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Winnisquam Echo

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2026

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White Tiger Karate celebrates 22 years of Strength in Peace

TILTON — On Nov. 7, White Tiger Karate (WTK) celebrated 22 years of empowering children, strengthening families, and making a difference in the community. To commemorate this milestone, WTK invites the public to a free anniversary open house on Saturday, Nov. 21.



Every great journey begins somewhere, and for WTK, that journey began with a simple question from a neighbor. In 2004, Sharyl Geisert was approached by a neighbor who asked if she would be willing to teach martial arts at their community center. At the time, Geisert was a brown belt and could not have imagined that this simple request would become the beginning of a lifelong journey. Before accepting, she approached her own Sensei to ask permission to teach. His response was an enthusiastic yes! That encouragement became the beginning of something extraordinary.

Starting with classes for both children and adults, what began as an opportunity to share her love of martial arts grew into a commitment to teaching, mentoring, and helping people discover strengths they may not have known they possessed. Today, under the leadership of owner and head instructor Master Sharyl Geisert, affectionately known as "Sensei," White Tiger has become much more than a martial arts school. It is a place where students of all ages and abilities are encouraged to overcome challenges, develop confidence, build meaningful relationships, and become the best versions of themselves.

A journey of learning, growth, and mentorship

SEE **WTK**, PAGE A11

Meet "Britain's Got Talent" Golden Buzzer Star Jack Goodacre at Franklin Public Library

FRANKLIN — Franklin Opera House, in collaboration with New Hampshire Music Collective, is pleased to welcome acclaimed singer-songwriter duo Jack & Tim for a special appearance at the Franklin Public Library on Nov. 20.

Jack Goodacre and his father, Tim Goodacre, became known to audiences around the world after their Golden Buzzer-winning performance on Britain's Got Talent in 2018. Prior to that performance, Jack also appeared on The Voice Kids UK and starred in "School of Rock" in London's West End. Jack has grown into an accomplished artist whose journey continues to resonate with audiences of all ages.

What makes Jack especially appealing to young musicians is his remarkable story. Through talent, determination, and hard work, he transformed a childhood love of music into international opportunities. His journey demonstrates the value of perseverance and following one's passion.

Today, Jack and Tim continue to write and create together while reaching audiences on both sides of the Atlantic. Their genuine father-and-son

SEE **JACK**, PAGE A11

Belmont High FBLA hosting annual Holiday Fair Saturday

BELMONT — For their 19th year, Belmont High School's Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) chapter will host its annual Holiday Fair on Saturday, Nov. 14 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Belmont High School.



The Holiday Fair is entirely organized and operated by FBLA students, under the guidance of adviser and BHS teacher Jeff Malcolm. Students gain hands-on experience in advertising, marketing, vendor relations, communications, and community outreach while managing an event that typically attracts 80 to 90 vendors and a large community turnout.

"The Holiday Fair offers a great opportunity to shop local, support area artisans, and help Belmont High School students gain valuable real-world business experience.," said Kyleigh Roe & Ella Stevens, BHS FBLA Presidents.

BHS FBLA will also support the Greater Lakes Region Children's Auction by collecting donations for this year's auction at the Belknap Marketplace. Additionally, Fred Caruso of Mix 94.1 will be on hand selling his popular Cash and Cans prize calendars.

Champs bring Belmont's season to a close in Final Four



Joshua Spaulding

David Mahoney goes airborne to get to the ball during action against St. Thomas in the Division III semifinals last week.



Joshua Spaulding

Christian Edgren settles the ball during hist team's semifinal game with St. Thomas last Wednesday afternoon.

BY JOSHUA SPAULDING
Sports Editor

BEDFORD — The task was a big one for the ninth-ranked Belmont boys' soccer team in the Division III semifinals on Wednesday, Nov. 5, as the Raiders took the field against defending champion St. Thomas at Bedford High School.

The Saints scored in the final three minutes of the first half and again in the first 10 minutes of the second half before opening things up and walking off the field with a 5-1 win to bring Belmont's season to a close.

"Not the result we had obviously shot for," said veteran Belmont coach Mike Foley. "The first goal they got took a lot of wind out of our sails, but we had played 560 minutes (seven games) without giving up a goal so there was concern coming in on how long does that hold and when it does go, does the damn break?

"To a degree, we just never could possess long enough out front to retain

SEE **SOCCER**, PAGE A10

Early deadlines for Thanksgiving

The offices of the Winnisquam Echo will be closed Thursday, Nov. 26 in observance of Thanksgiving.

To ensure that our Thanksgiving week edition arrives in subscribers' mail boxes on schedule despite the holiday, the submission deadline for any press releases and letters to the Editor intended for publication that week has been moved up to Friday, Nov. 20 at 4 p.m. Submissions can be e-mailed to Editor Brendan Berube at brendan@salmonpress.news.

The staff of the Echo thanks our readers for their cooperation with this scheduling change, and wishes one and all a safe and happy Thanksgiving.

Franklin Opera House seeks donations for 14thAnnual Festival of Trees

FRANKLIN — The Franklin Opera House is inviting individuals, families, businesses and community organizations to participate in its 14th Annual Festival of Trees, to be held Dec. 4, 5, and 6 at the Franklin Public Library.

This beloved annual holiday event serves as a fundraiser benefiting the general operations of the Franklin Opera House. Community members are encouraged to donate and decorate a variety of display items including artificial Christmas trees, wreaths, gift baskets and other creative holiday-themed displays. Festival attendees can then purchase raffle tickets to win everything on, in, or under those items.

The Festival of Trees provides a unique opportunity for participants to celebrate the season, showcase their creativity, promote their business or organization, and support the arts in the Franklin community.

According to Franklin Opera House representatives, "We welcome donations from anyone who would like to participate. Whether you are an individual, a business, organization, your contributions help make this event a festive and successful fundraiser year after year!"

All donated trees, wreaths, and similar items must be artificial. Donors are encouraged to decorate their displays with any theme or style of their choosing. If you would like to decorate a tree, but do not want to purchase one, Franklin Opera House has a number of trees of various sizes available at its administrative office (321 Central St., Franklin, open Tuesday through Friday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.). Donors' names will be prominently displayed alongside their creations (anonymity is always honored when requested) providing recognition and visibility to the many supporters who make the Festival of Trees possible.

If you are interested in donating, please visit www.FOHNH.org or call the office directly at (603) 934-1901. If you still prefer paper to electronic forms, Franklin Opera House is happy to send you a registration form upon request.

Belmont police log

BELMONT — The Belmont Police Department reported the following arrests from Oct. 26 to Nov. 9.

Stanley M. Emanuel, age 65, of Laconia was arrested on Oct. 28 for DUI-Impairment.

Velvet Elaine Weeks, age 55, of Laconia was arrested on Oct. 29 for Breach of Bail, Criminal Trespassing, Willful Concealment, and Possession of a Controlled Drug.

A 41-year-old male from Belmont was taken into protective custody on Oct. 30 for Domestic Violence-Criminal Threatening Against a Person with a Deadly Weapon.

Vicki M. Jackson, age 65, of Belmont was arrested on Nov. 2 for Disorderly Conduct, Criminal Mischief, Criminal Threatening Against a Person, and multiple counts of Simple Assault resulting in Physical Contact or Bodily Injury.

Todd R. Adams, age 68, of Laconia was arrested on Nov. 3 for Conduct After an Accident, Reckless Driving, and Criminal Mischief.

Deborah Joann Moulton, age 56, of Belmont was arrested on Nov. 3 for DUI-Impairment.

A 20-year-old male from Belmont received a summons in lieu of arrest on Nov. 4 for Driving After Revocation or Suspension of license and Driving After Revocation or Suspension-Original and Youth.

A 37-year-old female from Laconia received a summons in lieu of arrest on Nov. 4 for Reckless Driving.

A 31-year-old female from Tilton received a summons in lieu of arrest on Nov. 5 for Driving After Revocation or Suspension of license.

A 22-year-old male from Sanbornton received a summons in lieu of arrest on Nov. 5 for Reckless Driving.

Robert Leroy Clark, age 50, of Belmont was arrested on Nov. 6 in connection with multiple bench warrants.

Rebecca L. Hanson, age 42, of Laconia was arrested on Nov. 6 for being a Felon in Possession of a Dangerous Weapon.

A 62-year-old male from Laconia received a summons in lieu of arrest on Nov. 7 for driving after Suspension of Vehicle Registration.

