



Top of the Hill Newsletter

Fall 2024

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One of the nice features of our website is the ability for members to interact and post items of interest.

[It's the easiest thing to do.](#)

Check out the **Forum Page** where one may post information about issues of community interest – perhaps a special event, an important city hall meeting or a volunteer opportunity to name a few.

One may do the same thing within any of the 24 Groups...so please share and engage!

We'll be using the Forum to share information instead of sending a quarterly newsletter going forward – much easier, timely and interactive.

<https://www.topofthehillnewport.org/forum>

President's Letter by Laurie Love

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Happy Fall everyone and Happy New Year to Top of the Hill! Founded in 1985, we happily celebrate 40 years as a neighborhood association - the second oldest neighborhood association in Newport. This is a wonderful milestone and speaks to the strong bond of caring and sharing within our special Top of the Hill community.

I hope you enjoyed the last of the summer social events, our annual membership meeting, and the more recent civic events to meet the new City Manager as well as the meeting to hear from the Ward 2 City Council Candidates. We will be working in the new year to bring forth additional civic engagement opportunities for everyone, including working with other neighborhood associations.

If you missed the Annual Membership Meeting, please know that the slides from the meeting have been posted to the *Association Materials Group*. You will also find two association directories – one sorted by last name and a new second version sorted by street address posted there in December. I will also email the membership directories to all members before calendar year end as we did last year.

We are happily planning our Fall events as well as our largest event of the year – our annual holiday party. The Edward King House will once again host us, and we are arranging for another special entertainment guest. Please RSVP and mark your calendars for Sunday, December 8th.

In honor of our founding four decades ago when the Top of the Hill Association was formed, I've included a piece on fun facts, trivia, and history from 1985. What were the top news stories and what major events took place? An interesting look back – for those old enough to remember!

As noted above, this Fall newsletter is to be the final edition. I hope everyone has enjoyed reading the TOH newsletters. With our new website offering real time communications among the membership – via the Forum, the Groups, and the Member Chat, the need for the newsletter has faded and it does take a fair amount time for me to create, format and publish them. It was a great communication vehicle during Covid and before we had the new website, but now that we have multiple communication features online, it's time to move forward to the easier, more timely and interactive mode of communication. Many thanks to those who have contributed – especially Claire O'Donnelly for all her helpful Gardening Corner and Mike Margonis for his wonderful Historian's Corner last year.

All members are encouraged to use the website **Forum** page to share community information and events of interest. And please take a moment to review and consider joining some **Groups**. You'll see some wonderful pictures of several fabulous Wine Group events from this last quarter in the Photo Gallery of the newsletter. Check out the Groups with opportunities for more fun and information!

Lastly, thank you all for renewing your memberships and for supporting the association with your involvement. The Board is excited about the year ahead and we are all looking forward to ensuring that our members have opportunities to connect, have fun and enjoy our special neighborhood bond.

Happy 40th Anniversary!
Laurie

Gardening Corner by Claire O'Donnelly

Fall Gardening on the Hill

So, it is finally fall! My favorite season! I guess it is fitting that my favorite season should also be the last gardening letter I write for Top of the Hill. No one in our organization has come forward to offer to take on the newsletter so it will be coming to an end. Instead, I think we will try to post more information on the individual group pages – including the Gardening Group page.

So first off, hasn't the foliage been spectacular this year? The reds are amazing! I almost cannot keep my eyes on the road as I drive by looking into gardens along the way. There are essentially two factors to thank for this. One is the wet summer and the second is the dry fall. I know seems contrary that one season has to be wet while the other is dry but that is just the way nature set it up. If trees get too dry in the summer they may become shocked and drop leaves prematurely. Similarly, if the fall is wet and windy leaves may be blown off trees prematurely. While all of the leaf colors benefit from sun, the reds are especially grateful as they contain anthocyanin which is enhanced by the sun giving the most vibrant reds. As I drive around I find myself wishing there was a way to preserve these lovely colors but once they start to dry out they lose their beautiful vibrancy. So my advice is take lots of close up photos so you can look back in the dead of winter and see that we really had it pretty good this fall.

