

Free Public Library of Monroe Township

Out and About

A Community Newsletter

January 2026

Your guide to
what's going on in
Williamstown and
the surrounding
area!

Moulin Rouge Murder Mystery at Scotland Run

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What better way to start the year than with a fun whodunit? The Moulin Rouge Murder Mystery Dinner will take place on Saturday, Jan. 17th, at 6 PM, at Scotland Run Country Club on Fries Mill Road.

The scenario: the Moulin Bleu nightclub, struggling after the opening of the Moulin Rouge. Its owners are willing to do anything to keep it afloat...*anything*. In this chic setting, a murder will take place, and it's up to you to collect clues, interview bystanders and suspects, and piece together whodunit. You may even be recruited to play one of the supporting characters.



The night comes complete with a four-course dinner showcasing the food Scotland Run's Highlander Pub and Grill is most famous for. For your main course, you'll have your choice of prime rib, cod en papillote (fish baked in paper), and chicken fricassee with white wine sauce.

You're encouraged to come in costume (early-twentieth-century chic). Tickets are \$65 per person and include the show and dinner. To order, visit scotlandrun.com/events and click on the event link.

Enjoy a great night out using your wits and enjoying some great food in a top-notch setting!

Special Points of Interest:

- *Laser Stranger Things at Rowan's Edelman Planetarium*
- *Winter celebrations in Haddonfield and Mount Holly*
- *Wine and magic at Glassboro's Summit City Winery*
- *Lord of the Rings and Labrynth return to the screen*
- *Nonfiction books about the creative process behind rock's greatest hits*

Candy Bar Bingo at Pfeiffer Community Center

Start off the new year on a sweet note by taking part in the ever-popular Candy Bar Bingo...it's being held at the Pfeiffer Community Center on Friday, January 9th, from 6:30 PM to 8 PM.



Because this has become a popular event, reservations are required. You can sign up by visiting tinyurl.com/CBBINGO26. You'll get to enjoy some fun Bingo games with some very special prizes.

For more information, you can call the Pfeiffer Center at 856-728-9841.

This is bound to be a great way to meet and greet other members of our town...and satisfy your sweet tooth into the bargain.

Kricket Comedy Night at Autumn Lake Winery

Kick off the year with a night of laughs at the Kricket Comedy show at Willamstown's Autumn Lake Winery on Malaga Road, taking place on Saturday, Jan. 24th.



Seating for the show begins at 6:30 and the show itself starts at 7 PM. The show's got a great lineup featuring two terrific local comedians. Bob Marsdale, a Jersey native, specializes in observational comedy. He's performed in several of the best Atlantic City casinos and recently appeared on the news show "Right This Minute". Philly native Gene Norris is an actor as well as a stand-up comedian, appearing in several plays and films. He's well-known for performing at various charity events. His humor focuses on the ups and downs of marriage and fatherhood.

To find out more, to order tickets, and to learn what else is going on at the winery, visit autumnlakewinery.com. Autumn Lake is located at 870 West Malaga Road. You can call them at 856-516-4594 to get more information.

Enjoy a rollicking night of laughs with a couple of the area's best comedians—and some of its best wine!

Books and Brews at Village Idiot Brewing

If you're both a bibliophile and a zythophile (that's a fancy word for "beer lover"), you couldn't do better than to attend the Books and Brews Pop-Up at Village Idiot Brewing in Mount Holly on Saturday, Jan. 24th from 4 PM to 8 PM.

The brewery will have a curated book selection on hand, courtesy of The Literary Love Affair, a traveling bookstore. You and your friends can browse what's available while enjoying some of Village Idiot's terrific craft beers. It's a great way to relax, decompress, and escape winter's chill. The event's free to the public.

Village Idiot Brewing is located at 4 Commerce Plaza, Mount Holly. You can reach them for more information at 609-984-1826.

Happy reading and enjoy the brewskis!



Laser Stranger Things at Edelman Planetarium

After five seasons, the hit Netflix show *Stranger Things*, with its spooky atmosphere and nostalgic 1980s vibe, is coming to an end. Fans can celebrate the series at the Laser Stranger Things light show at Rowan University's Edelman Planetarium.



This particular show will take place Fridays at 7 PM, January through March. It will feature laser imagery from the show (watch out for those Demogorgons!) and, of course, lots of cool 80s tunes like Duran Duran's "Girls on Film" and Corey Hart's "Sunglasses At Night."

