

Winnisquam Echo

THURSDAY, MARCH 5, 2026

FREE

SERVING TILTON, NORTHFIELD, BELMONT & SANBORNTON, N.H

Students and Heritage Commission send important message to senior citizens



COURTESY

Belmont Elementary Student Council and advisor Danielle Embree with school wide collection of Soup and Crackers.

BELMONT — The Belmont Heritage Commission's "We Love our Senior Citizens" February event, now in its fifth year was another huge success. The Commission's goal was to send Valentines and warm wishes along with goody bags of groceries to help senior citizens get through the rest of the winter months. Heritage chair Vicki

Donovan stated that this winter has definitely been difficult due to grocery prices, heating costs and the inability to venture out due to the extreme weather. It's been tough for many, especially senior citizens.

The Heritage Commission members were very thankful for every school in Belmont who contributed in unique

ways to help us reach out to the senior citizens and housebound elderly. Belmont Elementary Student Council and advisor Danielle Embree organized a school wide Soup and Crackers Food Drive which helped greatly adding to other staples the commission purchases for the event. The students at B.E.S. also made wonderful Valentine's Day cards to add to each bag of goodies. Belmont Middle School fifth grade teachers helped students to

also make cards of warm wishes to get seniors through the last months of winter.

Donovan said, "It's heartwarming to watch the seniors cherish the cards as much as the items they put in their bags."

Members of the Belmont High School Honor Society, along with the Heritage Commission's Student Representative Riley DeGange helped load, carry and set up tables of

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Creativity and community await at Belmont Public Library this March

BELMONT — The Belmont Public Library invites community members of all ages to take part in a variety of engaging programs and book discussions throughout March 2026.

Regular weekly offerings include Story Time for children under school age on Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. Adults can participate in creative opportunities

such as the Fiber Arts gathering on Mondays at 10 a.m., and the Watercolor Workshop on Mondays at 2 p.m., both of which provide welcoming spaces for creativity and conversation.

The library's book groups continue to offer thoughtful discussions across a range of genres. The Afternoon Book

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Bear wrestlers earn Division III runner-up plaque

BY JOSHUA SPAULDING

Sports Editor

PETERBOROUGH — The Winnisquam wrestling team equaled its best output ever on Sunday, finishing as the Division III runners up at the Division III State Meet at ConVal Regional High School in Peterborough. The Bears finished 7.5 points behind the champion Bow Falcons.

The top finisher for the Bears was Dylan Griffin, who won the Division III title at 132 pounds. He started his day with a pin of a Hillsboro-Deering foe then pinned opponents from Masconic and White Mountains to earn a berth in the finals, where he pinned a John Stark foe to take the state championship.

Dayton Brigante wrestled to second place at 120 pounds, pinning foes from Bow and Mascoma before falling by pin to a ConVal opponent in the finals.

Aidan Sufert also finished in second place at 126 pounds, pinning his opponents from White Mountains and Bow to advance to the finals, where he was beaten by a Campbell opponent by a 6-1 score.

At 157 pounds, Christian Parenteau also took second place, getting pins over Prospect Mountain, Monadnock and Bow to advance into the finals where he was pinned by a Campbell opponent.

The other second place on the day for the Bears was at 190 pounds, where Noah Bassett got a pin of a White Mountains wrestler to start his day and then

SEE BEARS, PAGE A8

New Hampshire Writers' Project launches Veterans Out Loud at Veterans Home

TILTON — The New Hampshire Writers' Project (NHWP) officially launched the first event of the Colonel Melvin Weston Rowell Literary Project for Veterans with an in-person program, "Veterans Out Loud," at the New Hampshire Veterans Home in Tilton.

The morning brought together veterans, staff, community partners, and author Martin Swirko, who read from his novel "All Routes Are Amber." Residents engaged in conversation following the reading and received complimentary signed copies of the book for their Library as part of the program's commitment to increasing access to literature and meaningful cultural engagement.

"This project extends our mission of writers helping writers, with a focus on a very important demographic in our state—New Hampshire veterans and their voices," said Masheri Chappelle, Board Chair of NHWP.

The event was coordinated in partnership with Beverly Stoddard, Veterans' Projects Administrator with NHWP, and Maureen Campbell, MS, CTRS/L, Recreation Therapy Supervisor at the Veterans Home. Their thoughtful leadership helped create a welcoming, engaging experience for residents. Light refreshments were served, fostering space for meaningful conversation, reflection, and connection.

The program was co-sponsored by American Legion Post 88. Commander Gary Tasker—grandson of Colonel Melvin Weston Rowell—helped inspire the initiative and presented two generous donations during the event: a \$100 contribution to the New Hampshire Writers' Project to support the Colonel Melvin Weston Rowell Literary Project, and a \$500 donation to the New Hampshire Veterans Home, formally accepted by Maureen Campbell on behalf of the Home to support programming for residents.

About the Colonel Melvin Weston Rowell Literary Project for Veterans

The Colonel Melvin Weston Rowell Literary Project is a three-part initiative designed to honor and uplift veteran voices across New Hampshire:

Veterans Out Loud – In-person author visits featuring readings, discussion, and book giveaways

Veterans' Voices – Upcoming online writing sessions offering trauma-sensitive journaling, memoir, and creative expression support

Sponsor a Veteran Membership – A \$20 donation provides

SEE VETERANS, PAGE A8



PHOTO COURTESY

Maple sugaring season has started, and students at Belmont Elementary School are ready to go! On Friday, Feb. 13, Team Silver tapped half of our trees, and on Tuesday, Feb. 17, Team Blue made their way through the very snowy woods to tap the rest of our trees. Special thanks to School Resource Officer MacFadden and Ms. Gray for helping to lead the charge and to two of our assistant advisors, Belmont High School students Mike McWhinnie and Lily Kievet, for trudging through the snow with us to get this challenging, but sweet, job done! Photo courtesy of the Shaker Regional School District's Facebook page.

Anestis fifth at Northeast Regional Championships

NEW LONDON, Conn. — Graduate student Chase Anestis (Belmont.) went 2-1 on day two of the NCAA Division III Northeast Regional Wrestling Championship at Gregory Fieldhouse at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy to place fifth at 165 pounds on Sunday.

Anestis started the day

in the consolation quarterfinals, where he matched up against Springfield's Gabe Thomasson — the seventh-ranked wrestler in the weight class in the region. Anestis built a 9-0 lead in the first period and maintained a 10-6 advantage entering the third before sealing the win with an early takedown in the

final period to earn a 14-9 decision and advance to the consolation semifinals.

Needing two more wins to secure a spot at the NCAA Division III National Championship, Anestis met Landon Kearns of Coast Guard. Kearns entered the weekend ranked second in the weight class in Region 1. Anestis took

a 1-0 lead with an escape midway through the second period, but Kearns tied it with an escape in the opening seconds of the third before securing a takedown 23 seconds into overtime to seal a 4-1 sudden victory decision.

