

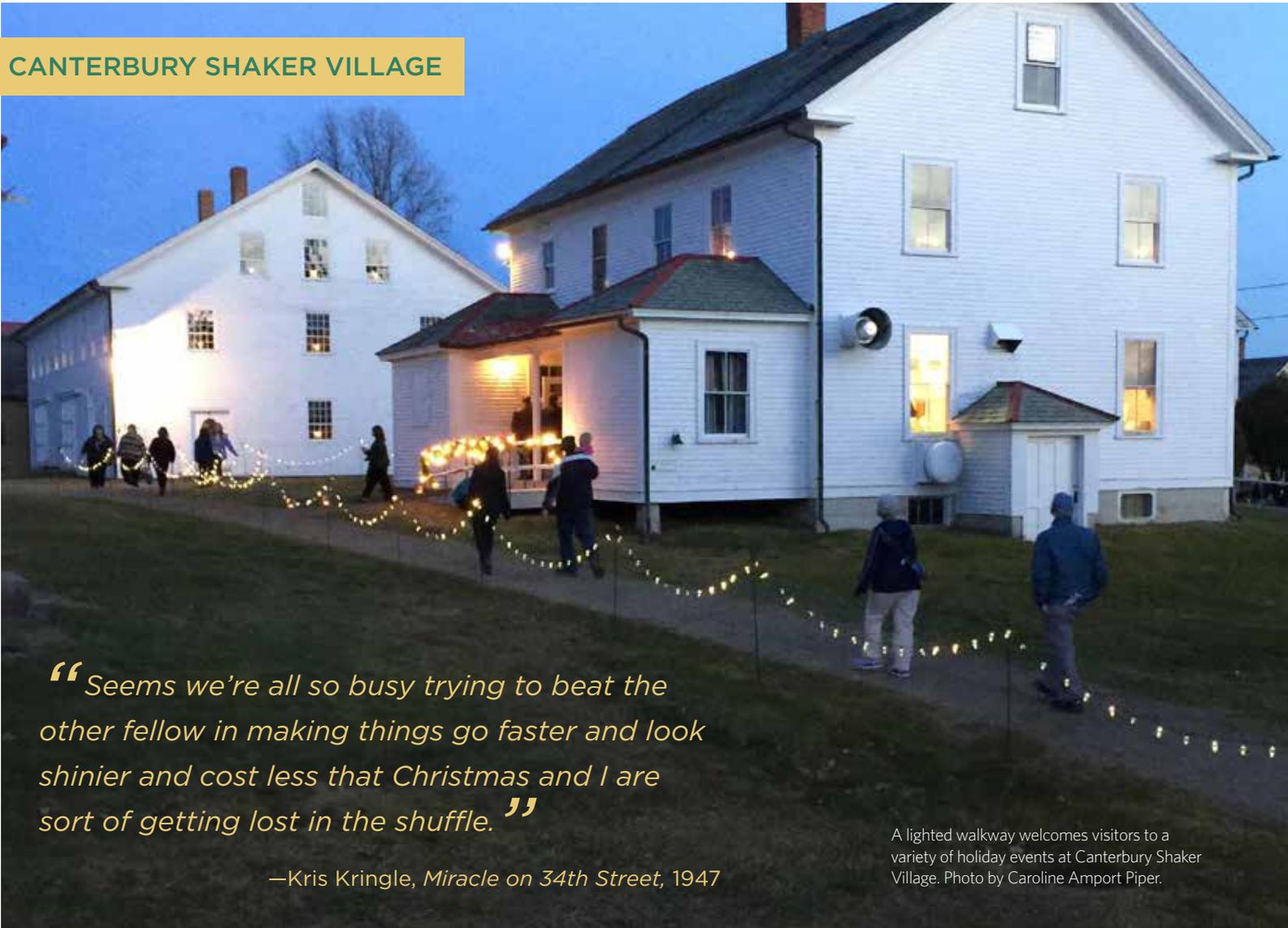
STEP OUT YOUR
DOOR INTO A CELEBRATION
OF COMMUNITY THIS
HOLIDAY SEASON

BY DEBBIE KANE

REIMAGINE



CANTERBURY SHAKER VILLAGE



“Seems we’re all so busy trying to beat the other fellow in making things go faster and look shinier and cost less that Christmas and I am sort of getting lost in the shuffle.”

