

## A Letter From The Editor...

Jamie Ipsen

For me, the biggest changes in nature happen in May—at least here in upstate New York. One day the world feels nearly colorless, and then, in a blink, it bursts into hues so vivid they take our breath away. May is that rare moment when a “quick change” feels like a gift.

Most change, though, isn’t like that. It doesn’t arrive with beauty and ease. It disrupts our routines—the familiar “warm blanket” we’ve wrapped ourselves in. Change can feel contradictory. We know we should embrace it, but knowing that doesn’t make it any easier. It takes effort. Sometimes more than we think we have to give.

And yet, if we’re honest, change isn’t optional. It’s the path forward. Maybe the answer isn’t to rush it, but to move through it slowly. To take a step, pause, adjust, reflect—and then take another. Progress doesn’t have to be sudden to be meaningful. It just has to keep moving forward.

So I’ll ask you this: what will you change this May?

Our town is full of opportunities—events, activities, and small moments of connection—quietly waiting. They’re calling your name.

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# LOCAL EVENTS

## MAY 2026

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
					1	2 MUSEUM OPEN HOUSE 9AM - 1PM  JR SOFTBALL 2PM @ SCHOOL
3	4	5	6 BRIDGE 1-4PM LIBRARY	7  JR SOFTBALL 6PM @ SCHOOL	8  SR GRASSHOPPER BASEBALL 6PM FIREMEN'S FIELD	9
10	11	12 UPK-12 ART SHOW 4-6PM	13 BRIDGE 1-4PM LIBRARY  HOPE MEETING 5PM	14 TOWN BOARD MEETING 6:30PM	15	16 HAGS PLANT SALE @ FIRE HALL 9-NOON  HUGS SING-A-LONG @ VILLAGE HALL 3-4:30PM
17	18	19 SCHOOL BUDGET VOTE! 1:30-8PM High School Concert 6-7pm	20 BRIDGE 1-4PM LIBRARY VILLAGE BOARD MEETING 5PM  ELEMENTARY TALENT SHOW 6PM	21	22	23
24	25 MEMORIAL DAY Village Ceremony ** 11am followed by Chick BBQ - FireHall**	26	27 BRIDGE 1-4PM LIBRARY	28 FOOD PANTRY 9-11AM FOOD SENSE PICK UP 1PM LEARNING FAIR 3-5PM	29	30
31	**PLEASE SEE THE HAMMOND HISTORY PAGE AND THE BBQ FLYER PAGE FOR DETAILS ON THIS COMMUNITY EVENT					

# HOPE NEWS

Do you want to live in a revitalized Hammond with opportunities and community support?

HOPE needs you!

Do you have an expertise to share like grant writing, co-op contracting, accounting, or fundraising?

HOPE needs you!

HOPE is bringing residents together for Hammond's revitalization, but it takes a village and a town working together to provide a future for our children and grandchildren.

Help us, help you, and join the next meeting on May 13th at 5pm at the new town hall or call 315-324-5321 ext 11 for more information.



## **JOIN US!**

**HOPE meetings are the 2nd  
Wednesday of  
every month at the New Town Hall,  
21 S. Main St., 5-6pm**

## **SPEAKING OF GRANT WRITING----**

Here is an Opportunity!

For a person with writing and thinking skills to help a Hammond nonprofit apply for a grant. Current volunteer doing this will provide training and coaching during transition. Very fun and satisfying!

Text or call Martha Cline 406-260-5036.

# YOUR TOWN

## News from Ron, your Town Supervisor:

The Hammond Town Board is glad to see spring finally arrive, and we're gearing up for a busy spring and summer. We're continuing to work closely with the Hammond HOPE group on revitalizing both the town and village, and we're also supporting the Hammond Area Garden Club in their efforts to help beautify the community.

We recently took delivery of a new plow truck—something that was definitely needed after the brutal winter we had. It's a solid upgrade to our fleet and will help us stay better prepared moving forward.

We'll soon be working with Highway Superintendent Roger Hadlock to plan out summer road maintenance and repair projects. With the current volatility in global markets, the cost of asphalt and related materials has been unpredictable, so it's still uncertain how much we'll be able to take on this season.