Kimone Aleisha Patrick, age 26, of Belmont was arrested on Nov. 7 for Domestic Violence-Simple Assault resulting in Bodily Injury or Physical Contact.

A 48-year-old male from Belmont was taken into protective custody on Nov. 8 for Domestic Violence-Simple Assault resulting in Bodily Injury or Physical Contact, Domestic Violence-False Imprisonment, and Resisting Arrest or Detention.

Winnisquam Regional School District to host annual holiday dinner Dec. 4

TILTON — The Winnisquam Regional School District will welcome residents of Tilton, Northfield and Sanbornton to its annual Holiday Dinner on Friday, Dec. 4, from 5 to 7 p.m. in the Winnisquam Regional High School cafeteria.

The free community dinner is a longstanding district tradition intended to express appreciation to the residents of the three towns for their continued support of local students, educators and the school district as a whole.

Guests will be treated to a traditional holiday meal featuring oven-roasted turkey, potatoes, gravy, farm-fresh squash, stuffing, salad and dinner rolls.

In addition to the meal, the evening will feature activities for children and a photo backdrop where families and friends can capture memories of the holiday gathering.

The annual event provides an opportunity for community members to come together outside the classroom and celebrate the relationship between the district and the towns it serves.

Organizers emphasize that the dinner is an expression of gratitude for the many ways residents support public education, from their investment in local schools to their encouragement of the students and professionals who make up the Winnisquam Regional School District. The event is free, including the meal and activities.

Residents of Tilton, Northfield and Sanbornton are encouraged to attend and enjoy an evening of food, fellowship and holiday cheer.

Campbell leads locals at Middle School Meet of Champions

BY JOSHUA SPAULDING
Sports Editor

HOPKINTON — The first ever middle school Meet of Champions, bringing together the top finishers from all of the middle school championship races the previous week, took place at the Hopkinton Fairgrounds on Friday, Oct. 30.

Kennett eighth grader Tabitha Johnson ran to the win in the girls' race, finishing in a time of 10:54 for the 3K course, which was 10 seconds ahead of her closest competitor, Beatrix Howey-Clark of Oyster River.

Profile eighth grader Sylvie Brown, who the next day would run to second overall in the Division III State Meet for high schoolers in Manchester, finished in third place with a time of 11:18.

Winnisquam's Kyra Campbell ran to ninth overall in 11:48 with Newfound's Georgia Sweeney in the same time for 10th place overall. Quinn Masterson of Newfound finished in 27th place in 12:26 and Amelia Cutting of Newfound was 31st overall in 12:31. Amelia Krautmann of Belmont finished in 56th place overall in 13:05 to round out the field of local girls in the race.

For the boys, Simon Cutting of Newfound finished in 48th place overall in 11:31, also one day before running in the high school championships in Manchester. Turner Hemingway of Newfound finished in 70th overall in 11:46 with Mark Kenney of Winnisquam in 72nd place in 11:48.

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

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PETS OF THE WEEK

Meet Salt!



Salt is an opinionated lady with an open mind and a personality all her own! She's willing to try just about anything once, but don't be surprised if she forms an opinion about it within the first five seconds. She's a girl who knows what she likes and isn't afraid to let you know!

Salt is your classic independent lady. She enjoys a little affection and cuddle time, but she's certainly not looking to be attached at the hip. She appreciates having her own space, doing her own thing, and checking in for some love when SHE decides it's time.

Salt is looking to be the only cat in her future home! She prefers to have her space to herself and would love a home where she doesn't have to share her kingdom with any other feline friends.

If you're looking for a cat with a little sass, a lot of personality, and just the right amount of affection, Salt might be the perfect addition to your home!

One thing is for sure: life with Salt will never be boring!

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Powerhouse announces 2027 season!

LACONIA — Powerhouse Theatre Collaborative, the resident theatre company of The Colonial Theatre in Laconia, held a season announcement party for participants and supporters. There was much excitement as Powerhouse laid out the plans for its upcoming 2027 Colonial Series, Spark Series and Special Events.

The Colonial Series will kick off in February with a musical revue called More in Love with Broadway. This will be a night that features the musical talent of many Power Players and the Power Chords as they perform a night of show tunes about love, perfect for Valentine's Day weekend!

From April 30 to May 2, Powerhouse will bring the hit Broadway musical "The Drowsy Chaperone" to the Colonial stage. This is a musical comedy about a 1920's musical comedy coming to life in a modern-day apartment as a character known only as "Man in the Chair" plays the record of his favorite musical for the audience. In October Powerhouse will be producing the musical Little Women based on the classic American novel. This touching and entertaining musical will also have a school matinee performance available to local schools. The Colonial Series finishes as always next December with A Christmas Carol: The Musical Ghost Story.

Also part of the Colonial Series, Powerhouse takes on its biggest and most expensive musical challenge to date, bringing the Disney classic "Mary Poppins" to the Colonial stage in August. Powerhouse will be hiring ZFX Flying Systems, one of the best theatre flying systems companies in the world, to make Mary, Bert and the Banks children safely fly high above the Colonial stage. The community has a chance to help Powerhouse make this magic happen at the Colonial by supporting its "Make Mary Fly Fund" throughout this holiday season.

The 2027 Spark Series will include a February Break production put on by teens called Treasure Inland: A Pirate Adventure far from the sea, that will perform at area libraries and the Belknap Mill. It will also contain two annual events Powerhouse holds at Prescott Farm - the 2027 New Play Festival in May, and an all-new outdoor theatre adventure in September called "The Wonderful Venture Through Oz." The new play festival will consist of plays written in Powerhouse's 2027 playwriting workshop which is already filling up. The Power Chords will hold its annual Holiday concert in November at the Congregational Church of Laconia and the Taylor Community.

And for the first time since 2023's production of the musical "Quilters," Powerhouse will be performing a full production at the Belknap Mill, Yasmina Reza's Tony-Award winning play, "Art." "Art" will star Powerhouse regulars Christopher Graham, Joel Iwaskiewicz, and making his long-awaited return to a Lakes Region stage, Powerhouse's founder/producer, Bryan Halperin.

Special events in the 2027 season include a new rendition of the naughty Christmas parody Fezziwig's After Dark, Just Duet V - a fundraiser for Powerhouse and the Colonial Theatre Advancement Fund, The 2028 Season Announcement Party, and a new cabaret series called the Power Surge Cabaret that will perform quarterly at the Taylor Community as well as at other venues around the region.

Those looking to get involved in Powerhouse workshops, productions, or the Power Chords should be able to find all the information at powerhousenh.org. But there are still plenty of activities left in the 2026 season including the Power Chords Holiday Concert, "A Christmas Carol: The Musical Ghost Story," and "Fezziwig's After Dark." Email info@powerhousenh.org with any questions on how to get involved or support the "Make Mary Fly Fund."

Start the new year off with a laugh at the Colonial Theatre

LACONIA — The Colonial Theatre of Laconia will present Juston McKinney – 2026 Comedy Year in Review on Saturday, Jan. 9, 2027 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets to the show are on sale NOW at ColonialLaconia.com or by calling 1-800-657-8774.

End the year with laughter as New Hampshire's own comedian, Juston McKinney, brings his annual must see show to Nashua to review the past year, 2026!

McKiney has multiple appearances on the Tonight Show, Conan O'Brien and one-hour specials on Comedy Central. He also has two one-hour specials on Amazon Prime and his latest special "On the Bright Side" you can see for FREE on this YouTube channel. Throw in some appearances at the TD Garden for Comics Come Home, a Showtime special with Rob Gronkowski, and you can see why NH Magazine named him "Best of New Hampshire" and the New York Times-called him "Destined for stardom." Have the last laugh of 2026 with Juston as he uses multimedia to dish on his New England life and looks back at the year that was.