Anestis advanced to the third-place bout last winter, ultimately falling on riding

time in a tiebreak period to narrowly miss out on qualifying for nationals.

In the fifth-place bout, Anestis squared off against Justin Hood of Emmanuel — the fifth-ranked wrestler in the region. After a scoreless first period, Anestis scored a nearfall late in the second and added a point for riding time to close his

career with a 5-0 decision.

He ends the season with a 13-5 record despite missing nearly three full months due to injury. He wraps up an impressive career with an 83-27 record, 28 pins, and none allowed.

Plymouth State finished the tournament 17th in the team rankings with 16.5 points.

Granite VNA offers Caregiver Connection in Belmont

BELMONT — Granite VNA offers Caregiver Connection on Wednesday, March 18 from 9:30 to 11 a.m. at Tilly Market Café at the Belknap Marketplace at 96 Daniel Webster Highway.

Join us and connect with other family caregivers, while enjoying an opportunity to unwind and have discussions rich in empathy and resources.

Pre-registration is not required. For more infor-

mation, call (603) 224-4093 or (800) 924-8620, ext. 85664 or visit www.granitevna.org. This program is offered at no charge.

About Granite VNA

Granite VNA is a not-for-profit licensed and certified home health and hospice care provider. The agency serves people of all ages in 72 communities across the Greater Capital Region and Central New Hampshire by providing

home care, hospice care, pediatric and maternal child health services, and wellness programming. The agency has offices in Concord, Laconia and Wolfeboro. Formed through the merger of Concord Regional VNA and Central New Hampshire VNA & Hospice, Granite VNA has served New Hampshire since 1899. For more information about Granite VNA, visit www.granitevna.org.

Aviation summer camp takes off



COURTESY

ACE Academy graduate, now licensed pilot, Ethan Seeler, gets ready for takeoff. Since attending ACE Academy, Seeler, currently a college student, has earned his private and commercial pilot's license, is rated to fly single and multi-engine aircraft, has his instrument rating and is licensed as an Airframe and Power Point Mechanic.

GILFORD — WinnAero, the STEM aviation/aerospace education non-profit, announces its summer day camp schedule with a new twist. Due to increasing applications, WinnAero has engaged RegPack, a computerized on-line registration and payment software company to expedite the registration process.

"Our increasing enrollments each year dictated we offer an on-line registration and payment option for parents," said WinnAero Education Director Dan Caron.

The new online process will apply to this summer's ACE Academies held at the Laconia Airport.

"Parents can now submit their student's application fully on-line, reserve a seat early, pay tuition securely and submit required documentation as well," added Caron.

The results have been immediate said Zach Glennon of Meredith. Glennon joined WinnAero as its Technology Consultant responsible for on-boarding the RegPack System. For the previous three years, the ACE Academies have averaged 100 students enrolled. Thus far in 2026, RegPack has already processed 56 applications for the July summer camps.

The dates, times, themes and tuition costs for the ACE Academies summer

camp are available at www.winnaero.org or by contacting Camp Director Caron at dan.caron@winnaero.org. The 2026 session themes include Air Traffic Control, Search & Rescue Techniques, Aerospace Engineering, Pre-Ground School for future pilots, a Space Academy, Drone Operations, and Aeromedical Effects of High Altitude Flight. All sessions are taught by current certified N.H. teachers augmented by subject matter experts. The ACE Academies are day camps for grades 3 through 12 students the weeks of July 6-10 and July 13-17. For more information, visit www.winnaero.org.

Early childhood developmental screening appointments available March 13

TILTON — Do you have a child aged three, four, or five who is not yet kindergarten aged? Do you have any concerns regarding their progress in early academics, communication, fine motor, or gross motor skills? The Winnisquam Early Learning Center has screening appointments available on Friday, March 13.

Please contact Jessie Heath, WRSD preschool coordinator, to schedule an appointment for your

child. She can be reached at jheath@wrdsau59.org or 603-286-2034. Winnisquam Early Learning Center (WELC) - part of the Winnisquam Regional School District - is staffed with early childhood special educators, a speech and language pathologist, occupational therapist, and physical therapist. WELC is a special education preschool program that provides specially designed instruction and therapy for children who are found el-

igible for special education services through an evaluation process.

The qualified staff at WELC can screen your child and make recommendations for further evaluations, if necessary, that could qualify your child for support and services at Winnisquam Early Learning Center if they are found eligible! Contact Jessie Heath to schedule your appointment!

Powerhouse announces auditions for "1776 the Musical!"

LACONIA — Powerhouse Theatre Collaborative, the resident theatre company of the Colonial Theatre in Laconia, announces auditions for "1776 the Musical," which will be performed June 27 at the Colonial in collaboration with 20 members of the Lakes Region Symphony Orchestra in honor

of America's 250th birthday.

"1776" won the Tony Award for best musical in 1969, and concerns the events leading up to signing of the Declaration of Independence as John Adams fights to convince the Continental Congress to vote for independence

from England. The musical looks at the compromises required to get all 13 states on board to sign Thomas Jefferson's historic document, leading up to the powerful final vote.

Auditions will be by video only, and require a one-minute song of your choosing that showcases your vocal range and act-

ing ability and an audition side provided at powerhousenh.org/auditions. Registration and video are due by Sunday, March 29.

Most rehearsals for "1776" will take place in May on Sundays, Mondays and Wednesdays in Laconia. There will be a few additional rehearsals in June and mandatory rehearsals on Tuesday, June 23 and Friday, June 26. There will be 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. performances at the Colonial on June 27.

Powerhouse is looking for talented actors who sing well as the show contains a lot of dialogue, and only a few group musical numbers. Auditioners should be self-motivat-

ed, and able to practice at home, as while this is a concert version with minimal staging, the play will be fully memorized and performed without scripts in hand. The staging will be directed by Bryan Halperin, with Music Direction and Conducting by Laura Iwaskiewicz, and Costumes by Emily Nelson. This is Powerhouse's first collaboration with the Symphony!

Says Halperin, "We wanted to do something to commemorate this historic moment in American history despite the admittedly polarized time we find ourselves in. '1776' is a powerful reminder about the

way our Founding Fathers found common ground and a common mission to achieve independence and we hope community members can come together and be reminded of our common history as Americans."

Tickets for 1776 are already on sale at coloniallaconia.com and powerhousenh.org/1776 - buyers should make sure they are only buying tickets from the correct links, as third-party sites inflate the ticket prices. This special event is sponsored by Friedman and Bresaw, PLLC.