Tickets are \$8 for adults, \$5 for kids, senior citizens, and Rowan students. You can order tickets for this and other shows this season (such as the "Laser Bowie" show that follows this on Friday nights) at sites.rowan.edu/planetarium/currentshows.

Fire & Ice Festival in Mount Holly

Mount Holly's Fire & Ice Festival is a mainstay for winter-lovers. This year, it takes place on Saturday, Jan. 31st, from 10 AM to 4 PM in downtown Mount Holly.

Weather permitting, there will be all kinds of great winter activities at this event (which is free to the public). For the kids, there will be fire engine rides, a petting zoo, four-legged residents of Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge, and kids' crafts sponsored by Home Depot. For the rest of the family, there will be ice carving demonstrations (that would be the "ice") and a chili cook-off (that would be the "fire"). There's also a dog sled demonstration—gotta love those huskies—and a beer tent, along with vendors, food trucks of all kinds, a gingerbread house competition, some curling (you know, that sport that's not quite hockey), and much more!

To find out more, visit mainstreetmountholly.org. Celebrate all that winter has to offer in one of South Jersey's most charming historic small towns.



Winterfest in Downtown Haddonfield

Looking for an interesting way to keep warm on a cold January weekend? Haddonfield is holding its Winterfest in its downtown area from 11 AM to 4 PM from Jan. 16th to Jan. 18th.



The event will entail special sales in Haddonfield's downtown shops (mainly, along Kings Highway and its offshoots). There will be some special events as well: Haddonfield's local restaurants will offer specials on their hot soups. In fact, Saturday the 17th will be Souper Bowl Saturday...there will be a soup cook-off at the Haddon Fortnightly and a chili cook-off at King's Road Brewing. You can vote on your favorites. (This part of the festival is ticketed and the proceeds will go to Camden's Cathedral Kitchen). And on Sunday the 18th, the King's Court area will feature live demonstrations of ice carvings.

For more information, visit downtownhaddonfield.com. To get tickets to Souper Bowl Saturday, visit Eventbrite.com.

This weekend in Haddonfield is a perfect way to warm up your winter in more ways than one!

Magic Show at Summit City Winery in Glassboro

Fans of stage magic can check out the Wine & Magic Show at Glassboro's Summit City Winery on Saturday, Jan. 10th at 7 PM.

The show will feature local magician Schreiber the Conjuror, who combines his stage illusions with a touch of Victorian atmosphere. You'll also get to enjoy some food from vendors on-site...and, of course, Summit City's best wines will be available for purchase.

Tickets are \$30.41 with taxes and fees. To order them in advance, visit summitcityfarms.com/events.

Summit City Winery is located at 500 University Blvd., Glassboro. You can call them at 856-881-2930.





All The World's A Stage...

Some people wish they had one day in their lives to do over...but what if you had no choice? The musical *Groundhog Day*, based on the hit Bill Murray comedy flick, is onstage at Williamstown's Grand Theater from Jan. 22nd to Feb. 7th.



Self-centered weatherman Phil Connors cares little for anything but his own advancement...something he feels he won't get much of covering the Groundhog Day festivities in Punxsutawney, PA. His producer Rita doesn't think much of his attitude, but that doesn't matter to Phil...he looks forward to getting a new and better job after Groundhog Day is over. But he awakens on what should be February 3rd...to find it's Groundhog Day all over again! The day keeps repeating itself, over and over, with Phil the only one aware he's living in a time loop. As he works this out, he begins to look on this loop as an opportunity to better his own life and the lives of the townspeople he's coming to know. He's also developing genuine feelings for Rita. Can he learn the lessons he needs to in order to break the cycle and leave this Groundhog Day behind?

Tickets are \$21.50-\$31.50 dependent on date and time. To order or to find out more, visit roadcompany.com, and enjoy a show you're bound to enjoy over and over!

It's the age-old story...an idealistic artist compromises his ideals for the hollow glamour of fame and fortune. But in Stephen Sondheim's musical *Merrily We Roll Along*, onstage at Pitman's Broadway Theater from Jan. 16th to Feb. 8th, the story is told in an entirely new way.