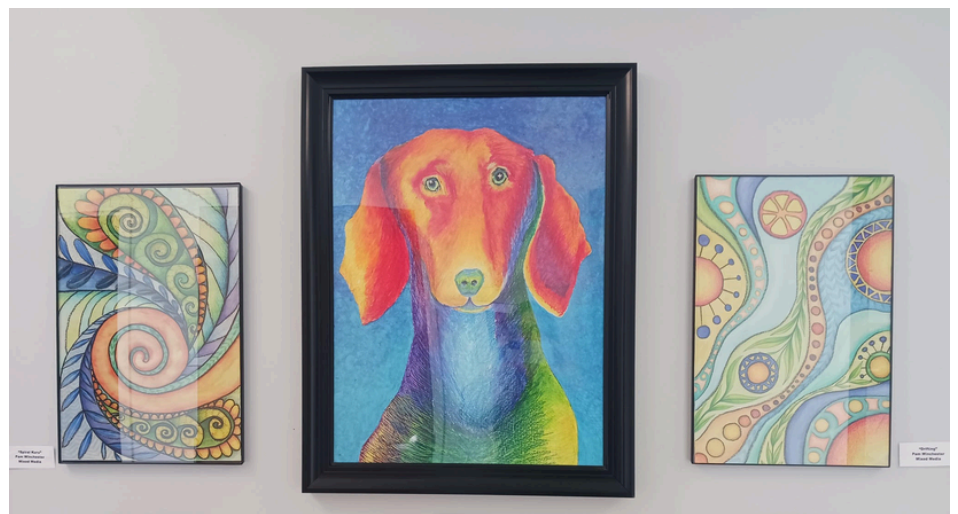
On a brighter note, all docks are now in place at the Chippewa Bay boat launch, and the area has been cleaned up and is ready for our island residents and boating recreation.

As always, we're here to serve the community. I welcome any thoughts, comments, or concerns—feel free to reach out by email at [HammondNYsuper@gmail.com](mailto:HammondNYsuper@gmail.com).

## News from Pam, your Town Clerk:

- Subscribe to **Town Board updates** at [townofhammondny.gov](http://townofhammondny.gov)
- See **Chippewa Boat Ramp Live Video** at [townofhammondny.gov](http://townofhammondny.gov)
- Get your **fishing and hunting licenses** at the Clerk's office 21 S Main St. Mon-Thurs 930-3pm
- **Town Dog Census begins May 1st** - State and Town Law all dogs over 4 months must be licensed. Get your pups licensed at the Town Clerk's office, 21 S Main St., Mon-Thurs 930-3pm; avoid a possible \$100 fine.
- **Grievance Day** is May 27th, 4pm-8pm, 21 S. Main St. Notice is at [www.townofhammondny.gov](http://www.townofhammondny.gov)

Check out the  
**COLOR Exhibit**  
Local art work currently  
on display in the  
**Town Hall**



# YOUR TOWN

## HAMMOND FIRE AND RESCUE

NATE WEIDEL

Hammond Fire and Rescue recently held its annual banquet at Edgewood Resort in Alex Bay, where we were proud to recognize several members for their dedicated years of service. Chief Jon Bass presented **Jake Tate** with the Chief's Award, recognizing his contributions and hard work.

We were honored to have been joined by several guests of honor: Assemblyman Scott Gray, Stephanie from Senator Mark Walczyk's office, Sheriff Rick Engle, Town Judge Rhonda Cazzio and many others. We also appreciated the presence of neighboring departments, including Brier Hill, Brier Hill Auxiliary, Morristown, Alex Bay, and Ogdensburg Rescue. Great food and a good time was had by all.

We wish to thank everyone who attended and helped us honor the legacy that is Hammond Fire & Rescue. Our fire house has a long and rich history that is exemplified in the men and women who continue to serve our community today.

Thank you, and as always if you need us our number is still 9-1-1.



**Ty Bass: 10 years.**  
**Danny Ceresoli: 15 years.**  
**Jon Bass: 20 years.**  
**Tom Bennett: 30 years.**  
**Ron Bertram: 45 years.**

## HAMMOND LIBRARY

The Hammond Library hours are:  
 Monday 3-5pm  
 Tuesday-Thursday 12-5pm  
 Saturday 9am-noon  
 Closed Friday & Sunday

The Pre-K story hour each month is hosted by Liz Scarlet



# SCHOOL NEWS

## BUDGET VOTE & ELECTION

Building the annual school budget is a careful, year-round process guided by district administrators in collaboration with the Board of Education. Throughout the year, we review programs, track costs, and align resources to support student learning and advance district priorities.

On the third Tuesday in May, district residents head to the polls to vote on the proposed budget for the coming school year and to elect members of the Board of Education. Your participation helps shape the future of our schools and ensures Hammond CSD continues to grow in ways that reflect our community values.

### When to Vote

This year, the annual budget vote and board election will take place on **Tuesday, May 19, 2026, from 1:30 to 8 p.m.** in the Hammond Central School cafeteria.

### Who Can Vote

To vote, you must be 18 years of age or older; a citizen of the United States of America; and a resident of the Hammond Central School district for at least 30 days prior to the vote.

