

Sottak earns All-New England accolades

BY JOSHUA SPAULDING
Sports Editor

BELMONT — It was an unusual year on the soccer pitch for the local high school teams, but one thing that remained the same was Nate Sottak leading the Belmont Raiders in scoring.

After another successful season, the Belmont senior was named an All-New England selection for New Hampshire by the United Soccer Coaches, which is a national soccer coaches association.

Belmont coach Mike Foley noted that New Hampshire coaches put forward players to be nominated and the leading vote getter is named New Hampshire's All-American and the next five spots are named All-New England. Sottak was one of those five honorees.

"For us, it's huge," said Foley, noting that



Nate Sottak was named an All-New England selection for New Hampshire as chosen by the United Soccer Coaches.

Belmont has had only one other athlete selected, Zach Bouchard, a member of the class of 1999 and a member of Belmont's only state championship team, who scored 108 goals in his career.

"It's always difficult for guys who play Division III soccer to get that

"This is a nice feather in Nate's cap."

Sottak finished his career with 64 goals and 28 assists, but Foley noted that his leading scorer's stats were probably stunted by Foley's own coaching style.

"I am one of a handful of coaches who doesn't let guys score more than three goals in a game," Foley said. "Nate could probably have 20 more goals in his career if not for me."

However, Foley pointed out that Sottak completely understood his coach's approach and never once complained about it.

In fact, in his very first game as a freshman, Sottak netted a hat trick and went on to be the team's leading scorer that season and each of the following three seasons. In Sottak's sophomore

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FSB spreads holiday cheer by donating to community groups

FRANKLIN — Eight community groups were presented with a \$500 donation from Franklin Savings Bank in recognition of the holiday season. The recipients included Twin Rivers Interfaith Food Pantry and Pemi Youth Center both of Franklin, Open Door Community Kitchen located in Penacook, Bristol Community Services, Tilton-Northfield Christmas Fund, Goffstown Network, Greater Lakes Region Children's Auction, and United Way of Greater Nashua.

Joseph Thornton, SVP - Retail Banking Officer, commented, "The pandemic has had a profound impact on the ability of our nonprofit community to raise funds, so they can continue to provide critical services to individuals who rely on them. Seeing the impact this has caused, we wanted to do our part to ensure these community groups can continue to carry on their mission of helping others."

The bank's retail team has a long-standing tradition of delivering holiday gifts to its business customers during the holiday season. Due to limitations imposed

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Belmont winter teams set to begin competition in January

BY JOSHUA SPAULDING
Sports Editor

BELMONT — After a fall season that saw the Belmont athletic teams play games against local competitors, the winter will look much the same, as the schedules were released for the new season.

The basketball season kicks off on Monday, Jan. 11, against Gilford, with the boys at home and the girls on the road and the two teams switch locations on Thursday, Jan. 14, for the season's second game.

The second week of the season has the Raiders taking on Laconia, with the boys at home on Tuesday, Jan. 19, and on the road on Thursday, Jan. 21, with the girls hitting the road on Jan. 19 and playing at home on Jan. 21.

Belmont will take on Division II Kennett to close out January, with the boys at home on Monday, Jan. 25, and the girls on the road while the girls will host on Thursday, Jan. 28, with the boys on the road.

February kicks off against rival Winnisquam, with the boys hitting the road to Tilton on Tuesday, Feb. 2, and then returning home on Friday, Feb. 5, while the girls will start the week at home on Feb. 2 and then traveling on Feb. 5. Prospect Mountain is next on the schedule, with the boys on the road on Monday, Feb. 8, and the girls hosting the Timber Wolves. On Thursday, Feb. 11, the two teams switch locations, with the boys at home and the girls on the road.

Belmont will be taking on Franklin on Monday, Feb. 15, with the boys at home and the girls on the road and on Thursday, Feb. 18, the boys will travel and the girls will be at home.

The final week of the regular season has Belmont taking on Inter-Lakes, with the boys at home on Monday, Feb. 22, and the girls on the road and on Thursday, Feb. 25, the girls will host the Lakers and the boys will be in Meredith.

All hoop games are scheduled for 6 p.m. varsity start times.

The Belmont-Gilford hockey team is scheduled to kick off the season against Kennett. On Wednesday, Jan. 13, the Bulldogs travel to Conway for a 6:30 p.m. game on Saturday, Jan. 16, Gilford-Belmont hosts Kennett at 12:45 p.m.

The next week is scheduled to be games against Kingswood, but as mentioned above, those games are questionable due to the Kingswood winter sports decision. If they are played, Belmont-Gilford hosts the Knights on Wednesday, Jan. 20, at 4:30 p.m. and visits Wolfeboro on Saturday, Jan. 23, at 7 p.m.