A flop on its first run in 1981, this show (based on a 1934 Kaufman/Hart play) has been re-appraised, recently winning a Tony for a revival. It tells the story of Franklin Shepard, a gifted composer who hopes to change the theater world. He teams up with writer/lyricist Charley Kringas and, together with would-be novelist Mary Flynn, tries to make a difference in the art world. But Frank gradually abandons his dreams for shallow success, eventually giving up composing altogether, rupturing his friendship with Charley, and leading a financially successful but emotionally and artistically hollow life. The catch is...the story is told *backwards*, in reverse chronological order. For every decision we see Frank make, we know the catastrophic consequences...until the bittersweet ending/beginning scene, when the three young friends share their idealistic dreams.



Tickets are \$40. To order, visit broadwaytheatre.org...and prepare to be amazed by one of Stephen Sondheim's most accomplished, fascinating, and emotionally affecting works.

"Whodunit?" That's the question the board game *Clue*—and the 1985 movie based on it—have asked for decades. Now, you'll be able to answer that question with the stage adaptation *Clue*, onstage at Philadelphia's Forrest Theater from Jan. 22nd-25th!



In 1954, six guests are invited to a remote New England mansion for unknown reasons. They're each assigned a pseudonym based on a color: Mr. Green, Miss Scarlet, Colonel Mustard, etc. A seventh guest, known as Mr. Boddy, arrives, to the dismay of the six: each one of them has a secret that they cannot afford to have exposed, and Mr. Boddy has been blackmailing all of them. He hands each of them a weapon (a candlestick, a rope, a lead pipe) and suggests that they murder the butler Wadsworth ("I buttler, sir."), who has the key to their escape from the mansion. But when the lights go off and back on again...the dead body is Boddy's! It turns out that Wadsworth is masterminding the whole affair...but who is the actual murderer? Like the movie, this adaptation has several different endings to choose from!

To order tickets, visit www.ensembleartsphilly.org. Whether it was Colonel Mustard in the study with the candlestick or Professor Plum in the dining room with the revolver...you're in for a great time!

What's New Onscreen!

Twenty-five years ago, *The Fellowship of the Ring* debuted in theaters, bringing J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* trilogy to live-action life in the cinema and creating a cultural phenomenon. This month, Fathom Events brings the entire trilogy, in its extended editions, to select theaters at select times the week of Jan. 16th.

These special editions include scenes that were cut from the theatrical versions (including the final fate of Sir Christopher Lee's Saruman in the final movie). But the epic story remains the same...the sinister One Ring of Power has ended up in the hands of young hobbit Frodo Baggins, who undertakes a treacherous journey across Middle-Earth, accompanied by a fellowship of various allies, to destroy it the only way possible—in the fires of Mount Doom where it was created. When the fellowship is separated, Frodo must travel onward with only the help of his faithful friend Samwise Gamgee...and the tormented Gollum, the Ring's past owner, who struggles with his desire to possess it. As the story builds to its breathtaking conclusion, it becomes clear that the simplest values—loyalty, love, kindness, quiet strength—are the greatest weapons in the battle against evil.

To find out dates, times and participating theaters, visit fathomevents.com.



And speaking of special Fathom Events releases...this year is the 40th anniversary of Jim Henson's *Labyrinth*, which combined live-action and puppetry to create a unique fantasy world. This month, it returns to select theaters the week of January 8th.



This film stems from Jim's desire to branch out from his usual Muppet work. Like his earlier *The Dark Crystal*, it was a commercial failure on its initial release but gained a following over the years. Teen-aged Sarah (Jennifer Connelly), a lover of fantasy fiction, is resentful at having to babysit her infant half-brother Toby. Using a rhyme from one of her books, she wishes Toby away with the goblins...and gets her wish. Now, the charismatic, treacherous goblin king Jareth (the incomparable David Bowie) gives her thirteen hours to make her way through his labyrinth to bring her brother back...or risk losing him forever to the goblin kingdom. Armed with only her wits, Sarah traverses various landscapes and meets fantastical allies and foes in her trek through the labyrinth. All the while, Jareth uses every trick he can to stop her, from his own charisma (difficult for a teenage girl to resist) to mind-tricks. Can Sarah overcome these obstacles to rescue her brother...and come to terms with truths about herself?

Accompanied by David Bowie's stellar music, this film deserves the devoted fandom it's gained since its release. For dates and times, visit fathomevents.com.

The Shaker sect, which began in America in the eighteenth century, was a stricter offshoot of the Quakers. *The Testament of Ann Lee*, premiering Jan. 23rd, tells the story of its founder and how she came to her remarkable vision.

