

Putter Day 2023

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 01/01/2023

The last time January 1st landed on a Sunday was in 2017, six years ago. Today, we look back on those long years with some regret. We still have to contend with a war that began in 2022 in Ukraine, a pandemic that began in 2019, and the big lie from an administration that began its deceptions in 2017. Mentally exhausting.

So, here we are. Another New Year. Instead of leaping forward, it can feel more like we're limping forward. Somewhere in all of this I suppose I'm obligated to type something vaguely positive - like 'hope springs eternal'. However, although hope, like 'thoughts and prayers' is a sweet sentiment. It's not an action.

Without action, major events can slip sadly from hope to thoughts and prayers. We see New Year's Day as a fresh start, but an imaginary one. It's just a number.

Putter Day is also a start - a call to action. Putter Day is about making that start tangible in some small way by acting to make something in your life (or a friend's life) better. It doesn't matter what that positive action is, or even how small it is. It's a real start - in the right direction.

Then, after a good start, what's next?
Just keep it rolling.

Imagine every household in America, all of us - improving, fixing or acting on something positive (no matter how small) on Putter Day.

Then, if we keep it rolling, perhaps Father Time would be more considerate of our new year.

May 2023 smile warmly, kindly upon us all.

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Squinting at 2023

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 01/08/2023

Note that while I certainly wish all a happy and prosperous New Year - I'm keeping a suspicious eye on 2023. I'm squinting - askance - at 23 with deep distrust.

(That's right, '23. I'm lookin' at you.) After the global shenanigans of 2020, 21, 22, 2023 better wipe its feet at the door before entering, and say, 'Please & Thank you'.

Standing at the threshold of 2023 (and wondering if I should let it in), I'm looking at yet another covid eruption in China - with more supply side issues to follow, a megalomaniacal dictator in Russia, an expanding missile farm in North Korea, a meltdown of basic freedoms in Afghanistan. What's New in the New Year - is old. Lots of bad vibes lurking. So, I'm skeptical, cynical, downright mistrustful.

Normally, I'm pretty optimistic. The joyful arrival of each New Year is rife with bright hope. This year? Not so much. Hope can go wait in the car. We're all still busy dealing with the aftermath - consequences, direct, indirect and subsequent, of these last three years that introduced us to doom-scrolling. Wallowing in all that bad news. Who needs that? For now, I will constrain my wallowing - and my hopes for the best as I remain dutifully prepared for the worst.

So, I gird my loins while I squint with suspicion at 2023. I'm putting 23 on notice. One false move and I may pen a sternly worded letter to The Times.

2023 notwithstanding, I'll ignore that tiny black cloud hanging just above my head. I'll continue to hold up my end, maintain my sunny disposition and be nice to folks.

Let that be my New Year's Resolution.

May 2023 smile warmly, kindly upon us all.

Uh-huh...

We shall see.

We shall see.

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Embrace

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 01/15/2023



The newly unveiled memorial to Martin Luther King and Coretta Scott King is at once artistically otherworldly and awe inspiring. Looking beyond these two iconic civil rights heroes that it represents it is also a monument to an abstract ideal.

Embrace – not as a noun, but as a verb. This is a call to action. If there was ever a singular concept that Martin and Coretta King lauded, lived and loved – this is it. It’s a monument as a big statement for an even bigger idea. You can walk within it and be totally embraced within it. And, who doesn’t want to be embraced?

Ten years ago I wrote a poem -
The meaning of the moment true
lives in whatever good we do.
As each the other, we embrace,
this world to be a better place.

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Our Community Access
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The Road to Normal

It's a long but steady journey.

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 01/22/2023

Resolved in 2023 -

Keep moving ahead toward our new (and improved) normal. For us it means continuing and expanding our live coverage of sports and civic events. This was a critical development in order to continue through the pandemic. Today we are all the better for it.

Resolved in 2023 -

Keep moving ahead with all the excellent radio programming that our talented volunteers produce and broadcast on wfpr.fm, Franklin Public Radio. They made our community radio station all the better throughout the pandemic.

Resolved in 2023 -

Resume and expand the production of our studio interview programs. Returning to our schedule: Frank Falvey, Senior Connections with Nan Rafter, Safe Coalition with Jim Derick and Dr. Anne Bergen and more. We also have some new studio series in the works and slated for production in the coming months.

Resolved in 2023 -

Return to our kitchen and develop another tasty cooking series or two. (Our hungry staff is always up for this gig.) Our past cooking programs: Cooking Thyme with Tri-County, Bill Hurley's Pizzapalooza (with extra cheese), Sandya's Kitchen, Brooke-n-Cookin'. We've also produced tasty specials about holiday cookies and treats with Franklin's Sons of Italy. We're always looking for more. If you're a foodie; love to cook and talk about cooking - call us or email us - info at franklin.tv.

Do you have a passion or some expertise that you would like to share with others on local TV or radio? Franklin.TV and wfpr.fm can make it happen. We can help you make it interesting and engaging. We also make it easy.

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New? News!

Welcome to Franklin.

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 01/29/2023

If you're new in town - welcome! Thanks to Franklin Newcomers & Friends, here's where you can gain traction on all things Franklin. <http://franklinnewcomers.com/>

GENERAL INFO:

Town of Franklin: <http://franklinma.virtualltownhall.net/Pages/index>

Franklin Community Website: <http://www.americantowns.com/ma/franklin>

Need a helping hand? Visit the Franklin Area Nonprofit Network.

<https://www.franklinareanonprofitnetwork.org/>

Franklin Downtown Partnership:

<http://franklindowntownpartnership.blogspot.com>

For MOM:

The MOMS Club of Franklin is a non-profit, international organization comprised of stay-at-home mothers and their children. <http://franklinmomsclub.com>

Back to Business, a local Franklin business, helping women return to the workforce, or make a career change: <http://www.backtobusiness.org>

For the KIDS:

Hockomock Area YMCA: <http://www.hockymca.org>

Franklin Youth Soccer Association: <http://www.franklinyouthsoccer.org>

Franklin Youth Baseball: <http://www.franklinyouthbaseball.com>

Franklin Youth Hockey: <http://www.franklinflyers.org>

Franklin's Veterans Skating Arena:

<http://www.fmcicesports.com/public/locations/franklin/index.htm>

For NEWS:

Franklin Matters, your daily source of information about what matters in Franklin, Massachusetts: <http://www.franklinmatters.org>

The Country Gazette Online: <http://www.wickedlocal.com/franklin>

Franklin Observer: <https://franklinobserver.town.news/>

Local Radio:

Franklin Public Radio, on 102.9: <https://www.wfpr.fm/>

Dean College's Power88 WGAO: <http://www.power883.org/>

Milford's MyFM: <https://myfm1013.com/>

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Our Local Groundhog

I'm going with a new England prognostication.
by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 02/05/2023

Well – the winter weather word hath come down from on high. That is, high atop Gobbler's Knob in Punxsutawney, PA – where Phil rules the roost. (Or, whatever it is that groundhogs live in – nest, burrow, den, beachfront penthouse w/ocean view?) Phil says six more weeks of ugh!

Phil has a huge fan base. But, for our New England forecast, it makes sense to go to a New England groundhog. We New Englanders are big on weather. It makes sense to seek a local prognostication for Groundhog Day.

Ms G is our local Wx rodent, at Drumlin Farm in Lincoln, MA. She is ushered into an outdoor enclosure with a bit of ceremony to visit with groups of schoolchildren. Ms. G is easygoing and really enjoys the ceremony, a little attention, a few cameras on her official day.

If she gets nervous and crawls into a burrow – perhaps because she saw her shadow – humans will interpret that as her forecast for six more weeks of winter. But, if she enjoys the weather, the kiddies, and she munches on fresh veggies, it's an early spring – as she predicts for this year. (Yess!)

Groundhog Day in the United States began in the 1700s, when German settlers in what is now Pennsylvania brought the tradition of Candlemas Day, halfway between the winter solstice and the spring equinox. In Europe, they would look to badgers for a sign of spring. Here in America there weren't a lot of badgers, but they had woodchucks (aka groundhogs) – Close enough.

Woodchuck? Groundhog?

How much wood would a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood?

Or, how much ground would a groundhog hog if a groundhog could hog ground?

Not so poetic. But, I digress.

So – I'm going with Ms G. With the temps this weekend hitting historic lows, I can say that Sp- Sp- Spr- Spring (Dang, it's f-f-freezing!) is in the air (almost.)

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President's Day

Dean College has a new President.

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 02/12/2023



Ken Elmore, left, interviews Franklin TV veteran, Frank Falvey, to the right.

Dean College President Ken Elmore, JD, is starting his tenure - by listening and engaging with folks. Recently, Elmore recorded his first TV program and podcast in our studio with our own Frank Falvey as his guest.

Franklin.TV and Dean College already enjoy a long-standing, mutually beneficial media relationship. Both we and they operate TV studios and public service radio stations, and we and Dean's media teaching staff confer regularly on industry trends and how best to prepare students for future careers. Elmore underscored the need to ensure that Dean's curriculum is always looking and moving forward.

Elmore joined Dean early last summer, becoming the school's 14th president, after his highly regarded service as Dean of Students for Boston University.

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Winning Ways

All about our high school kids - as courageous leaders
by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 02/12/2023

The Massachusetts Interscholastic athletic Association, MIAA and the MSAA, Massachusetts School Administrators Association team up with Franklin TV to produce a new TV series highlighting excellent student athletes across the state. The series will be available through local public access channels.



*Jay Horrigan and Pete Royce, Penelope Spack & Executive Director Bob Baldwin.
They discuss Penelope's selection as MIAA's Student Athlete of the month.*

Who are these dedicated student leaders of tomorrow? Peabody's Penny Spack and Pentucket's Henry Brien are both excellent examples.

Penny Spack is a senior at Peabody High School. She has a 4.07 GPA and is ranked 6th out of 403 students. Her intended major in college is Math and Neuroscience. She is currently on the Mayor's Leadership Council and taking six Advanced Placement classes: Literature, Physics, Economics, Calculus, European History, and Spanish. She received AP Scholar with Distinction in both 2022 and 2021 as well received Exceeding Expectations in Math and English on the MCAS in 2021.

Penny is a force in the classroom and in athletics. She is a three-sport captain in Ice Hockey, Soccer, and Softball with All Star honors in two of the three. She is currently tied as the leading scorer on the Peabody/Lynnfield/North Reading girls hockey team with 13 points (9 goals, 4 assists). In total, she has points in 12 out of 14 games. This is an impressive feat given she is a defenseman and the overall depth we have in our top ten ranked program. The Boston Herald named her a Defensive Player to Watch for the 2022-2023 season and was selected as a Boston Globe Player of the Week on January 17, 2023.



Henry Brien is an outstanding student at Pentucket Regional High School. He is currently taking the following courses: AP Biology, AP Statistics, Honors Pre-Calculus, Honors World History, Honors World Literature and Composition. Henry is a High Honors student enrolled in arguably the most difficult courses offered at Pentucket, and earned a 4.3 GPA for the 2nd quarter. His term GPA for the 1st quarter (taking the same courses) was a 4.6.