See the [Hammond School website](#) for budget and election details.

## WALK WITH A DOC

The school district is partnering with the Community Health Center of North Country and will be hosting a "Walk with a Doc" event on **Saturday, May 30th at 10:00am** at the school.

walk™ WITH a  
DOC

Saturday, May 30, 2026



10:00 AM

Hammond Central School

*\*Accessible for all walkers, strollers and wheelchairs*

Join us for a FREE, fun walk and discover a new, safe place to walk, learn about health, and meet new friends! The event is open to all and is for people of all abilities!





**Questions?**  
[rbabowicz@chcnorthcountry.org](mailto:rbabowicz@chcnorthcountry.org)  
 We are a local chapter of an international 501(c)3. Learn more at [walkwithadoc.org](http://walkwithadoc.org).

[HAMMOND CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWSLETTER 2026](#)

**CHECK OUT THE MAY CALENDAR FOR OTHER EVENTS AND HEALTH PAGES FOR COMMUNITY FITNESS OPPORTUNITIES AT SCHOOL!**

# HAMMOND FOOD ASSISTANCE

## HAMMOND FOOD PANTRY

DAN IPSEN

The Hammond Food Pantry serves folks in Brier Hill, Hammond, Morristown, Macomb, and Rossie. We're part of the TEFAP program through Central New York, and our goal is to provide 15 healthy meals per person each month for every household we serve.

If you already receive benefits like SNAP, WIC, TANF, Medicaid, or SSI, you automatically qualify. If not, you may still be eligible depending on your household size and income—check out this [link](#) for details. We are happy to assist you with that information as necessary.

The food pantry is open at the back of the Hammond Fire Hall either the 3rd or 4th Thursday of every month from 9-11 am. Upcoming distribution dates are May 28th , June 18th , and July 30th . If Thursdays are not convenient for you, you can have someone else pick up on your behalf. Should you need emergency food immediately, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Once in the door, we have a point system based on family size that enables you to choose from each of the major food groups. We supply carts, but please bring your own bags. We also offer frozen and refrigerated items, so bringing a cooler is a good idea.

New volunteers are always welcome. The Food Pantry needs help 3 times per month: unloading food pallets into the storage building, moving food between the storage building and fire hall, as well as assisting with stocking and/or shopping with clients on distribution dates. If you are looking for some meaningful community service, please give us a call.

Please direct any questions or feedback on this article to Dan Ipsen 518-603-5583. Thanks!



# HAMMOND FOOD ASSISTANCE

## FOOD SENSE PROGRAM

MARTHA CLINE

Would you like help with your grocery costs? The Food Sense program is an easy way to stretch your food dollars and it's local. Once a month you place an order (can be done online) and it comes to Hammond for your pick up. A unit each month is \$20.50. Multiple units can be purchased, and additional selections are always offered.

Check out the [website](#) and sign up for their email list so you get info directly from them.

Pick up in Hammond is at the fire department, is usually the 4th Thursday of the month at 1 pm. If you aren't available at that time, ask around and see if someone can do your pickup for you. It's worth the value of what you will receive. The deadline to submit your order is usually the third Monday of the month. Ordering and paying is easy online. Food Sense can be paid with SNAP as well, stretching those dollars, too.

### **MAY PACKAGE** (\$20.50)

Chicken Drumsticks, 3.5 lbs. (Avg)

Pork Tenderloin, 1.78 lbs. (Avg)

Ground Beef, 1 lb.

Hot Dogs, 1 lb.

Sharp Cheddar Slices, 6 oz.

Mixed Vegetables, 1 lb.

Macaroni & Cheese, 7.25 oz.

Carrots, 1 lb.

Applesauce, 15 oz.

Peaches, 15 oz.

Fresh Produce #1

Fresh Produce #2



All that for \$20.50! Items that aren't canned or fresh come frozen and can go right into your freezer. The selection is different each month, but always includes at least 4 protein items, vegetables/fruit and other food selections. Need ideas for how to use some of the items? Recipes are offered on the above website. Our local contact person is Judy Hayes 315-328-9067

# FARMERS' & ARTISANS' MARKET

## Vendor Spotlights

BY BROOKE STARK AND LORI THISTLE

### Circle G Farm

George and Mary Ellen Blatchley began their gardening enterprise with just a small home garden in Macomb. After retiring, around 2012, they expanded to a larger, certified organic garden, which includes a wide variety of vegetables. They provided produce through a CSA to begin with, then started venturing into Farmers' Markets in Canton, Potsdam and Hammond. They have been with the Hammond Market almost since the beginning, and always have delicious fresh vegetables, maple syrup products and coffees.