The Colonial Theatre of Laconia

The original owner, Benjamin Piscopo, was from Italy, and the theatre featured a fire curtain depicting Venice as seen from the water. In August of 2002, the theatre closed after 87 years of operation. On June 15, 2015, the City of Laconia announced a partnership with the Belknap Economic Development Council (BEDC) to purchase, renovate, and reopen the Colonial. The newly reopened Colonial Theatre has a seating capacity of 750 and plays host to various performances, including music, theatre, comedy, and civic events. Spectacle Management manages the Colonial Theatre and is home to the Powerhouse Theatre Collaborative. The Colonial Theatre is located at 609 Main St., Laconia, NH 03246. www.coloniallaconia.com

Spectacle Live

Spectacle Live's mission is to create connections that make exceptional live experiences happen. Founded in 2012 and headquartered in Chelmsford, Massachusetts, Spectacle Live is a live event and venue management company specializing in performing arts centers across the Northeast. The company partners with municipalities and arts organizations throughout New England to provide comprehensive services, including venue operations, marketing and promotion, booking and talent buying, ticketing, food and beverage management, technical production, and consulting. Spectacle Live currently works with more than a dozen venues across Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island, presenting a diverse range of events from concerts and comedy to theater and family entertainment. For more information, visit www.spectaclelive.com or contact Pete Lally at plally@spectaclelive.com or 617-531-1257.

Magical Mystery Doors brings music of three legendary bands to The Colonial Theatre

LACONIA — The Colonial Theatre of Laconia will present Magical Mystery Doors – A Beatles, Zeppelin, Doors Tribute on Friday, April 16, 2027 at 8 p.m. Tickets to the show are on sale now at ColonialLaconia.com or by calling 1-800-657-8774.

Magical Mystery Doors takes classic rock beyond the standard tribute. With two distinct productions, the band celebrates legendary music while reshaping it for today's audiences.

In this flagship show, Magical Mystery Doors brings together three of rock's most influential bands in a way no one else does. Hits from The Beatles, Led Zeppelin, and The Doors are reimagined through mashups and medleys that connect songs across catalogs. Imagine the melody of "Hello, I Love You" set against "Misty Mountain Hop," or a seamless journey from The Rain Song into Riders On The Storm and Here Comes The Sun. Backed by stunning visuals and lights, the result is a performance that feels both familiar and completely new.

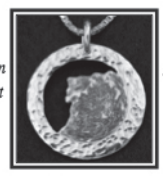
The Colonial Theatre of Laconia

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Opinion

Letter submission policy

Letters to the Editor must include the author's name, address, and a daytime phone number for purposes of verification in order to be considered for publication. Only the author's name and the town in which they reside will be published. Letters submitted without all of the required information will not be accepted.

It is the sole prerogative of the Editor to determine whether a submission satisfies our requirements and decency standards, and any submission may be rejected at any time for any reason he or she might deem appropriate.

The strength of encouragement

Sometimes, the most meaningful contributions to a community begin with something remarkably simple. A neighbor asks for help. Someone offers encouragement. An individual takes a chance on an opportunity without knowing where it might lead.

That is how White Tiger Karate began 22 years ago, and its story offers a worthwhile reminder of how much good can come from one person's willingness to say yes.

In 2004, Sharyl Geisert was a brown belt in martial arts when a neighbor approached her about teaching classes at a community center. Unsure whether she was ready, she sought the approval of her own instructor, who encouraged her to move forward. What began as a modest opportunity to share something she loved eventually grew into a school that has spent more than two decades helping children and adults develop confidence, discipline and character.

Today, White Tiger Karate in Tilton offers far more than traditional martial arts instruction. Its programs include child development, parkour, tumbling and physical education, all built around principles that extend well beyond physical fitness. And that is what makes this anniversary particularly meaningful.

There is certainly value in learning to defend oneself, mastering a difficult technique or earning a new belt. Those accomplishments require patience, practice and determination. But the lessons that matter most are often the ones that cannot be measured by a rank or displayed on a trophy shelf.

Learning to handle disappointment without giving up. Treating others with respect, even when disagreements arise. Understanding that confidence does not require putting someone else down. Recognizing that being strong and being kind are not opposing qualities. These are lessons that serve people throughout their lives.

For children especially, having another trusted adult who believes in their abilities can make a tremendous difference. Parents and teachers work hard to provide that encouragement, but coaches, instructors and mentors offer something equally valuable. They provide another setting in which young people can discover their strengths, work through frustrations and learn that mistakes are part of growing.

Not every child excels in a traditional classroom or on an athletic field. Some need a different environment to find their confidence. Others benefit from the structure, consistency and sense of belonging that extracurricular programs provide. The importance of those opportunities should never be underestimated.

White Tiger Karate's longevity also speaks to something that can be difficult for any organization to achieve: remaining relevant without abandoning the values that made it successful.

Over 22 years, the needs of families have changed. Teaching methods have evolved. Technology has transformed how children learn, communicate and spend their free time. Organizations that hope to serve successive generations must be willing to adapt.

Geisert appears to understand that balance. Her commitment to continued education and mentorship reflects an important truth: Experience does not mean there is nothing left to learn. That is a valuable lesson for adults as well as children.

Perhaps the most striking part of White Tiger Karate's anniversary is Geisert's answer when asked what she hopes students will carry with them long after leaving her school. Her answer was simply, "Love." It might seem an unexpected answer from someone who has devoted her career to martial arts. Yet there is considerable wisdom in it.

Strength without compassion can become intimidation. Confidence without humility can become arrogance. Discipline without understanding can become rigidity. But when those qualities are guided by kindness and respect, they can help build better relationships, stronger families and healthier communities.

In Tilton, Northfield, Belmont and Sanbornton, the organizations that help shape young people deserve recognition not only for their programs, but for the values they reinforce. Their contributions are not always immediately visible. Sometimes the greatest results appear years later, in the choices former students make and the way they treat others.

On Saturday, Nov. 21, White Tiger Karate will celebrate its anniversary with a free public open house from 9:30 a.m. to noon at 120 Laconia Road in Tilton. It is an opportunity to recognize the students, families, instructors and mentors who have contributed to its history. More importantly, it is an occasion to appreciate what 22 years of patient instruction and encouragement can mean to a community.

After all, this entire journey began because one neighbor asked a question and one instructor offered encouragement.

Twenty-two years later, that simple exchange continues to make a difference. There is a lesson in that for everyone.



COURTESY PHOTO

Dispatcher Randall and Captain Boulanger of the Belmont Police Department recently had the pleasure of delivering some special gift bags to members of our Good Morning, Belmont Program! These thoughtful gifts were generously donated and put together by the wonderful folks at One Church here in Belmont. Their kindness brought a little extra joy to our residents, and we were happy to help make the deliveries! Photo courtesy of the department's Facebook page.

The trouble with having too many choices

KIND HEARTS, COLD WINTERS

By CHIPPY

I went to the grocery store the other day to buy a box of crackers. That's all I wanted. A plain old box of crackers to go with a little cheese while I watched television that evening. Nothing fancy. Nothing that required a committee meeting or a consultation with a nutritionist. Twenty minutes later, I was still standing in the cracker aisle.

Apparently, somewhere along the way, crackers became complicated. There were whole grain crackers, multigrain crackers, gluten-free crackers, reduced-sodium crackers, extra-crispy crackers, crackers made with seeds I'd never heard of, and something described as an "artisanal flatbread crisp." I'm not entirely sure what makes a cracker artisanal, but I suspect it has something to do with charging twice as much for half as many.

Whatever happened to the regular ones?

I finally grabbed a box that looked reasonably familiar and headed for the checkout, where I discovered that even paying for groceries has become an exercise in decision-making. Did I want to use the self-checkout? Did I have a rewards number? Did I want to round up my purchase for charity? Did I want my receipt printed, emailed or sent by carrier pigeon? All I wanted was some crackers.

Now, before anybody accuses me of being an old grouch, I'll admit that having choices is generally a good thing. I like being able to find what I need, and I certainly wouldn't want to go back to a time when every store carried three kinds of everything and you took what you could get.

But I do wonder whether we've reached the point where having more choices isn't necessarily making life any better.

Take television, for instance. I remember when you could sit down after supper, turn on the television and find something worth watching without needing a degree in computer science. There weren't a thousand programs available, but you could usually find a ballgame, a decent movie or something that would make you laugh.

These days, we've got more entertainment at our fingertips than anybody could possibly watch in three lifetimes. And somehow, we still spend half an hour scrolling through menus, declaring that there's nothing on.

My wife and I have developed a little routine. One of us suggests a movie. The other says that sounds fine, but maybe we should see what else is available. Forty minutes later, we've read descriptions of 27 movies, watched six previews and decided we're too tired to watch anything. Then we go to bed.

I suppose the younger crowd has grown accustomed to all this. They seem perfectly comfortable comparing 14 different brands of toothpaste on their phones while standing in the store. Me, I tend to think that if a toothpaste cleans your teeth and doesn't taste like something you'd use to scrub the garage floor, you've probably made a pretty good purchase.