Henry has a remarkable athletic career at Pentucket. His accomplishments as part of the swimming co-op with Triton High School are incredible. He is a multi-year captain and has been named the Cape Ann League Male Swimmer of the Year for 2 consecutive years (2021 & 2022) and, no doubt, will be a favorite to win the award again this season. He holds school records in two individual events (100 yd. Butterfly 54.53 & 50 yd. Freestyle 22.71) and in all three relays. Henry placed 10th in Freestyle, and 12th in Butterfly at the State meet last winter and should be among the Top 10 this winter. Henry was also named to the Boston Herald All-Scholastic team last winter.

Both Penny and Henry are very dedicated to serving their communities as well. Penny Spack and Henry Brien; two of our future courageous leaders.

Look for Winning Ways with MIAA where every student has an inspiring story.

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Gus Brown

Franklin's Building Inspector.

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 03/05/2023

Not many would think of a building inspector as a positive change agent, but when I started at Franklin.TV I got to know Gus in just that way. When we began our search for a building to house our TV studio, both Gus and Mike D'Angelo were quite helpful. We talked architecture details, examined the old town hall building as a possible site. I learned something from every discussion.

After we found our current building, Gus visited us in the early phase of renovation, and he offered up a great idea for ease of access. He solved our internal handicap access issues between the original building and our new addition. His design ideas also made it possible for us to add a second outside access ramp. An attractive and useful design detail at little cost.

The result: Gus' suggestions made it much easier for our crews to load and roll equipment in and out of our studio for remote event coverage (and we do cover a lot of remote events.) I did relate this good news to Gus (along with my appreciation) some time ago. When we tend to the needs of those with mobility limits, we all win.

Remember your last run through the airport and rolling (or dragging) all that luggage? Handicap access design made your trip much easier.

While I've always supported ease of access for all, I saw it as a necessary and worthwhile benefit for others, but I didn't need it.

At least, not until today (Fri, 2-24).

Thanks to my right Achilles tendon, I have a new wardrobe accessory for a couple of months.

And, (big thanks to Gus), it's okay. I'm good to go. Literally.

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PEG in a Nutshell, 9 of 3

Will They Live On?

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 03/05/2023

“Will they live on?” This was a key, forward-looking question posed by Councilor Deborah Pellegrini at Wednesday’s recent Town Council meeting. It’s the right opening question – being asked at the local, state and federal levels of government with some slowly increasing concern over the long-term future of PEG TV studios.

Cord cutting (dropping cable service) has continued apace. Fewer cable subscribers mean less financial support for local access TV studios. How indeed does this play out over time? The answer is convoluted. All regulation to date has been set at the federal level via Congress and the FCC. Thus, there is the willingness of any future Administration, House and Senate to enact new legislation – or not.

I anticipate that if we are indeed adding real value to our respective communities, then concerns and actions at the local municipal level will influence bellwether states to act, and in turn perhaps spur ultimate (and hopefully positive) action by Congress. There are some early hints at what might transpire.

In 2015 the City of Chicago levied an Amusement Tax on Internet entertainment services (Netflix, Apple TV, etc.).

After four years of litigation, Netflix quietly surrendered in 2022 in the dispute over its duties under Amusement Tax Ruling No. 5, referred to as the “Netflix tax.” The program imposes a 9% levy on streaming music, video and gaming services.

Apple Inc. also began collecting Chicago’s tax on streaming entertainment services on Sept. 15, 2022, ending their legal challenge that this first-of-its-kind municipal tax violates the US Constitution and the federal Internet Tax Freedom Act.

In Massachusetts similar proposed legislation is being considered. It would provide some revenue to the state, to municipalities, and ultimately, to local access studios.

How? How much? When? A final disposition will come in the fullness of time.

To learn more:

<https://www.franklin.tv/peginanutshell.pdf>

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MIAA on Officiating

The Challenges and Rewards of Refereeing Sports.

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 03/12/2023

If there is one venue where parental passions tend to run hot, it's school sports. The folks who officiate games often take the brunt of many an overwrought complaint.



However, they know that feelings can run deep, and they try to take it all in stride.

The discussion was upbeat, and focused on how all involved; coaches, officials and parents - how everyone can help to make the student experience positive while promoting good sportsmanship. Jay, Pete, our guest officials and MIAA's Rich Pearson covered it all in an informed conversation worth watching.

Watch for this and other episodes about all the ins-and-outs of school sports on, 'Winning Ways with MIAA'.

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Sproing!

It started last week. It's official this week.
by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 03/19/2023

Sproing! That's the happy imaginary sound in my head when we 'spring forward' to reset our clocks to Daylight Savings Time. Most would agree that Winter around these parts was milder than usual, and we're good with it. No complaints. However, Winter is Winter.

Then, suddenly - **Sproing!** Last week in a single day we 'sproinged' to a later sunset. Dramatic! It's a clear manifestation of what surely arrives this week. Spring!
(SFX: party horns and cheers)

Yes, Spring - with its greening, its lengthening days and rising warmth, mixed with balmy breezes and occasional gusts of enthusiasm.

Spring puts the Eating Season in the rear-view. Eating Season starts with leftover Halloween candy and ends with Valentine's Day chocolates. In between? There's Turkey Day (technically, a full and filling weekend), all those Christmas parties, New Year's Eve Dinner, those SuperBowl super snacks - calories dipped in calories. There's nowhere to hide - that, uh, extra ten-ish pounds.

But, Spring is about striving. It's our annual second chance to dust off those New Year's resolutions. Having made the most of Eating Season (unfortunately for many of us), we can now redouble our efforts to make the most of Spring - and ourselves. Given that dieting is the top resolution, we strive to make the least of ourselves.

Advice: Don't go crazy. Dieting done right eventually finds its way forward to become a stable lifestyle. So, start simple. Diet for one day a week. Then two. Then try Mon/Wed/Fri for pace. You need reasonable relief along the way.

Having a planned, adjustable mix of 'light' days and 'reasonable' days is a start toward setting and navigating a healthy lifestyle. It avoids fast dieting which all too often results in fast failure and disappointment.

So, let the Spring Sproing dieting begin. Why? Because last year's bathing suit is unforgiving, yet you want to look svelte - even slinky in it. and that pernicious Eating Season weight? It won't just sproing itself off.

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Archives?

Moving our analog world over to our digital world
by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 03/26/2023

Now, let's seeee... Where - uh, did I put that?

Organizing all our personal records? Some of us do okay. Most of us? Not so much.

Then there are massive records. Records that are maintained for years. Digital records that require Terabytes to Petabytes of redundant 'can't fail' digital storage. This is the world (and cloud) that we now live in.

Want to know why medical costs keep rising? One cost is - archiving - as part of a deep digital backbone of information that enables doctors and nurses access your medical issues and history *on demand* - during your appointment. We all want that. We also have to pay for it. Resilient digital archiving is a necessary 'inbuilt' cost of our medical system. It's digital overhead, and its labor and systems cost is steep.

Same holds true for government records. How long to keep? That number keeps increasing as present-day meeting archives slip into historical records.

An old military joke:

“Sir, can we dump all these old records?”

“Sure. Just make three copies first.”

At Franklin•TV we have thousands of analog videotape hours of town meetings, going back to when 'The Town of Franklin' was in fact a town. We also have even more of the same in DVD form. These older records are at high risk of becoming unretrievable because those old videotapes and DVD's have a limited shelf life. The equipment to play them is also obsolete and becoming much harder to come by.

Professional archivists estimate that perhaps 95% of all old video records will simply vanish. We at Franklin•TV are researching how we might be the lucky 5%.

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Home \$weet Home!

The real real - on home ownership.

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 04/02/2023

For several years we carried Mike Shain's program about real estate when he was producing it at ABMI Bellingham's studio and later at Milford TV. Mike is into real estate and all matters relating to home ownership; buying, selling, financing, maintaining - and living well in your own Home \$weet Home.



Now Mike is producing and hosting his latest series about real estate with us at Franklin.TV. Home \$weet Home.

Joining Mike, Franklin's own Jay Horrigan who also knows real estate.

Mike Shain's expertise in home financing and Jay's background in the Franklin real estate market will make for informative (and perhaps enabling) programs on pathways to home ownership for those who wish to achieve the American dream.

At some point that American Dream is perhaps as simple as making macaroni and cheese in your very own kitchen. Srsly?

If mac 'n cheese is involved, mine is not to question, but just to enjoy comfort food in the kitchen. That's when you know you're truly Home, \$weet Home.



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NY v Trump

The Indictments – a Breakdown.

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 04/09/2023

NY v Trump Indictments - a Breakdown				
Count	Falsified Invoices	RevTrust Ledger	Vouchers	Checks
1	February 14, 2017	February 14, 2017	842457	
			842460	000138
5	February 17, 2017	March 16, 2017	846907	000147
		General Ledger		
8	April 13, 2017	June 19, 2017	858770	002740
11	May 22, 2017	May 23, 2017	855331	002700
14	June 16, 2017	June 19, 2017	858772	002741
17	July 11, 2017	July 11, 2017	861096	002781
20	August 1, 2017	August 1, 2017	863641	002821
23	September 11, 2017	September 12, 2017	868174	002908
26	October 18, 2017	October 18, 2017	872654	002944
29	November 20, 2017	November 20, 2017	876511	002980
32	December 1, 2017	December 5, 2017	877785	003006

This is my Excel summary of the 34 charges described in NY v Donald J. Trump. **IMHO** – NY District Attorney Alvin Bragg has a big hill to climb.

Here's how to read the breakdown. The first column cites a count number where a set of related events occurs as noted in subsequent counts.

There is a repeating structure:

Count 1, Column 2 – Date when Michael Cohen submitted an invoice for services.

Not stated: Nature of services and amounts invoiced.

Were services falsified? By Cohen? By Trump?

Count 2, Column 3 – Date Trump or an assign enters the invoice into a check ledger.

Were services noted consistently between the invoice and ledger?

Count 3, Column 4 – A voucher is generated to approve payment.

In what business expense account does the voucher place the invoice?

Count 4, Column 5 – Check issued and signed by Trump.

What entry appears on any of the issued checks as a memo?

Some elements for further investigation:

There were two vouchers issued for Cohen's first cited invoice. Why?

Are there listed services that were broken out for some reason?

Or - was the second voucher a reissue - as a replacement for the first?

Counts 1 to 7 were paid from a Donald Trump Revocable Trust account.

Counts 8 to 34 were paid via the organization's General Ledger account.

Why the change? Were hush payments scrubbed in counts 1 to 7?

Counts 1 to 7 have check numbers that differ from the general business account.

Counts 8 to 34 list related check numbers in a reasonable progression.

Are the first two issued checks where all of the hush money sums exist?

Is the matter of hush money payments and their alleged mischaracterization contained entirely within Counts 1 through 7?

If so, how the jury chooses to recognize the Trump Revocable Trust might become a pivotal point in determining guilt or innocence. If prosecutors can link the Trust to the ordinary business affairs of the Trump organization, then the claim that:

THE GRAND JURY OF THE COUNTY OF NEW YORK, by this indictment, accuses the defendant of the crime of FALSIFYING BUSINESS RECORDS IN THE FIRST DEGREE, in violation of Penal Law §175.10, committed as follows: The defendant, in the County of New York and elsewhere, on or about February 14, 2017, with intent to defraud and intent to commit another crime and aid and conceal the commission thereof, made and caused a false entry in the business records of an enterprise, to wit... (Details of each specific count follow).