The following week brings games against Ke-

SEE **BELMONT**, PAGE A5

“Lakes in Winter” Webinar offered by NH LAKES



REGION — Join NH LAKES on Wednesday, Jan. 6, at 7 p.m., for the webinar "Lakes in Winter."

Find out how our lakes freeze and what happens under the ice... and see and hear some strange and usual winter phenomena! Bring your questions about what happens to lakes in winter and be ready to share your stories of strange things you've seen in and along the lake during winter.

This informative, fun, and fascinating session will be presented by Krystal Costa Balanoff, Conservation Program Coordinator, NH LAKES, and Andrea LaMoreaux, Vice President of Programs & Operations, NH LAKES.

This webinar is part of the "Explore Lakes with NH LAKES" webinar series—a monthly series being offered through spring 2021. Make sure to tune in to these FREE webinars to learn about our lakes throughout the seasons, how wildlife survives changing temperatures, how our lakes are adapting to changing climates, and more!

These webinars are FREE, but pre-registration is required, and space is limited. Visit nhlakes.org/explore-lakes-webinars to learn more and sign up!

Established in 1992, the mission of NH LAKES, a statewide, member supported nonprofit organization, is to ensure that New Hampshire's 1,000 lakes are clean and healthy, now and in the future. To achieve its mission, NH LAKES works with partners, promotes clean water policies and responsible use, and inspires the public to care for our lakes. For more information, visit nhlakes.org, email info@nhlakes.org, or call 226-0299.

DHB Homes LLC completes acquisition of Barton's Motel property

LACONIA — DHB Homes LLC of Londonderry is proud to announce the acquisition of the Barton's Motel property on Union Avenue in Laconia. Site work is being done this winter with an April 1st target date to begin construction of the highly anticipated Lakeside At Paugus Bay, a 32-unit luxury condominium project set along the shore of Paugus Bay.

The project recently received the last of a series of city and state approvals and ten units are currently under agreement prior to construction.



Sizes of the units range from 2030 square feet all the way up to 3380

square feet. All units will have private elevator access, a two-car garage,

and tremendous lake and mountain views.

Roche Realty Group is

the exclusive listing brokerage for the first stage of the project. Jeremy Avery of RRG says they are very excited about the opportunity.

"It will be great to see these lake homes take shape," Avery said. "This new community is great for the area, providing a contemporary luxury buying opportunity for people who want to invest in Lake Winnepesaukee and spend time here with their friends and family."

DHB Homes LLC is based in Londonderry, NH but has been part of the Lake Winnepesaukee

community for many years. They have done several other projects in Laconia, including The Lake Houses at Christmas Island. Lakeside at Paugus Bay is the latest example of their long-term commitment to the area.

For more information on this exciting waterfront development please contact Jeremy Avery or

Joe MacDonald at the Laconia Office of Roche Realty Group at 528-0088, or visit www.lakesideat-paugus.com for a list of the available units.

Isolation, food security, staffing remain key concerns for senior advocates

ANGEL LARCOM
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LITTLETON — In a meeting with nutrition and food security organizations held last week,

U.S. Sen. Jeanne Shaheen outlined funding details from the latest Coronavirus Relief Act. Grafton County Senior Citizens Council Executive Director Kathleen

Vasconcelos represented the North Country at the one-hour virtual meeting.

The Grafton County Senior Citizens Council operates eight senior centers, including one in Littleton, as well as numerous regional Meals on Wheels Programs. Littleton resident Bob Muh currently serves as Board President for the organization.

According to Vasconcelos, the Senior Citizens Council delivered 13,000 meals through its Meals on Wheels program, a ten percent increase compared to pre-COVID numbers. The group also served 2,000 additional meals through its new Grab and Go program that replaced previous congregate meals and in-person transportation services.

Vasconcelos also focused on critical concerns resulting from the pandemic, chiefly the increased isolation of the North Country's elderly population.

She said, "One of the reasons that our grab

and go meals are so popular is that people can come out to the center and there's a brief social interaction. That component is so important."

"In the winter months, not as many people will be out and about. When we have to cancel some of our grab and go's for snowstorms, it becomes even more of a factor. We make sure our staff at the senior centers are contacting our clients on a daily basis to keep that connection and check in on them," added the director.

Another critical issue for the Grafton County Senior Citizen Council is adequate staffing. While the non-profit employees are considered essential workers serving on the front line, many are also elderly and considered high risk, said Vasconcelos.

"Anything that we can do to help temporarily increase their pay or provide bonuses will help us retain those employees. Finding employees right now is very challenging," she added.