—Kris Kringle, *Miracle on 34th Street*, 1947

A lighted walkway welcomes visitors to a variety of holiday events at Canterbury Shaker Village. Photo by Caroline Amport Piper.

HOLIDAY SHOPPING



For many of us, holiday shopping is a blitz. Crowded malls, cascades of emails from online retailers, and overloaded Internet servers as we try to select, order, and ensure that the items we've bought arrive in time.

The results?

We feel more like Scrooge than Buddy the Christmas Elf. We lose ourselves in the effort to do it all, so that the weeks and days up to the holidays, as well as the special days themselves, feel more like something to get through than a celebration of light and love.

But it doesn't have to be this way. Yes, it will be busy, and yes, there will be some headaches, but we can also choose to take a breath, slow down, and enjoy the season. Traditional holiday celebrations light up all the towns of the capital region and offer us a chance to take a day or weekend and give ourselves and our families the gift of a fuller holiday experience.

There's the old-fashioned Christmas at Canterbury Shaker Village or an evening of shopping, dinner, and a show here in Concord, and so much more. We hope you'll create your own experiences and that the following will spark some ideas for authentic, shared holiday moments for you and your loved ones.

So bring your list, check it twice, and then enjoy all that makes for a merry holiday season.



Decorated store windows at Bravo on Main Street in Concord.



Handcrafted gifts, art, and home goods at Giftopolis during Midnight Merriment in downtown Concord.

MIDNIGHT MERRIMENT

WHEN | Friday, December 2, 5:30pm to midnight

WHERE | Downtown Concord

Although this annual shopping event will be celebrating its twenty-fourth anniversary, this will be the first year it will be held with the Main Street renovation project complete. There's plenty of free parking and lots of space to explore the more than one hundred shops and restaurants located in and around the downtown area. They'll all be staying open late and offering special promotions, as well as displaying beautifully decorated windows, lights, and the kind of hospitality one expects in our tight-knit New England home.

And there's a lot to do besides scouting out that perfect gift. Amusements include a beard contest (embellishment optional), tree lighting, visits with Santa, gift-wrapping, and a range of entertainment, open galleries, and more.

We would be remiss not to mention that the annual Giftopolis will be held in the Eagle Square Atrium. Hosted by the Concord Arts Market, Giftopolis celebrates the best handmade arts and crafts from New Hampshire and New England. You'll find every-

thing from clothing and jewelry to fine art, pottery, and on and on. It's a wonderful opportunity to see what local craftspeople are up to and to support them while finding unique gifts.