If you haven't had a chance to do a fall cleanup these upcoming weeks would be a good time to fit it in. Ideally it would be great if all the leaves are down but honestly the trees are sneaky and always seem to hang onto a few leaves just to torture us gardeners! The leaves from most trees tend to be on the acidic side which is really not good for grass. Indeed, at this time of year many grass owners apply lime to the grass to help increase the PH making it less acidic overall. I don't know about you but I always think of lime as acidic, like lime juice, but the lime we put on the grass is actually mostly calcium carbonate. I think it got its name from the use of limestone way back when. As part of the clean up many people cut back their flowers and plants but I personally prefer to leave them for the birds and animals to forage. Berries and seeds are a great source of food, as are the many insects that hang out on the foliage over winter. Leaves and broken twigs in beds can provide shelter for many animals and hopefully keep the mice from deciding to take up residence in our homes! Do clear out your raised vegetable gardens though and if possible, compost the waste matter left over from this summers disappointing tomato harvest.

Finally, this is the time to get all your fall bulbs planted before the ground gets too hard. Clump your bulbs in groups of five or more for a striking spring display. Daffodils thrive in Newport. With over a million and counting we are all very thankful that they do. Tulips grow very well and can be spectacular but the rabbits think they are a spring buffet so as soon as your shoots appear protect them with a wire surround or a deer and rabbit deterrent spray. The sprays actually do work as long as you don't have a great sense of smell, they definitely have an odor. The big drawback of the sprays is that you have to be vigilant about respraying after a rainfall which is no fun during spring shower season!

Since I won't be passing on any more gardening hints, I thought it would be nice to leave you in the much more capable hands of Monty Don, a British gardener whom I very much admire. I think I may have talked about him before, but you can never have too many reminders about a good thing! Monty has been giving gardening advice for over twenty years on a show called Gardeners World which

was broadcast by the BBC but which can also be found on YouTube. A very dear friend gave me a gift card to Island Books in Middletown for my birthday a couple of years ago and I was able to pick up a copy of *The Complete Gardener* by Monty Don which I totally treasure. Even if you never lift a spade lift this book, the illustrations are amazing, and the advice is within reach of most of us. Just a quick aside, how lucky are we on our little Island in small Rhode Island to have two amazing book stores on our doorstep? I cannot say enough in praise of both Island Books and Charter books where customers are greeted by the most knowledgeable and friendly staff ever.

On that note let me leave you with a quote from Marcus Tullius Cicero “He who has a garden and a library wants for nothing”.

It has been my pleasure to garden with all of you. Best wishes for the upcoming Holiday season and 2025, Claire O’Donnelly

What Happened During the Year 1985?

Fun Facts, Trivia, and History

- GREGORY DEVICTOR UPDATED: JUN 26, 2024

Back in 1985, what were the top news stories and historical events? What were the most popular movies and best-selling books? Likewise, what were the favorite baby names and what was the average life expectancy? What was 1985 best known for, and was it a good or bad year overall?

Let's find out!

Here is a summary of the top news stories and history events that happened in 1985:

1. President Reagan’s second inauguration was held privately.
2. Extremely low temperatures affected every state east of the Rockies; Phoenix received three inches of snow; and 41 tornadoes hit Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, and Ontario, Canada all in the same day.
3. The EPA established standards that would cut the amount of lead used in gasoline by 90 percent starting January 1, 1986.
4. In 1985, New York became the first state to require that all front-seat auto occupants wear seat belts, or face a \$50 fine.
5. Britain agreed to return Hong Kong to China in 1997, “in return for terms guaranteeing a 50-year extension of its capitalist system.”

6. Microsoft released Windows 1.0, the first domain name was registered, and Steve Jobs resigned as chairman of Apple Computer.
7. Coca-Cola announced that it was changing its century-old secret formula. According to CBSNews.com, “The new Coke would have a smoother, sweeter taste—similar to Diet Coke, but sweetened with corn syrup.”
8. Blockbuster, Quicken Loans, Papa John’s Pizza, Penn Station, and Samuel Adams were all founded.
9. Back in the year 1985, Walt Disney World received its 200-millionth guest.
10. Michael and Jessica were favorite baby names, shoulder pads and parachute pants were fashion trends, and chocolate mousse and sushi were crowd-pleasers.