Then the prosecution's case has merit. But, is it a bridge too far?

If the jurors consider the Trust account to be private funds and set apart from the Trump Organization, and regard it as a personal checking account and not a part of any business records, then the prosecutor's case might be severely flawed.

What we don't know:

The nature of services and related amounts listed on Cohen's invoices.

Are there dated 'phone-con' events listed as billable time?

These would prompt questions of nature and substance in such conversations.

Who opted to frame the nature of hush money payments? Cohen or Trump.

No Cohen invoices were listed prior to the Indictments. However, earlier invoices, voucher, ledger entries and checks may be introduced as evidence to establish their prior working relationship, and any services and payment pattern changes. Sums paid via each check, and any noted check memos might also be telling. Then there are Trump's 'agents and assigns' - bookkeeping staffers. What do they know?

Cohen's testimony is mission critical. Also, Pecker's testimony regarding the newspaper's (negative story) catch-and-kill strategy will also be significant in establishing hush money, its movements and timings, and any discussion(s) directly noting the election and bad publicity protections afforded to candidate Trump.

There is no direct reference in the indictment regarding connectivity to suppress negative information about candidate Trump during a federal election. This link will have to be made unambiguously clear and absolute in the court proceedings.

In Sum:

This case is detailed and complex. This case is fraught with boring accounting details that will tax the best juror's attention span. Much is also omitted from the indictment. That said, the state would not try the case in the indictment itself. The charges are kept basic and deemed provable in court.

The wild card is if Trump takes the stand and testifies under oath. That is a risk his attorneys will likely seek to avoid. Trump's follow-on Mar-a-lago speech was telling. He opened immediately with his usual machine gun litany of grievances against the legal system, the Bidens, etc. Within a minute or two, as it became clear that Trump wasn't going to address the state's indictments against him many news organizations abandoned their coverage.

Finally, if some secret Trump supporters end up in the jury box there is some potential for a mistrial or a hung jury. Jury selection will be mission critical.

In another week this saga will fade into the noise of the day. News outlets will give it a nod as motions are filed from time to time – until the court date arrives.

I say all of the foregoing as a mere citizen. It's all IMHO. I have no special legal expertise, but I have worked in and with enough news departments in my long career to wonder why no one else is carefully analyzing the prosecutor's charges. Rather than simply castigating a notorious defendant, I've opted to consider the case itself, its merits and limits. What has Alvin Bragg learned that previous prosecuting attorneys didn't know?

Note that the quantity of counts does not equate to the quality and veracity of the counts. Either way, this case could be all over and done after Count 7.

There is much to be revealed in witness testimony that we just can't know. How it all plays in the courtroom will determine if The Don is still Teflon.

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Franklin Sports – Live!

Whenever, Wherever, However.

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 04/16/2023

Friday, April 14 – another lovely Spring afternoon for a ball game. The Franklin High School Girls Varsity Softball game v Sharon. Folks watched these very images streamed live on our YouTube channel and on Franklin Pride C96/V28.



Live School Sports!

These days it's what we do, and carrying every game is our ongoing challenge. We've geared up and staffed up to cover multiple events whenever and wherever possible. Why? Because it's someone's kid out there. It's about Franklin Pride.

Shout out to our TV crew: Chris Flynn, Chris Leverone, Meredith McKunes, Scott Tooker, Li Wang – along with our announcers: Pete Royce, Jay Horrigan and Ryan Martin for covering as many games as possible.

New technology has emerged in the past few years, along with new ways to connect from wherever to our studio. We do our best to keep ahead of the latest technical innovations in local TV. Again, why? Franklin Pride.

Check out all three of our Youtube channels. Just go to our website, Franklin•TV. Click on a channel logo to see playlists of our past livestreamed programs.

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Our Community Access
Franklin•TV

New Normal is Not Normal!

**We, the People - are Aimlessly Angry.
by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 04/23/2023**

Recently I sat with a long-time friend about to retire. In our casual conversation I switched to my ersatz 'Mr. Media' voice.

"Annd, we're back live discussing Bob's upcoming retirement - wrapping up a career after 16 years behind the counter at his most recent job. Tell us, Bob - What was the best part of a day on the job?"

"The People."

- Interesting - and what was the worst aspect of your workday?"

"The People."

He went on to explain that in the normal course of any day there were folks who were gracious, civil, kind. There were also people who were horribly rude, angry at the world, and not the easiest to satisfy. As a general take-away, Bob saw that the more recent exchanges with his clients were trending in the wrong direction.

"These days more people seem to have a longer face; a shorter fuse."

Our New Normal has taken on an impatient impertinence - a subtle, simmering of background frustrations. These can emerge as displaced anger that pervades the day-to-day of everyday - of ordinary life.

True, that each of us carries our own bag of personal frustrations. We can begin to move our personal New Normal in a more positive direction. Through the smallest acts of simple thoughtful civility, we can reframe our day, our general outlook.

We can choose to be a positive moment in someone else's New Normal. Even the smallest exercise of social graces can make our own New Normal all the better.

What is our normal - new or otherwise? It can be what we choose to make of it.

We can be those people who are remembered as the best part of someone's day.

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Artificial Intelligence

It's the new 'new thing' and it's coming - fast.
by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 04/30/2023

Artificial Intelligence. It's the current high-techie buzz - a fancy polysyllabic term. Fake Info? Says the same thing - just not in buzzy breathy brochure language.

When the ChatGPT Open A.I. interface surfaced recently, I challenged it with a simple request - Write a one-page essay on Franklin, MA history. The result started off reasonably enough, but half-way along, the rising degree of fable over fact was clear. The A.I. was fabricating - faking it, instead of making it. Open-ended A.I. is a big high-tech 'boil the ocean' challenge. It's wikkid hahd. I'm also mistrusting of any endeavor where the experts state, "We actually don't know how or why it works."

That said, there is a subset of A.I. that does work quite well. It's G.I. Guided Inquiry. This subset of A.I. software development rests on a simple premise. If you code the right questions and goals in software, you can get the right answers. The computer can produce useful outcomes for specific tasks through training - exercising the specified questions and goals repeatedly, and through lots of trial and error - ultimately, to produce a beneficial, dependable, emergent behavior.

This week I tested Cleanvoice, a smart audio editing system that automatically removes 'filler sounds, stutters, hesitations and the like from speech recordings. This is a task that is well suited to G.I. designed software, and the company that offers this intelligent task-specific service appears to have gotten it right.

I uploaded a test audio file that was about 2 minutes long. Only 10 seconds later it returned a processed file that was 7 seconds shorter.

The accompanying report stated that Cleanvoice removed:

12 filler sounds, 2 stutters, 7 seconds of dead air, and a mouth sound.

I listened to their processed audio clip. I was very impressed. I was also humbled. Were I to attempt manually editing and cleaning up all those momentary blips in my 2-minute sample, it would take perhaps 30-40 minutes. Tidying up a full hour of audio to this level of error-free speech would take a long day.

When spending a little money can save a lot of time - that's a real intelligent move.

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Writing – for Funsies

Our Senior Scribblers want YOU.

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 05/07/2023

Our Franklin Senior Center Writers Group (The Scribblers) seeks new members.

You don't have to pen the next **GREAT AMERICAN NOVEL**.
You don't have to be the next Mark Twain or Papa Hemingway.
None of us would claim to be – yet.
But we can aspire.
It could happen.
And if not? That's okay.



We don't write for literary fame – or even residuals. We write because we enjoy it.
Simple stories? Original musings? Personal memoirs? Poems? An epic yarn?
It's all good.

Consider joining our group. It's always loads of fun. No judgements. Just a shared appreciation for the personal joy of creative self-expression and the written word.

The Senior Scribblers meet every week at the Franklin Senior Center. Once a month we head to the Franklin•TV studio to record our radio show/podcast.

Although we meet in person locally, we also use Zoom as our easy remote option. It's always available for folks to participate in bad weather, or for writers who live elsewhere in the U.S. and want to join our group. We're wide open to all.

Do you have some stories? We'd love to hear them. Discover your inner scribbler. Feel free to 'sit in' on a Wednesday meeting (1 pm); and just get to know the gang.

Franklin Senior Center
10 Daniel McCahill Street
Franklin, MA 02038

Call to be added to our Scribblers' email list.
(508) 520-4945

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The Federal Budget & The Debt Ceiling

Congress holds the purse strings.

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 05/14/2023

This week (Monday 11am, 2pm, 6pm) we discuss the U.S. Federal Budget on our radio program 'More Perfect Union'. Dr. Michael Walker-Jones sent a link to this overview by David Wessel of The Brookings Institute. It's worth a read.

When the federal government runs a deficit by spending more than it collects in revenue it borrows money to cover the difference by issuing IOUs as U.S. Treasury securities. The debt ceiling is a limit set by Congress on the amount the Treasury can borrow (Currently \$3.14 trillion). The Treasury hit that ceiling in January and has been taking what are known as "extraordinary measures" to keep paying the bills. But it will run out of maneuvering room sometime in the next several months, perhaps as early as June, unless Congress acts.

There have been four Federal shutdowns where operations were affected for more than one business day. In 1995-1996, President Clinton and the Republican Congress were unable to agree on spending levels, so the government shut down twice, for a total of 26 days. In 2013, a standoff over funding for the Affordable Care Act resulted in a 16-day shutdown. And in December 2018 and January 2019, a dispute over border wall funding led to a shutdown that lasted 35 days.

Because tax revenues aren't sufficient to cover all federal spending, the federal government borrows a lot—an average of more than \$7 billion per business day. Raising the debt ceiling doesn't increase federal spending beyond what already has been approved by Congress; it simply allows the government to pay for purchases and obligations it already has made. Because Congress in the past has always lifted the debt ceiling before the Treasury has run out of money, no one knows for sure what will happen if Congress doesn't act this time—what the Treasury and the Federal Reserve will do, and how financial markets will react. Failure to make timely interest and principal payments on U.S. Treasury securities, regarded as the safest financial asset in the world, would be an unprecedented default and, among other things, would call into question the credibility of the U.S. government's promises and probably raise the interest rate that investors demand to hold U.S. Treasury debt in the future.

In contrast to government shutdowns, a failure to raise the debt ceiling threatens not only the spending subject to annual appropriation by Congress, but all federal spending—including interest on the debt and Social Security, Medicare, and other government benefits. Federal employees can continue working—there is no need for agencies to decide which services are essential and which are not—but their paychecks may be delayed.

We know from transcripts of Federal Reserve meetings that when this issue arose in 2011, the Obama Treasury was planning to make all interest and principal payments and to delay paying all its other bills—including government benefits. The Biden Treasury hasn't said what it plans to do if Congress doesn't raise the debt ceiling in time. It is, however, likely to make interest and principal payments on Treasury debt. Whether and how it will prioritize other payments is unclear—but someone will not get paid on time; there simply won't be enough cash to meet every obligation.

What is the connection between raising the debt ceiling and reducing the federal deficit? Legally, there is no connection, though sometimes the two issues occur close together if the Treasury bumps up against the debt ceiling close to the end of the federal fiscal year on September 30, the deadline for approving appropriations bills (even if only temporary ones).