According to a statement released by the Senator's office, one out of every seven men, women and children are

now considered food-insecure. Up to 23 percent of New Hampshire children live in food-insecure homes due to COVID-19. Shaheen stated that the new Emergency Coronavirus Relief Act of 2020, passed last week, contains nutritional and agricultural assistance for organizations like the Grafton County Senior Citizens Council, farmers and New Hampshire families.

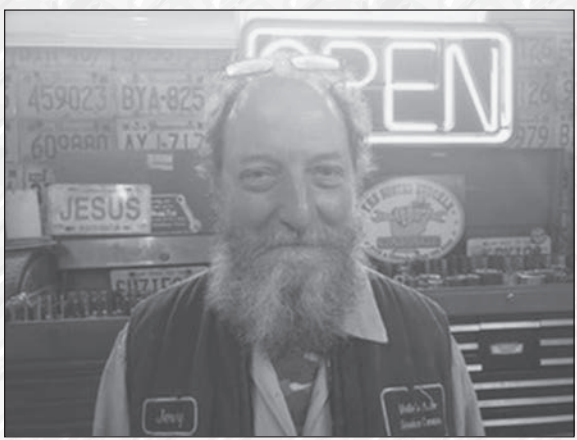
According to the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, approximately \$11 billion of the \$900 billion funding that passed last week would be delivered directly to the National Secretary of Agriculture to purchase food and agriculture products. One hundred million was assigned to the Agriculture Market Program.

Only \$75 million was earmarked for a competitive grants program that supports projects delivering fresh fruits and vegetables to low-income families. SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistant Program) beneficiaries would see a 15 percent increase in benefits.

Shaheen said, "This is an alarming crisis that cannot be overstated.

Lives are at stake, and Congress needs to act now."

Granite United Way North Country Regional Manager Nanci Carney stated last week that the North Country received an additional \$50,000 in CARES Act funding last week to address food security issues. Granite United Way and AHEAD Housing planned to partner in the delivery of food cards to needy individuals, she said.



HE'S HERE!

We are proud to announce that Jerry Mello, who was previously working at Garneau's Garage, has now joined our team at Bumper To Bumper Auto Repair Inc., here on Rt. 115, Twin Mountain, NH. Jerry has over 43 years of active experience in the automotive field, with his expertise in automotive repair. Come on in and help us give Jerry a warm welcome to our team. Jerry is anxious to be here, and to take care of all your automotive needs. You can call him at 603-846-0000.

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Warning Signs of Alcohol Abuse

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- Waking up with headaches or hangovers after drinking
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- Trouble getting to work on time due to drinking
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Bonnette Page & Stone Corp. named Construction Manager for Lakeport revitalization project

LAKEPORT — Paugus Properties, LLC, owned by developer Scott Everett, has selected Bonnette, Page & Stone Corp. of Laconia to manage the construction of the next phase of their Lakeport Revitalization Effort. The purchased properties are located at 41 Elm St. and 9 Park St. in Lakeport and are a short distance away from the beautifully restored Lakeport Opera House at 781 Union Ave., also owned by Paugus Properties, LLC.

Officially referred to as 1 Elm going forward,

the first phase will begin in the upcoming weeks. Unlike the Opera House, the existing buildings are not structurally sound and will require demolition. In their place will stand a beautiful mixed-use development that will include some retail space, leasable apartments, and purchasable condos. The goal is to continue enhancing the area's vibrancy by creating additional housing and business opportunities in a structurally sound, aesthetically pleasing new structure.

"Scott's vision of and passion for enhancing this Lakeport neighborhood's aesthetics and purpose is beyond exciting. It's great to see someone with local ties show so much passion for and desire to give back to the community he grew up in. Paugus Properties is polishing a gem that was just waiting for its day to shine and it will shine for many years to come. We are thrilled to be part of this journey with Scott and his team," says Bonnette, Page & Stone President, Keith McBey.

"Every project BPS is selected for is amazing. We are grateful for each of them but there is something extra special about being selected for a project in your own backyard. I also have family connections to this neighborhood so being a part of its makeover means a lot to me on a personal level too," says Bonnette, Page & Stone Vice President, Barrett Salta.

Construction will begin in early 2021 with anticipated completion in 2022. Bonnette, Page & Stone, Corp will work di-

rectly with Paugus Properties' Construction Project Manager, Mike Lokken.

