



MERRIMACK  
FRIENDS &  
FAMILIES

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Est. 1973

JANUARY 2023

## Presidents' Message

*Julie Akers & Tammy Ditman*



Happy New Year to one and all!

We hope you were able to enjoy the holidays with friends & family. Between Yankee swaps, cookie swaps, tree decorating, a book club party and a holiday movie night MFF members had lots of fun opportunities to celebrate together.

The MFF January calendar is beginning to fill up! If your New Year's resolution is to get out of the house, make new friends and have fun then come have fun with MFF. Watch for Evites to special events like a self-defense class given by the police department and a series of monthly themed events at the library. As always, we'd love to see you at trivia, book club, lunches, walks, coffee chats and other outings. We feel the more the merrier so invite a friend, neighbor or relative to join us.

Wishing you a happy and healthy New Year!  
Julie and Tammy

January calendar

DATE	TIME	EVENT
Jan 3	6:00 PM	Trivia @ Able Ebenezers
Jan 7	9:00 AM	Membership Social @ Buckley's
Jan 9	7:00 PM	Board Meeting
Jan 10	6:00 PM	Trivia @ Able Ebenezers
Jan 17	6:00 PM	Trivia @ Able Ebenezers
Jan 19	7:00 PM	Movie Night
Jan 23	6:30 PM	Book Club
Jan 24	6:00 PM	Trivia @ Able Ebenezers
Jan 25	6:00 PM	Secret Sister Potluck Gift Exchange
Jan 31	6:00 PM	Trivia @ Able Ebenezers

Please see the Evite for additional information

Vice President

Catherine Pepler



Happy New Year MFF Members!

Is it me or did 2022 just fly by? As I look back over the past 12 month a huge smile comes to my face. Our club has enjoyed many opportunities to come together in service and many social events. We are so pleased that you have participated! Through you we continue to grow and do good things. We welcomed new members and some have jumped right into action. Many thanks to Laurie Libby and her success with our Service Projects from Easter Baskets, Backpacks and Stockings for the Troops to call out a few. Thank you, Laurie! Jill O'Toole leading the Lunch Bunch and Recipe Swaps. I think all that have participated that you make these events lots of fun. Thank you, Jill! Our Membership Team, Beth Voorhees, Robin Johnson and Lisa Cassell have hosted many Social and Information events. Such fun to meet up with friends and meet new friends. Spread the word on these events and invite someone to join us. All in all we have had a very successful year all possible because of you!



It is with great pride we have supported community organizations. All possible with the funds through the annual yard sale, bake sales and donations. Know your annual dues contribute to this also. I do want to say a big thank you to the many members that have donated funds, articles, time and enthusiasm. For the club year 2021/2022 we donated \$19K the following local organizations in support of their ongoing missions. These are the organizations we supported:

- Bridges
- Camp Naticook Scholarship Fund
- Merrimack Community Food Pantry at St. James
- Merrimack School Department Social Services
- St. John Neumann Food Pantry

As a reminder, Merrimack Friends & Families is a charitable 501(c) organization.

Watch for this class! An evite will be sent shortly. Merrimack Police women's self-defense course for members. If your daughter is 18 and older, she can join in. Dates are sent February 5, 12, 19 and 26 from 9:00am - 1:00pm. There will be classroom instructions and hands-on practical lessons. I am very excited to let you know that we are partnering with Merrimack Public Library to have month events. We are in the early stages of planning so more to come! Hoping to kick off in February.

Lastly, as we are now in 2023 it is time to think about nominations for the next board of directors. Interested in a board position? Reach out to any Board member for information and to answer any questions you may have. Watch for emails in the upcoming month asking for nominations from Heather Murray.

Until the next time, stay safe!

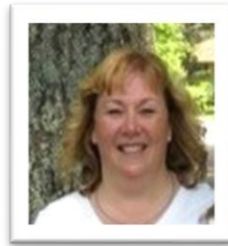
In friendship,  
Catherine Pepler  
MFF VP





## Treasurer

*Bev Coelho*



Just a reminder that if you use Amazon when shopping, please use Amazon Smile and select Merrimack Friends and Families as your Charity to donate your 0.5% of eligible purchases.

Thank you,  
Bev



## Secretary

*Sandy George*



Please let me know if there is anyone in the club who needs our help over the coming months. Help can be as simple as a phone call or card, or less simple as a meal, a ride, or a visit. We are a family and family helps family.

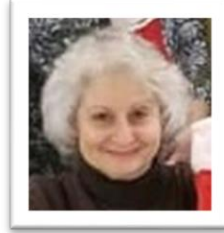
Happy New Year  
Sandy George



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## Ways and Means

*Carol Figueroa & Jill O'Toole*



We hope you have a wonderful holiday season with your family and friends. Happy New Year!!

Our next event will be in February. We will be hosting a fundraiser at the 31st annual Winter Carnival which takes place at Wasserman Park on Saturday, February 25th from 12:00 to 3:00 pm. Please save the date and look for the Evite at the beginning of February.

Carol and Jill

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## Service

*Laurie Libby*



Happy New Year!!!

I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season. Our January project will be a volunteer activity with Families in Transition. The volunteer coordinator responded that she would reach out to me early January to schedule our group activity. I hope to have the Evite out soon.