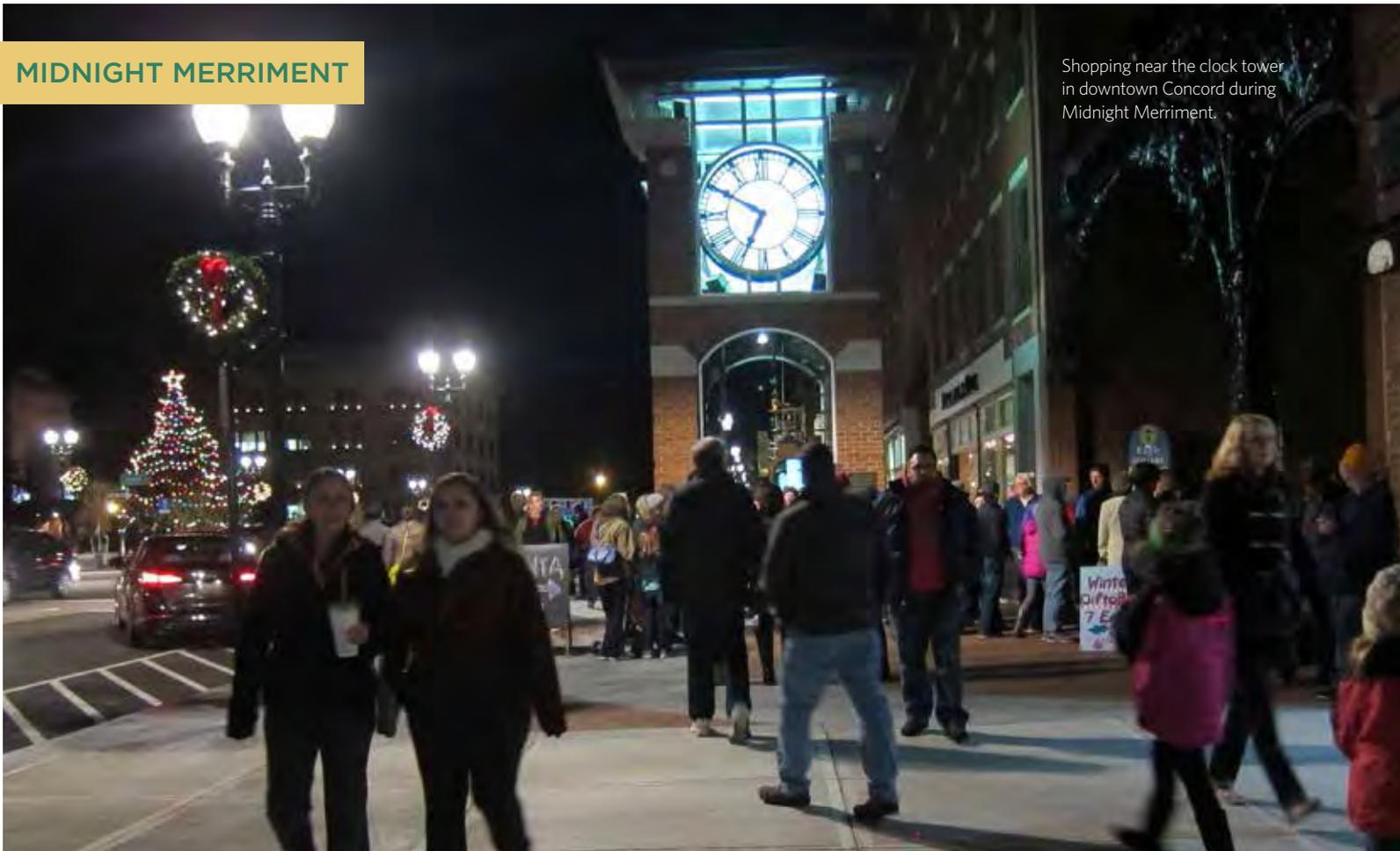
Over the following days and weeks, you'll also have opportunities to enjoy the Discover Downtown Holiday Series. This series of events creates a compelling, community-based holiday shopping experience in Concord.

But don't think that a fun night supporting community businesses and artisans has to be all about shopping. Concord's theaters are also providing a range of offerings that allow you to round out any weekend tour of Concord's downtown with dinner and a show.

Red River Theatres (11 Main Street) presents a visit with Santa Dude, inspired by the character captured in all his glory by Jeff Bridges in the movie *The Big Lebowski*. Throughout the holiday season you can also catch *Girl with a Pearl Earring*, the Royal Shakespeare Company's *King Lear*, and Exhibition On Screen Series: *Manet* from the Royal Academy of Arts in London, as well as a wide range of movies and other events you're not likely to find at the multiplex.

Across town, the new Hatbox Theatre (270 Loudon Road) will present an original adaptation of Charles Dickens's classic *A Christmas Carol* featuring a local cast. On December 6, they will also host

MIDNIGHT MERRIMENT



Shopping near the clock tower in downtown Concord during Midnight Merriment.



Above: Red River Theatres in Concord is the perfect place to grab a movie and a bite before or after holiday shopping. Photos by Allegra Boverman.

