

Monday Evening Spanish Classes at Bachelder Library

Learn Spanish or brush up forgotten skills

Press release

All are welcome to join the new Spanish class being offered on Monday evenings at the Bachelder Library in East Andover, whether new to Spanish and wanting to learn the basics, or already having some Spanish background but wanting to practice rusty skills.

Co-sponsored by the Andover Institute and the library, the Spanish class meets each week from 6:30 to 7:30 PM, and newcomers are welcome to join at any time.

The class is starting at a beginning

level; classes may evolve into beginner and intermediate/advanced sections depending on student levels and interest.

The class includes grammar, reading, writing, and conversation and is taught by Chloe Rochon. Chloe has taught Spanish at the New Hampton School and has lived in Nicaragua and Spain.

The cost for a four-week series is \$48, or \$15 per session on a drop-in basis; anyone interested is encouraged to drop in to try it out. For more information, contact Caroline Moulton Ratzki at CarolineMoulton@gmail.com or Chloe Rochon at Chloe_Rochon@hotmail.com.



Three Rivers Chorale Seeks New Voices

Rehearse on Mondays at 6:30 PM in Franklin

Press release

A Franklin choral group, Three Rivers Chorale, would welcome new soprano, alto, tenor, and baritone voices. This budding group has performed for

local events and is eager to grow its membership.

Rehearsals take place on Mondays at 6:30 PM at Inspire Music, 47 River Street (in the old railroad building). Contact Christine Dzujna at 934-7163 for more information.



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Ragged-Kearsarge Greenway volunteer Lee Carvalho; Friends of the Northern Rail Trail-Merrimack County co-president Alex Bernhard; and Andover Planning Board member Paul Currier.

Attendees will then share information about additional local hiking opportunities. The ultimate goal of the workshop is to combine the information collected in the session into a single document or Web site for the use of all area hikers.

An evening with Andover's own master storyteller, Loretta Phillips, to be held at 7 PM on Wednesday, February 17, also in the AE/MS library. A professional storyteller since 1987 and a founding member of several regional storytelling organizations, Loretta writes most of her own material, but her repertoire also includes "folk tales, fairy tales, legends, urban tales, tall tales, small tales, cat tales, rat tales, and just plain tales." In addition to being entertained by Loretta, attendees will also learn about the art and history of storytelling and about other opportunities to see local storytellers perform.

Formed as a working group of the Andover Community Association in early 2015, the Andover Institute was so-named to recall a common title for many private educational institutions in 19th-century America – the short-lived Highland Lake Institute in East Andover, for one example. Andover residents who have suggestions for future programs and events are urged to contact the association at [\[munity03216@gmail.com\]\(mailto:munity03216@gmail.com\).](mailto:AndoverCom-</p>
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The Andover Institute: Year One

The hiking workshop is the latest in a series of "Space Explorations" offered by the Andover Institute and designed to introduce local residents to venues more-or-less "off the beaten path" for many. Last year's destinations included the Proctor Academy campus; a now-shuttered summer camp for girls; the City of Franklin; a local heron rookery; the moon and other objects in the night sky (via a high-powered telescope); and the Ice House Museum of automobilia in New London.

The storytelling event falls into another category of Institute presentations: programs that entertain and educate. In 2015 these included a six-session series on permaculture; an illustrated "travel night" featuring photos taken by recent local visitors to Bhutan, Nepal, Cuba, and Alaska; a 20-session tai chi course; and workshops on genealogy, apple-tree pruning, "edible landscaping," geocaching, hard cider-making, home weatherization, and a "PhotoExpo."

Local volunteers who contributed time, talent, and other resources to the 2015 programs included Scott Allenby, the Andover Energy Group, Deb Brower, Lee Carvalho, Larry and Susan Chase, Charlotte and Luan Clark, Steve Colardeau, Pam Cooper, Tina Cotton, Charlie Darling, Bob Eldredge, Jay Fitzgerald, Glenn Haley, David Kidder, Rick "Mooseman" Libbey, Bob Norander, Harvey Pine, Proctor Academy, Jimmy Sfères, Nancy Tripp, Eric Viandier, Jennifer White, Todd Workman, Marcia Wyman, and Peter Zak.



Potter from page 16

tate, but the house burned down. Their graves were moved to their present site in 1849 to make room for a railroad. All that remains to this day is a small plot with their gravestones, the registry site concludes.

According to The Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, Potter's wife Sally was a Penobscot Indian. When Potter started his solo career, she served as his assistant.

"Because of his dark complexion, Potter was often thought to be an American Indian or Hindu, all of which added to his air of mystery," the site continues. "He was described in advertisements as a 'Black Yankee.' He sometimes dressed in a turban and performed as an Asian or introduced his wife (accurately) as an American Indian. Potter took full advantage of his perceived exotic appearance and fueled the mystery over the origin of his birth by claiming to be the son of Benjamin Franklin. (Although Franklin was known to be quite the ladies' man, he was out of the country at the time of Potter's conception.)

"Magic acts performed by Asians and Africans were successful because of the lingering belief of the public in 'real magic' from mystical and exotic parts of the earth. Potter, the consummate showman, took advantage of these folk beliefs and gave his audiences what they wanted – mystery, exoticism, and a smashing good show. In 1817, during the depression of 1815 to 1820, he was

confident enough to increase his admission to a dollar, at a time when an unskilled laborer earned about 50 cents per day.

"While he performed primarily in New England, Potter and his wife played most of the United States. In Mobile, Alabama, he was refused space at an inn because of his race. Despite his run-in with prejudice during his stop, he made \$4,800 – about \$55,500 today. Not feeling safe with that much money, he left the city in the middle of the night in the opposite direction of his next venue."

After Potter's death, his son Richard Jr. continued his father's profession, although unsuccessfully.

The Manchester, New Hampshire, "Ring" of the International Brotherhood of Magicians is named in honor of Richard Potter.

According to Magicpedia, for one of his tricks, Potter would enter an oven – we assume a large oven – with raw meat and remain in there until the meat was cooked. We assume he would emerge unscathed and not charbroiled. He also handled and swallowed molten lead. Kids, don't try this at home.

Mr. Know-It-All, a.k.a. Bob Tremblay, can be reached at 508 626-4409 or RTremblay@WickedLocal.com.



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