For all the details on Powerhouse Theatre Collaborative, auditions, and other events in the 2026 season, check out powerhousenh.org or email info@powerhousenh.org. Powerhouse is still looking for business sponsors to support the costs of this and other productions in the 2026 season - contact the email above with questions or interest.



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COURTESY

The Belmont High School Outdoor Environmental Club had the perfect day for their trip to Cannon Mountain last Friday. Twenty-five students participated in this year's trip, and got a healthy dose of physical activity and Vitamin D! Photo courtesy of the Shaker Regional School District's Facebook page.

Bank of New Hampshire announces officer promotions



COURTESY

Pictured (l-r): Chris Walkley, SVP – Senior Commercial Banking Manager; Tarra Sorell, Business Development Officer; Nicole Ceja, AVP – Prestige Plus Officer; Tiffany Baert, VP – Marketing & Public Relations Officer

LACONIA — Bank of New Hampshire is proud to announce the promotions of Christopher Walkley to SVP – Senior Commercial Banking Manager, Tiffany Baert to SVP – Marketing & Public Relations Officer, Nicole Ceja to AVP – Prestige Plus Officer and Tarra Sorell to Business Development Officer.

Chris Walkley joined Bank of New Hampshire in 2011 as a Junior Credit Analyst and was promoted to AVP – Commercial Banker in 2014. His continued success led to additional promotions with increasing responsibility across all aspects of commercial lending. In his expanded role, Chris will assume direct oversight of the Commercial Banking Team, including the Maine team, providing comprehensive leadership over commercial lending activities throughout the bank's lending footprint.

Tiffany Baert began her career at Bank of New Hampshire in 2010 as a Marketing Administrator. Over the past 15 years, she has steadily expanded her responsibilities across all aspects of marketing, including public relations

and promotion, advertising, communications, customer experience, budget execution, partnership negotiations and staff management. In 2025, Baert successfully developed a restructured Marketing department, adding key personnel focused on teamwork, customer feedback strategies, social media presence and modern branding initiatives.

Nicole Ceja joined Bank of New Hampshire in 2018 as a Bank Services Representative and was promoted to Retail Bank Trainer in 2021. In 2024, she advanced to the role of Prestige Plus Administrator. In this position, Ceja has implemented efficiencies in database management, developed a new onboarding process and expanded Prestige Plus membership for this elite bank customer group.

Tarra Sorell joined Bank of New Hampshire in 2019 as a Customer Service Representative and transitioned to the Cash Management group in 2022 as a Cash Management Support Specialist. In this role, she assumed additional responsibilities and played an integral part

in stabilizing the department while providing exceptional support to both her colleagues and customers. In her new role as Business Development Officer, Sorell will focus on increasing customer sales goals.

“These promotions reflect the exceptional leadership, dedication and results Chris, Tiffany, Nicole and Tarra consistently deliver for our customers and our organization,” said Ross Bartlett, EVP – Chief Operating Officer. “They have demonstrated a commitment to our mission and a passion for continuous improvement. We are proud to recognize their achievements and look forward to them continuing to excel in their expanded roles.”

Founded in 1831, Bank

of New Hampshire is the oldest and one of the largest independent banks headquartered in the state. With assets exceeding \$2.7 billion and 21 banking offices across New Hampshire and southern Maine, the bank provides comprehensive deposit, lending and wealth management solutions for families and businesses. As a mutual organization, Bank of New Hampshire is focused on the success of its customers, communities and employees—rather than stockholders. With a legacy of strength and stability, the bank combines local decision-making and trusted guidance with modern technology to deliver a seamless banking experience. For more information, call 1-800-832-0912 or visit BNH.Bank.

Sanbornton Town Clerk raffling off dog gift basket

SANBORNTON — The Sanbornton Town Clerk's office is encouraging residents to register their four-legged friends by once again raffling off a dog gift basket.

Register your dog by April 30 at the town clerk's office, 17 Meetinghouse Hill Rd., during normal business hours to be entered for a chance to win! Your dog must be up to date on their rabies vaccination, and dogs already registered have been entered automatically. The winner will also get one free dog registration for next year, and will get to pick the number tag they would like.

For more information, contact the town clerk's office at (603) 286-4034 or tctc@sanborntonnh.org.

Local Emmanuel College student named to Dean's List

BOSTON, Mass. — Broc Pelchat of Tilton has been named to the Fall 2025 Emmanuel College Dean's List.

Pelchat is majoring in Nursing.

To earn a spot on the Dean's List, Emmanuel students must achieve a grade point average of 3.5 or higher for a 16-credit semester.

With more than 80 majors and areas of study, Emmanuel College combines outstanding classroom instruction and real-world experience to prepare students for lives of professional achievement, lifelong learning, and purpose. Voted the #1 college location in America in 2025 by Niche.com, Emmanuel offers ready access to world class medical, cultural, and business organizations in the Heart of Boston, all with a tight-knit 17-acre campus and 13:1 student-to-faculty ratio. Learn more at Emmanuel.edu.

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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.

Keeping the next generation in mind

In every town meeting, every budget discussion, every planning decision, there is a question that rarely gets asked out loud but should sit at the center of the conversation:

What does this mean for the next generation?

Belmont, Northfield, Sanbornton and Tilton are proud of their history. We can point to historic buildings, family names that stretch back generations, and traditions that have endured for decades. That continuity is something to value.

But a community cannot live on history alone.

If our towns are to remain vibrant, they must be places where young people can see a future for themselves — not only as children passing through our schools, but as adults who choose to return, build careers, raise families and invest their time and talent here.

That begins with opportunity.

Affordable housing is not an abstract concept; it determines whether a recent graduate can rent an apartment in town or whether a young couple can buy their first home near the families who helped raise them. Workforce development is not just an economic term; it shapes whether local businesses can hire and grow. School quality is not merely a line item in a budget; it influences whether families decide to stay.

There is also the matter of engagement. Young people who feel heard are more likely to remain invested in the place they call home. When we encourage student involvement in civic life — whether through internships, volunteerism, or simply attending public meetings — we are planting seeds for future leadership.

It is easy to frame community decisions in terms of immediate impact. How much will this cost this year? How will this affect next April's tax bill? Those are fair questions. But long-term thinking matters just as much.

What will our town centers look like in 10 or 20 years? Will small businesses still have room to thrive? Will there be housing options for teachers, first responders and young tradespeople? Will recreational spaces be maintained so families continue to gather there?

A town that works only for one age group or one stage of life will eventually feel the consequences. A balanced community — one that supports seniors, working families and children alike — is more resilient.

None of this requires sweeping change. Often, it requires steady, deliberate choices: zoning that allows thoughtful growth, investment in infrastructure, support for schools and recreation, encouragement for entrepreneurship.