And don't get me started on coffee. I like coffee. I drink it every morning. I've been drinking it for years, and I haven't felt the need to reinvent the experience. Give me a decent cup, a little cream and a place to sit, and I'm a happy man. But order coffee in some places today and you practically need to fill out an application. What size? What roast? What milk? Hot or iced? Sweetened or unsweetened? Extra shot? Flavored syrup? By the time they're finished asking questions, I'm ready to order a glass of water.

Of course, there's a certain irony in all my complaining. I'm the same fellow who will stand in a hardware store for 15 minutes comparing two nearly identical screwdrivers because one has a slightly better grip. So apparently, having too many choices is only a problem when somebody else is interested in them.

My wife has pointed this out more than once. She's usually right about these things, although I try not to encourage her by admitting it too often.

Maybe that's what I've been overlooking. The world hasn't necessarily become more complicated because people are trying to make our lives difficult. A lot of these choices exist because somebody, somewhere, wanted something different. And there's nothing wrong with that.

The person who needs gluten-free crackers is probably grateful to have them. The fellow who enjoys fancy coffee isn't hurting anybody. And those streaming services have certainly made it easier to find an old favorite on a cold November evening.

Still, I think there's something to be said for knowing what you like and being satisfied with it.

Not everything needs an upgrade. Not every decision requires extensive research. Sometimes the familiar choice is perfectly good, and sometimes the best thing you can do is stop comparing and get on with your day.

I've decided to put that philosophy into practice. Next time I go grocery shopping, I'm going straight to the cracker aisle, picking up the first familiar box I see and heading for the register. No comparing ingredients, no studying prices per ounce, no wondering whether some imported variety might change my life.

Of course, knowing my luck, they'll have discontinued the ones I like. And then I'll have something entirely new to complain about.

Winnisquam Echo

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The Machine brings the music of Pink Floyd to The Colonial Theatre

LACONIA — The Colonial Theatre of Laconia will present The Machine Performs Pink Floyd on Sunday, Dec. 6, at 7 p.m. Tickets to the show are on now at ColonialLaconia.com or by calling 1-800-657-8774.

The Machine has forged a nearly 40-year reputation of extending the musical legacy of Pink Floyd. The New York-based quartet performs a diverse mix of The Floyd's extensive 15-album repertoire, complete with faithful renditions of popular hits as well as obscure gems.

With stellar musicianship and passionate delivery, The Machine explores collective improvisation rivaling that of an early 1970's Pink Floyd, while their use of expanded theatrical elements and elaborate stage displays and lighting continue The Floyd spirit of the 1980's. The band is also known for recreating entire albums as a part of their show, accepting requests from fans, and for taking an A-Z approach in which one song is played for every letter of the alphabet.



The Machine has sold out theaters, premier showcase rooms and casinos across North America, Europe and Asia, performed at renowned music festivals such as Bonnaroo, Riverbend, and Gathering of the Vibes, and shared the stage with full symphony orchestras, including the Atlanta, Detroit, Pittsburgh, Jacksonville, Charlotte and San Diego Symphonies, as well as the Buffalo Philharmonic.

The band features founding member Tahrah Cohen (drums), longtime bandmates Scott Chasolen (keys, vocals) and Ryan Ball (guitar, vocals), and newest member Chris DeAngelis (bass, lead vocals). The band continues on to celebrate the music of Pink Floyd and to honor the life of Joe Pascarell, who co-founded the band with Tahrah in 1988.

"They duplicate the sound and hits of Pink Floyd with chilling accuracy, and they play for a hell of a long time," raves Matt Diehl of Rolling Stone.

"These guys are great!" said Bob Ezrin, Co-Producer of Pink Floyd's "The Wall."

"The Machine look nothing like Pink Floyd, but that doesn't matter-they sound exactly like Pink Floyd, and that's what counts," added Matthew Webber of Spin Magazine.

The Colonial Theatre of Laconia

The original owner, Benjamin Piscopo, was from Italy, and the theatre featured a fire curtain depicting Venice as seen from the water. In August of 2002, the theatre closed after 87 years of operation. On June 15, 2015, the City of Laconia announced a partnership with the Belknap Economic Development Council (BEDC) to purchase, renovate, and reopen the Colonial. The newly reopened Colonial Theatre has a seating capacity of 750 and plays host to various performances, including music, theatre, comedy, and civic events. Spectacle Management manages the Colonial Theatre and is home to the Powerhouse Theatre Collaborative. The Colonial Theatre is located at 609 Main St., Laconia, NH 03246. www.coloniallaconia.com

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www.spectaclelive.com

2027 MVSB Community Calendars now available

MEREDITH — MVSB (Meredith Village Savings Bank) is pleased to announce that its complimentary 2027 Community Calendars are now available at all branch locations while supplies last.

Featuring scenic images from across New Hampshire's Lakes Region, Mount Washington Valley, White Mountains and Seacoast areas, the annual calendar showcases the winning photographs selected through MVSB's Community Photo Contest. Wall and tent-style calendars are available free of charge to community members at MVSB offices in Alton, Ashland, Center Harbor, Exeter, Gilford, Laconia, Melvin Village, Meredith, Moultonborough, North Conway, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Rochester and Wolfeboro.

"Each year's calendar celebrates the beauty, character and traditions of the communities we serve," said Cindy Hemeon-Plessner, MVSB Senior Vice President and Chief Marketing & Experience Officer. "The photographs featured in the 2027 edition reflect the remarkable talent of local photographers while capturing many of the landscapes, wildlife and moments that make New Hampshire such a special place to call home. We invite everyone to stop by a branch and pick up a calendar before they run out."

The 2027 Community Calendar features photographs by:

- Andrew Drummond, Sunrise on Mount Adams (January)
- Kelly Norcross, Deer Couple in the Snow (February)
- Robert Kozlow, Maple Sugaring in NH (March)
- Kelly Danner, Keeper of the Flame (April)
- Jason Kennedy, Bemis Brook Falls in Spring (May)
- Kathy Diamontopoulos, Buried Treasures (June)
- Sophia Lupo, Dock Life at Dusk (July)
- David LaBar, Bear with "Do Not Pet the Fluffy Dogs" Sign (August)
- John Gisis, Wolfeboro Bay (September)
- Jaron Jenkins, Sandwich Fair Ferris Wheel (October)
- Erin Rojek, Screech Owl (November)
- Susan Francesco, A Loved One Visits (December)



Courtesy Photo

Complimentary 2027 MVSB Community Calendars are available at all branches while supplies last. MVSB team member Jaron Jenkins displays "Sandwich Fair Ferris Wheel," his winning photograph featured for October.

MVSB has produced its annual Community Calendar for many years as a way to celebrate the regions it serves and highlight the work of local photographers. The Bank accepts submissions to its Community Photo Contest each spring, with selected images featured in the calendar, on its website and through social media channels. Information about the contest and featured calendar photos can be found at mvsb.com/annual-community-photo-contest.

MVSB has been serving the essential banking needs of people, businesses, nonprofits and municipalities for over 150 years. As a mutual savings bank, MVSB has no stockholders but rather operates for the benefit of its customers, employees and community. Since our founding, one thing has always remained true: caring is at the heart of everything we do. By building and nurturing relationships, we believe that we can cultivate a community where we all thrive. It all starts with caring about our customers and neighbors. To learn more, visit any of the local branch offices located in New Hampshire in Alton, Ashland, Center Harbor, Exeter, Gilford, Laconia, Melvin Village, Meredith, Moultonborough, North Conway, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Rochester or Wolfeboro, call 800-922-6872 or visit mvsb.com.

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Belmont resident receives scholarship for commitment to nursing, beginning real-world patient care

NORTON, Mass. — Adeline Takantjas '29, an aspiring nurse practitioner from Belmont, has earned the 2026 Sturdy Health Nursing Scholarship Award.

Given annually to a high-achieving sophomore, this award includes a renewable $5,000 scholarship, an opportunity for paid summer employment, internship support and full-time employment after graduation. Takantjas's achievement was announced during the nursing program's White Coat Ceremony, which celebrates students' transition to clinical training.



"It was wonderful to have all that support," Takantjas said. "And having a guaranteed job at Sturdy really helps me feel that putting in all this work is going to be worth it."