Bonnette Page & Stone is a Construction Management firm founded in 1969 who specializes in commercial, industrial, institutional and residential construction projects of all types and sizes throughout New Hampshire. Current projects include: Construction of 1 Elm in Lakeport, Restoration of the historic Colonial Theater, construction of North Hampton's new pub-

lic library, restoration of the historic Belknap Mill, renovations to Auburn Village School, construction at Weirs Beach Village, construction of the Mittersill Performance Center in Franconia, construction of Belmont Police Department's new facility, renovations to the Nashua Soup Kitchen & Shelter, renovations and construction at Hopkington Schools, construction at Village Apartments, renovations to Sanbornton Fire Department, and exterior improvements at Gilford Well.

Belmont man sentenced to 24 months for Conspiracy to Commit Bank Fraud

CONCORD — Jon Daigle, Jr., 33, of Belmont, was sentenced to 24 months in federal prison for conspiracy to commit bank fraud, United States Attorney Scott W. Murray announced today.

According to court documents and statements made in court, on Dec. 12, 2019, the Belmont Police Department received a report that two people were using drugs in a parked car outside a convenience store. Officers responded and identified Daigle and Monica Kemper as the occupants of the vehicle. In plain view, they observed drug paraphernalia in the car. Officers seized the vehicle and applied for a search warrant, which was granted. Later that day, officers searched the car and found suspected methamphetamine, drug paraphernalia, mail addressed to various people in Laconia, Gilford, and Meredith (including checks made out to people who were

not occupants of the vehicle), a USPS mail tote, and a lock pick set.

On Jan. 15 of this year, the Bedford Police Department began an investigation of mail stolen from a community mailroom. A surveillance camera in the mailroom showed that on Jan. 12, Daigle was captured on video as he picked the lock to the mailroom, entered the room, rummaged through various packages, and left with a handful of mail.

On various occasions between January and April of 2020, Daigle and Kemper altered stolen checks and cashed or attempted to cash them at various banks in New Hampshire. Some of the checks were stolen from the community mailroom in Bedford and also from mailboxes in Manchester. On April 1, Daigle and Kemper attempted to use a stolen driver's license to cash a check at a credit union.

On April 23, Daigle and Kemper were arrested by Manchester Police officers after an extensive investigation. Officers seized the vehicle and obtained a search warrant. The vehicle contained over \$16,000 in stolen checks, stolen credit cards, the stolen driver's license used at the credit union on April 1, and various other pieces of stolen mail.

Daigle previously pleaded guilty on Aug. 6. Kemper previously pleaded guilty and is scheduled to be sentenced on Feb. 25, 2021.

"Fraud crimes involving stolen mail can damage victims in a variety of ways," said U.S. Attorney Murray. "In order to protect the integrity of the mail and our financial system, we will work closely with our law enforcement

partners to identify and prosecute the criminals who attempt to profit by stealing mail and defrauding banks with stolen checks."

"The theft of mail in the furtherance of various fraud schemes has a significant financial and emotional impact on its victims," says Manchester Chief Allen Aldenberg. "Hopefully, this will serve as a warning to all would-be mail thieves that there are serious consequences for this type of activity."

This matter was investigated by the United States Postal Inspection Service, the Belmont Police Department, the Bedford Police Department, and the Manchester Police Department. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Georgiana L. MacDonald and Aaron Gingrande.

TILTON POLICE LOG

TILTON — The Tilton Police Department responded to 977 calls for service and reported the following arrests from Nov. 16 through Dec. 13.

Arrested during this time period were Rudy Montambeault (for Simple Assault), Robert Pepin (for Willful Concealment), Jennifer Downs (for Willful Concealment), Thomas Snediker (for Sale of a Controlled Drug), Douglas Ramsey (for Driving After Suspension, Driving Without Proof, and in connection with a warrant), Brittany Freeman (for Driving After Suspension), Tanya Douville (for Possession of Drugs and Breach of Bail), Christian V. Pampinella (for Fraudulent Use of a Credit Card and Receiving Stolen Property), Keith Cabral (in connection with a warrant), Amanda McIntosh (in connection with a warrant and for Criminal Trespassing and Willful Concealment), Jodi McElroy (in connection with a warrant), Emily Kresco (for Driving After Suspension), Michael Sullivan (in connection with a warrant), Kaliegh Vinal (for Willful Concealment), and Casey Gardner (for Driving After Suspension and Misuse of Plates).

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Caleb Duggan of Belmont named to UVM Dean's List

BURLINGTON, Vt. — Caleb Duggan, Class of 2023, has been named to the dean's list for the fall 2020 semester at the University of Vermont. Duggan from Belmont, is in the College of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences.

To be named to the dean's list, students must have a grade-point average of 3.0 or better and rank in the top 20 percent of their class in their respective college or school.