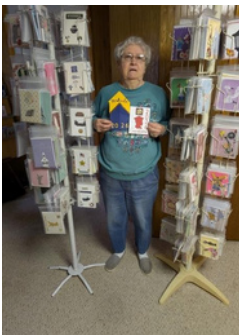
The Blatchleys also began producing maple syrup on a small scale until 2010 when they expanded and built a sugar house with a larger evaporator. They sell dark, medium and light syrup. These days, Circle G Farm is only at the Hammond Market. They enjoy the afternoon hours, and really appreciate the friendly atmosphere under the pavilion!



### Card Creations

Sandra Hyde and her good friend, Sue Bulger, started crafting homemade cards about fifteen years ago for their own enjoyment. Before long, friends began asking to buy their cards, and they eventually joined the Market together when it was at the Museum. Sandy now makes her beautiful greeting cards on her own. She has a large following of regular local customers as well as one gentleman who comes every summer from Canada to stock up for the year! Sandy is always busy, and is already working on Christmas cards to sell this season.

Sandy enjoys the friendly social atmosphere at the Hammond FAAM every week. She also has a shop at her home in the village.



### River House Soaps

When Melanie Conner of Morristown first started crafting, it was her jewelry business that was her focus. She enjoyed making beaded jewelry, but was not satisfied with purchasing beads, so she began making her own. She was especially fascinated with gemstones, which were incorporated into her artwork.

Melanie's primary sales at the Market, however, are her soaps. She used to buy homemade soaps in Sacket's Harbor, but when she found friends who had milking goats, she ventured out on her own goat milk soapmaking, taking online classes and teaching herself the trade. Her soaps contain some fragrances from her own garden, infused into oils, and she also uses high quality essential oils for around 25 different fragrances. You can always follow your nose to her stand at the Pavilion. Mel says she is delighted with the Hammond Market; she looks for regular customers as they look for her. She finds it a great way to connect, and looks forward to it every year.

Melanie's products can also be found online, or at the St. Lawrence Gallery in Clayton, at Picker's Dream in Gouverneur, and at her home by appointment.



# HAMMOND HISTORY MOMENT

## DECORATION (MEMORIAL) DAY

DONNA DEMICK, TOWN HISTORIAN

How many of you remember Memorial Day as Decoration Day and consistently celebrated on May 30th ? Although the name and date of this celebration may have changed, the purpose of this patriotic event remains the same.

Unofficially, Decoration Day began at the end of the Civil War in 1865, with its official beginning three years later. Its purpose was to have a set time for the nation to take flowers to decorate the graves of the soldiers who had died in the war. Major General John A. Logan declared it should be May 30th, when flowers would tend to be in bloom in most parts of the country.

After WWI, the decision was made to expand this day to honor military who died in ALL wars. Both names, Decoration Day and Memorial Day, have been used interchangeably over the years, but the first name seemed to be more popular until the 1970s. In 1971, US Congress declared Memorial Day as a national holiday to be celebrated on the last Monday in May.

In Hammond, Decoration Day has been honored and celebrated for several years. Although it may have been a few years after the Civil War, the earliest record I can find is in the 1888 diary of Peter Allen, a farmer who lived where Fred Proven lives today. He wrote, “Went to cemetery to Decoration services, quite a good number of folks gather there, the flowers and evergreens were the very best.” Then, they had a big luncheon at Taylor Hall (the big stone building across from the bank).

For years we had a small parade followed by a ceremony in front of the town hall. The school band usually played at least two patriotic numbers. A trumpet solo of Taps was performed, a wreath was placed on the war monument, and the flag was lowered to half-staff. Honor guard gave salute and shot their guns. Prayers and a speech or two would be given.

Now, we have no parade, but we do have a lovely ceremony in front of the old town hall. On May 25th at 11 AM, we will give honor to our fallen military heroes with some of the Hammond Firemen as color guards, a few patriotic songs from the second and third graders, a band song, prayers, and short speeches, as well as the dedication of 10 new military banners. After the ceremony, all are invited to go to the firehall for a chicken BBQ dinner. (Pre-orders are preferred by calling 315-681-5891 or by using Facebook



Messenger on the Hammond Fire & Rescue page.) We hope many of you will come to join in this special day of honor and remembrance of those who paid the ultimate price.

# HAMMOND F&R EVENTS

**MEMORIAL DAY**  
**CHICKEN**  
**BBQ**

**12PM-2PM**  
 Monday, May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026  
 Hammond Fire Hall

CALL/TEXT TO PREORDER  
 315-681-5891

**Dinners include:**  
 1/2 chicken, potato salad, baked beans, coleslaw, and a roll, \$15.00. 1/4 chicken dinner meal is \$10.