Still, members of Congress have used the imperative of raising the debt ceiling as leverage in negotiations in Congress and with the White House over appropriation bills and, sometimes, over broader tax and spending policies. (This maneuver usually is used by members of Congress from a party other than the president's party.) In 2011, for instance, President Obama and the Republican majority in the House reached a multi-part agreement—the Budget Control Act—just a couple of days before the Treasury ran out of cash. Among other things, it put caps on total appropriated spending and created a special congressional committee to craft a plan to reduce future deficits. The committee failed to come to agreement, triggering a series of automatic spending cuts.

The Brookings Institution is financed through the support of a diverse array of foundations, corporations, governments, individuals, as well as an endowment. The findings, interpretations, and conclusions in this report are solely those of its author(s) and are not influenced by any donors.

IMHO:

This too shall pass. Odds are that it will be resolved timely. Neither political party wants to repeat the traumas of past shutdowns. Over the decades both parties have raised the debt limit as necessary.

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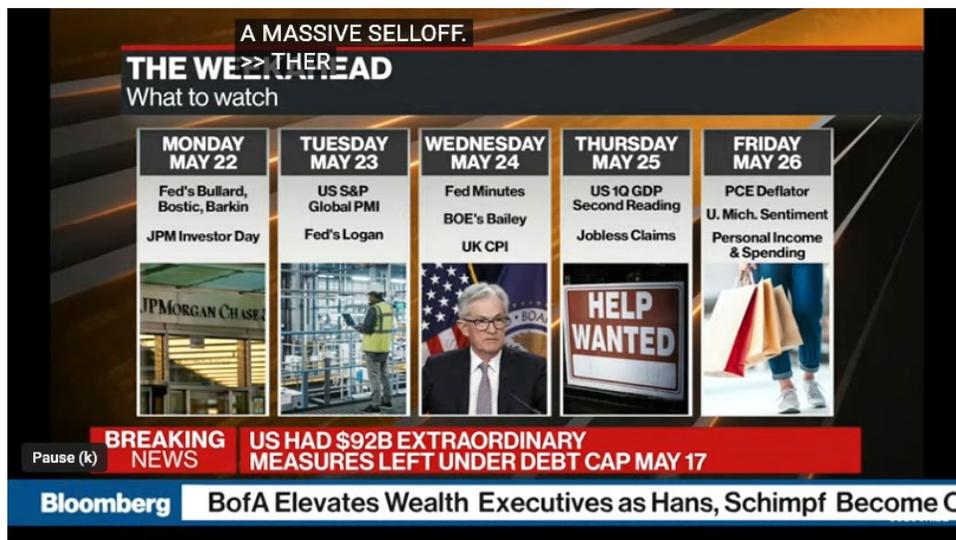
Our Community Access
FranklinTV

Crawling Along

Getting the Message Across - Literally

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 05/21/2023

We have introduced a new visual addition to our Community Bulletins. You'll see new text messages crawling (I prefer the term 'gliding') across our channel screens. Among our ongoing list of 'way too many things to do' we have had a desire to find faster and easier ways to post timely messages to our channel bulletin boards. Some time ago we planned for this. We reserved the lower portion of our screen's real estate for messages that we could crawl as text under other graphics.



Some news networks are obsessed with text, titles, and crawls. (I'm lookin' at you, Bloomberg Business.)

Our new text service enables us to post the basic 'Who/What/When/Where' of local upcoming events. Each of our three local channels will display messages appropriate to that channel's programming and viewers.

Be they crawling - or gliding - our lower-screen text messages will be updated frequently as new events and requests dictate.

Ecclesiastes 9:11 The race is not always to the swift. Sometimes just consistently crawling along gets it done.

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Good v Bad Days

...and we hate it when that happens.

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 05/28/2023

We strive. Good days are when it all works – perfectly – just like in the brochure. Bad days? When it doesn't. We strive to make the bad days a rare occurrence. These days (good or bad) there is much digital complexity in what we do. So, we maintain backup systems wherever we can.

Video recordings of government meetings are part of the public record.

Fortunately, we have backup recordings, and backups of the backups. Our main recorders are good for 8 hours. (Expanding to 20 hours this Summer.) Youtube is one backup. Our 2 DVD recorders (4 hours) are another. Our backup system records all cameras and Zoom separately - 30 days.

We also distribute our meetings through backups. Our Youtube and Zoom connections travel through different internet access points. Our connection between Town Chambers and our main studio is another. The digital systems design concept is that if something must fail, it won't fail completely.

In the broadcast world every live event is mission critical. When something goes awry, big or small, everyone sees it as it happens. There's nowhere to hide.

If something goes wrong the only question is, "How rapidly can we correct?"

All that said, we are always looking for critical single points of failure within our systems, and how we work. Automatic operations can fail. Manual operations can be inconsistent. But when combined, they can become much more reliable.

Although our Youtube and Zoom connections were fine, the start of Wednesday's Town Council meeting was not seen on our cable channel. Our 'fix time' to set things right was 40 minutes. We're developing plans to reduce that time to not more than one minute.

Although true perfection does not exist in this world, we will continue to strive. Our goal is for every day to be a good day – just like in the brochure.

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Good v Bad Days, Part 2

...and we srsly hate it when that happens.

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 06/04/2023

It's 6am, Saturday, 6/3. Yesterday's graduation ceremony is history. So is the torrential weather that plagued it. I'm still stunned and dismayed by events that prevented us from covering FHS graduation live. Last week I wrote:

"These days (good or bad) there is much digital complexity in what we do. So, we maintain backup systems wherever we can."

That reflection became a prophetic understatement: Yesterday was a bad day. We do all we can to prepare for the worst, but even the best preparations and plans can go only so far. Here is the simplest telling of events:

First - We lost power at the high school and longer still at the field.

Backup plan: emergency power - we had that. But...

Parts of the school did not.

The school's PA system on the field was not working.

Facilities brought in their electrician to troubleshoot the issue - But...

All the wet wiring kept popping ground-fault circuit breakers.

Second - The school's fiber communication lines went dark.

We had no direct connection to the school, our studio, and the internet.

Backup plan: Verizon cellular internet service to our studio. - But...

Third - Verizon cell service was also disrupted - for the duration.

We no longer had power or a digital connection of any kind.

Backup backup plan - Record the event and rebroadcast later.

We were on the field with torrential storm, thunder and lightning all around. We had to pull and keep all our gear - cameras, microphones off the field, shut down and cover the school's PA systems while the storm rolled through. Setting and testing it all in place takes an afternoon. What could we do in about 20 minutes?

We scrambled to get PA systems working for one podium mic and hustled two of our five cameras back onto the field. We are reassembling our recordings of the event for rebroadcast and video on demand as soon as possible.

They say, "Man plans, God laughs." (Origin: Old Testament, 2nd Hesitations 13:6)
I fail to see the humor. The storm was indeed biblical.

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The biblical rains, winds, thunder and lightning killed power, internet and cellular service in several locations around Franklin. We were stuck in a tent on the field while trying to keep critical gear dry and working.



The ceremonies began immediately after the worst of the storm was reduced to drizzle. Our only remaining option: Record it all with two of our cameras.

Strawberry Stroll?

The weather gods continue to taunt us.
by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 06/11/2023



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It's 6am, Saturday, 6/10. Yesterday's Strawberry Stroll is not history, because as of this writing it hasn't happened yet.

There were other rainy days in the past that dampened the Franklin Downtown Partnership's outdoor events. And, given last week's F.H.S. Graduation deluge - we fully understand the caution.

Normally, I would be reporting how, "a *fun time was had by all*," describing the fun and frolic of the event - the booths, the great food, the local music and activities. There would be pix of happy crowds with cute kiddies in tow, meandering (strolling) among the many exhibit tents. (You had to be there.)

However, it all happens today, Saturday 6/11, 4 to 8pm. We will be there.

We will bring our own bit of fun. As you meander (stroll) along Main Street, stop by our tent - Smile! - and have your own

Official Strawberry Stroll Souvenir Pix taken in our photobooth.

However, if you happen to read this during the week, that leaves us with a timing conundrum. So, just assume that everything I said in the boxed paragraph above was/is absolutely the case. (You had to be there.) The Stroll will be/was fabulous.

It takes a lot of planning and work to make these community events happen - and make Franklin as a community - and us - all the better for them. Thanks to FDP, and watch for our look back on Strawberry Stroll '23 - next week on Franklin.TV.

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Juneteenth – Then and Now

The Story behind the Story.

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 06/18/2023

This is our third celebration of Juneteenth as the nation's newest federal holiday. It's happening on Monday, June 19th. How will you celebrate? Good question. Let me suggest that you listen to wfpr.fm online or tune to 102.9 on your radio.

11 AM 2 PM and 8 PM [A More Perfect Union](#) – with Dr. Michael Walker-Jones, Representative Jeff Roy and Dr. Natalia Linos

We recorded our program on Friday morning 6/16, and enjoyed a highly insightful conversation with our roundtable of radio regulars along with our excellent guest, Dr. Ken Elmore, Dean College President.

The simplistic telling of events for Juneteenth is that it marks the end of slavery. The Union Army's General Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas to inform the last of the slaves in the region that they were free men. Thus, the event was originally dubbed 'Emancipation Day'. The fuller understanding of that time and events is not so clear cut. Granger's news was suppressed. The entrenched interests of slavery and forces of fear and hate were not so easily eradicated.

We discussed the historical record, the attitudes of the times and the significance of Juneteenth. Then as now, beyond the oppression of slavery, the pernicious forces of systemic racism were also in play – and they continue to this day. True freedom for all was not wrought in an instant through a simple declaration – like flipping on a light switch – et voila – freedom. Juneteenth marks the end of slavery and offers a national moment for reflection and jubilation. However, writ large, it also marks the beginning of a long, painful yet so necessary journey toward truly equitable, unfettered freedom – not just for people of color, but for all of us. We know the immortalized words – All men are created equal. Juneteenth offers all of us an annual opportunity to listen, learn and most importantly, to live those words.

That's why our march to truly equitable freedom – and the vigilant, steadfast work to eradicate hate and systemic racist suppression in all its forms – must go on.

Join us, Monday on wfpr.fm as we delve into the deeper story of Juneteenth.

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Our Greatest Invention?

It's Also One of Our Oldest.

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 06/25/2023

Beyond fire and the wheel, there is language, and there is language immortalized. Writing likely began as an effort at simple adornment. A crude representation of a memory scratched onto a cave wall. Sometime well before the caves of Lascaux, writing gradually took form around 10-15 thousand years ago.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lascaux>

What do these ancient images tell us? The mind ponders and wanders. I can divine some images as a shopping list:

“Honey, on your way home pick up some bison, and if it’s still in season - a mastodon.”

What is key is that these first efforts at recorded memory reveal the experiences of early humans. As language became refined over the millennia, we could include abstractions (the future?) and convey experiences and concepts to later generations who would follow us.