It also requires a willingness to listen to younger voices. Their perspectives may differ from those who have lived here longer, but that difference is not a threat. It is a resource.

Our towns have been shaped by generations who planned not only for themselves, but for those who would follow. Roads, schools, libraries and public spaces were built with a sense of permanence and shared responsibility.

As new issues arise and new decisions are made, we would do well to ask that quiet question again and again:

What does this mean for the next generation?

The answer will shape whether Belmont, Northfield, Sanbornton and Tilton remain not just places with a proud past, but places with a promising future.



COURTESY

Mrs. Black's first grade class at Belmont Elementary School was so thankful to receive matching Jake Deware shirts from the Jake Deware Kindness Project for Random Act of Kindness Day! Last Monday was also "twin day" for spirit week, so it worked out perfectly that we could all be "twins!" Photo courtesy of the Shaker Regional School District Facebook page.

The quiet comfort of knowing your place

The older I get, the more I appreciate knowing exactly where I am.

Not in the philosophical sense, though there's something to that, too. I

mean knowing which grocery aisle carries the peanut butter without looking at the signs. Knowing which hardware store creaks when you open the front door. Knowing that if you turn left instead of right on a snowy afternoon in February, you'll pass that one stretch of road where the wind always seems to sweep the snow sideways.

There's a comfort in familiarity that sneaks up on you over time.

The other day, I was driving along Lake Winnepesaukee, the surface still locked in winter's grip, and I realized I wasn't paying attention to the curves in the road. My hands knew them. I've been making that drive for decades now. I've made it in mud season, in high summer when the boats are out in force, and in November when the trees stand bare and honest against a gray sky.

When I was younger, I thought adventure meant going somewhere else. Somewhere bigger. Somewhere louder. And there's nothing wrong with that. A man ought to see a bit of the world if he can. But there's a different kind of richness in staying long enough to understand a place.

In rural New Hampshire, you don't just learn the roads. You learn the rhythm. You know which diner fills up after church on Sunday. You know which gas station will still be open when the rest of the town has called it a night. You know which neighbor owns the snowblower that can handle the heavy, wet stuff.

That kind of knowledge isn't flashy. It doesn't show up on a résumé. But it matters.

My wife and I were talking the

KIND FOLKS, COLD WINTERS

By CHIPPY

other evening about how different things feel now that the kids are grown. There was a time when our weeks were measured by

school calendars, sports schedules, permission slips that had to be signed in a hurry. These days, the house is quieter. Not empty, exactly. Just settled.

There's a rhythm to that, too.

I'll admit, I used to grumble about routine. I'd say I was stuck in one. Same roads. Same faces. Same errands. But somewhere along the way, "routine" turned into "roots." And roots, I've learned, are not the same thing as being stuck. Roots are what keep you steady when the wind picks up.

New Hampshire has a way of teaching that lesson. We get our share of wind. We get our share of long winters, too. You don't make it through February up here without a little stubbornness and a good pair of boots.

What strikes me most, though, is how people here carry their familiarity lightly. We don't make a fuss about it. We wave from the driveway. We hold the door without making eye contact long enough to embarrass anyone. We nod. That's often enough.

There's a certain shorthand in small towns. You don't have to explain where you're from. You don't have to justify why you stayed. Staying is reason enough.

I was in a local shop recently when a young fellow ahead of me at the counter struck up a conversation with the owner. Turns out his grandparents used to run a business in town. He'd moved away for a few years and had just come back.

"I forgot how easy it is to talk to people here," he said.

That stuck with me.

We don't always see what we have while we're standing in the middle of it. We assume it's ordinary. We assume every place works this way. It doesn't.

There's something about knowing the person bagging your groceries might also be the one coaching Little League in the spring. Something about recognizing the truck behind you at the stoplight because you saw it parked outside the post office yesterday. It builds a quiet trust. Not blind trust. Just the steady kind that grows from shared ground.

I suppose I'm at an age now where I measure wealth differently. It's not about square footage or horsepower. It's about whether I can walk into a room and recognize half the faces. It's about whether, if my car won't start on a cold morning, I can think of three people I could call without hesitation.

That's a fine kind of wealth.

And maybe that's what knowing your place really means. Not that you've settled for less. But that you've learned the value of what's right in front of you.

I still enjoy seeing new sights when I can. I'm not opposed to a little adventure. But I've come to believe there's nothing small about a place that knows your name, your history, and maybe even which brand of peanut butter you prefer.

There are worse things in this world than being known.

On a cold New Hampshire evening, when the sun slips down early and the porch light clicks on almost by instinct, I sometimes stand for a moment before heading inside. The air has that sharp, clean edge to it. The kind that makes you feel awake.

I look around and think: I know this place.

And it knows me back.

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Common Man Family promotes Sean Brown to CEO



Sean Brown

ASHLAND — The Common Man family is pleased to announce the promotion of Sean Brown to Chief Executive Officer. An employee since 1995, Brown now leads the independent hospitality family in implement-

ing strategic initiatives, driving business growth, and monitoring financial performance. He oversees the senior leadership team, working collaboratively to model and develop the company's culture, values, and Do Good mantra of-

fering helping hands in the community.

"Sean has great attention to detail, a tireless work ethic, strong integrity, and an innate sense of responsibility for our success," said Common Man owner and founder Alex Ray.

"He's moved up through the ranks and has been a strong leader in many facets of our complex business. I couldn't be prouder of Sean. I have a lot of respect for him, so it was an easy choice to have him be the next leader of our company," said Ray.

"I've worked countless years side by side with Alex and I believe in his long-standing mission of providing 'WOW' hospitality, a unique dining experience, opportunities to our staff, and service to our communities," said Brown. "That mission speaks to me, and I look forward to keeping it going."

Brown most recently served as the Chief Operations Officer for The Common Man, overseeing the daily operations of 17 restaurants, four Inns, two stores, and The Fly-

ing Monkey Movie House and Performance Center.

Prior to that, he was District Operations Manager, overseeing all front of the house operations for The Common Man's specialty brands including all Meredith locations, and Foster's Boiler Room and The Italian Farmhouse in Plymouth. In his earlier tenure, he was general manager for Lago, Lakehouse, and Camp Restaurants in Meredith. He started as a server in 1995 at what was previously Boathouse Grille in Meredith, now Lago.

"I've learned and grown here, and I'm invested in our people, our restaurants, and our communities," said Brown. "As we get ready to celebrate 55 years in business this November, we're working hard to keep our menus fresh and appeal to the next generation while at the same time focusing on the traditional fare that our long-time guests have come to know and love."

The Common Man named Brown General Manager of the Year in 2007 and 2009, and he's been nominated as General

Manager of the year several times in his career. He's served as a board member for the Lakes Region Association, Greater Meredith Program, New Hampshire Lodging and Restaurant Association, and he is currently on the Lakes Region Community College Culinary Program's Advisory Committee and President's Council.