About UVM
Since 1791, the University of Vermont has worked to move humankind forward. Committed to both research and teaching, UVM professors -- world-class researchers, scholars, and artists -- bring their discoveries into the classroom and their students into the field. Located in Burlington, Vermont, one of the nation's most vibrant small cities and top college towns, UVM is a Public Ivy and top 100 national research university educating 10,700 undergraduate students, 1,627 graduate students, 776 certificate and non-degree students, and 478 M.D. students in the Larner College of Medicine.

BELMONT POLICE LOG

BELMONT — The Belmont Police Department reported the following arrests during the 10-day period from Dec. 7-17.

Frank R. Paquin, age 39, of Belmont was arrested on Dec. 7 for Second Degree Assault-Domestic Violence-Strangulation.

Katherine M. Perkins, age 18, of Tilton was arrested on Dec. 7 for Domestic Violence-Assault and Criminal Mischief.

Michael W. Sweeney, age 46, of Belmont was arrested on Dec. 8 for Illegal Kindling of a Fire.

Joseph Fredrick Kildunne, age 29, of Laconia was arrested on Dec. 8 for Driving After Revocation or Suspension.

Virginia M. Bristow, age 40, of Tilton was arrested on Dec. 10 for Possession of Marijuana.

Jillian D. Moulton, age 33, of Belmont was arrested on Dec. 11 for Possession of a Controlled Drug (subsequent).

Stacey William Gates, age 44, of Belmont was arrested on Dec. 12 for Domestic Violence-Criminal Threatening, Domestic Violence-Criminal Assault, and in connection with a warrant.

Rodrigo Garcia-Martinez, age 20, of Canterbury was arrested on Dec. 13 for Driving Under the Influence-Impairment. Two juveniles, both age 17, were arrested during the same incident for Unlawful Possession and/or Intoxication.


Haigan W. Doubleday, age 33, of Tilton was arrested on Dec. 15 for Driving After Revocation or Suspension.

James E. Previe-Prescott, age 31, current address unknown, was arrested on Dec. 15 for Driving After Revocation or Suspension and in connection with multiple warrants.

Daniel J. Harris, age 32, of Pittsfield was arrested on Dec. 15 for Driving After Revocation or Suspension and Suspension of Vehicle Registration.

Katelyn M.J. Lewis, age 36, of Littleton was arrested on Dec. 16 for Driving After Revocation or Suspension.

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The roots of our holiday traditions

Did you ever wonder where the tradition of the Christmas stocking came from, or why traditional Christmas colors are red, green and gold or why Kentucky Fried Chicken in Japan is so busy on Christmas? There are endless myths and fables surrounding the Christmas holiday, but there are even more interesting facts. While researching Christmas, and digging deep, we found a plethora of fun and thought-provoking facts worth sharing with our readers.

The first one notes that early images of St. Nicholas depict him as a strict disciplinarian rather than the overweight, jolly man in the red suit we see today.

Way back when, a common Christmas eve tradition was to tell scary ghost stories by the fire.

In 1914, during the First World War, a truce between the United Kingdom and Germany was held. They decorated their shelters for the holiday and exchanged gifts and even played a game of football with each other.

When a child drops a letter in the mail to Santa in America, the mail is sent to Santa Claus, Indiana.

Thanks to the province of Nova Scotia, who since 1918 have been sending the city of Boston an enormous Christmas tree as a thank you for supporting them during the Halifax explosion.

Pope Julius I, Bishop of Rome, proclaimed Dec. 25 as the official day to celebrate the birth of Jesus in A.D. 350.

For the past 40 years, people in Japan have eaten Kentucky Fried Chicken for Christmas dinner, and must make their orders two months in advance.

British illustrator John Callcott Horsley invented the first Christmas card in 1843.

In England from 1649-1660, Puritan Oliver Cromwell outlawed Christmas celebrations and carols.

The first artificial Christmas trees were made in Germany out of dyed goose feathers, (we're still trying to picture this one).

X is the Greek letter "chi," which is an abbreviation for the word "Christ" in Greek hence the abbreviation X-mas being used so often.

Several European countries thought that good and evil spirits were active during the Twelve Days of Christmas. These 'spirits' then became known as Santa's elves.

Have you ever wondered what a 'Yule' log actually is? Us too. It is a large log that is burned during the Twelve Days of Christmas as a symbol of health, fertility, luck and is said to ward off evil spirits.

In Bolivia there is a celebration called the 'Mass of the Rooster' that takes place on Christmas Eve. Some folks bring roosters to the mass to symbolize the thought that a rooster was the first animal to announce the birth of Jesus.

In 2010, the Columbian government hung lights on jungle trees. When the FARC guerrillas sauntered by, the trees lit up and released banners asking the terrorists to lay down their weapons. As a result 331 guerrillas peacefully re-entered into the community.

