

HAMPTON *Connects*

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The Millers of Full Moon Farm

"Farming isn't just a way of life; it's a full time job." - Unknown.



Rob Miller and his daughter Molly exemplify farming as a way of life, devoting their time and energy to working Full Moon Farm seven days a week, year-round. Doing so is a steadfast effort to fulfill their commitment to preserve the land and serve the community. Their work ethic, organic farming methods, and farmstead bounty reflect their dedication to practices that make Full Moon Farm a success.



A typical workday for Rob and Molly starts early in the morning with feeding and watering the cows, chickens, and pigs. Other tasks vary throughout the day depending on the season. Planting, caretaking, harvesting, and stocking the farmstead are all part of a workday that doesn't end until evening when it's back to feeding and watering the animals and closing up the greenhouse. Even winter doesn't minimize the daily work. There are fences to repair, seeds to order, and a general crop plan to make. When asked which crops each of them likes best to grow and harvest, Molly said she favors onions, tomatoes, and winter squash. Rob's preference is growing potatoes and carrots, or as he said, "You never know what you're going to get until you dig them up."



For twenty-five years before opening the farmstead on Station Road, Rob sold the farm's organic produce and products at the Storrs Farmers Market and at the Ashford Farmers Market before that. But when Tom Gaines and Bob Gardner asked why he didn't sell his produce in Hampton, Rob began to consider the idea. In 2010 the farmstead became a reality, and eventually Rob made the decision to stop selling at

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farmers markets to focus only on the Hampton farmstand. Although the farm is no longer certified organic (Rob doesn't miss the tedious and endless record keeping), customers can rest assured that Rob and Molly still follow the guidelines and requirements that make their crops organic. They start with organic seeds and follow through with other organic methods such as not using synthetic fertilizers and using pesticides derived only from natural sources.

In 2015 the farmstand really took off when Molly, whose college major was retail, applied her expertise to promoting the farm through social media. After Molly used her skills on Facebook and Instagram, the farmstand grew rapidly in popularity and sales. More people discovered what the farmstand had to offer: organic fruits and vegetables, pastured

pork, grass-fed beef, free-range eggs, baked goods (including sourdough bread), and cut flowers grown and arranged into bouquets by Rob's wife Annie. In addition to the farmstand, there is a self-serve area that gives customers accessibility to healthy food whenever the farmstand isn't open. But sales aren't the only way Rob and Molly reap the rewards of their hard work. Molly said some of the best rewards are, "interacting with people, getting feedback about what we do, and providing people with healthy food." Rob and Molly agree that when people support local farmers, they eat healthy food and at the same time, make their own personal contribution to preserving the land.

Rob and Molly's integrity and dedication to organic farming prove good people are good to the land. Hampton is fortunate to have the Millers in our community.

Winter Blues

By Claudette Russell

Have they started yet? The irrational thoughts. The psychological aberrations. If so, you have a case of the winter blues, an escalation of seasonal frustration, anxiety, and anger that disrupts happiness and hope. If you are in denial, answer the following questions to confront your level of despair.

1. Do you have recurring thoughts of breaking your metal, snow shovel in two and throwing it into the recycling bin?
2. Do you fight the temptation to stuff your snow boots into the shredder?
3. Do you have an insatiable desire to dig through the snow with your bare hands, hoping to find the first crocus?
4. Do you spend an inordinate amount of time sighing over seed catalogs and envisioning blossoms in your snow-covered garden?
5. Do you wrap a beach towel over your wool sweater and get misty-eyed while looking at photos of last summer's vacation?
6. Do four sweaters under your puffy, down jacket not keep you warm enough when you go out to get the mail?
7. Do the words *Total Due* on your fuel bill cause you to retreat to your bed where you lie in the fetal position and weep for hours?

If you answered yes to even one of these questions, you are among the many suffering from the winter blues.

But if you practice patience long enough for the sun to start melting your ice and snow-covered backyard, you will find what you have been longing for. That first, beautiful crocus.

Contributors to our third issue include:
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Check out our new website at www.hamptonconnects.com
Please email your comments/suggestions to
info@hamptonconnects.com



Fletcher Memorial Library Has a Lot to Offer Our Community

Fletcher Memorial Library closed out 2024 with a new director, a new way to borrow books, and a successful Book & Bake sale. Beth Desjardin, long time volunteer, has been selected as the new director. She is new to the post but not to library patrons who are familiar with her friendly efficiency.

FML sponsors The Palace Project which is a way to tap into thousands of free books, using an easy to download app. Library staff can assist with the app setup.

At the start of its one hundred and first year, the library looks forward to providing books and more for the Hampton community. Summer is the time for an active music program, while the Top Shelf Gallery presents displays of art year-round. The library also offers community recreation, housing for a long-running knitters group, a book group, Mahjong, Baby Storytime, and the occasional book and author talk or artist demonstration.

In addition to its Book & Bake Sales, the library sponsors the annual Hampton Harvest Festival, its big fundraiser.

Library events are publicized via the website, www.fletchermemoriallibrary.org, which posts a monthly calendar as well as listings of new books and media. The library's Facebook page lists books as they arrive and posts timely information about all library programs.

The library is a friendly and welcoming place in a charming Victorian with a lovely butterfly garden. Despite its small size, Fletcher has a fine selection of books, two special collections, modern digital access, and a solid program of events for the community.