**Takeout or dine in.**

*Pre-Orders preferred*  
 as we have a limited number of dinners to sell!

**Text or call**  
**315-681-5891** to pre-order your dinners. Or send us a Facebook message.

**HAMMOND**  
**FIRE & RESCUE**  
**RAFFLE**

WIN A  
**BOBCAT ZT3000**  
 ZERO TURN LAWNMOWER

**\$10 PER TICKET**  
**ONLY 1000 TICKETS SOLD!**  
 Need Not Be Present To Win!

WINNER ANNOUNCED ON  
**JULY 18, 2026**

For tickets, contact any fire department member or send us a facebook message.

## Field Day Raffle Tickets Available NOW

Win a Bobcat ZT3000. A 61" Deck, 24 Horsepower, Zero Turn Lawn Mower.

\$10 per ticket with only 1,000 tickets available for sale. Winner to be drawn at our annual Field Day Celebration on Saturday July 18th. Winner need not be present to win.

For tickets contact any fire department member or send us a Facebook message (Hammond Fire and Rescue).

# HAMMOND HISTORICAL MUSEUM

## Gearing Up for the Scottish Festival

The Hammond Museum will host the 5th annual Scottish Festival on July 11. We are looking for volunteers like you! You can sign up [here](#)

Meetings are May 16 and June 13 at noon at the museum. Feel free to attend! Be sure to buy your raffle tickets for a chance to win some amazing prizes.

**JULY 11, 2026**

WE ARE LOOKING FOR  
**VOLUNTEERS**

**HAMMOND SCOTTISH FESTIVAL**

**General Festival Volunteers**

Let's keep things running smoothly behind the scenes! If you'd like to be a part of it, we'd love to have you.

**Highland Games Volunteers**

This is a wonderful way to be part of one of the festival's most beloved traditions. We need help with field setup, athlete check-in, event coordination, et cetera!

Hammond Scottish Festival | hammondscotfest

**Hammond Historical Museum  
Scottish Festival Raffle**

JOIN OUR EXCITING  
**RAFFLE!** **JULY 11<sup>TH</sup>, 2026**

- ONE (1) NIGHT STAY FOR TWO (2) AT SINGER CASTLE'S ROYAL SUITE**  
\$850 Value - Donated by Dark Island Tours, Inc.
- ONE (1) NIGHT STAY & DINNER FOR TWO (2) AT THE BRAE LOCH INN**  
Donated by Jim & Val Barr, The Brae Loch Inn
- \$500 CASH**  
Donated by Uncle Sam Boat Tours, Alex Bay
- \$500 CASH**  
Donated by St. Lawrence Federal Credit Union
- KAYAK**  
Donated by LP Thompson Insurance
- KOBALT MINI TOOL BOXES & TOOLS**  
Donated by Ogdensburg Lowes

**TICKETS: \$10 EACH**

**GET YOUR TICKETS NOW!**  
Purchase tickets at the Museum, on our website, from a Committee Member - or message us!

hammondmuseum.com

Hammond Scottish Festival | hammondscotfest

## ARTS & MUSIC

### The Hammond Ukulele Group (HUGs)



#### **Community Sing-a-long!**

The Hammond Ukulele Group (HUGs) will host a community sing-a-long at the Village Hall on May 16th from 3-4:30pm for all ages! Refreshments will be available. Perhaps a free ukulele lesson is in your future?

### The Iva Smith Gallery - The Yellow Barn

*A sneak peek at this summer's concert series (part I):*

#### **Sunday, June 14, 5 pm - The American Civil War in Music and Words**

Featuring Fiddlers Kathy Sommer & Don Woodcock, Harvey Nussbaum on Guitar and the Poems of Walt Whitman read by Todd Moe

*Travel back to the Civil War period via music and poetry with fiddlers Kathy Sommer and Don Woodcock and radio announcer Todd Moe, accompanied by Harvey Nussbaum on guitar. The program will feature poems of Walt Whitman interpreted with fiddle and vocal tunes of the era, notably the music of Steven Foster.*

#### **Sunday, June 28, at 5 pm - An Intimate Evening with Hiroya Tsukamoto**

*Experience the spellbinding artistry of Hiroya Tsukamoto—a master of finger-style guitar and evocative storytelling that transcends cultural boundaries. Hiroya's music weaves intricate melodies with poetic narratives in an unforgettable, soul-stirring performance.*