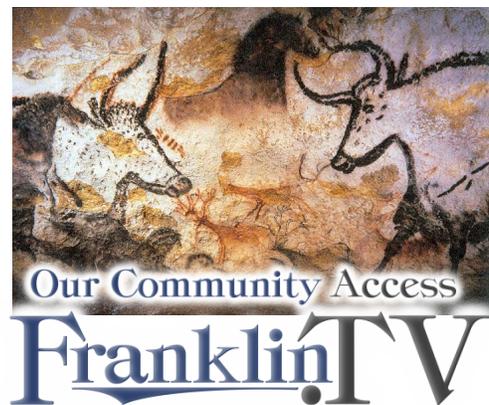
Today, many of us write for our own enjoyment. Personally, I view writing as a mental full-contact sport. Our Senior Center Writers Group (aka, The Scribblers) has just completed our third book. It’s a lovely romp through seventy-seven pages of our past short works. All dressed up for the press run, our latest works will be released later this Summer.

Writings from the Senior Scribblers.
Coming soon to a Senior Center near you.

Will you be in our next book? Join our group.
Write on, man! Write on!

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It's The Forthajooleye!

A big, big holiday through the eyes of the small
by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 07/02/2023



With all its sparkle and festivity, our Independence Day makes a big impression on teeny tots and toddlers who are just getting the hang of sentences. They take it all in as a huge bedazzling celebration of pyrotechnics and parades – a big bombastic blast that parents and grandparents call The Fourth of July.

“Forthajooleye!”

They parrot back the string of syllables. “Forthajooleye! Forthajooleye! Yaay!!”

In the fullness of time, they grow to understand why we celebrate Forthajooleye. They learn another important four-syllable word: Independence. Yes, the Fourth is a biggie in our national psyche. As it should be. It is that annual affirmation of who we are as a nation, and what we stand for as a people. It is that day when our youngest citizens enjoy a wondrous introduction to our celebration of freedom in this special country that we call home. Forthajooleye is our patriotic tradition that spans and binds generations. There are few places that celebrate the Fourth as well as Franklin. A holiday as big and boisterous as our Fourth deserves big play.

On August 24th the people of Ukraine will celebrate their own Independence Day. For them, the desperate fight for democracy and independence is far from over. With bombs bursting in air and the rocket’s red glare – a free people fight on – with many giving their lives to ensure that their flag is still there. And, make no mistake, we as a free people need to fully support that fight as well.

двадцять четверте-серпня
August twenty-fourth

So, celebrate our independence – our freedom.
Celebrate with the very young. (It’s more fun.)
Celebrate, because we want to.
Celebrate, because we can.

Happy Forthajooleye!

And, thanks for watching!

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New England Candlepins!

We're rollin' again. Bigtime!

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 07/09/2023

Saturday 7/8, at 0-dark-thirty (much too early) on the way to recording another tournament (number 18) for *New England Candlepins*. We are back!

The bowlers are back too. We had a record 128 bowlers register to compete in our tournament. That adds more prize money to the tournament kitty. The grand prize winner gets almost \$2,000.00 (and yess - those all-important bragging rights).

The qualifying tally for the top 16 who made it to TV was also an all-time high. Contestants had to roll a hot 3-string total of 410; a big number built from lots of marks with good fills. Today they were all bringin' their 'A' games.



Director Chris Flynn grabs an opening 'glam' shot of one of our newest bowlers. We had several new faces appear this season after our three-year Covid hiatus.

We load our gear into Ryan's Family Amusements in Millis at 8am, and with some luck and hustle we have it all set up for recording our 8-show tournament starting around 10am. We're still rolling as I type, and we'll wrap it all up at around 6-7pm. A long-ish day, but always big fun.



Naturally, it's great to have the gang back. Rich Myrick and Dave Chestercove bring the games to life - serious bowlers talkin' serious bowling - all while talkin' lighthearted smack about Jay Horrigan. Listening to any of our shows, you know their all having a blast kickin' back and enjoying the best the game has to offer.

Check our Youtube channel and cable schedule for *New England Candlepins, Tournament 18*, starting later this Summer.

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Our Community Access
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A Radio Decade!

2013 to 2023 – and Onward!

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 07/16/2023

In the Summer of 2013 the Federal Communications Commission posted notice that they would open a filing window for community radio stations in November.

It was ten years ago this week that I began preparing our application for wfpr•fm. We filed. We waited – nervously. There were ninety filings in Massachusetts alone. Many were competing for the few available FM channels. Only nineteen hopefuls were granted construction permits.

In February of 2014 we got the official nod from the FCC. Yessss! Their issued construction permit gave us three years to build our studios, our transmitter site and begin broadcasting. February of 2017 was a game changer. Radio has given us the ability to reach everyone – at work, at home, in the car. We've been at it for seven years, and our volunteers have made our on-air operation as professional as any station anywhere.

2023. Ten years have passed, and we're doing quite well, thank you. This year the FCC will open another community LPFM filing window in the fall. No doubt, there will be another slew of hopefuls, and only a few fortunates will win. The FM dial is much tighter now with so many AM stations adding FM channels to their service. Local community cable stations are also uniquely qualified to add FM service to their outreach efforts. Other PEG TV studios have contacted us for guidance. We're happy to help.

There were folks who helped us ten years ago. Their expert guidance was essential. Now it's our turn.
That's what community is about.

Thanks for listening to 102.9 wfpr•fm.
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Our Open Board Meeting

It's Happening. August 19th at Our Studio
by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 07/23/2023

This year our Annual Open Board Meeting will take place as part of a neighborhood block party at our 23 Hutchinson St. studios.

Join us, Saturday, August 19th at 3:00pm.

If you plan to attend, please RSVP by August 12 to:

info@franklin.tv

It's open to all Franklin businesses and residents. We'll meet-and-greet and enjoy the day starting at 3:00pm. Come hungry and enjoy some great food and music with Jamie Barrett. You can also tour our studios and learn about Franklin•TV and wfpr•fm. We'll also review the past year's progress and plans for the future. At our meeting you may cast a vote for new and/or renewing board positions.

Excerpt from FCCA bylaws: (Available on our website.)

Section 15. Election of Director by the Membership (a) Members shall be notified by the Clerk of the election of a director by the Membership at the Annual Meeting. Said notice shall be in accordance with the notice provisions of Section 4 of this Article IV. (b) Any eligible voting Member may be nominated for election to the position of Director by: (i) Written notification to the Clerk no later than seven (7) days prior to Annual Meeting; or (ii) By nomination from the floor of the Annual Meeting made and seconded by no less than three (3) eligible voting members.

Thanks to our board members who contribute their time and energy to help make Franklin•TV all that a public access TV studio can be. If you would like to become involved either as a volunteer or to create your own TV or radio programs at Franklin•TV and wfpr•fm, just send an email to: info@franklin.tv with your contact information. You can also call us to discuss and explore your ideas. 508-541-4118.

Please join us at our Franklin•TV event. Again, it's Saturday, August 19th starting at 3:00pm. Our brief open board meeting begins at 4:00pm. Come meet, greet, and learn all about local TV and radio in Franklin.

See you then.

And - as always -

Thank you for listening to wfpr•fm.

And, thank you for watching.

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Streaming – an Observation

Cable Cord-Cutting Continues

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 07/30/2023

On July-27 Alan Earls penned an insightful report in The Franklin Observer about cord-cutting and the state’s legislative efforts to ensure the viability of local media studios like Franklin•TV.

As subscribers cancel their cable subscriptions, we see our revenues drop off. Currently, Franklin.TV has seen a 15% drop in revenue over the last 5 years. We also must contend with all the same inflationary costs that everyone faces.

Crafting such legislation is a Solomonic task. The Massachusetts House and Senate have bills currently being considered on Beacon Hill. The “Act to Modernize Funding for Community Media Programming” has a version in the House, H.74. A similar measure, S.34, is moving in the Senate. The bills seek to ensure that streaming services (Netflix, Apple+, Prime, Paramount, et al) meet the same financial obligation to support local media that the cable companies (Comcast, Verizon) currently do.

Per State Rep. Jeff Roy, H. 74, “is a bill that is worth considering as it would bolster accessibility, civic engagement, and transparency of government operations.” At a time of dwindling newspaper coverage, this legislation would help municipal TV studios to continue covering and broadcasting matters of great interest to citizens. “It would simply replace the current fees on cable companies and requiring streaming services to step up to the plate,” he continued. “I look forward to reviewing the committee’s report on the proposal,” he added.

The City of Chicago successfully enacted similar legislation 5 years ago in an effort to keep pace with changing times and technology.

We applaud the work of the Massachusetts Telecom Committee, the House and Senate and their efforts to timely and reasonably address the needs of local media centers. Without this legislation, smaller communities are at risk of seeing their local PEG media services merge into regional centers (less local) or vanish entirely.

And – as always –

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Our Community Access
Franklin•TV

Our Open Meeting – A Reminder

It's Happening. August 19th at Our Studio
by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 08/06/2023

This year our Annual Open Board Meeting will take place as part of a neighborhood block party at our 23 Hutchinson St. studios.

Join us, Saturday, August 19th at 3:00pm.

If you plan to attend, please RSVP by August 12 to:

info@franklin.tv

It's open to all Franklin businesses and residents. We'll meet-and-greet and enjoy the day starting at 3:00pm. Come hungry and enjoy some great food and music with Jamie Barrett. You can also tour our studios and learn about Franklin•TV and wfpr•fm. We'll also review the past year's progress and plans for the future. At our meeting you may cast a vote for new and/or renewing board positions.

Excerpt from FCCA bylaws: (Available on our website.)

Section 15. Election of Director by the Membership (a) Members shall be notified by the Clerk of the election of a director by the Membership at the Annual Meeting. Said notice shall be in accordance with the notice provisions of Section 4 of this Article IV. (b) Any eligible voting Member may be nominated for election to the position of Director by: (i) Written notification to the Clerk no later than seven (7) days prior to Annual Meeting; or (ii) By nomination from the floor of the Annual Meeting made and seconded by no less than three (3) eligible voting members.

Thanks to our board members who contribute their time and energy to help make Franklin•TV all that a public access TV studio can be. If you would like to become involved either as a volunteer or to create your own TV or radio programs at Franklin•TV and wfpr•fm, just send an email to: info@franklin.tv with your contact information. You can also call us to discuss and explore your ideas. 508-541-4118.

Please join us at our Franklin•TV event. Again, it's Saturday, August 19th starting at 3:00pm. Our brief open board meeting begins at 4:00pm. Come meet, greet, and learn all about local TV and radio in Franklin.

See you then.

And – as always –

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Changing Comcast Channels

A new P/E/G channel lineup for Comcast viewers.

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 08/13/2023

On August 29th Comcast will change our P/E/G channels lineup. Only Comcast customers will be affected. Verizon and Youtube streams are not affected.

This is a technical change that Comcast is making. They are moving two of our program services to lower channels that are being vacated by other services.

P/E/G is a shorthand acronym for our three local cable TV channels:

Our Public Access channel offers full production support for local cable TV programs produced by your Franklin neighbors and friends (or perhaps you).

Our Educational channel covers as many school sports and student events as we can fit into our busy production schedule. Many are carried live.

Our Government channel covers several evening Council, Committee and Board meetings each week from our two TV control facilities in the Municipal Building.

