

NHJPA Winter Newsletter

Winter 2025



President's Corner

Greetings and Happy New Year!

I extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who attended our 10th Anniversary Banquet. Your presence made it a truly memorable event filled with delightful food, camaraderie, and entertainment. Further details can be found in this newsletter.

I must share the bittersweet news that Lisa Law has resigned from her position as Secretary due to her increasing responsibilities. We commend her for her achievements with her Wedding Chapel in Nashua and her weekly radio program, which brings peace and joy to her listeners.

We all cherish our roles as Justices of the Peace, and we each have our own stories to tell! I encourage you to reach out to me or Nancy Lavalley with your joyful experiences, and we'll share them with the group. Here are a couple of my own.

Last week I was having a Holiday lunch with a friend at a restaurant that was new to both of us. In the middle of lunch, a nice young man came to our table and said, "I'm the General Manager, are you a Justice of the Peace?" (My first thought was.....Hmm, another booking?) And I responded, "Yes, I am." Then he said, "Well you did our wedding 2 ½ years ago so I will comp your meal." What a nice surprise! (Hmmm) Sometimes tips for Officiating a wedding can come 2 ½ years later!!

Curious, I asked him where the wedding took place and he named another local restaurant. We said our good-byes and I took out my calendar and pen so my friend and I could plan to meet for lunch again. Much to my surprise, the pen I took out of my purse was from the restaurant where his wedding took place!! So I gave it to my server to give to him as a souvenir! Amazing coincidences!

As we enter this bustling season of engagements, I wish you all successful bookings! Please remember to recommend our members if you are unable to accept a booking yourself.

I look forward to seeing everyone at our March 30 meeting at the Puritan Backroom in Manchester!

Best regards,
Judith Wilhelmy
President and Founder, NHJPA





NHJPA's 10th Anniversary Celebration

We had an amazing time kicking off at the well attended NHJPA's 10th Anniversary Celebration at the Puritan Backroom in Manchester! The evening started with a delicious buffet that everyone enjoyed. During the celebration, we had a selection of raffles and NHJPA's Lisa Law presented the 10-Year NHJPA Awards to some incredible people: Judith Wilhelmy, our President and Founder; Nancy Lavallee, our Vice President and Co-founder; and John Scuto, a NHJPA member and treasured past Board Member.

The entertainment was a highlight of the night, featuring the talented Concord Coachmen, who had the crowd singing and laughing along. Judith and Nancy even joined in on the fun with a hilarious improv bride interview with an unforgettable character named Jolene! It was truly a night to remember!



L to R: NHJPA member Lisa Law and Judith Wilhelmy, President and Founder



L to R: NHJPA member John Scuto, Judith Wilhelmy, President and Founder, and Nancy Lavallee, Vice-President and Co-founder



The Concord Coachmen





Member Spotlight



Meet Susan Miele

- *NHJPA Secretary (interim)*

We are delighted to share the exciting news that the board has officially appointed Susan Miele as Secretary (Interim) for the remainder of the term. Susan brings a wealth of experience and familiarity to this role, having previously served as our secretary with great dedication and competence. Her deep understanding of the responsibilities associated with this position, combined with her commitment to our organization's values and goals, makes her an excellent choice for this role.

We are thrilled to welcome her back and look forward to her contributions as we continue to navigate the challenges and opportunities ahead. Please join me in extending a warm welcome to Susan as she resumes her important duties.



Governor Sununu signs bill raising marriage age to 18

~ provided by the New Hampshire Bulletin

Gov. Chris Sununu signed a bill that will bar those under 18 from getting marriage licenses in New Hampshire, adding the Granite State to a list of 11 other states that have fully banned marriage for minors.

[Senate Bill 359](#) states that: "No person below the age of 18 years shall be capable of contracting a valid marriage, and all marriages contracted by such persons shall be null and void." Under current law, that age is 16.

The new law will take effect on Jan. 1, 2025. [To read the full article click here.](#)





A Wedding Day Memoire

by Judith Wilhelmy, NHJPA President & Founder

The Wedding Crasher

We have all heard to be prepared for a wedding crasher – someone who disagrees with the marriage or an ‘ex’. I think you will find this one guest quite uninviting, to say the least.

Well folks, here we go:

Strike one... the bride and groom strolled in fashionably late.

Strike two... being an early evening outside wedding ceremony, by the time the bride and groom showed up it was so pitch-black when the vows kicked off that I needed a flashlight—thank you, modern technology!

Strike three... an uninvited guest, a skunk, met its unfortunate fate nearby, and I was trying to officiate while holding my breath like a champ!



Cheers to unforgettable moments!

Judith

Mr & Mrs Pepé Le Pew





Commitment Ceremony

by Nancy Lavalley, NHJPA Vice-President and Co-founder

Many people often ask: what exactly is a Commitment Ceremony? Essentially, it represents a heartfelt promise made between two loving partners who choose to forgo legal marriage for personal reasons. This ceremony resembles a conventional wedding but does not formally designate the couple as husband and wife. For example, you might say:

"It is with immense joy that I conclude this ceremony of your
Vows of Loving Commitment to one another."

"To seal the loving commitment you have made today, you may now share a kiss."

For more Ceremony inclusions visit [NHJPA.org/news-resource](https://www.nhjpa.org/news-resource)



HAPPY
Engagement

From Proposal to Planning

A Guide to Understanding Engagement Trends

~ provided by *Wedding Pro*

Today's couples are approaching their wedding planning in new and more personal ways, starting with their engagement. And the key to appealing to them lies in understanding their entire journey—from the moment they say "yes" to when they start booking vendors. [Click here to download](#) this guide for all the details on the latest engagement trends and what matters most to your ideal couples.