#### **Sunday, July 19, 5 p.m. Collages: Compositions by Ryan C. McNally and Paul H. Gaston**

*Debuting original compositions by Ryan C. McNally and Paul H. Gaston..Featuring soprano Brooklyn Church; tenor Gerard Powers, Paul H. Gaston on euphonium, Ryan C. McNally on piano and Christian Hosmer on violin. The concert will open with 'Songs of Nature', a five-movement song cycle featuring the text of American poets. This concert will also offer a rare opportunity for lovers of brass instruments to hear Paul H. Gaston play euphonium. The dazzling talent for composition and keyboard performance by Ogdensburg native Ryan C. McNally will also be on display.*

#### **Iva Smith Memorial Gallery Hours:**

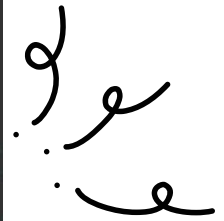
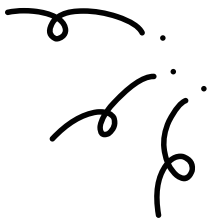
Wednesday 10am - 5pm

Friday 1pm - 5-m

Saturday 10am - 5pm

## ARTS & MUSIC

# COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT



SLC Arts is proud to announce **Pamela Winchester** as the recipient of our 2026 Arts Recognition Award.

Pamela Winchester has spent decades uplifting the North Country through her work as an educator, muralist, and passionate advocate for both art and nature. Many know her from her years teaching at Ogdensburg Free Academy, where she inspired generations of young artists through creative and ever-evolving classroom projects.

Beyond the classroom, Pam has dedicated her artistic talents to the community through public art, murals, barn quilts, and collaborative projects that celebrate our local history, landscapes, and traditions. Her work often brings people together—inviting community members of all ages to participate in creating art that reflects the beauty and spirit of the North Country.

From her Blue Goose Studio in Hammond, Pam continues to mentor artists, develop new work, and lead projects that connect art, nature, and community.

# HEALTH & FITNESS

## The Wellness Thread

RUTH WIDRIG



### Walking With Purpose: Spring Steps for Body & Mind

As the weather softens and the North Country begins to green, many of us feel the natural pull to step outside again. Walking is one of the simplest ways to support our health – and when we walk with purpose, it becomes something more. Purposeful walking blends posture, breath, and awareness so each step steadies the mind and strengthens the body.

A purposeful walk begins with presence. Stand tall, soften your shoulders, and let your gaze rest a few feet ahead. Match your breath to your steps – a gentle rhythm that calms the nervous system and clears mental clutter. Notice the sounds, the light, the way your feet meet the earth. This kind of walking isn't about speed; it's about intention.

### Walking a Labyrinth: A Path Inward

Unlike a maze, a labyrinth has one winding path that leads you to the center and back out again. It's a moving meditation – a way to walk slowly, breathe deeply, and listen inward. Many people use three simple phases: \* **Release** on the way in \* **Receive** at the center \* **Return** with clarity on the way out

Hammond is fortunate to have two public labyrinths. **True North Labyrinth of Peace** - a 5 circuit labyrinth located by the parking lot at the Iva Smith Memorial Art Gallery (Route 37) and **Peace Labyrinth** - a 7 circuit labyrinth located in the back lawn of the Hammond Presbyterian Church (215 St. Lawrence Ave). Both provide a peaceful place to walk, reflect, and reconnect.

### Trails to Explore This Season

Our community is rich with places to stretch your legs, breathe fresh air, and enjoy the beauty of the St. Lawrence region:

**Macsherry Trail Long Loop** - 2.5 miles

**Chippewa Bay Nature Trail** - 1.1 miles

**Alamogin Public Forest Access Road Trail** - 4.1 miles

**Ferrone Woods Preserve Trail** - .5 miles

**Hammond Central School Walking Path** - .54 miles

Whether you choose a brisk walk, a slow meander, a barefoot moment in the grass, or a meditative labyrinth journey, each step is a chance to support your health, lift your mood, and reconnect with the land we call home.

### Community Challenge: Where do you love to walk in Hammond?

Send us your favorite local walking spots – trails, quiet roads, river views, or hidden gems. Your suggestions help neighbors discover new places to move, breathe, and enjoy our beautiful town.

**This spring may your walks be steady, spacious, and filled with purpose.**

# HEALTH & FITNESS

## Fitness!

BY GRIFF STARK-ENNIS

Part of living in the North Country is embracing the mantra that we all know so well: “You’ve gotta drive to survive!” Whenever I’m home visiting my parents, I’m very quickly reminded of this.

You want a late-night snack? Drive. You forgot milk at the grocery store? Drive. Your son’s flight has landed in Massena and he needs to be picked up because he has no other way of getting home to the farm and he’s hungry? Drive...please?