While Comcast's final channel assignments are still under consideration, we anticipate that our local P/E/G programming which appears on Comcast channels 8, 96, 11 will move to Comcast 6, 8, and 9, starting on August 29th.

Again, Verizon and our YouTube streams are not affected.

While there may be a bit of confusion through September, ultimately the channel reassignment do place all our local channels squarely within the Boston area TV station lineup. These changes will likely prove to be slightly beneficial for Comcast customers (and for us) over the long run.

More details about the 8/29 channel changes to come as they are made available.

Stay tuned.

And - as always -

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Our Community Access
FranklinTV

Our Open Meeting – It's Today!

It's Happening Today - at Our Studio, 3pm.

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 08/19/2023

Our Annual Open Board Meeting is ON! It's part of our annual neighborhood block party at our 23 Hutchinson St. studios.

Join us, at 3:00pm.

It's open to all Franklin businesses and residents. We'll meet-and-greet and enjoy the day starting at 3:00pm. Come hungry and enjoy some great food and music with Jamie Barrett. You can also tour our studios and learn about Franklin•TV and wfpr•fm. We'll also review the past year's progress and plans for the future. At our meeting you may cast a vote for new and/or renewing board positions.

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Thanks to our board members who contribute their time and energy to help make Franklin•TV all that a public access TV studio can be. If you would like to become involved either as a volunteer or to create your own TV or radio programs at Franklin•TV and wfpr•fm, just send an email to: info@franklin.tv with your contact information. You can also call us to discuss and explore your ideas. 508-541-4118.

Our brief open board meeting begins at 4:00pm. Come meet, greet, and learn all about local TV and radio in Franklin.

See you then.

And – as always –

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Our Open Meeting – It's History!

It Happened Yesterday with a Good Turnout.

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 08/20/2023

Our Annual Open Board Meeting is now in the history books as part of our annual neighborhood block party at our 23 Hutchinson St. studios.



We gathered at 3pm. Our brief open board meeting began at 4:00pm to vote on a single agenda item to extend Pandora Carlucci's board membership for three-years.

Our Board President, Dr. Anne Bergen opened the meeting and introduced our board members to the gathered group of friends and neighbors. Then the vote was recorded for continuing Pandora's term.

I provided a brief update on a few other matters:

- Our annual income is slowly dwindling v our expenses and the expanded work we do for schools and government.
- Our recent construction of a new additional Town Hall meetings facility.
- The upcoming Comcast channel reassignments, slated for August 29th. Our new Comcast channels are: Public 6, Educational 8 and Government 9. Verizon viewers are unaffected.

In sum: Another enjoyable Saturday afternoon and successful open board meeting. Thanks to our board members who contribute their time and energy to help make Franklin•TV all that a public access TV studio can be. If you would like to become involved either as a volunteer or to create your own TV or radio programs at Franklin•TV and wfpr•fm, just send an email to: info@franklin.tv with your contact information. You can also call us to discuss and explore your ideas. 508-541-4118.

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Changing Comcast Channels

New P/E/G Channel Lineup for Comcast Viewers.

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 08/27/2023

On Tuesday August 29th Comcast will change our P/E/G channels lineup. Only Comcast customers are affected. Verizon and Youtube streams are not affected. This is a technical change that Comcast is making. They are moving our programs to TV channels that are being vacated by other services.

P/E/G is a shorthand acronym for our three local cable TV channels:

Our Public Access channel (on Comcast **6**) offers full production support for local TV programs created by your Franklin friends and neighbors (or perhaps you).

Our Educational channel (on Comcast **8**) covers as many school sports and student events as we can fit into our busy production schedule. Many are carried live.

Our Government channel (on Comcast **9**) covers Council, Committee and Board meetings each week from our two TV control facilities in the Municipal Building.

Again, our local P/E/G programming, normally on Comcast 8/96/11, will move to Comcast **6/8/9**, on Tuesday, August 29th. Verizon channels **26/28/29** and our YouTube streams are not affected.

While there may be a bit of confusion through September, the channel reassignments place our local channels squarely within the Boston area TV station lineup. These changes will likely prove to be beneficial for Comcast customers (and for us) in the long run.

As we so often say on TV - Stay tuned.

And - as always -

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Wine, Wine, Wine...

Mark & Kim - 244 episodes and counting.

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 09/03/2023

But - here's the thing. It's not just about quantity. I'm talkin' 244 terrific episodes with lots of fun and insightful info. Mark Lenzi and Kim Simone are seriously into it, and as you listen you also get seriously into it along with them. The passion is there, and they love to share it.

"Exploring All Things Wine with You!"

True to the program's name, they take you into the entire wonderful world of wine; introducing you to wine authors, experts, regions, vintners, vintages, techniques. You name it. They know all about it.

Listen to the Wonderful World of Wine every Wednesday at 10a, 2p, and 7p on wfpr.fm 102.9, Franklin Public Radio.

You can also go to our website - wfpr.fm and click on Past Shows. It's all there - every scintillating episode of The Wonderful World of Wine.

Do you have a passion to share? Perhaps it could be a podcast as well. We can help with that.

Call us. 508-541-4118.

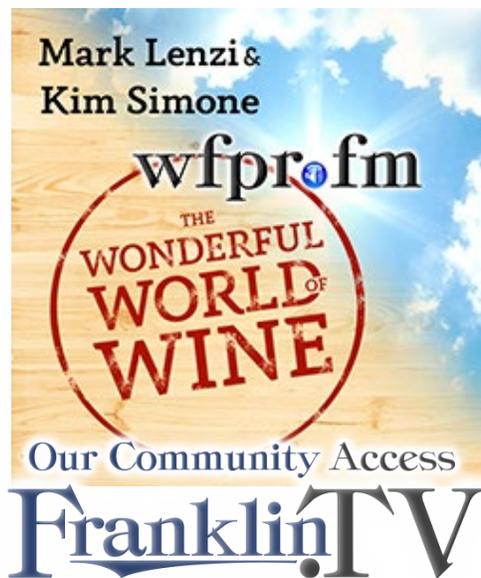
Or email - info@franklin.tv

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PROGRAMMING NOTE:

Our assigned Comcast channels have changed. Verizon is not affected.

Our All-Access channel has moved from 8 to 6.

Our School channel has moved from 96 to 8.

Our Government channel has moved from 11 to 9.

Dean College TV

Virtual Sets for their Studio

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 09/10/2023

Exactly 8 years ago we installed 5 large DTV screens in our small studio. This was our early foray into virtual sets - artful backgrounds created in Photoshop. For us, it was a game-changer. Later, we installed even larger displays in our larger studio. Now we are extending virtual sets to Dean College's TV studio. Dean's Peter Leger and Gregg Seibert moved a pair of large 75"DTV screens from our place to theirs.



Recently, we've enjoyed having Dean's President Ken Elmore at our studio to record his insightful interview TV series, 'Riffin' on Main St.'. It made sense to extend our studio capabilities so we could include Dean students more readily in producing and recording President Elmore's programs. No doubt, more opportunities for program collaboration with Dean and its TV curriculum will evolve as well.

And - as always -

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Our Government channel has moved from 11 to 9.

Pamela Hines

Take the Jazz Journey

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 09/17/2023



Pamela Hines has been a prolific presence in American jazz as a pianist and composer. She has received national and international critical acclaim for instrumental compositions that contribute to the art of the trio, and for jazz originals for vocalists who are more at home in the American Songbook.

Hines has led or played with other jazz artists at hundreds of east coast venues for three decades, including Scullers, Groton Hill Music Center, Les Zygomates, Prudential Center Summer Music Series, Boston Harbor Park Summer Music Series, Ryles, Johnny D's, Thelonious Monkfish (Mad Monkfish), Spirit of Boston, Acton Jazz Cafe, Mechanics Hall, New Haven Jazz Festival, Newton Jazz Festival, New Composers Jazz Festival, and Cachaca, Duplex and Metropolitan Room in NYC. (Whew! Busy girl.)

Her 2018 release, *Music of Richard Whiting*, earned 4.5/5 stars and was a Top 10 of 2018 selection by Dan McClenaghan, at *All About Jazz*. Three of her trio CDs have reached the top 20 on national radio charts and her all-original Christmas CD with vocalists made the national radio list in 2008.

Hines was host/pianist for *Live Jazz New England* on NPR-station WICN, 2012-17. She currently hosts the *Saturday Jazz Matinee*.

And did I happen to mention that Pam also hosts *Jazz Journey* on wfpr.fm? No? Listen, on 102.9 fm, Tuesday: 9a/12p/6p. Enjoy the Journey - and all that Jazz.

And - as always -

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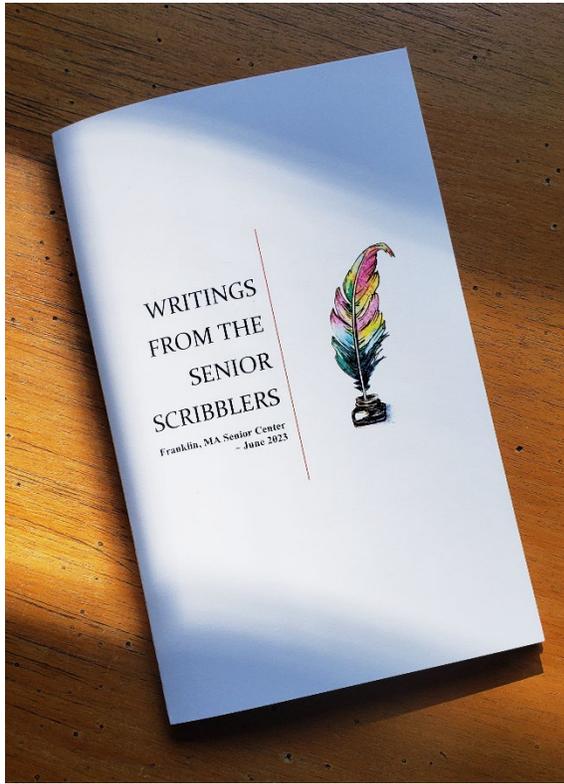
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Our School channel has moved from 96 to 8.

Our Government channel has moved from 11 to 9.

Our Book Launch

The Senior Writers Group – Book Launch
by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 09/24/2023



Oh yes, we did. Our third Writers Book will be officially launched at the Senior Center on Tuesday morning at 10 am.

WRITINGS FROM THE SENIOR SCRIBBLERS
Third Edition – by Scribblers Press

This time we arranged for our collected works to be beautifully printed and bound as a self-micro-published run of 100.

It's a real book book – 77 pages of collected writings and storytelling. Simple stories? Personal adventures? Musings? Poems? There's something for every reader.

It's not in The Library of Congress. You won't find it on Amazon or Google Books. It's available only at the Franklin Senior Center. Come to our great unveiling, Tuesday, Sept 26th at 10 am.

Join us for selected readings and copies of our latest 'best seller'. The NY Times literary critic wasn't extended a special invitation. Not even Oprah's Book Club. Just you.

Do you have some stories and scribbles in you? You can be part of our next book.

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Our Franklin Pride School channel has moved from 96 to 8.

Our Town Hall TV Government channel has moved from 11 to 9.

A Crisis of Our Time

Our Mental Well-Being is at Risk

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 10/01/2023

Mental Trauma – It’s a pernicious undercurrent of general anger and discontent that pervades our new normal. We witness moments of it as airline and road rage.