Here's an interesting one, the 'Bicycle' card company created playing cards during WWII that revealed an escape route for POW's in Germany.

In the song "The Twelve Days of Christmas," the verse referring to "true love" is a reference to God. A "partridge in a pear tree" represents Christ and the "two turtledoves" represent the Old and New Testaments.

Did you ever wonder why the colors red, green and gold are affiliated with Christmas? The color green is a symbol of life and rebirth, red symbolizes the blood of Christ and gold is a symbol of light, wealth and royalty.

Christmas trees are grown for roughly 15 years before they are purchased. In Poland spider webs are a common decoration for trees because a spider, according to legend, wove a blanket for baby Jesus.

In 1836, Alabama was the first state in the country to officially recognize Christmas.

Mistletoe is considered sacred to the Druids because it produces fruit and remains green throughout the winter. The Druids never let the plant hit the ground and believed that it was a cure for infertility and warded off evil spirits.

Environmentalist Teddy Roosevelt banned Christmas trees from the White House in 1901. Apples were the first Christmas tree decorations.

Why do we hang stockings by the chimney with care? Apparently, there were three sisters who were too poor to afford a marriage dowry and were bound to end up on the streets. Bishop Saint Nicholas filled their stockings with gold coins, and their lives were forever changed.

We hope you enjoyed these fun Christmas facts and hope that you have a happy holiday season filled with endless laughter and memories to last a lifetime.

COURTESY

LRAA hosting abstract art class for beginners

Join abstract artist Krista Doran for her class "Beginner Abstract Art for Creative Flow." This is a fun beginner class to learn abstract art using different mediums. It is an eight-week course that will be held Sundays from 9-11 a.m. at the Lakes Region Art Association Gallery, 120 Laconia Rd., Suite 132, Tilton, NH 03276. The first class will begin Jan. 3 to kick off the New Year with some fun creativity.



STRATEGIES FOR LIVING

No room at the inn

BY LARRY SCOTT

There was no room at the Bethlehem Inn that first Christmas eve, not even for a young lady in labor. No one seemed concerned about a pregnant teen-ager looking for a room in which to deliver her first-born. It was party time! Nary a gentleman stepped forward, willing to sacrifice the use of his room for the evening. The young couple, consigned to the dark and drafty stable, would have to fend for themselves.

Not that there was anything wrong with the Inn. These people deserved a break. Living under the jurisdiction of the Roman government was no walk in the park. An evening at the Inn was a welcome change of pace, a chance to share some holiday cheer, an opportunity to forget if only for a few moments, the challenge of living in the real world.

As a matter of fact, however, it wasn't "hol-

iday time." It would be years before this evening would be celebrated. For the majority, it was just another evening and, in the manger below, just another birth. Few of them would ever know that what took place that night was the greatest event in human history.

It is difficult to describe the uniqueness of that evening. Cleaning up the new baby and preparing Him for His first meal, not even Mary and Joseph realized the impact on all humanity that would emanate from this night. Little did Joseph realize that, as he looked at the twinkling eyes of his wife's firstborn, he was looking into the eyes of God.

It is significant that the first ones to learn of the events of that evening were shepherds. These were hard-working, salt-of-the-earth men, despised commoners, too poor and too busy to enjoy an evening at the Inn. But a host of singing angels put them

on notice; something special had taken place. This was one trip to town they would never forget.

They no doubt expected to be welcomed with pomp and ceremony. The heavens had announced the birth of royalty. What they found, however, was lowing cattle, perhaps a donkey or two, and a simple manger scene. For all the hoopla, they were surely surprised to find an apparently normal, newborn baby boy. But looks were deceiving for this precious youngster, although human in the fullest sense of the word, was far from typical. He was God.

Not, I would note, like Adonis, the god of Greek mythology or Baal, the god of the Canaanites. He was no legend or the product of superstitious belief. This One came out of eternity. He had been there when the world was brought into being. He had walked with Adam, talked with Moses, and joined the three Hebrew children

in Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace. God Himself had joined the human family and thirty-three years later, this God would take upon Himself the penalty for sin and make possible the promise of eternal life for people like you and me.

For those at the Inn, the party would soon be over. For the shepherds, however, it was the dawning of a new day. Their hum-drum existence had been crowned with new meaning. They were the first to have an encounter with the living Jesus, and they went home "praising God." Fulfillment, they discovered, was not to be found in the Inn; it was to be found in a Person.

And that is the message of Christmas. Happiness ... is a man called Jesus!