Like her peers, Takantjas also received the prestigious white coat. The new attire celebrates the nursing program's sophomores for their extensive academic training as well as their personal commitment to helping others, marking their progress as they build careers in the healthcare industry.

Wheaton's nursing program combines a strong liberal arts foundation with hands-on clinical experience, preparing graduates to deliver compassionate, evidence-based care. Students also benefit from the college's state-of-the-art simulation center and opportunities for experiential learning in a variety of health care settings.

Wheaton College in Massachusetts combines liberal arts and sciences study with real-world experience. Students learn to apply holistic life and career planning skills to prepare for career paths aligned with their interest. This approach connects academics to careers and equips graduates with the skills to thrive personally and professionally.

Sanbornton Library hosting workshop on "Opting Out of AI"



Courtesy Photo

Geneva Sambor

SANBORNTON — Geneva Sambor, a Digital Learning Specialist Educator, will lead a workshop on "Opting Out of AI: Taking Control of Unwanted AI" at the Sanbornton Public Library on Thursday, Nov. 19 at 6 p.m.

Sambor is a local New Hampshire Educator who is passionate about teaching digital literacy, privacy and safety. This interactive program will focus on reclaiming digital choice in the world of Artificial Intelligence with practical settings, research, and device know-how. People of all levels of technological comfortability are welcome. You are encouraged to bring your own device, a phone, tablet or laptop to follow along.

The Sanbornton Public Library is located at 27 Meetinghouse Hill Rd. The program will be held in the second floor Woodman Room. The library accessibility includes an automatic door and an elevator lift. This program is free and open to the public, light refreshments will be provided.

For more information, contact the Sanbornton Public Library at (603) 286-8288 or splnhcirc@gmail.com Website: splnh.com.

Murder and mystery await you courtesy of Franklin Opera House



FRANKLIN — Murder, mystery, and mouthwatering desserts await guests at "Murder in Black & White," a Murder Mystery Dessert Fundraiser benefiting the Franklin Opera House, taking place Friday, Nov. 13, and Saturday, Nov. 14 at 7 p.m. at the Franklin Elks Lodge #1280 in Franklin.

The mystery begins with one intriguing question: Who is after Ann White? And why? As the evening unfolds, guests will follow clues, interrogate suspects, and uncover secrets in a thrilling interactive mystery where appearances can be deceiving, and everyone has something to hide. Until the killer is caught, everyone is a suspect.

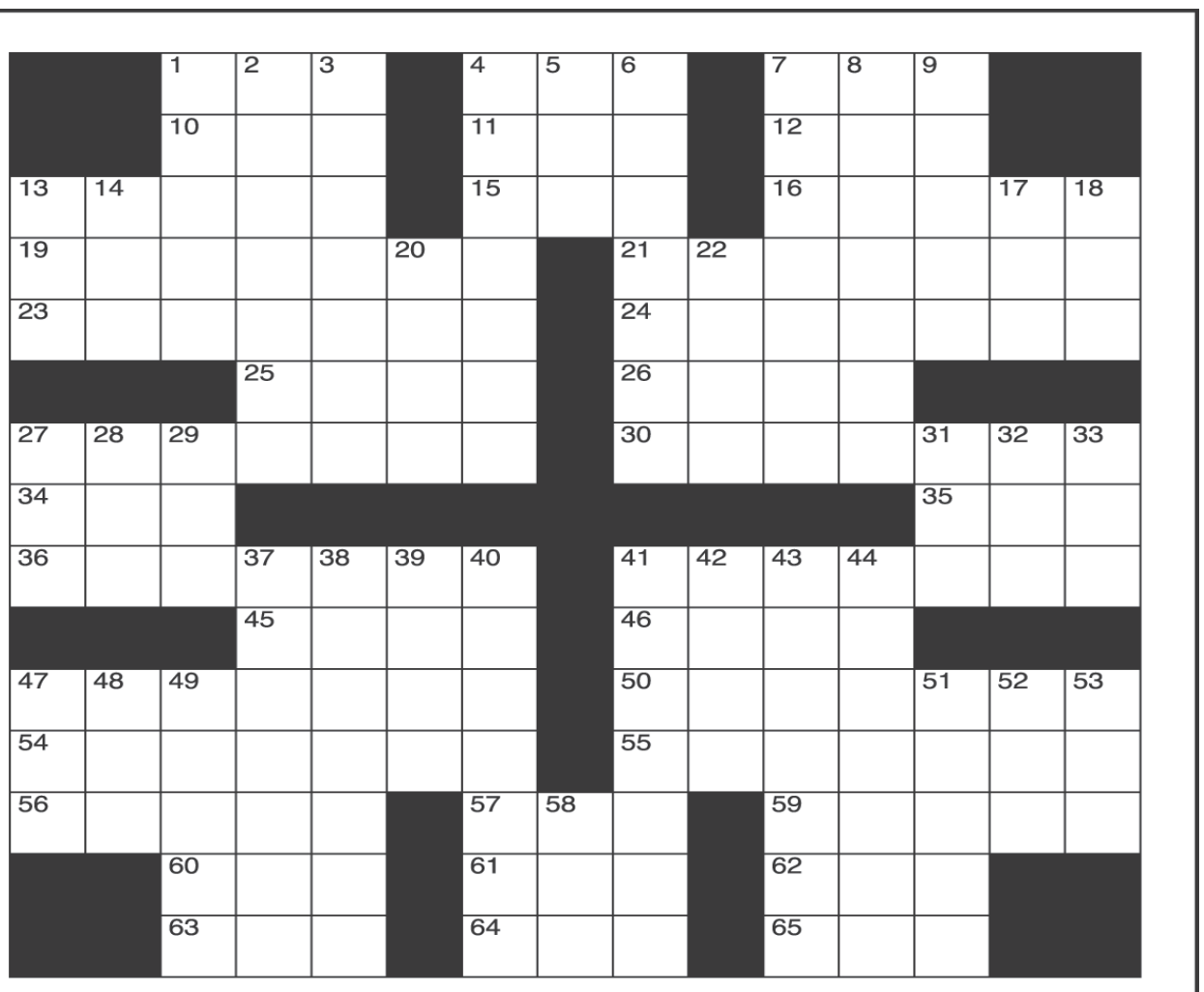
Combining suspense, comedy, audience participation, and decadent desserts, "Murder in Black & White" promises an unforgettable night of entertainment while supporting the community. The Franklin Opera House serves as the pillar of arts and culture in Franklin, offering live performances, educational programming, community events, and entertainment throughout the year. Fundraising events such as "Murder in Black & White" help ensure continuing affordable entertainment to serve Franklin and surrounding communities for generations to come.

Desserts for this event are made by Lady Liberty Confections in Franklin. Choose a classic whoopie pie, GF whoopie pie or a black & white parfait for your dessert when you purchase your ticket. Light snacks are provided for each table, and a cash bar will be available throughout the evening. Advance Tickets only – no tickets at the door- can be purchased at www.FOHNH.org.

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CLUES ACROSS

1. Tire pressure metric
4. Request
7. Clairvoyance
10. 007's creator Fleming
11. Male adult
12. Norse mythological figure
13. Coffin cloths
15. Breeze through
16. Ladyfish genus
19. We all take them
21. Nobleman's jurisdiction
23. Members of U.S. Navy
24. Rummy-like card game
25. Unable to move
26. Type of horse
27. Parted
30. Woman's cloak
34. South American plant
35. Prohibit
36. Something one takes
41. Dish detergent manufacturer
45. Romanian river
46. Personification of pity
47. Makes upset
50. Discuss again
54. Medical instrument
55. Support
56. Informal term for money
57. Catch doing something wrong
59. Prehistoric people
60. Large African antelope
61. Automobile
62. "Losing My Religion" rockers
63. High-resolution scientific instrument
64. A major division of geological time
65. Attempt

CLUES DOWN

1. Indoor plant
2. Fit to be sold
3. Rather
4. Collected
5. A baglike structure in a plant or animal
6. Irish rap group
7. Ageless
8. Lists indicating curriculum
9. Pokes at
13. Public television station
14. They __
17. Cooking tool
18. Separately managed account
20. Iron-containing compound
22. Swiss river
27. Former French coin
28. Electronic countermeasures
29. Taxi
31. Helps little firms
32. Unhappy
33. Midway between northeast and east
37. Glowing
38. Lists of items to be discussed
39. An informal body of friends
40. Indispensable quality
41. Neural structures
42. Brews
43. A place to dock
44. Festive singer
47. Sino-Soviet block (abbr.)
48. Northernmost point of mainland Wales
49. Most worthless parts
51. Type of "bear"
52. Take or consume
53. Defunct European organization
58. Swiss river

PUZZLE SOLUTION

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Comedic illusionists featured on "AGT" to perform at The Colonial Theatre

LACONIA — The Colonial Theatre of Laconia will present Young & Strange on Thursday, Feb. 4, 2027, at 7:30 p.m. Tickets to the show are on sale now at ColonialLaconia.com or by calling 1-800-657-8774.