Brown can often be found volunteering at community events representing The Common Man at Pedaling for Payson, the Sandwich Fair, Swim with a Mission, Harbor Care's community Thanksgiving meal, Hands Across the Table, and other activities. He partners with the Plymouth State University Business Department annually to mentor students in The Common Man Ice Cream apprentice and business plan program.

Founded in 1971 by owner Alex Ray, the Common Man family in New Hampshire is made up of 17 restaurants, four Inns, a Spa, two stores, and The Flying Monkey Movie House and Performance Center. Common Man

locations include Common Man restaurants in Lincoln, Ashland, Concord, Claremont, Merrimack, and Windham; The Barn on the Pemi, Common Man Inn & Spa, The Ranch, The Lodge, Foster's Boiler Room, Italian Farmhouse, New Berry's and JJ's, and The Flying Monkey in Plymouth; Common Man Inn & Restaurant in Claremont; Lakehouse Grille, Camp, Lago, and Town Docks in Meredith; Lincoln Diner in Lincoln; Route 104 Diner in New Hampton; Tilt'n Diner in Tilton; Airport Diner in Manchester; and the Common Man Company Store in Ashland. The Common Man sister businesses include Common Man Roadside at the welcome centers on Interstate 93 north and south in Hooksett and Common Man Roadside Market & Deli locations in Plymouth, Manchester, Epsom, Portsmouth, and Derry. For more information, visit thecomman.com or follow on Facebook at www.facebook.com/thecommanmannh and Instagram @ thecommanmannh.

Leadership Lakes Region convenes local experts to examine economic realities, housing needs



FRANKLIN/LACONIA — On Feb. 11, Leadership Lakes Region (LLR) held its Economic Issues Day, an intensive dive into the fiscal forces shaping New Hampshire's Lakes Region.

The program began in Franklin with Marty Parichand, (Outdoor New England) detailing the city's downtown revitalization. A panel facilitated by Kim Sperry (LLR 09) followed, featuring Amy Landers, Lakes Region Tourism (LLR 00), Karmen Gifford, Lakes Region Chamber of Commerce (LLR 09), and Danielle Scadova-Vose, Lakes Region Planning Commission, focusing on the intersection of tourism and local business.

Heather Shank, (Leadership Greater Concord), Senior Planner, Department of Business and Economic Affairs addressed the critical shortage of affordable housing and childcare, illustrating how these "twin pillars" dictate workforce retention.

In the afternoon, the class transitioned to WORK Lakes Region in Laconia for a lunch sponsored by Grappone Auto Group. Owner Jodie Gallant (LLR 12) shared her entrepreneurial journey and strategies for growth. The session continued with Chris Logan, President & CEO of Bank of New Hampshire, who provided insights into the economy, changing banking trends and impact of community banking.

Participants then tackled "The Impossible Pie," a budget simulation facilitated by Dona Murray (LLR 12) regarding public sector trade-offs. The day concluded with a housing impact panel facilitated by John Beland (LLR 05), featuring experts Joia Hughes, City of Laconia, Kim Lesnewski, Meredith Village Savings Bank (LLR 18), Carmen Lorentz, LR Community Developers (LLR 12), Scott Knowles, and Chris Adams, Re/Max Bayside (LLR 15).

The heavy involvement of alumni—ranging from LLR 00 to LLR 18—underscored the program's long-term impact on community leadership.

"Today was about understanding how a mortgage rate in Laconia and a school budget meeting are all connected," noted one participant.

LLR is a 501(c)(3) non-profit dedicated to developing informed community leaders. To learn more, visit www.leadershiplakesregion.org.



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Griffin leads Bears at Meet of Champions



Christian Parenteau wrestles for Winnisquam during Saturday's Meet of Champions at Pinkerton Academy.



Aiden Sufert wrestles for Winnisquam during the Meet of Champions on Saturday in Derry.



Dylan Griffin battled his way to fourth place at 132 pounds at the Meet of Champions on Saturday.

BY JOSHUA SPAULDING
Sports Editor

DERRY — The Winnisquam wrestling team was well-represented at the Meet of Champions, held on Saturday, Feb. 28, at Pinkerton Academy in Derry.

Dylan Griffin had the top finish for the Bears, placing fourth at 132 pounds. He started his day with a pin of a foe from White Mountains, pinned a Bishop Guertin wrestler and then fell 4-2 to an opponent from Souhegan. He came back and pinned a wrestler from John Stark before falling to Bishop Guertin 11-7 to place fourth overall.

At 157 pounds, Christian Parenteau started with a pin of a Salem wrestler and a pin of a Merrimack foe before being pinned by an opponent from Keene. He was then pinned by a Milford wrestler before pinning a Merrimack opponent to finish in fifth place overall.

Noah Bassett wrestled at 190 pounds and pinned foes from Concord and Milford before getting pinned by a Salem wrestler. He then fell 11-6 to a Goffstown wrestler and 12-5 to a Spaulding foe to place sixth overall.

Dayton Brigante pinned a Nashua South foe to start his day at 120 pounds before being pinned by a ConVal foe. He came back for a 15-7 win over Spaulding before falling by a 17-11 score to a Salem opponent.

Aiden Sufert started at 126 pounds with a technical fall win before falling by a 7-0 score to Timberlane and finished up his day being pinned by a Hollis-Brookline wrestler. Lucas Durphey was pinned by foes from Goffstown and Milford at 113 pounds and Andrew Field was pinned by wrestlers from Souhegan and Winnacunnet at 215 pounds.

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

Singer-songwriter duo to perform in Franklin



FRANKLIN — The Franklin Opera House, in partnership with the NH Music Collective, proudly presents acoustic duo and independent singer-songwriters Tyler Levs & Joliet4. Together, they are MUTU4L, performing at Franklin Public Library Saturday, March 14 at 7 p.m.

Songwriters Tyler Levs and Joliet4 first met during the final round of an online vocal competition in 2019, where Joliet emerged as the winner. Their mutual admiration quickly turned into a supportive friendship, with frequent exchanges of praise on social media—often ending with the phrase “It’s mutual.”

The pair’s first in-person encounter occurred at TwitchCon in San Diego, where they improvised a half-way jam using a guitar and a nearby door as a makeshift drum. Though the impromptu performance landed them in a bit of trouble, it cemented their creative chemistry.

Carefully balancing family responsibilities and solo careers, the two artists spent nearly four years cultivating a collaborative space. A road trip to SXSW in 2023 revealed how much more fluid and enjoyable songwriting could be when done face-to-face. Since then, they have committed to writing their debut album together, splitting time between New England and the Midwest while staying connected via Zoom. Their acoustic-focused singles are already streaming on all major platforms, accompanied by original video content on YouTube. A trip to SXSW in 2023 revealed how much more fluid and enjoyable songwriting could be when done faceto face. Since then, they have committed to writing their debut album together, splitting time between New England and the Midwest while staying connected via Zoom.