Below from left: Three of the many upcoming shows during the holiday season at Capitol Center for the Arts: *The Twelve Days of Christmas*, *The Mavericks*, and *The State Ballet Theatre of Russia*.



their Tales Told monthly series, based on NPR's *The Moth*. Audience members put their names in a hat, and names are selected at random to tell a true, original story.

And the Concord City Auditorium, affectionately known as the Audi (2 Prince Street), will host its annual open house on December 4 with a potluck supper, special entertainment, and the famous Audi punch. That same weekend, the Audi will host the Concord Dance Academy's Holiday Spectacular. Other shows include the Community Players of Concord's *Once on This Island: A Caribbean Musical Masquerade* (November 18 to 20), *The Nutcracker* (December 10), Symphony New Hampshire Holiday Pops Concert, and more.

Over at Capitol Center for the Arts (44 South Main Street), there'll be a full holiday season planned that includes *Dueling Pianos*, the *Mavericks*, *Mannheim Steamroller*, *The Twelve Days of Christmas*, the *Rocking Horse Christmas Show*, and *Holiday Pops!* to name a few.

In all, this represents an authentic holiday experience of gifts, community, food, and entertainment from Thanksgiving through the New Year. Just step out your door.

TAKE A BREAK WITH A BOOK, LIBATION, AND LIVE MUSIC

Need a bit of sustenance and a steaming cup of tea with honey or a hot chocolate as you browse through downtown Concord's shops or take an evening walk to enjoy the Christmas lights?

There's no better place than True Brew Barista at 4 Bicentennial Square. There you'll find a full range of coffees and espressos, smoothies, tea, hot cocoa, and, if you're in the mood, one of their twenty-four craft beers on tap. There's also a variety of sandwiches, baked goodies, Bavarian pretzels, and their very own unique Barista Balls.

True Brew Barista also offers a range of specialty lattes. These include the Fluffy Bunny (toasted marshmallow and caramel), the Moose Knuckle (caramel, macadamia nut, and German chocolate), and the Scrappy Cocoa (hazelnut, salted caramel, and chocolate).

True Brew Barista is also known for its live music. Every Thursday they host an all-ages, all-originals open-mic night, and they regularly feature local musicians as well as those touring the region.

Prefer to sip a Sunday Driver (English toffee, chocolate, and hazelnut latte) with a nosh while perusing the huge selection of books, magazines, and literary journals at Gibson's Bookstore? Well then, there's the sister store to True Brew Barista, True Brew Café. The café offers the same drinks, sandwiches, and baked goods, but they also make a range of sweet and delicious crepes. You'll find



that just-right book for yourself or a friend at the café, but you will only find the music and a libation at the Barista. Whatever your choice, you will find peace, warmth, and the means to soothe your shopping muse at either location.

➔ WWW.TRUEBREWBARISTA.COM

CHRISTMAS AT CANTERBURY

WHEN Saturday, December 3 & 10, 3 to 8pm
WHERE Canterbury Shaker Village, Canterbury
TICKETS \$18 adults, \$8 children ages six to seventeen and free under five

In an era when cell phones and social media are ubiquitous, the Canterbury Shakers' love of community and simple living is a welcome respite and a reminder of what we've lost as we've rushed headlong into technology and the never-ending workday. Established in 1792 and operating as a museum since 1992, Canterbury Shaker Village transforms itself into a family-friendly holiday destination for two Saturdays each December. Entering its eighth year, the Christmas at Canterbury celebration is based on the notion of cleansing the spirit.

Shakers considered the end of the year an opportunity to get

together with others, put aside their differences in a spirit of community, and move into the new year with a renewed spirit and faith. "The event ties into our mission to rejuvenate the human spirit," says Canterbury Executive Director Funi Burdick. "The Shakers would have their own holiday celebrations but bring the larger community in to share in the festivities."

We know this may cause some separation anxiety for many, but leave your phone in the car and experience a Christmas from a simpler era. Besides just enjoying the grounds and interacting with the community, you can take in a range of musical performances, tree lighting, ornament making, cookie decorating, and much more.