It’s a reality that we must all embrace, even if it makes that survival a bit of a chore.

But one drive that I never regret or grow tired from? The drive to the **Thousand Islands Fitness Center**, the “friendly, local gym that brings a world-class fitness facility to the Alexandria Bay and Thousand Islands, NY area.” Because on the other side of that drive is a community focused on health.

Now, many of you were there alongside Jane Fonda when the fitness craze ignited in the 1980s (read: you’re old), and it’s only grown and intensified ever since! But nowadays the focus is on both physical health *and* mental health.

At-home workouts are extremely convenient...especially for country-folk with miles and miles between destinations. But there is something to be said about (a) getting out of the house, in general and (b) exercising in a communal space around other people that share that same focus and value. And for me, that’s where the TI Fitness Center comes in.

But I’ll keep this brief and I’m sure you have some questions. So...

**Where is the fitness center located?** - 45240 NYS Rt. 12, Alexandria Bay, NY 13607

**What kinda stuff does the fitness center have?** - Star-trac cardio equipment, treadmills, ellipticals, steppers, recumbent & upright cycles, rowing machines and a versaclimber.

**What are the hours of operation?** - Established members of the fitness center enjoy 24/7 access to the facility, by way of remote door access. Desk Hours for Membership & Training historically have been on Monday, Wednesday and Friday between 9am-12pm and 3pm-6pm. However, appointments can now be scheduled on Tuesdays, Thursdays and weekends!

**How much does daily access and/or a membership cost?** - Rates for the fitness center can be found [here](#), with rate options available for individuals, families and seniors (62+).

**Who can I call if I have more questions?** - The fitness center’s phone number is (315) 528-3442.

Another part of embracing life in the North Country is embracing the idea of community. Feeling connected to people makes those miles of distance feel a lot smaller. And feeling connected to people in a space designed for exercise makes those workouts feel a lot quicker...trust me!

# HEALTH & FITNESS

## Shape Up!

BY BROOKE STARK

Last issue, we focused on getting fit through local low-intensity **Zumba classes**. Just an update: May classes have been changed to Mondays and Thursdays 6:00-7:00 at the Brier Hill Fire Hall with instructor Mary Prinz. First class is free!

### **Hammond Central School – Community Fitness Schedule**

Now through the end of May (on school days only):

#### **Fitness Room**

Monday–Thursday: 5:00–8:00 PM

Open to the public for workouts

Walking in hallways is also allowed during this time

#### **Gymnasium**

Monday–Thursday: 8:00–9:00 PM

Monday & Wednesday: Basketball

Tuesday: Volleyball

Thursday: Pickleball

#### **Important Notes**

Facilities are only open when school is in session

Bring clean athletic shoes and a valid ID

All participants must sign in

# GROUPS & CLUBS

## **TOWN RECREATION DEPARTMENT**

BETH LACEY - DIRECTOR

Baseball & Softball (Grades 1-6):

The season runs from April through June, featuring games against local teams at the school and Firemen's Field

T-Ball (Pre-K & K):

The season takes place in June and July.

We are also looking for volunteer coaches and umpires; anyone interested should contact Beth Lacey - [townofhammondrecreation@gmail.com](mailto:townofhammondrecreation@gmail.com)

## GROUPS & CLUBS

Hammond Area Garden Club presents



# *Plant Sale & Silent Auction*

**Saturday May 16, 2026**

**Hammond Firehall**

**9-12 noon**

Perennials, Annuals, Herbs, Vegetables  
Houseplants and more



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### **LET'S GET LIT - BOOK CLUB**

BETH LACEY

Our group meets at the end of each month to discuss books, life, and participate in fun activities.

New members are always welcome! For updates and event locations, please join our Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/share/g/1Hxdvhgkkw>.

# GROUPS & CLUBS

## THE LOCAL EXCHANGE

BETH LACEY

We have started a new Facebook community for homemakers, crafters, artists, DIYers, gatherers, and woodworkers. Our goal is to host monthly or bi-monthly meetings to collectively share, barter, and trade skills, passions, and surplus goods. The only requirement is to bring items you made, grew, or created to trade with fellow participants. Facebook Group:

<https://www.facebook.com/share/g/189j4erAGs/>

We are looking to host our first event on **May 16 or 17** ( time TBD & updates to follow on our page)

All will be welcome to participate in these one-of-a-kind events. Examples of items that have been received/traded at previous events: food and garden products such as baked, canned, fermented, frozen items, fiber and sewn items, ceramics, woodworking, paintings and art, herbal medicine and tinctures, plant cuts, seeds, and so much more.