For more thoughts like this, follow me at in-defenseoftruth.net.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

An open letter of thanks to frontline workers

To the Editor:

2020 is a year that most of us instinctively would like to forget. The arrival of a global pandemic brought unprecedented challenges to our world, drastically altering our lives. Practically overnight, businesses, schools, healthcare and long-term care facilities had to significantly adjust how we operate. In many ways, 2020 has been a year we will not look back on fondly.

However, I would also argue that 2020 has been a blessing; for it has shined the light on an exceptional group of people—front line healthcare workers. At a time when the national conversation has been more toxic and divided than ever, when I go to work every day at Taylor Community, I witness the best of people. I see a team of skilled, dedicated employees who are not complaining or placing blame. They are simply showing up and getting the job done.

Throughout the Lakes Region and around the country, frontline workers are arriving at work daily with the sole mission of caring for others. They are doing this while also navigating a variety of personal challenges at home—like finding childcare options for their kids in the midst of hybrid and re-

mote school schedules, and supporting friends and neighbors who have lost their jobs and need a helping hand. They are extraordinary, caring people who are working extra hours and sacrificing time with their own families in order to care for those most at risk.

On the job, they are wearing multiple layers of personal protective equipment; they are using their skill and creativity to keep residents engaged, active, and happy. They are delivering food, grocery shopping, sanitizing rooms, keeping buildings & grounds operating efficiently, working in offices to ensure general operations are running smoothly. Simply stated, they represent the best of us.

I could not be prouder of our team at Taylor Community and all frontline workers throughout the Lakes Region. Today I hope you will join me in recognizing the selfless, dedicated, hardworking frontline workers who are meeting this moment with skill, courage and compassion. We see you, we appreciate your sacrifice, and we thank you.

MICHAEL FLAHERTY
PRESIDENT & CEO, TAYLOR COMMUNITY
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D2 football All-State announced

BY JOSHUA SPAULDING
Sports Editor

REGION — The Division II football All-State teams for the northern cluster were announced last week and the list was populated with local athletes from Kennett, Kingswood, Plymouth and Gilford-Belmont.

After his team finished as the Division II runner-up following a

loss to Souhegan in the championship game, Plymouth coach Chris Sanborn was named Coach of the Year while Plymouth senior running back and defensive back Cole Johnston was named Player of the Year.

First Team Offense went to quarterback Cody Bannon, running back Joe D’Ambruoso,

tight end Trevan Sanborn, linemen Eddie Camp and Tyler Stokowski and kicker Will Fogarty of Plymouth, quarterback Parker Coleman, running back Tanner Bennett, slot Cole Salyards, wide receiver Kyle Perry and linemen Braden Santucio of Kennett and wide receiver Curtis Nelson and linemen Cooper

Brown of Gilford-Belmont. Also on the list was lineman Jake Currier of Merrimack Valley.

First Team Defense went to linemen Bobby Graustein and Evan Koroski, linebacker Gaven Gagne and defensive back Isaiah Scharnowski of Kennett, linemen Trent Sargent and Sean Griffiths, linebackers Ian Tryder and

Calvin Swanson and defensive back Charlie Co-meau of Plymouth, lineman Blake Descoteaux of Gilford-Belmont and linebacker Jackson McCullough of Kingswood. Also earning honors was defensive back Travis Knouse of Merrimack Valley.

Honorable Mention went to defensive lineman Malik Reese of Gil-

ford-Belmont and linebacker Jeff Hollins of Merrimack Valley.

Sports Editor Joshua Spaulding can be reached at 279-4516, ext. 155 or josh@salmonpress.news.

Wolves sweep Seacoast Spartans

LACONIA — The New England Wolves EHL Junior Hockey team swept the weekend of Dec. 12-13, going 2-0 against in-state rivals the Seacoast Spartans. The games were played at Merrill Fay Arena in Laconia.

Both games started off slow for the Wolves, as they trailed each affair by two goals. The Wolves came roaring back in each contest, however, as they won the games by scores of 6-3 and 4-3.

In Saturday’s contest, the Wolves scored four goals in the third period, highlighted by LJ Newell’s stellar play in nets and captain Donnie Feldman’s three assists. On Sunday, Kyle Penton played great in net, and Nick Bosch, Richie Colarusso and Kevin Bite played great defense in front of him. Ricards Jelenskis recorded a hat trick (three goals) including the game winner in overtime to seal the victory.

The Wolves JR program held a Toy Drive to benefit Boston Children’s Hospital over the weekend and would like to thank all who donated at each of the Wolves games, Saturday vs. Seacoast (EHL), Saturday vs. Cyclones (EHL) and Sunday vs Seacoast (EHL).