In particular, enjoy the foot-stomping music of the Jordan Tirrell-Wysocki Trio on December 3 and an old-fashioned magic show featuring Andrew Pinard portraying nineteenth century magician Jonathan Harrington. Andrew will demonstrate his slick sleight of hand three times each evening.





TAKE A BREAK AT THE CANTERBURY COUNTRY STORE

Canterbury doesn't have a coffee shop, but it does have the Canterbury Country Store (3 Center Road). Located in the center of town adjacent to the post office, the community-owned store has an interesting variety of homemade and homegrown products from hot coffee, fresh bread, and preserves to sweets, soaps, and even hand-knit mittens.



It's also a great place to catch up on local gossip.

→ WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/CANTERBURYCOUNTRYSTORE

TAKE A BREAK AT A TRADITIONAL DINER

Located in the center of Contoocook, the Country Fare Diner (12 Maple Street) dishes up traditional diner fare and local conversation (the weather was the hot topic on a recent visit). They can be found on Facebook, or give them a call at (603) 746-4140.

If a café is more your speed, grab coffee or a brew next door at the Everyday Café (14 Maple Street). This café and pub serves breakfast all day and a tasty array of baked goods, sandwiches, and burgers. New Hampshire beers and wines are available too.

Find them online at www.theeverydaycafeh.com.



→ WWW.THEEVERYDAYCAFENH.COM

Clockwise from top: Canterbury Shaker Village holds many events for children and families that keep holiday history alive. Photo by Caroline Amport Piper. Outdoor vase candle display at Der Markt. Exclusive holiday candles from Marklin Candle Design available at Der Markt. Photo by Joe St. Pierre. Holiday decorations and ornaments on display at Der Markt.

STARRY, STARRY WEEKEND

- WHERE Various locations in Hopkinton & Contoocook
- WHEN Thursday, December 1: Preview Night, 5 to 7pm
 Friday, December 2: 10am to 8pm
 Saturday, December 3: 10am to 6pm
 Sunday, December 4: 10am to 4pm

There's a reason Hopkinton and Contoocook are part of New Hampshire's Currier & Ives Scenic Byway. They are quintessentially quaint New England towns.

Starry, Starry Weekend fully embraces the concept of a small-town holiday by featuring three days of events that capture the sights and sounds of the season. "It's all about community," notes Christine Marklin, co-owner of Marklin Candle Design and Der Markt at Marklin in Contoocook. "We have a very special community with incredibly talented people."

Highlights include shopping events at various retail stores and arts and crafts for sale in Contoocook's renovated historic train depot (a preview night of the event provides an early glimpse of locally made gifts and décor), decorating gingerbread houses, a visit with Santa, and much more.

Make sure you get the chance to check out Der Markt at Marklin, the retail store for Marklin Candle Designs (28 Riverside Drive, Contoocook). This is one of the country's foremost makers of liturgical candles (they made the candle used by Pope Francis during his 2015 memorial service at Ground Zero in New York City).

WARNER'S WINTER WONDERLAND



Top: The cozy dining room at Schoodacs Coffee & Tea in Warner.

Above: A wide selection of holiday books for sale at MainStreet BookEnds. Photos by Joe St. Pierre.

TAKE A BREAK FOR WARM QUICHE OR A HOT BOWL OF SOUP

Consider your shopping options over a perfectly brewed cup of artisanal java or tea at Schoodacs Coffee & Tea (1 East Main Street, Warner). They also offer a variety of soups, quiche, and baked goods to nosh on over a warm cup or to take home for your holiday meal. Housed in a renovated historic home, Schoodacs has a large, welcoming front porch where you can sit and catch your breath in the cool air and ponder what in the world a schoodac might be.*



*Hint: It's rumored to be the sound made by saw blades, which harkens back to Warner's early history as a sawmill town.

→ WWW.SHOODACS.COM

Der Markt is a shopper's delight, featuring glassware by Simon Pearce, fanciful home accessories, artisan clothing and jewelry, locally made foods, and Marklin's distinctive handmade liturgical candles. There's a selection of plain as well as decorated pillar candles, including a line designed by New Hampshire's famed illustrator and author Tomie dePaola.