MUTU4L will be performing at the Franklin Public Library in Franklin. This historic Carnegie library offers a warm, acoustically friendly environment ideal for an up-close musical experience. Attendees can expect a relaxed atmosphere that encourages interaction with the artists. close musical experience. Attendees can expect a relaxed atmosphere that encourages interaction with the artists.

Advanced tickets are available on the Franklin Opera House Web site, www.FOHNH.org. Seniors & Students – \$16, Adults – \$18. All tickets at the door will be \$20.

Special thanks to Franklin-based businesses, Seufert Law and Beck & Bellucci, for sponsoring this event.

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Notes from the Closing Ceremony (and the trip home)



JOSHUA SPAULDING

The Milan-Cortina Olympics Closing Ceremony took place in the historic Verona Arena on Sunday, Feb. 22.

Valley Improv brings evening of spontaneous comedy to Franklin



FRANKLIN — Franklin Opera House is pleased to present an evening of high-energy improvisational comedy by Valley Improv. This hilarious night of spontaneous comedy will be held at Franklin Public Library. The performance will run from 7 to 9 p.m. on March 28, offering a night of audience-driven humor that entertains both children and adults.

Founded in 2008, Valley Improv has toured northern New England, delivering fast-paced, interactive comedy that hinges on the creativity of its performers and the audience's imagination. Using a series of "games" and on-paced, interactive comedy that hinges on the creativity of its performers and the imagination of the audience. Using a series of "games" and on-the-spot storytelling, the troupe crafts unique plots, characters, and dialogue from suggestions supplied by the crowd. The result is a dynamic, inclusive experience that guarantees laughter for everyone in attendance. This wonderful group has built a reputation across northern New England for its quick wit, collaborative spirit, and ability to turn any suggestion into a memorable theatrical moment. Their performances blend humor, heart, and spontaneity, creating an unforgettable experience for audiences of all ages.

No scripts. No rehearsals. Every moment is created live, and audience members become part of the show through their suggestions.

Tickets for this show are available in advance at www.FOHNH.org or at the door. Adults \$14, Seniors \$12, Students \$10. Seating is limited; early purchase is recommended.

Special thanks to Franklin businesses Peabody Place and Beck & Bellucci for sponsoring this event.

My sixth Olympic experience is officially over, as I arrived back in the United States last Tuesday afternoon. I was a bit surprised we weren't delayed due to the snowstorm that dumped two feet of snow on Boston the previous days, but we arrived right on time and I was able to hit the road to Bedford on the way home to see the Division III boys' basketball semifinals.

The Gilford hoop boys made the stop worth it, as they earned a trip to the finals with a win over Kearsarge, though it started at 7:30 p.m., which in my European mind was 12:30 p.m. I got home at 10:30 p.m., which was about 4:30 a.m. where my mind was. But, I was up the next day ready to go, unpacking and clearing up things that needed to be done.

Taking a look back at the Closing Ceremony in Verona, it was definitely an experience. Sitting on the cold stone for a few hours is probably nobody's idea of fun, but that being said, it was a pretty cool location to hold the Closing Ceremony. It was by far, the smallest Closing Cere-

SPORTING CHANCE



By JOSHUA SPAULDING

mony I have been to. The Verona Arena is not a huge place and they didn't put anybody behind the stage area as they wouldn't be able to see. So, the sheer number of people in the arena was definitely the smallest number in my four Closing Ceremony experiences.

They did most of the traditional things that I have seen at the last few Closing Ceremonies that I have been to. The athletes all paraded in and got a chance to sit and watch as there was tons of pomp and circumstance and lots of performances on the arena floor. They did the flag turnover, where the Milan-Cortina folks handed the flag over to the French Alps folks, who will be hosting the next Winter Olympics in 2030. There was also a video put together by the French Alps Organizing Committee, which highlighted their region as they prepare to host the next Winter Games. It is expected that those Olympics will be much like the Milan-Cortina

version, with activities all around the mountains (and coast) of France. And of course, the Olympic flame was extinguished to close out Milan-Cortina.

There was a slight issue when we got back to Milan, as the Metro wasn't running since it was so late. So, I ended up having to take a local bus that I had never taken before. That in and of itself was an experience, as the bus was a little late and the driver was definitely bent on making up that time, which in and of itself is fine, but those cobblestone streets and old buses make for a bit of a bumpy ride at 1:30 a.m.

It's fairly fitting that my Olympics ended with a little bit of a crazy transportation situation. That was kind of the story of Milan-Cortina for me.

Joshua Spaulding is the Sports Editor for the Granite State News, Carroll County Independent, Meredith News, Gilford Steamer, Winnisquam Echo, Plymouth Record-Enterprise, Littleton Courier, Newfound Landing, Coos County Democrat, Berlin Reporter and The Baysider. He can be reached at josh@salmonpress.news, at 279-4516, or PO Box 729, Meredith, NH 03253.





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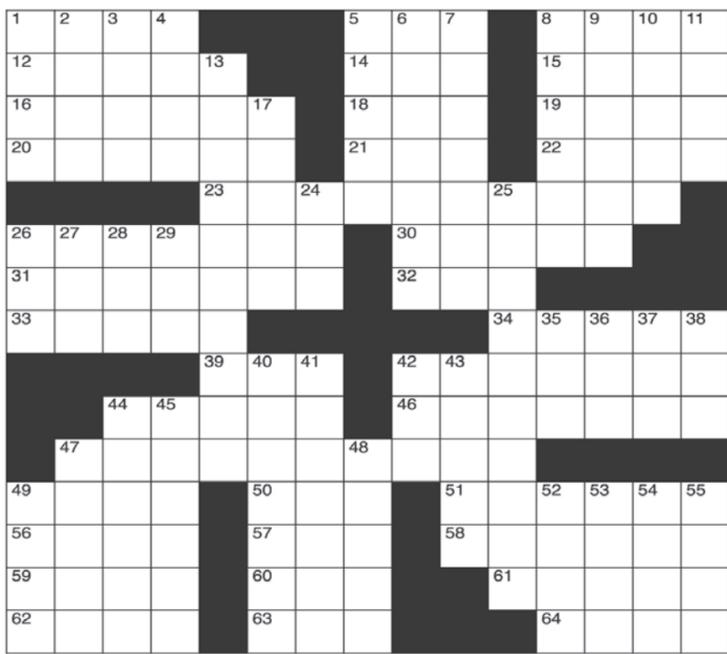
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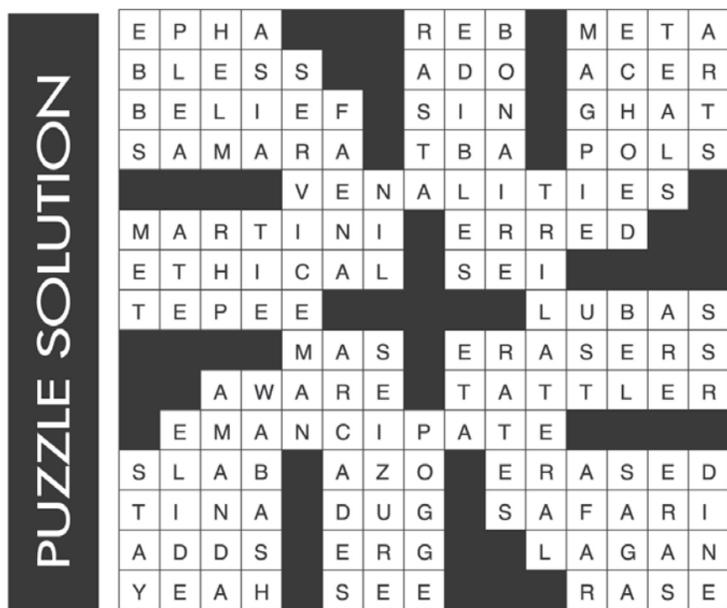


CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Unit of dry measure
- 5. One who defies authority
- 8. Social media giant
- 12. Render holy
- 14. "Much ___ about nothing"
- 15. Computer manufacturer
- 16. Creed
- 18. Immoral act
- 19. Mountain pass
- 20. Winged nut
- 21. Don't know when yet
- 22. Elected officials
- 23. Corrupt tendencies
- 26. Popular adult beverage
- 30. Made a mistake
- 31. Morally correct
- 32. Type of whale
- 33. Portable conical tent
- 34. Native people of the Congo
- 39. More (Spanish)
- 42. Classroom implements
- 44. Cognizant of
- 46. One who tells
- 47. Free from bondage
- 49. Thick piece of something
- 50. Containing two adjacent nitrogen atoms
- 51. Removed from the record
- 56. Legendary singer Turner
- 57. Broke up the earth
- 58. Hunting expedition
- 59. Contributes
- 60. Unit of work or energy
- 61. Wreckage on the sea bed
- 62. Affirmative! (slang)
- 63. Witness
- 64. Scrape (Archaic)

CLUES DOWN

- 1. "___ and flows"
- 2. Humble request for help
- 3. A position of leadership
- 4. Continent
- 5. Adherent of a particular religion
- 6. Things that can be eaten
- 7. Self-governing Netherlands territory
- 8. Long-tailed crow
- 9. Repeated
- 10. Bluish greens
- 11. Humanities
- 13. Someone who serves in the armed forces
- 17. Labor (Spanish)
- 24. Zero
- 25. Shared by involving three parties
- 26. Queens ballplayer
- 27. Consumed
- 28. Rest here please
- 29. Men's fashion accessory
- 35. American time
- 36. Sound unit
- 37. They ___
- 38. Soviet Socialist Republic
- 40. Places to play video games
- 41. A sudden attack of illness
- 42. When you hope to arrive
- 43. Charges
- 44. Actress Seyfried
- 45. A tributary of the Ohio River
- 47. Omit when speaking
- 48. Armored fish
- 49. Remain
- 52. From a distance
- 53. Adventure story
- 54. Geological times
- 55. Eat dinner



HERITAGE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE A1
 items for the residents of Belmont to choose from. The potatoes and onions section, new this year was definitely a hit according to commission member Priscilla Annis.

"The help from the B.H.S. students made such a difference especially when decorating and set-

ting up," Annis said.

Thanks to the overwhelming support of the John W. Sargent Fund and Gilford Hannaford Supermarket the Heritage Commission was able to add more to their food selection. Market Basket also donated gift cards which helped us greatly with items for the housebound seniors when that number doubled from last year.

A small group of seniors who lost food items in their community room due to burst pipes were also helped out.

"All ages of the students in Belmont brought more to the senior citizens than they probably realize," Donovan said.

This event sends a true message of caring about each other.

BELMONT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE A1
 Group will meet on Thursday, March 12 at 4:30 p.m. to discuss "Educated: A Memoir" by Tara Westover.

Mystery lovers can join the Mystery Book Group on Thursday, March 19 at 10 a.m. to discuss "A Good Girl's Guide to Murder" by Holly Jackson. The Friday Fiction Book Group will meet Monday, March 23 at 10:30 a.m. to talk about "The Children's Crusade" by Ann Packler. The Nonfiction book group will start up again Friday, April 3 at 10:30 a.m. to discuss "Northeast: A Story of Courage and Survival in the Blizzard of

1952" by Cathie Pelletier. Copies of book selections are available at the library or digitally through Libby or Hoopla.

The Belmont Public Library's Teen Book Group will meet on Thursday, Feb. 19 at 4 p.m. to discuss "The Bletchley Riddle" by Ruta Sepetys and Steve Sheinkin. This welcoming group offers teens a chance to explore exciting stories, share their thoughts, and connect with fellow readers in a relaxed and friendly environment. All interested readers are welcome to attend.

Younger patrons and teens can participate in a special Clover Diamond Art Keychains craft pro-

gram on Tuesday, March 17 from 3 to 5 p.m. This drop-in program, recommended for ages 10 and up, allows participants to create their own sparkling clover keychains while supplies last.

These programs reflect the library's ongoing commitment to providing meaningful educational, creative, and social opportunities for the Belmont community.

For more information, visit belmontpubliclibrary.org, call (603) 267-8331, or stop by 146 Main St. during open hours: Monday-Friday 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Tuesday-Thursday 10 a.m.-6 p.m., and Saturday 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

VETERANS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE A1
 a full year of NHWP membership to a veteran, granting access to workshops, resources, and community programming

The project is named in honor of Colonel Weston Rowell, an 1890 West Point graduate and decorated officer who served 33 years, including tours on

the Western Frontier, in the Spanish-American War, the Philippine Insurrection, Cuban Pacification, and as Commander of Base 6 AEF in Marseille, France.

Through this initiative, NHWP seeks to build community, foster dignity through storytelling, and ensure that veterans across the state have opportunities to share their experiences in supportive and meaning-

ful spaces.

For more information about hosting a Veterans Out Loud event or supporting the Colonel Melvin Weston Rowell Literary Project, visit NHWritersProject.org/Veterans or contact Beverly Stoddart, Veterans' Projects Administrator at mwrvtlitprogram@nhwritersproject.org.