Direct from London's West End and fresh from their appearances in the Live Finals of "America's Got Talent" 2026, England's most famous comedy illusionists Young & Strange present "DELUSIONISTS" — a spectacular new magic show packed with breathtaking illusions and hilarious comedy.

Suitable for the entire family this fast-paced, high-energy interactive show brings some of the biggest and most astonishing illusions in magic to the stage, combined with the unmistakable comedy that has made Young & Strange an audience favourite around the world.

"DELUSIONISTS" is an unforgettable experience that will leave you laughing, gasping and asking one very simple question:

How did they do that?!

"Young & Strange are stand-out stars," raves The London Evening Standard.

"Young & Strange triumph," wrote The London Times.

The Colonial Theatre of Laconia

The original owner, Benjamin Piscopo, was from Italy, and the theatre featured a fire curtain depicting Venice as seen from the water. In August of 2002, the theatre closed after 87 years of operation. On June 15, 2015, the City of Laconia announced a partnership with the Belknap Economic Development Council (BEDC) to purchase, renovate, and reopen the Colonial. The newly reopened Colonial Theatre has a seating capacity of 750 and plays host to various performances, including music, theatre, comedy, and civic events. Spectacle Management manages the Colonial Theatre and is home to the Powerhouse Theatre Collaborative. The Colonial Theatre is located at 609 Main St., Laconia, NH 03246. www.coloniallaconia.com

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www.spectaclelive.com

603 United hosting Winter Craft Fair and Festival of Trees

BELMONT — 603 United is holding their Annual Winter Craft Fair and Festival of Trees Dec. 5 & 6. This family fun event will take place in the Belknap Marketplace Saturday, Dec. 5 from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 6 from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Step into a Winter Wonderland of twinkling lights, beautifully decorated trees, and handmade treasures. There's something for everyone in the family, from browsing unique crafts and gifts to enjoying festive sights and smells that will make the season sparkle.

Our sponsored trees and wreaths will be raffled off, giving attendees the opportunity to win festive displays complete with exciting prizes, gift certificates, merchandise, and other surprises generously provided by our sponsors. Purchase raffle tickets, explore the displays, and enter for a chance to win your favorites! The tree raffle will be held on Sunday at 2 p.m.

There will be live music from the 603 Pickers and The Moulton Band on Sunday to help bring in the Holiday Spirit.

603 United is still taking applications for Vendors, Sponsors and Decorated Trees to be raffled. For more information, visit www.603united.org.

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Squirrel Nut Zippers keep 30th anniversary celebration going with festive Christmas Caravan Tour



LACONIA — Following a triumphant year celebrating the 30th anniversary of their platinum-certified breakthrough album Hot, the Squirrel Nut Zippers have announced that they are bringing the party into the holiday season with the return of their acclaimed Christmas Caravan Tour, a joyous musical celebration that has become one of America's most cherished and distinctive holiday traditions.

Tickets for Squirrel Nut Zippers Christmas Caravan Tour at the Colonial Theatre of Laconia on Thursday, Dec. 17 at 7:30 p.m. are on sale now at ColonialLaconia.com or by calling 1-800-657-8774.

Blending the warmth of Christmas classics with the infectious energy of New Orleans jazz, vintage swing, folk traditions, blues, and Americana, the Christmas Caravan transforms venues into festive wonderlands where audiences are transported to a bygone era filled with revelry, nostalgia, and holiday cheer.

For more than two decades, the Christmas Caravan Tour has captivated audiences nationwide with its unique mix of seasonal favorites, fan-loved originals from their hit album Christmas Caravan, which has sold more than 250,000 copies and reached #12 on the Billboard Holiday Albums chart, and the band's signature blend of musical styles. Equal parts holiday concert, vaudeville revue, and vintage variety show, the performance delivers an unforgettable evening filled with dazzling musicianship, spirited sing-alongs, heartwarming moments, and plenty of surprises.

"The Christmas Caravan Tour has always been about creating a sense of wonder and community," said Jimbo Mathus, frontman and co-founder of the Squirrel Nut Zippers. "The holidays are one of the few times when people slow down long enough to gather and share music. We wanted to create something that feels timeless—a celebration of old-world Christmas traditions, American roots music, and the joy of bringing people together. Every year the audience becomes part of the show, and that's what makes it so special."

This year's Christmas Caravan promises an evening of musical storytelling and festive celebration. Whether performing a swinging rendition of a Christmas classic, a New Orleans-inspired holiday romp, or one of their signature hits, the Squirrel Nut Zippers create a concert experience that feels equally at home beneath twinkling Christmas lights and inside a lively Prohibition-era speakeasy.

The tour follows the band's highly successful 30th anniversary celebration of Hot, the landmark album that helped spark the swing revival of the 1990s and remains one of the era's most influential recordings with. Certified platinum and featuring the hit single "Hell," Hot introduced millions of listeners to the band's inventive fusion of jazz, swing, blues, folk, and Southern roots music and continues to resonate with new audiences with the single recently featured in hit TV series like Wednesday (2025) and Lucifer (2021).

As the band commemorates three decades of Hot, the Christmas Caravan serves as both a holiday celebration and a testament to the enduring appeal of one of America's most original musical groups.

Lotus Land brings the music of Rush to the Colonial stage

LACONIA — The Colonial Theatre of Laconia will present Lotus Land on Saturday, Feb. 6, 2027, at 7:30 p.m. Tickets to the show are on sale now at ColonialLaconia.com or by calling 1-800-657-8774.

With an unparalleled performance, The American Rush Tribute Lotus Land brings the force of live Rush to life on stage. Enjoyed by die-hard Rush fans, musicians, and casual music listeners alike, the Lotus Land experience has been heralded as the ultimate celebration of RUSH's musical craftsmanship and spirited performances.

With the true set up and sound of the Canadian power trio, Lotus Land delivers the thrill that people expect when they see RUSH in concert. Their performances have wowed sold-out houses in premiere concert venues and their fan base continues to grow nationally and internationally.

The Colonial Theatre of Laconia

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Skechers expands, relocates at Tanger Outlets

TILTON — Tanger Outlets Tilton continues to evolve its retail lineup with the expansion and relocation of Skechers, now open in a larger space at the center, along with plans for Old Navy to relocate to a new storefront.

Skechers recently opened its expanded 5,800-square-foot store in Suite 210, next to Bath & Body Works. The relocation expands the brand's presence at Tanger Tilton from its previous 3,350-square-foot space, giving shoppers more room to explore Skechers' popular selection of footwear and accessories for men, women and children.

Shoppers can also look forward to a future relocation of Old Navy within the center, featuring an updated format and fresh new store design.

"These moves reflect our continued focus on creating a strong, relevant retail mix and evolving the center to best serve our shoppers and brand partners," said Eric Proulx, Tanger Tilton General Manager. "We're excited to see Skechers grow at Tanger Tilton and look forward to sharing more about Old Navy's next chapter at the center as plans progress."

Also joining the center's retail lineup is The Blossom Shop, a locally rooted florist and gift boutique that has served Franklin, New Hampshire, and surrounding communities for more than 65 years. Set to open this November, the new 2,532-square-foot store will be located next to Jockey and offer a selection of fresh flowers, plants, locally crafted pottery, Van Otis chocolates and thoughtfully curated gifts for every occasion.

The store opening and relocations are part of Tanger Tilton's broader strategy to refresh its retail mix for guests. Building on the opening of Crocs earlier this year, these updates reflect the center's continued commitment to bringing fresh brands and experiences to the Lakes Region, strengthening its longstanding role as a premier shopping destination for the surrounding communities.

