmers's favorite collection in Wex Rex is his wall of Roger Rabbit memorabilia; Sohmers also showed the reporters televisions from the 1940s, answering their questions about the technology.

Our junior investigators further discovered Wex Rex's most valuable item: a 1960s fan sketch of John Lennon, autographed by the latter.

The Reporters wrapped up their visit by picking out any item in the store that they believe would gain value in the coming years. Out of the four items, the one book chosen would gain the most value, in Sohmers's estimation!

The Junior Reporters next visit will be at Ninja Challenge Marlborough with owner Paul!