For many, all is not as it may seem at the surface. This is particularly true among seniors. Statistics indicate that up to twenty-five percent of seniors experience issues that can threaten or diminish their mental and emotional well-being.

Dr. Anne Bergen and guests investigate the many facets of mental health in today’s challenging environment. Find Anne’s program in our weekly TV Guides, and find answers and insights that can lead to a better, brighter outlook on life.

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M.I.A.A. is Back

Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 10/08/2023

If you're a parent of a student athlete then you are probably familiar with the MIAA and their important work with advancing and coordinating school sports and athletic programs across Massachusetts. If not, learn more on Franklin.TV.



Our own Jay Horrigan and Pete Royce are back in our studio for another season of 'Winning Ways' with MIAA's Jim Clark, Dr. Bob Baldwin, and Steve Dubzinski as they honor the sportsmanship and scholarship of winning students, along with the ins-n-outs of school athletics with coaches and athletic directors across the state.

And- as always -

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DPW, Better & Better

A Town is Made of Treasured Places.

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 10/15/2023

There are quietly treasured places and spaces tucked in here and there that dot the landscape of any town. They are often physical markers of a storied past. Some are 'institutional'. Some are 'monumental' (literally). Some are simply spaces for recreation, reflection, renewal. They all contribute to the local zeitgeist - the unspoken identifying and unifying spirit of the community. They are who we are. In that sense they are treasured - hushed - perhaps even spiritual places.

We breeze by them without a thought on most days. But, without them we are less.



As public works they are a public good - good public works of art, usually unsigned. That said, an appreciative nod to Franklin's DPW, the Dept. of Public (Good) Works. Robert Cantoreggi and his talented team are always there, deftly working away in that unsung background. All that good work? You might say it's - 'monumental'.

And - as always -

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Endless Konnections

There Are Many Paths to Wellness

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 10/22/2023

There are indeed many paths to follow in cultivating personal wellness. For most of us the topic of wellness is expansive, yet for each of us wellness is personal. What constitutes wellness? We believe that wellness is good and important in our lives, but our limited understanding of wellness can make wellness, umm well – elusive. The sources and activities that we embrace to promote wellness can be variable. In a post-covid world, most of us have a general appreciation for wellness in our lives. How can we best achieve a clear understanding of wellness to guide us?



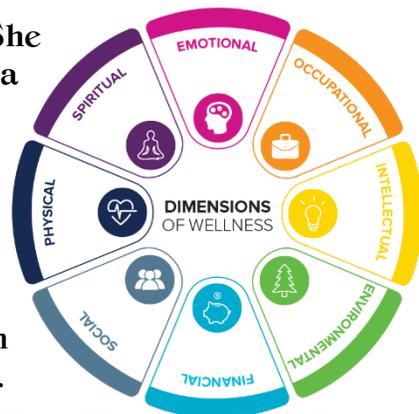
Farah Andre (right) is a registered wellness nurse. She serves as our able navigator on a journey through a vast ocean of wellness opportunity. Wellness – it's physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, financial, social, and more. Here she talks with Legrand of CaribbeanApparel.net about identity and fashion. Farah's Endless Konnections is coming to our All-Access cable channel soon. Watch and learn about all the actions, sources and connections that can encourage greater overall wellness in our daily lives.

And – as always –

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Wonder Week

You Sensed it When You Were 4 Years Old

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 10/29/2023

Wandering, I wonder under a canopy of color.

Mulling over color, and the rhapsody of our galaxy's glorious audacity to flaunt and strut its presence.

This is Wonder Week for me.

There is that early wonder - the one we felt when everything was new. We were what? Four? Five? There are those earliest memories that we can draw on to return us to wonder.

The distant momentary impressions we recall - before we were taught - our open curiosity. disciplined.

“Don't touch that. Stay in line. Single file. No talking.”

We should never let go of our joyous exploration of wonder.

We came into this world with it.

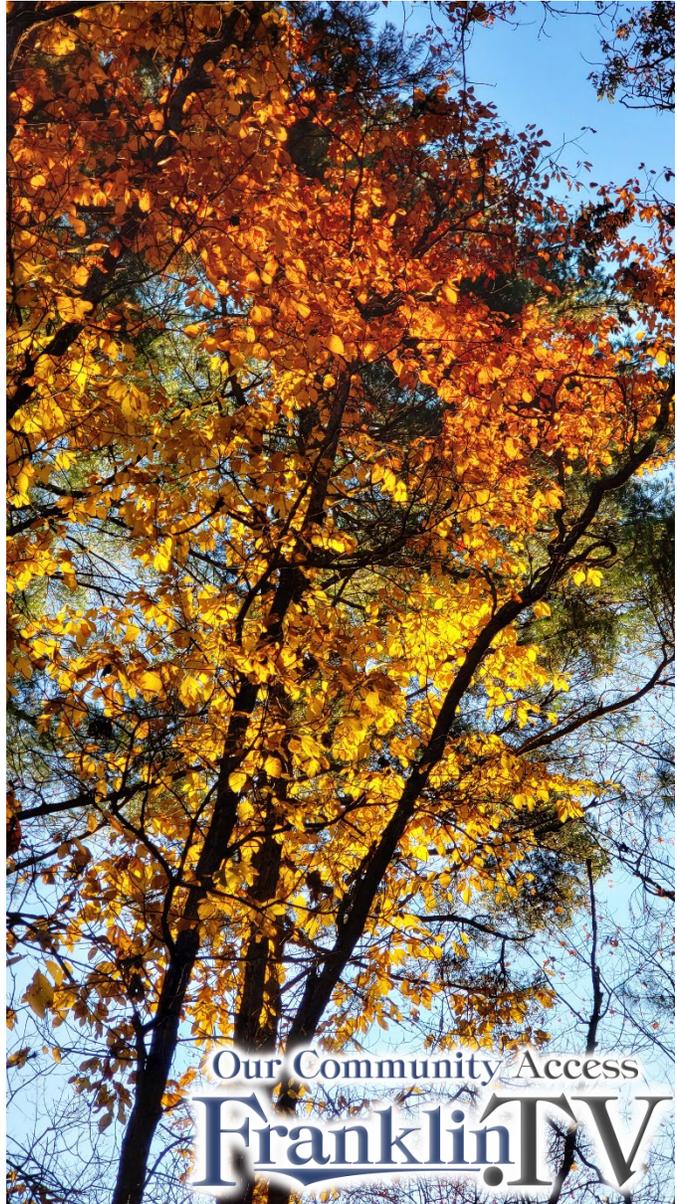
Let us keep it - and leave with it.

And - as always -

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Guy Fawkes Day

Remember, Remember...

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 11/05/2023

Guy Fawkes Night, also known as Guy Fawkes Day, Bonfire Night, and Fireworks Night, is an annual commemoration observed on November fifth, primarily in Great Britain, involving bonfires and fireworks displays. Its history begins with Catholic plotters who intended to assassinate Protestant king James I and his parliament on November 5, 1605. Guy Fawkes, a member of the Gunpowder Plot, was arrested while guarding explosives they had placed beneath the House of Lords.

Celebrating that the plot was foiled and the King had survived, people lit bonfires around London. Months later, the 'Observance of 5th November Act' mandated an annual public day of thanksgiving.

Within a few decades Gunpowder Treason Day as it was then known, became the predominant English state commemoration. Its Protestant overtones also fostered anti-Catholic sentiments. Bonfire celebrations burnt effigies of hated figures such as the Pope. Gradually, November fifth came to be known as Guy Fawkes Day.

*Remember, remember, the 5th of November,
Gunpowder, treason, and plot.
I see no reason why gunpowder treason
Should ever be forgot.*

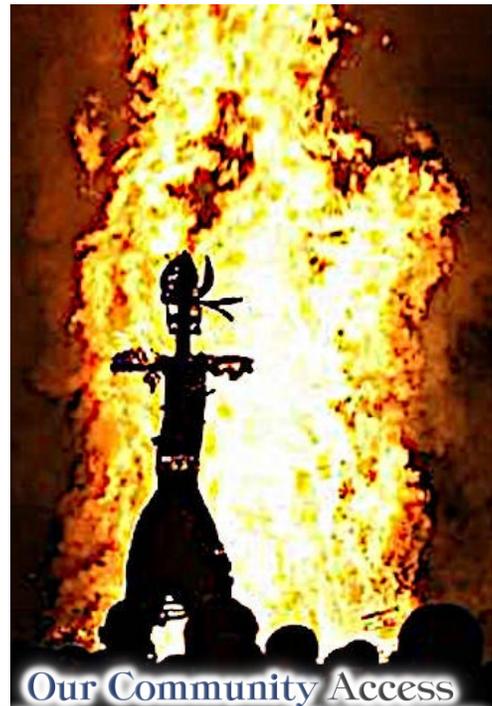
*Guy Fawkes, Guy Fawkes, 'twas his intent
To blow up the King and the Parliament.
Three score barrels of powder below,
Poor old England to overthrow.*

*By God's providence he was catch'd,
With a dark lantern and burning match.
Holler boys, holler boys, let the bells ring
Holler boys, holler boys. God save the King!*

Now you know. If you intend to celebrate,
keep the extinguisher handy.

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Our Community Access
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Programs? Of Course.

Where Do Program Ideas Come From?

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 11/12/2023

Yesterday began much like any other extraordinary day at the office. I arrived and found Citizen Frank (Falvey). “Hey, Frank. How’s it goin’?”

I sat. Two guys – talking shop. A collective meandering muse.

We talked about past programs and guests; some of the interviews that Frank has done; our mission as a public access TV channel and radio station. (Which Citizen Frank has contributed to mightily for decades). ‘Citizen Frank’ is my nod to his dedication to the cause as a volunteer, and that honorific embodies what we are about – Frank is citizen TV, writ large.

Our shared musing moved from interview techniques to our larger role as a public access channel – for everyone. Regular program producers and hosts like Frank provide a public service; a supportive platform that makes it possible for other citizens to tell their stories as guests engaged in easy conversation.

Frank and I; just relaxing in the lobby; having our own easy conversation that segued (like a lateral arabesque?) from ‘interviews’ to ‘newsworthy’; expanding to ‘press passes’; to that unwritten tension between first responders and the media.

Then – “We should discuss that topic on ‘More Perfect Union’.”
Frank said it. I heard it. A knee-jerk ‘Yes’ clicked in my head.
Of course.

Then, Frank’s guests arrived. Bo and Ken are local musicians. Frank and I gave them a tour of the studio while we discussed what we do; how we do it; how their program can come together.

Then, back in the lobby – more conversation – more musing, and I offered to Bo & Ken that I was planning musical programs for 2024. We could record an album – a CD – as a one-hour TV program in our larger studio.
Of course.

Have an idea for your own program? Of course. Call us. 508-541-4118.