About Tanger Tilton

Tanger Tilton is Lakes Region's upscale, open-air outlet shopping destination, featuring an extensive collection of top brands and local shops. The 250,000-square-foot center features more than 50 premier stores and eateries, including shopper-favorite brands like American Eagle, Bath & Body Works, Coach, Kate Spade New York, Old Navy, Gap and Under Armour. For a full store listing and map, as well as directions, events and offers, visit tanger.com/tilton, download the Tanger App or connect on Facebook and Instagram. Guests can also access the ultimate shopping experience by joining TangerClub, Tanger's exclusive loyalty program, for curated offers and rewards.

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JOSHUA SPAULDING

Bronson Glines prepares to boot the ball up the field during his team's semifinal game in Bedford last Wednesday.



JOSHUA SPAULDING

Brody Ennis boots the ball up the field during action against St. Thomas in the Division III semifinals.

SOCCER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE A1

any type of continuity," the Raider coach continued. "And the fact that we had two breakaways and didn't convert is a game changer."

Kyle Waldron had an early defensive stop and the Saints sent a shot through the crease and another that was headed wide. Keeper Ryan Monasky saved a direct kick chance and another bid while the Saints sent a shot wide of the net. Derik Matthews had a good clear and Christian Edgren senta. Nice ball up to Evan Martinez that was sent wide of the net. Brody Ennis sent a nice ball up to Joey Thomas and Niko Smith made a good run that was stopped by the defense.

The Saints sent a corner kick wide of the net and Brennen Geoffrey had a good defensive stop while Monasky snared another Saint chance. Wyatt Bamford had a crossing cleared out of the zone and Matthews had another clear at the other end. Matthews and Waldron cleared out crossing passes from the Saints and after Ennis sent a nice ball up to Bronson Glines that the Saints stopped. The Saints sent a corner kick wide of the net before they put the first goal in the net with for the 1-0 lead with 2:29 to go.

The Raiders came right back with Smith going in on net but the shot was denied and the Raiders couldn't convert on the ensuing corner kick and the game went to halftime with St. Thomas up by a 1-0 score.

Monasky made a couple of early saves in the second half and the Saints sent a shot over the top of the net while Matthews and Aaryn Durand had good defensive stops. The Saints were able to score their second goal with 31:04 to go in the game for the 2-0 lead. Monasky made a diving save on a header by the Saints and Waldron sent a great ball ahead to Martinez that went wide of the net.

St. Thomas pushed the lead to 3-0 with 26:28 to go and after a solid defensive stop from Smith, sent a couple of shots wide of the net and had a corner kick go over the top of the net. The Saints scored their fourth goal with 20:46 to go and Zayn Morris, Geoffrey and Edgren all had good defensive stops with Monasky making another save.

Thomas had a run in the zone that was denied before the Raiders got on the board on a shot from Martinez that found the back of the net with 9:37 to go to make it 4-1. The Saints responded moments later to push the lead to 5-1 and Martinez came back with a chance that was cleared. Monasky had another save and Ennis had his cross cleared as the clock ran out on Belmont's season with the 5-1 St. Thomas win.

"You convert right after they score and it's a 1-1 game going to half, that's a big difference in how you approach what you want to do in the second half," Foley said. "They're the defending state champions for a reason.

"Our guys had a phenomenal year and it was awesome to be here again," the Raider coach continued, noting that the quarterfinal win over rival Gilford came with goods and bads. "We talked about the emotional high of beating Gilford and now you have to come back and play another emotionally-charged game at 8 at night.

"The fact that it took us a while to find our footing, if you dig yourself a hole, it's just impossible to get out of," Foley said. "We're senior heavy (12 seniors), but we have a lot of underclassmen who do stuff, but they came together about a month ago and turned a corner.

"This senior group has been the backbone of what we've been able to do," the Raider coach added. "Saying goodbye to those guys is always going to be tough but we're comfortable with the group we have coming back and the kids we have coming in.

"The idea would be to be back here next year and see what happens," Foley said.

The Raiders finished the regular season at 9-4-3 to earn the ninth seed in the tournament and upset eighth-ranked Fall Mountain and top-ranked Gilford to earn their spot in the Division III semifinals.

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



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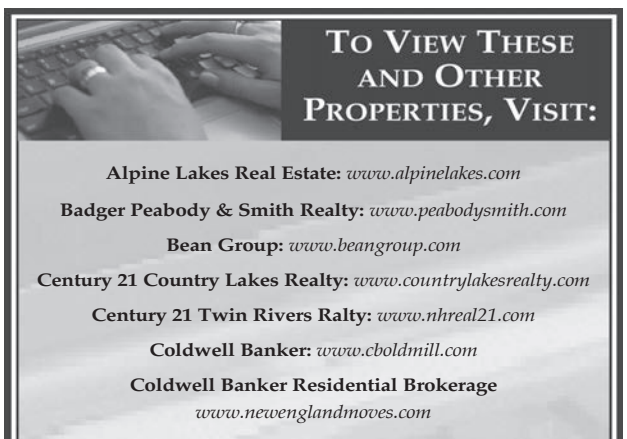
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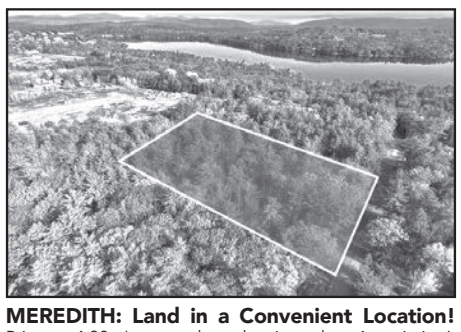
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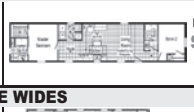
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NHEX explores the human side of business efficiency

REGION — As insurance applications and enrollments move online, Amanda Lapar is helping her agency rethink how it works. She also values the personal relationships that help clients make sense of complicated choices.

"It's nice to be able to be in person with them and create relationships," said Lapar, a consultant at Doran Independent Insurance.

As a member of the New Hampshire Entrepreneurship Exchange (NHEX), Lapar brings that experience to conversations with other young professionals who are improving systems in their own businesses. By sharing what works at Doran, she supports fellow members while learning from the changes they are making.

Together, those discussions raise a practical question. As technology changes daily work, how can better systems support better service?

For Lapar, who has worked at Doran for four years, improving efficiency includes examining how the agency uses its software and what other tools might help. As more applications and enrollments become electronic, she and her colleagues are asking practical questions about the systems they use.

"How are we benefiting from this?" she said. "Should we be getting this to be more efficient?"

Those questions have relevance beyond insurance. NHEX members include professionals updating systems within established companies and owners developing processes for newer businesses. Founded in 2025, NHEX brings together young professionals from different industries to share knowledge, solve business problems, and build careers in the Lakes Region.

Their conversations create an opportunity to examine a change before making it and learn from someone who has already worked through a similar problem. For NHEX co-founder Ethan Keslar, the value comes from connecting those decisions to a clear purpose.

"A useful conversation about efficiency starts with what you are trying to improve," he said. "Is the process easier for your staff? Is the experience clearer for your customer? Those questions help us think beyond simply adding another tool."

In Lapar's work, that customer experience depends on understanding individual needs. She helps people compare health insurance options, with much of her work focused on Medicare.

Knowing the plans is one part of the job. Helping someone understand which option fits their circumstances requires conversation.

"Everybody's health insurance needs are different," she said.

Clients may need help understanding benefits or comparing options they did not know were available. Lapar sees the consultant relationship as a way to make that complexity manageable.

"They don't need to understand it 100 percent, because that's why they have us," she said.

Her experience helps NHEX members consider both the systems behind a service and the people using it. Although she does not own the agency, she brings knowledge of how its processes function in daily work.

"When someone is starting from scratch with their systems, we can share what we already have in place and what we've learned," she said.

For Keslar, those observations are an important source of ideas for improving a business.

"Young professionals often see opportunities to improve systems because they work with them every day," he said. "NHEX gives them a place to test those ideas with people who understand different parts of running a business."

That exchange allows members to bring a specific challenge to the group, draw on experience from other industries, and consider what might work in their own setting.

"We're bouncing ideas off of each other and kind of working to help each other grow," Lapar added.

NHEX invites interested professionals to attend a session to experience the collaborative environment firsthand. For more information, visit nhex603.com or contact Ethan Keslar at ethan@keslarinsurance.com.

WTK

CONTINUED FROM PAGE A1

One of the guiding principles behind WTK is that personal growth never ends. Throughout her journey, Geisert has continued to seek knowledge, training, and guidance from mentors who have helped shape not only her professional abilities but also who she is as a person.