Here are the five most popular TV shows from 1985-86:

1. *The Cosby Show* (NBC)
2. *Family Ties* (NBC)
3. *Murder, She Wrote* (CBS)
4. *60 Minutes* (CBS)
5. *Cheers* (NBC)

History Facts:

1. In 1985, Ronald Reagan was President of the United States, and George H. W. Bush was Vice President.
2. On January 1, New York became the first state to require that all front-seat auto occupants wear seat belts or face a \$50 fine.
3. On January 1, Michael Harrison made Britain’s first mobile phone call on the newly-launched Vodafone network.
4. On January 3, Mitch McConnell began serving his first term as Senator of Kentucky. A Republican, McConnell served as majority whip (2003–07), minority leader (2007–15), and then became the Senate’s majority leader in 2015.

5. From January 18-22, extremely low temperatures affected every state east of the Rockies, “with three new state record lows established: -34° at Mt. Mitchell, North Carolina, -19° at Caesar's Head, South Carolina, and -30° at Mountain Lake, Virginia.” Weather.gov tells us that “The inauguration parade for President Reagan's second term was canceled with wind chills in Washington DC colder than -10° F. Florida's Secretary of Agriculture termed this the ‘freeze of the century’ with the state's citrus industry suffering \$2.5 billion in losses.”
6. On January 29, Oxford University's governing assembly refused to grant Margaret Thatcher, Britain's Prime Minister, an honorary degree.
7. On February 7, New York City Mayor Ed Koch announced that the song *New York, New York* would become the Big Apple's official anthem.
8. On February 17, the price of a first-class stamp increased to 22 cents.
9. On March 4, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) set new limits on the permissible amount of lead used in gasoline. According to Archive.EPA.gov, Administrator Lee M. Thomas established standards that would cut the amount of lead used in gasoline by 90 percent starting January 1, 1986. The new EPA standard would limit the lead content of gasoline to 0.10 grams per gallon. (The current standard allowed 1.10 grams per leaded gallon.) The Administrator also set an interim standard of 0.50 grams per leaded gallon, effective July 1, 1985.”
10. On March 15, the dot-com revolution began when Symbolics.com became the first Internet domain name to be registered. Wired.com reveals that “In those early days, even before AOL, the internet was a noncommercial medium that only eggheads and propellerheads used. It was more of a military and academic tool than today's vast playground.”
11. On March 18, Capital Cities Communications Inc agreed to purchase ABC for \$3.5 billion, which was the first ownership transfer of a television network.
12. On May 20, the Dow closed above 1,300 for the first time.
13. On May 27, Britain agreed to return Hong Kong to China in 1997, “in return for terms guaranteeing a 50-year extension of its capitalist system.” History.com explains that Hong Kong—a small peninsula and group of islands jutting out from China's Kwangtung province—was leased by China to Great Britain in 1898 for 99 years.”
14. On May 31, nearly 100 people died when 41 tornadoes hit Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, and Ontario, Canada.