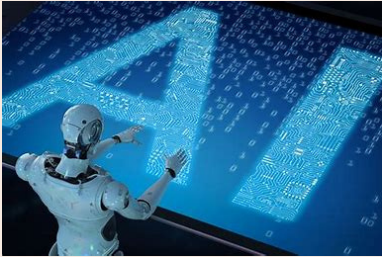


Spring Meeting Announced!

Save the Date

Save the Date

Mark Your Calendar! Sunday, March 30, 2025



Understanding AI! - Guest Speaker James T. McKim

Prepare to immerse yourself in the intriguing world of artificial intelligence with our distinguished guest speaker, James T. McKim. He will clarify the intricacies of "Understanding AI," a topic of critical relevance that will continue to gain significance as technology evolves.



Meet our Guest Speaker
James T. McKim, Jr. PMP, ITIL
Managing Partner, Organizational Ignition, LLC
www.organizationalignition.com

Puritan Backroom (Canotas Room), Manchester

Time: 1:00 PM

Cost: \$30 per person

(Includes lunch from a select menu and a non-alcoholic beverage)

RSVP today!

Your online payment receipt is your confirmation (see below)

Questions: email Nancy Lavalley - nhjpaorg@gmail.com



[Please click here to remit your online payment.](#)



When making your payment, kindly include the name of the meeting (AI)
in the add'l info section of the payment form.



Member News



Welcome

A warm welcome to our new NHJPA Members

Raymond – Madelene “Matty” Beaulieu (English/Espanol)

Derry – Dana Soren MacAlister

[Click here for the online NHJPA Listing](#)

Join the New Hampshire Justice of the Peace FB group.

[Click here to submit your request.](#)



We want to hear from you! NHJPA, established in 2014, aims to educate and network with New Hampshire Justices of the Peace. Please participate in our survey so we can better serve our members. For membership inquiries, visit nhjpa.org. If you haven't already please [Click here](#) to take a brief survey!

At the NHJPA meetings, we have a raffle with participants donating what they can. The cash donations are then sent to the New Hampshire Food Bank. Food Banks prefer a cash donation over food donations. For each \$2 donated they can purchase \$10 of food items. [Click here](#) to read more about the NH Food Bank.

NHJPA member Lisa Law recently met with members of SCORE Granite Region on her Facebook podcast, the Lisa Law Show. Missed it? Visit [WSMN.Live/Lisa-Law](https://www.facebook.com/WSMN.Live/Lisa-Law) or the [Lisa Law Radio Show Facebook](#) page. SCORE offers free expert guidance to grow your business, with workshops and webinars on small business topics. Take advantage of your own personal small business mentor. Check out [SCORE Granite Region](#)



Meet your Board of Directors

President and Founder

Judith Wilhelmy, Nashua
watersideweddings@gmail.com

Chairperson of Membership

Nancy Lavallee, Danville
nhjpaorg@gmail.com

Vice President and Co-founder

Nancy Lavallee, Danville
loveknotsjp@gmail.com

Chairperson of Education and Partnerships

Dan Soucy, Hudson
alvirnechapeljp@yahoo.com

Secretary (Interim)

Susan Miele, Nashua
nhweddingsbysusan@gmail.com

Chairperson of By-Laws, Nominations and Elections

Patricia Berger, Raymond
seacoastnotary@gmail.com

Treasurer

Patricia Berger, Raymond
seacoastnotary@gmail.com

Annual Elections will take place at the Spring Meeting on March 30, 2025. If you are interested to be considered in a position please contact Patricia Berger, Chairperson of Elections at seacoastnotary@gmail.com



NHJPA Mission Statement

The New Hampshire Justice of the Peace Association promotes Professionalism and Integrity by requiring members to comply with a Code of Ethics and provides Education through meetings, workshops and networking.

New Hampshire Justice of the Peace Association

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Suggestions for Officiants

- Always check the Marriage License before signing. Ensure it does not have a watermark stating, "This is not a valid Marriage License." If possible, bring this to the couple's attention when they receive it from the City/Town Clerk.
- Always make a copy of the marriage license before submitting it to the City/Town Clerk.
- Take a picture of the couple for your records.
- Keep tissues or a handkerchief on-hand for tearful brides and grooms!
- If the wedding is to be held in the same room as the reception, strongly encourage the couple to keep the bar closed until after the ceremony. If the bar is open, guests may gather around it, and many may choose to order another drink instead of sitting down for the ceremony. This can make it difficult to get everyone seated in a timely manner when it's time for the ceremony to begin.

What Makes a Great Officiant?

To be a successful Justice of the Peace, you need to develop key skills: public speaking, listening, organization, resourcefulness, reliability, patience, humor, and flexibility. You also need a good understanding of wedding styles, options, and laws. NHJPA offers helpful information in these areas.

We are ready to help you! Join us at our upcoming meetings to meet and connect with other Justices of the Peace.

Member Benefits

- Support and Encouragement from fellow members.
- Listing and Referrals on our website.
- Referrals from other members.
- Use of NHJPA Logo for website and professional use.
- Up to date information in the Marriage Law.
- Subscription to NHJPA Times Newsletter.
- The opportunity to have legal papers signed and/or notarized at our meetings.
- Social events and tours.

For more on NHJPA Member Benefits and Membership [click here](#)