She recognizes three important mentors in her life: Grandmaster Clarence Cooper, Jr., her martial arts teacher; Melody Johnson, her SKILLZ Child Development mentor; and Kelly Murray, who guides her in business and personal development. Although each brings a different area of expertise, all three have contributed significantly to Geisert's personal growth, challenging her to continue learning, reflecting, and becoming a better version of herself.

Their influence reinforces a philosophy central to WTK: regardless of our age, rank, experience, or accomplishments, there is always more to learn.

Growing with the generations

One of the keys to WTK's longevity has been Geisert's willingness to embrace change while remaining true to the school's core values.

For Geisert, change itself has never been the challenge. In fact, she welcomes it. The greater challenge is ensuring that WTK continues to remain relevant and meaningful to each new generation of students and families.

"I've always enjoyed change and exploring new ideas. The challenge is staying relevant in an ever-changing world while remaining true to the values that have guided us from the beginning," Geisert shares.

As generations evolve, so do their needs, perspectives, and ways of learning. Geisert believes that effective teaching requires a willingness to listen, adapt, and continually seek new knowledge.

This philosophy has helped WTK grow from traditional martial arts instruction into a school that combines time-honored principles with modern child development education.

While teaching methods may evolve, the values of compassion, integrity, respect, and an indomitable spirit remain constant.

More than Martial Arts

Guided by its philosophy, "Strength in Peace," White Tiger Karate believes that true strength comes not only from physical ability but also from compassion, integrity, respect, self-discipline, and perseverance.

The school's mission reflects this commitment: "Our mission is to cultivate honest, caring individuals who embody compassion, integrity, and an indomitable spirit."

Throughout the years, WTK has continued to grow and evolve. Today, the school offers age-specific SKILLZ Child Development martial arts programs, traditional Pai Lum Kung Fu, parkour, tumbling, and homeschool physical education opportunities. As the Northeast Headquarters for Pai Lum Kung Fu, WTK takes pride in preserving the traditions and values of martial arts while embracing modern approaches to child development.

What truly makes White Tiger Karate special, however, is its people. Generations of students, families, instructors, and leadership team members have helped shape the school into the welcoming and inclusive community it is today.

Students are taught that success is not simply measured by the color of a belt, the height of a jump, or the number of trophies earned. Success is measured by personal growth, the courage to try, the kindness shown to others, and the determination to never give up.

Through its STORM Leadership Program, community activities, and commitment to developing tomorrow's leaders, WTK demonstrates that the lessons learned on the training floor extend far beyond the dojo.

The legacy of love

As WTK celebrates its 22nd anniversary, Geisert finds herself reflecting not only on the school's accomplishments but also on what she hopes its lasting impact will be.

When asked what she hopes students will carry with them long after they leave her dojo, her answer is one simple word. "Love."

For Geisert, love is more than an emotion. It is demonstrated through kindness, compassion, acceptance, understanding, and the willingness to lift others up.

"Our world is in a turbulent time and what I have found is that the one thing that can raise our community is love," Geisert explains.

In a world where differences can sometimes divide us, she believes that teaching people to care for one another, respect one another, and recognize the value in every individual is more important than ever. It is a belief reflected in WTK's welcoming environment, where every student is encouraged to grow, every individual has something valuable to contribute, and strength is measured not simply by what we can accomplish for ourselves, but by what we can do for others.

Celebrating 22 years — the community is invited!

To commemorate this special milestone, WTK will host a 22nd Anniversary Open House & Celebration on Saturday, Nov. 21 from 9:30 a.m. to noon. The celebration is free and open to the public!Guests are invited to enjoy light food and refreshments while taking a special Walk Down Memory Lane, featuring photographs and a slideshow highlighting the school's 22-year history, its students, instructors, families, and memorable moments.

Whether you are a current student, former member, longtime friend, or someone simply interested in learning more about WTK, everyone is welcome.

The celebration offers an opportunity to reconnect with old friends, share memories, meet the WTK family, and honor the many individuals who have contributed to the school's journey.

Looking toward the future

As White Tiger Karate celebrates 22 years, there is much to be thankful for: the families who have placed their trust in the school, the dedicated instructors who share their knowledge and passion, the students who inspire everyone around them, the mentors who have provided guidance, and the community that has supported its journey.

Perhaps one of the greatest lessons of these 22 years is that we never truly know how much of a difference a simple act of encouragement can make. After all, White Tiger Karate began with a neighbor's invitation and a Sensei who said yes.

That same spirit of encouragement continues today, as students are taught to believe in themselves, instructors are encouraged to keep learning, and future leaders are given opportunities to grow.

Twenty-two years. Thousands of lessons. Countless moments of growth. One enduring mission. And if there is one lesson Geisert hopes will reach far beyond the walls of WTK, it is that love has the power to strengthen individuals, unite families, and uplift an entire community.

White Tiger Karate — Strength in Peace. Rooted in Love.

White Tiger Karate is located at 120 Laconia Rd., Suite 201, Tilton, and offers Martial Arts, child development programs, parkour, tumbling, and physical education opportunities for children and adults. Contact us at 603-998-1511.

JACK

CONTINUED FROM PAGE A1

connection, combined with Jack's experiences growing up in the spotlight, offers an inspiring perspective for aspiring artists and students.

Following the performance, audience members will have a unique opportunity to meet Jack and Tim and participate in an informal question-and-answer session. Young musicians, students, and music lovers of all ages are encouraged to attend. Jack will share insights from his experiences as a child performer, discuss the lessons he has learned along the way, and answer questions from attendees.

More than a concert, this event offers an opportunity to hear firsthand from a young artist who has navigated the challenges and opportunities of a creative career while staying grounded in his love of music and community.

This special event is presented by the Franklin Opera House and hosted at the Franklin Public Library. Tickets are available at www.FOHNH.org or at the door. This is a general admission event, and seating is available on a first-come, first-served basis.

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Desrochers, Abbott compete in Meet of Champions



Jennifer Pinard — Courtesy

Eloise Abbott of Winnsiquam runs in the Meet of Champions on Saturday at the Hopkinton Fairgrounds.



Jennifer Pinard — Courtesy

Winnisquam's Cullen Desrochers competes in the Meet of Champions at the Hopkinton Fairgrounds on Saturday.

BY JOSHUA SPAULDING
Sports Editor

HOPKINTON — The top local runners from around the region descended on the Hopkinton Fairgrounds for the annual Meet of Champions on Saturday. The race brought together the top teams and individuals from each of the three State Meets the previous Saturday in Manchester.

For the boys' race, the top local finisher was Colin Foster of Newfound, who finished in ninth place in 15:49 while Collin Reeder of Profile was 44th in 16:47 and Jacob Pinard of Kingswood finished in 48th place in 16:53. Kennett's Micah Stackpole was 58th overall in a time of 17:10 with Winnisquam's Cullen Desrochers right behind him in 59th place in 17:12. Lance Labens of White Mountains Regional finished in 66th place in a time of 17:28.

Gilford's William Reinhardt finished in 116th place in a time of 18:47, Andy Rolfe of Profile was 123rd in 19:00, Ezra Boisseau of Profile was 129th in 19:29, Walter Meyer of Profile finished in 135th in 20:34, Jack Burhoe of Profile was 136th overall in 21:04 and Nicholas Southwell of Profile placed 138th in 22:50.

This marked the first time that the Profile boys had qualified for the Meet of Champions as a team (fourth in the Division III State Meet) and they return six of their top seven runners to the fold next year.

For the girls, Profile eighth grader Sylvie Brown led the local athletes with a 14th place finish in 19:00 with sophomore Elsa Bartlett of Inter-Lakes right behind in 16th place in a time of 19:14. White Mountains Regional ninth grader Devyn Cyr placed 45th overall in 20:25, Winnisquam sophomore Eloise Abbott was 75th overall in 21:12 and White Mountains Regional's Mackenzie Morgan finished in 83rd place in a time of 21:25. Prospect Mountain ninth grader Ulitta Paige finished in 104th place overall in a time of 22:04 to round out the field of local runners.

With their top-25 finishes, Foster, Brown and Bartlett all qualify for the New England Championships on Saturday, Nov. 14, at Troy Howard Middle School in Belfast, Maine. Girls start at 11:30 a.m. and the boys follow at 12:15 p.m.

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