15. On May 31, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) announced that they were taking emergency action to ban the recreational drug Ecstasy. The official ban of Ecstasy, formally known as MDMA, would take place on July 1.
16. In June, the historic Route 66 was decommissioned by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). History.com reports that “Measuring some 2,200 miles in its heyday, Route 66 stretched from Chicago, Illinois to Santa Monica, California, passing through eight states. The diagonal course of Route 66 linked hundreds of mostly rural communities to the cities along its route, allowing farmers to more easily transport grain and other types of produce for distribution. The highway was also a lifeline for the long-distance trucking industry, which by 1930 was competing with the railroad for dominance in the shipping market.”
17. On June 10, Coca-Cola announced that it was changing its century-old secret formula. According to CBSNews.com “The new Coke would have a smoother, sweeter taste -- similar to Diet Coke, but sweetened with corn syrup.” After its launch, the new Coke was only around for 79 days, and was regarded by many to have been one of the biggest-ever marketing mishaps. For example, a CBS poll showed that only 13 percent of soda drinkers liked the new beverage.
18. On July 11, Coca-Cola agreed to start selling old Coke again. According to Donald Keough, the President of Coca-Cola: "We're bringing it back, the original taste of Coca-Cola returns as Coca-Cola Classic and soon America will have a real choice: the new taste of Coke or the original taste of Coca-Cola Classic." Keough added: "The simple fact is that all of the time and money and skill poured into consumer research on a new Coca-Cola could not measure or reveal the depth and abiding emotional attachment to the original Coca-Cola felt by so many people,"
19. On July 13, “Live Aid” concerts in both London and Philadelphia raised \$70 million for the “devastating strife and starvation occurring in Africa, particularly Ethiopia, and brought worldwide attention to the issue.”
20. On August 10, the King of Pop Michael Jackson bought ATV Music, the Beatles’ publishing company, for \$47.5 million.
21. On August 21, three lucky ticket holders won \$13.7 apiece in the New York Lottery.
22. On September 20, Walt Disney World received its 200-millionth guest.
23. On September 22, the Plaza Accord was signed by the finance ministers of the G5 nations—the United States, United Kingdom, West Germany, France, and Japan. MarketBusinessNews.com

reports that under the agreement, the U.S. promised to reduce its federal deficit, Japan pledged to establish a looser monetary policy, Germany said that it would implement a series of tax cuts, and all nations wanted to see a better balance between Japan's imports and exports.

24. On September 30, Howard Stern was fired from WNBC (AM) in New York City. On November 17, he began broadcasting his radio talk show from WXRK (FM) in New York.
25. On October 2, President Reagan banned imports of South African Krugerrands into the U.S. (The restriction took effect on October 11.)
26. On November 19, President Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev met for the first time in Geneva, Switzerland.
27. On November 20, Microsoft Windows 1.0 was released. EDN.com tells us that "The OS had been codenamed 'Interface Manager' but was finally dubbed 'Windows' to describe the computing window boxes that popped up on the user's screen. Drop-down menus, scroll bars, icons, and dialog boxes made programs easy to learn and use. Windows 1.0 shipped with several programs, including MS DOS file management, Paint, Windows Writer, Notepad, Calculator, Calendar, Card File, a clock, and the game Reversi."
28. On December 9, Phoenix received three inches of snow.
29. On December 10, Congress passed a bill to balance the federal budget.
30. On December 11, the Dow closed above 1,500 for the first time.
31. On December 11, General Electric purchased RCA and its subsidiary NBC.



In 1985, Back to the Future was the highest-grossing film.

Sports Facts and Trivia

1. In January, the San Francisco 49ers defeated the Miami Dolphins to win their second Super Bowl.
2. On January 1, Washington defeated Oklahoma in the Orange Bowl before a crowd of 56,294.
3. On January 1, USC beat Ohio State in the Rose Bowl before 102,594 spectators.
4. On January 1, Nebraska defeated LSU in the Sugar Bowl before a crowd of 75,608.
5. In April, Villanova University won their first NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Tournament by defeating Georgetown in the final game.
6. In May, the Edmonton Oilers won the Stanley Cup by defeating the Philadelphia Flyers in their third consecutive Finals appearance.
7. In May, Spend A Buck won the 111th running of the Kentucky Derby.
8. On May 16, Michael Jordan was named the NBA's "Rookie of the Year."
9. In June, Andy North won his second U.S. Open title at the Oakland Hills Country Club in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.
10. On July 13, MLB player Roger Maris retired from the New York Yankees.
11. On September 8, Pete Rose tied Ty Cobb's major league career record of 4,191 base hits.
12. On October 2, Mayor Richard Caliguiri of Pittsburgh established a coalition to keep the struggling Pittsburgh Pirates baseball team in town for five more years.
13. In October, the Kansas City Royals won the World Series by upsetting the heavily-favored St. Louis Cardinals in seven games.
14. On October 7, Lynette Woodward became the first woman to play with the Harlem Globetrotters.
15. On December 20, sportscaster Howard Coswell retired from television sports after 20 years with ABC.
16. NBA Champions: Los Angeles Lakers
17. NCAA Football Champs: Oklahoma
18. U.S. Open Golf: Andy North
19. U.S. Open Tennis (men/women): Ivan Lendl/Hana Mandlikova
20. Wimbledon (men/women): Boris Becker/Martina Navratilova

In 1985, the Kansas City Royals won the World Series by upsetting the heavily-favored St. Louis Cardinals in seven games.