- Bring items you grew or made only
- Label all food items with proper name and date
- Absolutely NO exchange of money allowed, just the bartering system



## HAMMOND'S FIRST ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF TREES

This December, Hammond will host it's first Festival of Trees! Details will be coming soon but first we are asking for 6'-7' artificial Christmas trees in good condition.

If you have one you would like to donate, email Jamie Ipsen at [hammondcompass@gmail.com](mailto:hammondcompass@gmail.com)

## BRIDGE CLUB

Bridge club meets Wednesdays 1:00 - 4:00pm @ the town Hall from mid-September through May. If you are interested, text Marilyn Hunter at 315-323-6384 for details.

# HUMOR & FUN

## MAY JUMBLE

If April showers bring may flowers,  
what do may flowers bring?

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Solve the anagrams to reveal the letters for the final message

Solve the anagrams in the top part of the puzzle.

Use the circled letters from the words in the top part to complete the final word or phrase at the bottom  
Each circled letter is used just once.

## MAY

May I remind you how seasons sway,  
How “may” once meant *perhaps... someday*–  
But **May** arrives and makes it clear:  
Change is blooming, bright, and here.

You *may* feel stuck, you *may* feel gray,  
Like April clouds that overstay–  
But then comes **May** with skies so blue,  
And proves what change can really do 🌸

So when you doubt, just think of May:  
A little hope can lead the way. ✨



# RECIPES

## ROASTED RHUBARB JAM

BY: LAURIE MCNAMARA

*Total Time: Prep: 15 min. Cook: 30 min. YIELD: 16 servings*

In this quick and easy Rhubarb Jam Recipe, fresh rhubarb is roasted in sugar and lemon juice before adding fresh ginger juice and vanilla.

### Ingredients

- 1 pound rhubarb trimmed and cut into 1/2 inch pieces
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1 pinch kosher salt
- 1 large lemon juiced
- 1 inch piece ginger root peeled and squeeze for juice (about 1 teaspoon juice)
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

### Instructions

- Preheat your oven to 400°F (or 200°C)
- In an oven-safe dish add in the rhubarb, sugar, a pinch of salt and lemon juice. Toss well and let sit for 10 minutes.
- Slide the baking dish onto the middle rack of your preheated oven for 30 minutes.
- Remove and let cool.
- Peel an inch piece of fresh ginger and place it in a garlic press. Squeeze gently over a bowl to catch the juices. Remove any pieces of ginger before pouring it (about 1 teaspoon) into the roasted rhubarb. Lastly add 1 teaspoon vanilla.
- Stir and break up any large pieces of rhubarb and leave chunky or blend it until thick and smooth, kind of like the consistency apple butter.
- Serve (chunky or smooth) over cheesecake, angel food cake or pound cake. Or spread on biscuits or buttered toast.



# RIVER NEWS



## SAVE THE RIVER IN CLAYTON WANTS TO KNOW: WERE YOU A PART OF THE 1976 NEPCO OIL SPILL?

“The history surrounding the 1976 NEPCO oil spill goes far beyond the scientific reports created after it. This spill was a community-wide lived experience. In order to ensure these stories aren’t lost to time, Save The River is looking to connect with those who experienced this catastrophe firsthand.

Were you one of the “muckers” who worked on the front lines of the cleanup? Or perhaps you weren’t there yourself but have a family member or close friend who spent the summer of ’76 scrubbing oil. We want to honor that hard work and record those specific memories of this massive cleanup effort.

Even if you didn’t have a shovel in your hand, the spill likely touched your life in some way. We are seeking accounts from anyone in the region whose life was impacted by the disaster. Especially stories regarding:

- Property Damage: How did the oil affect your docks, boathouse, or shoreline?
  - Drinking Water: Did the spill affect your access to clean drinking water?
- Recreation & Fishing: How long did it take before the River felt “normal” enough to resume boating or fishing?

Whether you have a detailed narrative or just a select few vivid memories, your contribution is invaluable. Please reach out to us at [outreach@savetheriver.org](mailto:outreach@savetheriver.org) to share your story. “

## NEARBY



The Brockville Railway Tunnel is opening Friday, May 15 for the 2026 season!

Throughout the summer and fall, you can explore Canada's oldest railway tunnel daily from 9am–9pm. And yes, it's completely free

From your first walk through to your annual visit, it's always a magical experience!

Please note the Tunnel may close at times for maintenance or special events. See Brockville Railway Tunnel on FaceBook for updates.

## LOCAL BUSINESSES

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE YOUR  
BUSINESS INFORMATION TO  
APPEAR ON THIS PAGE,  
PLEASE EMAIL  
HAMMONDCOMPASS@GMAIL.COM**

**We want to include YOU!**