“It’s great pair of wins on home ice. The community came out, masked up, and support the team and the Toy Drive. Thanks,” said GM Andrew Trimble.

The Wolves will be taking a few weeks off at the holidays. For more info, visit www.ne-wolveshockey.com.

Local students named to President’s List at Plymouth State University

PLYMOUTH — A total of 899 students have been named to the Plymouth State University President’s List for the Fall 2020 semester. To be named to the President’s List, a student must achieve a grade point average of 3.7 or better for the Fall 2020 semester and must have attempted at least 12 credit hours during the semester.

Tyler Bryant of Belmont
Asia Merrill of Belmont
Krystal Groz of Northfield
Marissa LoGrasso of Belmont
Lydia Morrison of Tilton
Kerry Boyle of Sanbornton
Jessica Holt of Sanbornton
Kimberly Noseworthy of Belmont
Grace Shaw of Belmont
John Beaulieu of Northfield
Mark Magoon of Tilton
Lilli Keegan of Northfield
Sheena Duncan of Tilton
About Plymouth State University

Established in 1871, Plymouth State University serves the state of New Hampshire and the world beyond by transforming our students through advanced practices where engaged learning produces well-educated undergraduates and by providing graduate education that deepens and advances knowledge and enhances professional development. With distinction, we connect with community and business partners for economic development, technological advances, healthier living, and cultural enrichment with a special commitment of service to the North Country and Lakes Region of New Hampshire.

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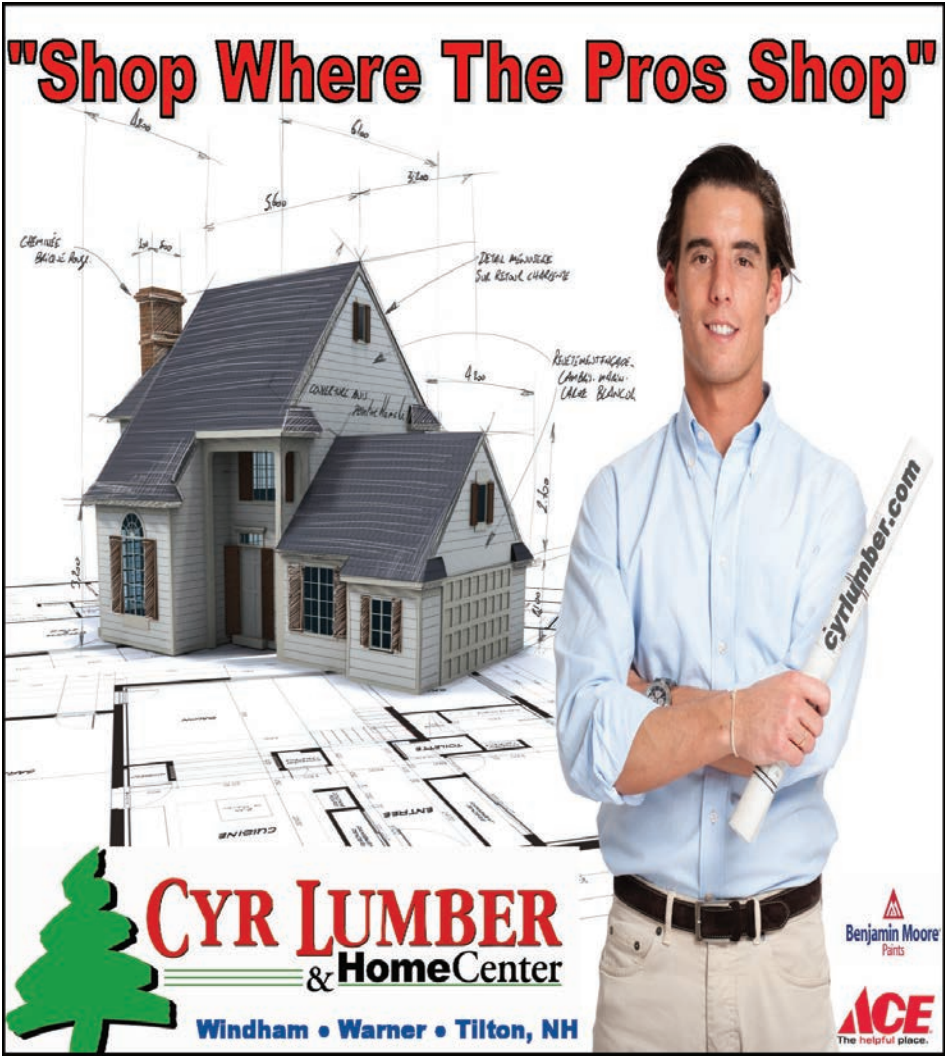
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