I am working with the meals on wheels coordinator for a Valentines project for February. Details to follow.

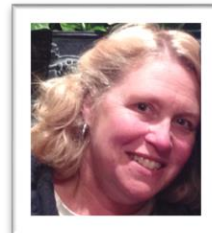
That's all I have for now.  
Laurie



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## Membership

*Lisa Casell, Robin Johnson & Beth Voorhees*



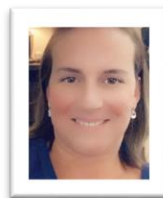
Happy New Year and welcome to 2023. So far Membership has one event planned for January, our monthly coffee social at Buckley's Bakery and Cafe. This month we will be meet on Saturday the 7th of January at 9:00 am. We will meet upstairs. Please join us for coffee and conversation and if you know someone interested in joining MFF please let them know about this event. Hope to see you there.

Robin, Beth and Lisa

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## Publicity

*Beth Milliken*



Please remember to send pictures of your MMF related events me so that we can include them on our Facebook and Instagram pages, along with in our future newsletters. It's so nice to be able to share with our members how much fun we have! When you send, please let me know a quick summary of what the pictures are of.

Happy Holidays Everyone!  
Beth

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# Happy Birthday!!



Wendy T	1/08
Heather M	1/23
Sandy G	1/27

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## Interest Group Happenings

### Secret Sisters

Happy New Year, Secret Sisters! If for any reason you did not receive (or deliver) your December gift, please let me know and I'd be happy to assist. Your SS is counting on your full participation, and I know the holidays are such a busy (and often stressful) time for all of us.

Our second Gift Exchange Party will be this month on **Wednesday, January 25**. Be on the lookout for the Evite! Remember, when a potluck occurs in a given month, this is where the gifts should be exchanged – no need to deliver them anywhere else. If you cannot attend the potluck, be sure to arrange something with me or another member so that everyone still gives AND receives a gift!

Remember, sometimes your SS wants to make sure you received your gift from her, but for obvious reasons, she cannot come right out and ask you! So, it is always nice to submit a quick "thank you" note in the monthly newsletter just to let her know you got it. It is not required, but it is certainly a great gesture. Just send a note to Wilma or Barb, and they would be happy to publish it.

Again, thank you for your participation. I hope that 2023 has only good things in store for you all!

Regards,



Jill Mitchell

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## Book Club

We had a great time at Jill's house for our Holiday Book Club meeting. As always, the food was delicious and the atmosphere was welcome in this chaotic season. We discussed [A Christmas Sonata](#) by Gary Paulson which is listed as a young adult book. The story was well received by most of the club. It was a nice light book to read with an uplifting message which was perfect for this time of year. We had the biggest turnout of this year which was a welcome surprise. We did a book and bookmark exchange and there were many interesting books and bookmarks exchanged. We will be talking about the books we received in the exchange at our January book club meeting.

An email was sent out to book club members asking them to choose from a list of the books they would like us to read as a group from February to June. I have asked everyone to please send in their choices by December 31. I will try to honor those who send in the lists later than December 31 if possible.

Our next meeting will be Monday, January 23 at a house to be determined. Please watch for the evite for more information. I will need hosts for the rest of the year. Thank you in advance for volunteering.

Happy New Year  
Sandy George

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## Lunch Bunch

We enjoyed a festive holiday luncheon at the Common Man in December. There were holiday treat bags at each place setting, and we got to know each other a little better with a quick round of questions with Catherine Pepler going home with the holiday candle prize!

Keep an eye out for the evite to our upcoming January event.

In 2023 we will be continuing our comparison challenges with both the other Thai restaurant, a Lot of Thai, as well as the other Mexican restaurant Don Ramon's. Portofino's & The Lobster Boat are also in the works for the new year with 1 more spot open before our picnic lunch in June at Watson Park. If you have a recommendation for a restaurant in Merrimack that is open for lunch send it my way.







# Recipe Swap

What a wonderful time we had last month visiting with each other before swapping delicious cookies & confections! Below is 1 recipe & 4 links to some of the recipes from our swap. I hope you try & enjoy them!

Mounds Balls made by Tammy Ditman

2 1/2 sticks butter (melted)

1 can sweetened condensed milk

2 boxes confectioners sugar

14 oz sweet coconut

chocolate chips for coating balls

Mix all ingredients (except chocolate chips) well. Roll into balls & chill. Melt chocolate chips & dip chilled balls, chill again to firm up chocolate.

<https://www.thespruceeats.com/almond-joy-fudge-520880> submitted/made by Jill O'Toole

<https://www.bettycrocker.com/recipes/pecan-crescent-cookies/02b804df-7b16-4be3-bo65-14347809dab9> submitted/made by Bunny Knight

<https://www.twopeasandtheirpod.com/oreo-balls> submitted/made by Bev Coelho

[https://www.modernhoney.com/wprm\\_print/14233](https://www.modernhoney.com/wprm_print/14233) submitted/made by Robin Johnson

Keep an eye out for the evite to our upcoming January event. The theme will be Light & Healthy to help us all recover from all those tasty cookies!



## Don't forget to support us while you shop!

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Merrimack Friends & Families  
Charitable Fund Inc.**

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Amazon donates.

[Go to smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)

**amazon**smile