Ann Lee (Amanda Seyfried), after a childhood controlled by her father, has lost four children in infancy. A deeply spiritual woman, she prays for guidance, and receives it when she discovers a sect called the Shakers (so named because of its participants quivering in ecstasy during prayers and hymns). She breaks off from her Quaker church to join this new group...one which is, in many ways, ahead of its time in its insistence on gender equality, pacifism, communal living, and forgiveness of sins rather than punishment of them. It also insists on celibacy (something that does not please Ann's husband Abraham). In time, Ann leads a group of Shakers to America, which is on the eve of its own revolution. There, she must try to establish her vision (which seems frightening to many, not least in the fact that Ann, a woman, is leader) in the face of persecution.



With many actual Shaker hymns (making use of Seyfried's remarkable voice), this film is an amazing chronicle of an intense and extreme but often revolutionary faith.

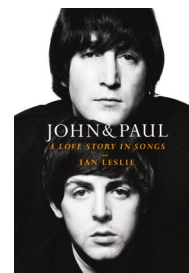


The Biblio-Files

Start off the new year by enjoying some great nonfiction books about the creative process of some of the world's best rock musicians (even some fake ones)!

There's no question about who the greatest pop songwriters of all time were...John Lennon and Paul McCartney of The Beatles. Ian Leslie's *John & Paul: A Love Story in Songs* shows how their friendship, with all its ups, downs, and complexities, is reflected in their work.

John Lennon and Paul McCartney met at a church fair in 1957, and immediately clicked as friends, musicians, and songwriters. Their partnership fueled the rise of history's greatest rock band. Leslie tracks the evolution of these two men—as individuals and as partners—through their creative process. From their youthful teen love songs (which, even then, displayed more artistry and lyrical depth than most of their kind) to the folk-music (and cannabis) influence that showed up on *Rubber Soul*, to their drifting apart musically and personally as John got more under the influence of LSD, avant-garde art, and Yoko Ono, to the post-breakup years where the two men started out clashing over old hurts but gradually mended fences until John's tragic murder, it's all reflected in their songs, many of which Leslie spotlights and analyzes in terms of their partnership.



Leslie's thoughtful, insightful writing illuminates the inner life of two men...out of which grew the most unforgettable rock and pop music of all time.

Last year, Bruce Springsteen's groundbreaking album *Born to Run* turned fifty. Peter Ames Carlin, who previously wrote a biography of The Boss, details the development of the album in *Tonight in Jungleland: The Making of Born to Run*.



In 1974, Bruce and his E Street Band pals were in a slump...their first two albums had gotten great reviews, but lackluster sales. The next one would be make-or-break for The Boss and his band. Gradually, its theme began to take shape...escape, flight, running away from dead-end lives towards something better. Whether it's a car ride to a new life with one's love ("Thunder Road" and the title track), escaping into the joy of making music with pals ("Tenth Avenue Freeze-Out"), wounded young friends running from troubled lives ("Backstreets"), seeking a haven from life's pressures in romantic love ("Night", "She's the One") or a desperate flight into crime or gang life ("Meeting Across The River" and the epic "Jungleland"), all the songs revolve around this central concept. With expertise, Carlin traces the evolution of each track from its rough lyrics to its electrifying finished product, along with the conflicts and problems that went into making them, all of it coming together to give Bruce Springsteen the attention he deserved as one of rock music's most poetic songwriters.

Springsteen fans shouldn't miss this look into the creative process behind one of The Boss', and rock's, greatest albums.

We've discussed some of the greatest musicians that ever were...now how about some that *never* were? Rob Reiner (RIP) along with Christopher Guest, Michael McKean, and Harry Shearer, bring us *A Fine Line Between Stupid and Clever*, a history of one of Britain's loudest rock bands, Spinal Tap!



Cleverly (or is it stupidly?), this is two books in one. One half, *Smell The Book*, is the fictional history of Spinal Tap, where director Marty DiBergi and musicians Nigel Tufnel, David St. Hubbins, and Derek Smalls discuss the ups and downs of the band (who recently returned to the big screen in *Spinal Tap 2: The End Continues*). The other half is Reiner and his actors' account of the conception and making of the mockumentary ("rockumentary"?) that became a comedy classic, and the fake band's not-so-fake career as they did appearances in character (including a voiceover spot on *The Simpsons*, which features Shearer as a regular voice actor). Fortunately, the actors had a lot more luck than the onscreen band,

and even today are still portraying their hilarious characters. But enough of my summarizing. Whaddaya say? Let's read!

The fun in this two-in-one book goes up to eleven! (Oh, come on, you know I had to say it.)