Watch for the sheep that roam freely at the Marklins' fourteen-acre Windhover Farm, a working farm along the Contoocook River—the candle-manufacturing facility and store are on the property.

WARNER'S WINTER WONDERLAND

WHERE | MainStreet MarketPlace & Gallery and
MainStreet BookEnds
WHEN | Saturday, December 3

Just up Route 103 from Hopkinton and Contoocook, the town of Warner kicks off the holiday season with its Winter Wonderland event. This is a chance to join the community of Warner as it celebrates all that it means to be in New England during the holidays.

Features include traditional caroling by the Northeast Catholic Choir, a festival of trees in the town hall, artists and artisans, food, live storytelling, and more.

"It's a sweet event that's not just about shopping," says Katherine Nevins, owner of MainStreet BookEnds and an organizer of the event. "The idea is to bring back the feeling of an old-fashioned holiday."

Be sure not to miss the activities in the barn at MainStreet BookEnds (16 East Main Street, Warner). Local artists and artisans display and sell their work in this rustic studio space behind the bookstore, which was the birthplace of Charles A. Pillsbury, local philanthropist and cofounder of the Pillsbury Company.

There will be cozy live readings of *The Night before Christmas* by the

bookstore's woodstove throughout the day. Efner Tudor Holmes will read her children's classic *The Christmas Cat*, artist Nan McCarthy will display her work, woodworker Gary Young will have a selection of hand-carved wooden bowls, and author Jeffrey Zygmunt and photographer Leslie Tuttle will be on hand as well.

OUR LAST WORD

Whether you celebrate Kwanzaa, Hanukkah, Christmas, the winter solstice, or your own unique take on the holiday, gift shopping and giving can be part of what brings people and communities together. It's the thought that counts, so look past the inbox and the Internet, and take advantage of all that it means to be a New Englander during the holidays. 🍷

FOR MORE INFORMATION

CONCORD

Midnight Merriment

➔ WWW.INTOWNCONCORD.ORG/EVENTS/MIDNIGHT-MERRIMENT

Red River Theatres

➔ WWW.REDRIVERTHEATRES.ORG

Hatbox Theatre

➔ HATBOXNH.COM

The Audi

➔ WWW.THEAUDI.ORG

Capitol Center for the Arts

➔ WWW.CCANH.COM

CANTERBURY

Canterbury Shaker Village

➔ WWW.SHAKERS.ORG

STARRY, STARRY WEEKEND

➔ STARRYSTARRYWEEKEND.BLOGSPOT.COM

Marklin Candle Design

➔ WWW.MARKLINCANDLE.COM

WARNER'S WINTER WONDERLAND

MainStreet BookEnds

➔ WWW.MAINSTREETBOOKENDS.COM/EVENT/WARNERS-WINTER-WONDERLAND

Schoodacs Coffee & Tea

➔ WWW.SCHOODACS.COM



Simply the Best!

Your Real Estate specialists in Concord & greater Central NH, Century 21 Circa 72 & Thompson Real Estate want to help you!

Whether buying or selling, our experienced agents will work with you every step of the way to make sure you are 100% satisfied.

We have 2 convenient offices and 30 experienced agents ready to serve you.

Our local Real Estate experts are professional, attentive, knowledgeable and focused on giving you the BEST Real Estate service in New Hampshire!

Give us a call today - you'll be glad you did!



46 Pleasant Street
Concord, NH 03301
Office: 603.224.3377
info@c21nh.com



1033 Suncook Valley Hwy
Epsom, NH 03234
Office: 603.736.9700
thompson@c21nh.com

Search MLS listings and more at www.c21nh.com

ABLE
INSURANCE AGENCY
AUTO - HOME - BUSINESS - COMMERCIAL - HEALTH - LIFE
When you're ready, we're Able!

For an online quote visit: www.able2insure.com
Current clients: have you downloaded our app?

603-225-6677 | 130 Broadway, Concord