Miscellaneous Fun Facts, Trivia, and Poo Culture Trends

PBS.org explains that pop culture is that loose blend of books, music, fashion and other daily ephemera that contributes to the identity of a society at a particular point in time. In the 1980s, radio, film, television, and books defined the essence of American pop culture.

1. In 1985, popular baby names were Michael, Christopher, Matthew, Joshua, Jessica, Ashley, Jennifer, and Amanda.
2. The average life expectancy at birth in the United States was 74.7 years.
3. The cost of a 30-second Super Bowl ad was \$525,000.
4. Popular Halloween costumes included Hulk Hogan, Elvira, Richard Nixon, and Ronald Reagan.
5. Favorite holiday gifts were Care Bears, Teddy Ruxpin Talking Bears, Pound Puppies, the Wheel of Fortune game, and the Super Mario Bros. video game.
6. Fashion trends in 1985 included shoulder pads, mini skirts, leg warmers, huge earrings, fingerless gloves, parachute pants, members only jackets, stirrup pants, and oversized tops.
7. Heartthrobs and fashion icons for the year were Kim Basinger, Jennifer Beals, Diahann Carroll, Joan Collins, Elvira, Linda Evans, Morgan Fairchild, Melanie Griffith, Kathy Ireland, Elle Macpherson, Madonna, Dolly Parton, Princess Diana, Brooke Shields, Jewel Shepard, Helen Slater, Suzanne Somers, and Heather Thomas.
8. Hunks included Harrison Ford, Mick Jagger, John Travolta, and Robert Redford.
9. Sharlene Wells (Utah) won the Miss America crown.
10. Laura Martinez-Herring (Texas) became Miss USA.
11. Top-grossing Broadway shows were *Cats*, *La Cage aux Folles*, *The King and I*, *A Chorus Line*, *Biloxi Blues*, *Singin' in the Rain*, *Dreamgirls*, *Sunday in the Park with George*, *The Tap Dance Kid*, and *Brighton Beach Memoirs*.
12. Broadway shows that opened in 1985 included *Aren't We All?*, *Arms and the Man*, *As Is*, *Babes in Arms*, *Big River*, *Biloxi Blues*, *Benefactors*, *Blood Knot*, *Dancing in the End Zone*, *Doubles*, *Grind*, *Hay Fever*, *Jerry's Girls*, *Leader of the Pack*, *Mayor*, *Pack of Lies*, *Singin' in the Rain*,

Strange Interlude, The Iceman Cometh, The King and I, The Marriage of Figaro, and The Odd Couple.

13. Five Broadway shows that closed on opening night were *Glory Days, Take Me Along, Dance a Little Closer, Cleavage,* and *Play Me a Country Song.*
14. At the 57th Academy Awards, which honored the best films of 1984, *Amadeus* won an Oscar for Best Picture, Milos Forman (*Amadeus*) won an Oscar for Best Director, F. Murray Abraham (*Amadeus*) won an Oscar for Best Actor, and Sally Field (*Places in the Heart*) won an Oscar for Best Actress.
15. At the 37th Primetime Emmy Awards, *The Cosby Show* (NBC) won an Emmy for Outstanding Comedy Series, and *Cagney & Lacey* (CBS) won an Emmy for Outstanding Drama Series. Likewise, Robert Guillaume (*Benson*) won an Emmy for Outstanding Lead Actor in a Comedy Series, and Jane Curtin (*Kate & Allie*) won an Emmy for Outstanding Lead Actress in a Comedy Series.