And – as always –
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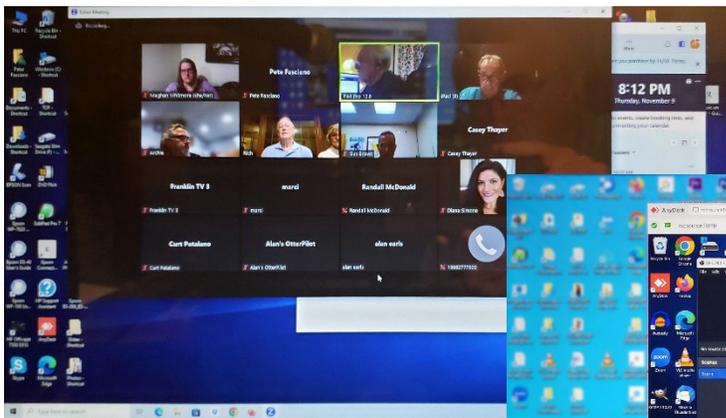
Computers Run Computers

It's Like a Digital Hall of Mirrors

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 11/19/2023

Since Covid's ending (um- sorta) there are some practices that continue. What was necessary then remains convenient to this day. Nothing is more obvious than Zoom meetings. In our shared isolation (oxymoron), we all gave Zoom a collective bear hug.

That meant managing and streaming remote meetings - remotely. Today, it's a common task for us to have computers running computers - that run computers.



The screen(s) shown here at the left are from a computer in my home office. It's hosting and recording a ZBA Zoom meeting.



My other computer at the right is managing another computer at Franklin.TV. That computer is controlling our Zoom stream to a computer at YouTube - and another computer (not shown) that is controlling what our cable subscribers are watching on our Government Channel C9/V29. It's also recording the meeting for later rebroadcast.

It's a digital high-wire act. Ensuring that all of these participating computers are on their best behavior requires a bit of digital discipline and preparation that takes place for up to an hour before each event. And, yes, there is one more small computer that is 'tuned in' to the cablecast - monitoring the progress of the meeting. Before covid a common maxim held that one can never be too rich or too thin. Welcome to the digital post-covid age where one can never have too many computers.

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Full-on Holiday Mode

Ready or Not - It's Here

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 11/26/2023

Yep. It's here. It's all around us and expanding by the day. There were early signs in late October - commercials hinting at 'the coming holidays' well before Halloween. Get ready to get ready.

We are watching Black Friday transform from a Big Bargain Day after Turkey Day to a full-on Sensational Season of Stupendously Spectacular Sale Savings. - Srsly? It's the mercantile engine that launches our holiday season with serious spending.

There's more than one origin story for Black Friday. The mythology: Black Friday is about retail sales. After an entire year of operating at a loss (in the red) stores would supposedly earn a profit (go into the black) on the day after Thanksgiving with holiday shoppers spending heavily for Christmas gifts and decor.

Yes, but no.

In 1950s Philadelphia, police coined the term to describe chaos on the day after Thanksgiving, when hordes of suburban shoppers and tourists flooded into the city for the Army-Navy football game on Saturday. Not only were police not able to take the day off, but they had to work long shifts coping with heavy crowds and traffic. Shoplifting also spiked amidst large crowds of shoppers. Hence, Black Friday.

In the eighties, retailers promoted the myth and opened their stores early - at 6am, then 5am, then 12 midnight, then...

This year the Black Friday Savings juggernaut began online - in early November.

Too much, too soon? I haven't finished my Halloween candy yet.

And - as always -
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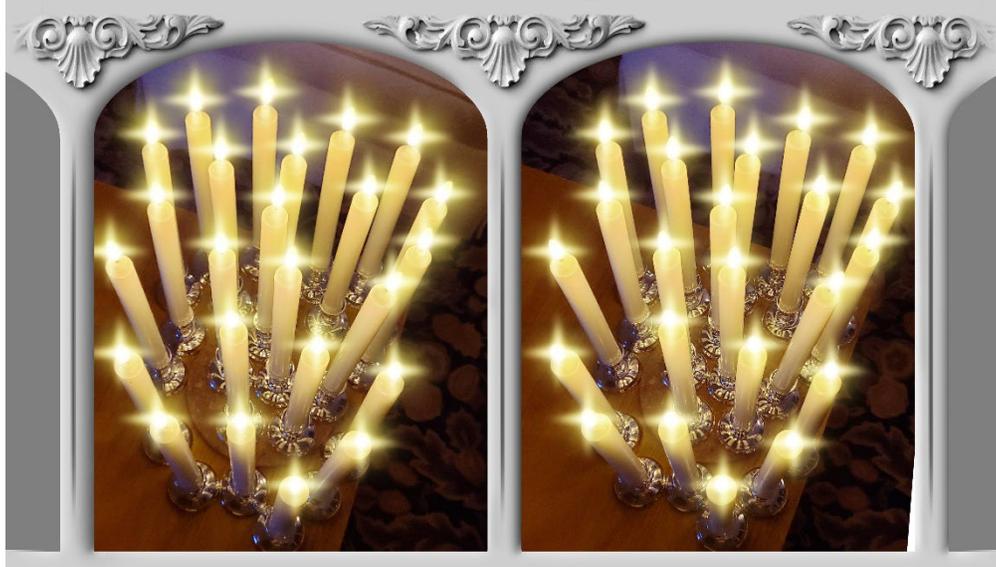


The Gathering Light

'Tis Better to Light a Candle...

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 12/03/2023

'Tis indeed better to light a candle than to curse the darkness. (Proverbs 4) I lit more than two dozen for the windows in my home. With battery-powered flames ablaze, I snapped this 3D stereogram, The Gathering Light with my smartphone.



If you print this page, the size is perfect for viewing in 3D. How? Hold the image at a close reading distance. Relax your eyes and gaze far away. Look well beyond the image pair. OR: Try looking at the center line between the Left|Right images, then relax your gaze. (Daydreaming helps.) As you totally relax your focus, a third 3D image will 'unfold' between the Left|Right pair. When you get it right, you'll know.

This holiday season Franklin has many worthy candles to light up - with your help. Visit the Franklin Area Nonprofit Network: franklinareanonprofitnetwork.org. Check out the directory. You might find a spark of inspiration. This holiday season, whose candle could you - will you - light?

And - as always -

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It's Kitschmas

Yep. 'Tis the Season...

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 12/10/2023

Kitsch ([/kitʃ/](#) *KITCH*; German) is a descriptive term applied to art and design that is perceived as naïve imitation, overly eccentric, gratuitous or of banal taste.

Or in the case of Christmas – perhaps all the above. Few holidays can bring out our twisted penchant for high kitsch quite like Christmas. We celebrate by decorating our ho-ho-homes, work places and even ourselves, each in our own way.



Yes, Kitschmastime is here. Chock-a-block with kitschy décor and over-the-top ugly sweaters we love to loathe throughout the rest of the year.

Not gonna lie. I participate. Guilty as charged. About twenty years ago I chanced by a garden store with a small artificial tree in the window. The tree was sprouting – bursting with fiberglass lit by pulsing colors from its base. It was vaguely radioactive. Hypnotic. Glorious. I was compelled. My neighbors said, “That’s – just – umm, WRONG! The desired effect. And, Merry Kitschmas to all.

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Millis Berfield Band

An Unique Musical Delight

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 12/17/2023

On Thursday, Frank Falvey invited a most entertaining local duo to our studios. The Millis Berfield Band. (Thank you, Frank.)



Percussionist Ken Porter, and at the guitar, Bo Veaner. They've been playing together for over ten years. (They claim that they're finally getting the hang of it.) Their music is an eclectic list of covers and clever originals written by Veaner.

Look for their episodes in January on Frank Falvey's TV program, 'Frank Presents' on our All-Access channel C6/V26, and catch them on 102.9, wfpr.fm as well.

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Solstice



Chamukkah



Christmas



Epiphany



Kwanzaa



Eid al-Adha



The New Year



Oshogatsu



謹賀新年

YES, VIRGINIA

BY FRANCIS CHURCH, NEW YORK SUN, SEPT 21 1897

Virginia, your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the skepticism of a skeptical age. They do not believe except they see. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible by their little minds. All minds, Virginia, whether they be men's or children's are little. In this great universe of ours, man is a mere insect, an ant, in his intellect, as compared with the boundless world about him, as measured by the intelligence capable of grasping the whole of truth and knowledge.

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy. Alas! how dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus! It would be as dreary as if there were no Virginias. There would be no child-like faith then, no poetry, no romance to make tolerable this existence. We should have no enjoyment, except in sense and sight. The eternal light with which childhood fills the world would be extinguished.

Not believe in Santa Claus? You might as well not believe in fairies! You might get your papa to hire men to watch in all the chimneys on Christmas eve to catch Santa Claus, but even if you did not see Santa Claus coming down, what would that prove? Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see. Did you ever see fairies dancing on the lawn? Of course not, but that's no proof that they are not there. Nobody can conceive or imagine all the wonders there are unseen and unseeable in the world.

You tear apart the baby's rattle and see what makes the noise inside, but there is a veil covering the unseen world which not the strongest man, nor even the united strength of all the strongest men that ever lived, could tear apart. Only faith, fancy, poetry, love, romance, can push aside that curtain and view and picture the supernal beauty and glory beyond. Is it all real? Ah, Virginia, in all this world there is nothing else real and abiding.

No Santa Claus! Thank God! he lives, and he lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, nay, ten times ten thousand years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood.

(But, Church's Santa story is not over. Read on.)



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Yes, Ginny

by Pete Fasciano, Franklin•TV & wfpr•fm, Dec / 24 / 2023

Ginny, your little friends are wrong. While skeptics may argue their doubts regarding the existence of Santa, there are likewise good reasons to believe – to know – that Santa is real. He is as real as the warming Sun, and just as you can feel the Sun’s warmth, even on the coldest days you can feel the glow of Santa’s warmth as well – whenever you may wish – wherever you chance to be – and however you so choose to embrace his goodly spirit.

Yes, Ginny, there is a Santa Claus. Across the centuries, Santa has been there for children everywhere as a jolly countenance – a timeless exemplar – of niceness above naughtiness. He reminds us annually that good can and must prevail against the travails of our world.

Not believe in Santa Claus? You might as well not believe in fairies! True, there are Santa naysayers whose hearts can run cold. Indifferent to the darker conditions that beset these times, they deny their own light; a light to be kindled within each of us. Here present is the Santa imperative. He is the quintessence of that most festive light of good will. A supernal light of charity; rekindled each year to rid the darkest days and uplift our better spirits.

Some say that nobody can see Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. Some say Santa is everywhere. Better said, he is never far away. In point of fact, he is as near and dear to our giving hearts as a simple Christmas wish – and deed – joining others in joy and peace – and sharing the fulgent, yet unseeable beauty of this season – this life.

Yes, Ginny, we may open our eyes and gaze upon Santa’s good works as we so choose. Better still, by opening our generous hearts to humanity, humility, wonder and whimsy, enchantment, lyric lore, faith, hope, and yes, charity we discover a most profound truth. Santa’s gift of love for each child grows with and within that child; as love, received in childhood, is then so given, shared and shared again tenfold throughout that child’s life.

And, dear Ginny, in that magical moment of giving – joy abides. Through giving moments across centuries gone and centuries yet to be, Santa lives on. His Christmas Spirit finds those givers of the heart. As we embrace Santa’s spirit, he in turn embraces us – young and old alike in fullest measure. And, gladly, we all become Santa – jolly, merry, real and true.

And – as always –
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