Best- Selling Books

1. *A Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood
2. *Baby's First Words* by Lars Wik
3. *Chapterhouse: Dune* by Frank Herbert
4. *The Cider House Rules* by John Irving
5. *The Class* by Erich Segal
6. *Contact* by Carl Sagan
7. *Family Album* by Danielle Steel
8. *Hold The Dream* by Barbara Taylor Bradford
9. *If Tomorrow Comes* by Sidney Sheldon
10. *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* by Laura Numeroff and Felicia Bond

Most Popular Television Shows

This cool TV trivia has been made available courtesy of Nielsen Media Research. How many of these shows do you remember?

1. *The Cosby Show* (NBC)
2. *Family Ties* (NBC)
3. *Murder, She Wrote* (CBS)
4. *60 Minutes* (CBS)
5. *Cheers* (NBC)
6. *Dallas* (CBS)
7. *Dynasty* (ABC)
8. *The Golden Girls* (NBC)
9. *Miami Vice* (NBC)
10. *Who's the Boss?* (ABC)

Highest Grossing Films

1. *Back To The Future*
2. *Rambo: First Blood Part II*
3. *Rocky IV*
4. *The Color Purple*
5. *Out Of Africa*
6. *Cocoon*
7. *The Jewel of the Nile*
8. *Witness*
9. *The Goonies*
10. *Spies Like Us*

Biggest Pop Artists

1. Aretha Franklin
2. Billy Ocean
3. Bruce Springsteen
4. Bryan Adams
5. Cameo

6. Chaka Kahn
7. Daryl Hall & John Oates
8. DeBarge
9. Duran Duran
10. Foreigner
11. Eddie Murphy
12. Freddie Jackson
13. Huey Lewis & the News
14. Julian Lennon
15. Klymaxx
16. Kool & the Gang
17. Lionel Richie
18. Madonna
19. Mary Jane Girls
20. Mr. Mister
21. New Edition
22. Paul Young
23. Phil Collins
24. Pointer Sisters
25. Prince
26. Rene & Angela
27. REO Speedwagon
28. Sade
29. Sheila E.
30. Starship
31. Stevie Wonder
32. Sting
33. Tears for Fears
34. Tina Turner
35. Whitney Houston

America's Largest Corporations

1. Exxon Mobil
2. General Motors
3. Mobil
4. Ford Motor
5. Texaco
6. IBM
7. DuPont
8. AT&T
9. General Electric
10. Amoco

Photo Gallery

August 17, 2024: Wine Group "Island Theme" Tasting & Dinner hosted by Larna & Dan Lackner



September 7, 2024: Susan and Tim Kelleher hosting the Italian Wine Group Soiree



September 17, 2024: Meet our new City Manager, Colin Kennedy



Please help us make TOH the strongest neighborhood association in Newport

Lastly, I've added our Letter of Introduction below to our final newsletter in case you haven't seen it. We use this to invite new neighbors and friends to the association. It's also posted on the homepage of our website. Our ask for our 40th anniversary year is for everyone to please ask just one neighbor to join TOH over this special next year. Let's help make sure the neighborhood is connected!

Thank you!!



The End



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

You may be new to the area or perhaps you are a long-term resident of our notable neighborhood -- to all, we wish to say Hello and introduce ourselves.

Established in 1985, the Top of the Hill Association (TOH) is a non-profit civic and social neighborhood association whose mission is to promote community and cultural interaction among our members. We organize over twenty events throughout the year for our 200+ members and work with others for the betterment of our city by the sea.

The Top of the Hill Association is not the same as the Top of the Hill group on Nextdoor.

Newport is an esteemed place to call home and our neighborhood is truly an exceptional place to reside. The two square miles that make up Top of the Hill are home to the Redwood Library (nation's oldest library building), the Newport Art Museum (Richard Morris Hunt's first commission in Newport), and the beautiful St. Michael's Country Day School. It also contains some of the finest Victorian homes in the country – extraordinary for such a small area.

It's wonderful to live in the Top of the Hill neighborhood, but what makes it particularly uncommon, is the sense of community. Being part of one's community is so important and has so many benefits. We hope you'll consider joining TOH and taking part in our special neighborhood association.

With kind regards,

Laurie Love
President
Top of the Hill Association

<https://www.topofthehillnewport.org/>