BEARS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE A1
 got a technical fall win over Raymond. He then dropped a 1-0 decision to a Bow grappler in the finals to finish in second.

Andrew Field wrestled his way to third place at 215 pounds after starting his day getting pinned by a Bow opponent. He came back with pins over Mascenic, Newport and White Mountains to earn the third place finish.

Anna Drinkwine also finished third at 106 pounds. After getting pinned by a White Mountains opponent to start the day, she pinned wrestlers from Campbell and Pelham to finish in third place.

Lucas Durphey placed fourth at 113 pounds, dropping his first match to a Bow opponent before pinning a Campbell foe. He then dropped an 8-4 decision to a wrestler from Mascenic to finish in fourth on the day.

At 138 pounds, Lucas Fournier pinned a Mascenic wrestler to start and after getting pinned by a ConVal foe, came back and

pinned a Franklin opponent before closing his day getting pinned by a Kearsarge opponent. Romain Berghmans got a technical fall win over Conant to start the day at 144 pounds and after being pinned by a Bow opponent, got pins over Pelham and Raymond before dropping a 13-10 decision to a Hopkinton wrestler.

Nate Tassej was pinned by a Bow wrestler to start his day at 150 pounds but answered with a pin of Mascenic before being pinned by a Mascoma opponent to close out the competition. Lazar Arbutina got pins over Mascenic and Franklin to start his day

at 165 pounds before getting pinned by Pelham and White Mountains. Isaac Timmons was pinned by a Kearsarge opponent at 175 pounds, came back with a pin of a Mascenic wrestler and was pinned by a Conant foe to close out his day. Hunter Mulinski was pinned by wrestlers from Pelham and Franklin in the heavyweight division.

Griffin, Parenteau, Bassett, Field, Drinkwine, Durphey, Brigante and Sufert all earned bids to the Meet of Champions for their efforts.

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

Community survey launched to address gaps in women's health access across NH

REGION — Women of the Mountains Birth Initiative (WOMB) is calling on women across New Hampshire to participate in a brief, anonymous survey aimed at improving access to comprehensive women's health care statewide.

The survey is part of a federally funded initiative led by the New Hampshire Insurance Department (NHID) to better understand where women face barriers to care—including insurance coverage gaps, limited provider access, and unmet health needs across the lifespan. Findings will directly inform state-level recommendations, payer strategies, and future outreach and education efforts.

WOMB recently partnered with NHID to host a regional focus group in late 2025. This follow-up survey expands that effort, offering a broader opportunity for voices—especially those in rural and underserved communities—to be heard.

"Too often, decisions about women's health care are made without hearing directly from the people most affected,"

said a representative from WOMB. "This survey is a chance for lived experiences to shape real policy conversations."

The survey is voluntary, anonymous, and takes approximately 5-10 minutes to complete. No personally identifiable information is collected. NHID has contracted with Health Management Associates to analyze results and prepare a report with recommendations to the state.

Community members are encouraged to participate and share the survey widely.

Take the survey at https://healthmanagement.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_d4h9ebw3BlT_oVM.

PETS OF THE WEEK

Meet Boudreaux!

Meet Boudreaux — your future partner in fun and forever friend

Boudreaux is a lanky, goofy, and oh-so-lovable hound with a personality just as big as his long legs! This spunky young pup is full of life and always ready for his next adventure. Whether he's zooming around the yard, romping with his four-legged friends, or showing off his silly side, Boudreaux brings joy and laughter wherever he goes.

He absolutely loves other dogs and would thrive in a home with a playful companion or an active family who enjoys getting outside. A good game of tug is one of his favorite pastimes, and he's always eager



to show off his playful, puppy energy. Once the fun winds down, Boudreaux reveals his softer side. He's a total snuggler

bug who loves curling up close and soaking in all the love and attention he can get. His loyalty and affectionate nature make him a wonderful companion who just wants to be by your side.

Because he's still a puppy, Boudreaux has plenty of energy and is excited to keep learning and growing with his forever family. With guidance, love, and continued training, he's sure to blossom into the best buddy you could ask for.

If you're looking for a goofy, loyal, and loving dog to share your days (and your couch), Boudreaux might just be your perfect match. Could this sweet hound be your next best pal?



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Lakes Region Symphony Orchestra salutes "Cowboys and Canyons" March 21



COURTESY

Concertmaster Margaret Hopkins is featured at LRSO's March 21, 7 p.m. concert at Inter-Lakes Auditorium in Meredith.

MEREDITH — The Lakes Region Symphony Orchestra continues its 50th anniversary season with "Cowboys and Canyons" on Saturday, March 21 at 7 p.m. at Inter-Lakes Auditorium in Meredith. Guided by conductor Ben Greene, this dynamic concert captures the spirit of the American West through an orchestral journey that ranges from cinematic sweep to rhythmic exuberance.

Featured in this program is violinist Margaret Hopkins, concertmaster of the Lakes Region Symphony Orchestra, as soloist in Mark O'Connor's "Fiddle Concerto." This work blends virtuosic technique with the energetic drive of American folk and fiddle traditions, offering audiences a showcase of rhythmic vitality and expressive nuance. Margaret has appeared in concert throughout

Europe, Israel, Canada, and across the United States. An accomplished educator and arts leader, she serves on the faculty of the Portland Conservatory of Music and performs regularly with chamber ensembles throughout New England.

The evening also highlights John Williams's spirited "The Cowboys Overture," a rousing opener with cinematic orchestra-

tion; Ferde Grofé's "Grand Canyon Suite," a work renowned for its evocative landscapes and expansive sonorities; and the irresistible "Hoedown" from Aaron Copland's "Rodeo," a kinetic finale that brings audiences to their feet. These works celebrate the musical imagination of America's Old West.

Looking ahead, LRSO will close its 2025-26 season with Mixtape: Hits of

the '60s and '70s on Saturday, May 9 at 7 p.m. at the Colonial Theatre in Laconia and Sunday, May 10 at 3 p.m. at Inter-Lakes Auditorium. Featuring guest vocalists Taylor O'Donnell and Adrian Sicam, this upbeat program re-imagines beloved pop classics - from soulful Motown to sing-along pop favorites - with full symphonic sound.

Tickets for both the March and May concerts

are on sale now at www.LRSO.org, where patrons can also find discount packages, seating options, and concert details.

The Lakes Region Symphony Orchestra has been bringing exceptional live music to New Hampshire audiences for 50 years and remains dedicated to inspiring a love of classical music and showcasing the extraordinary talent of local and guest musicians.

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Tilton: Restored in 2021, this bright 3BR Cape has soaring cathedral ceilings, a brick FP, and granite kitchen on 2.75 private acres abutting a golf course. 1-car garage under, new detached 2-car garage, central AC, screened porch & deck.

Belmont: Charming 3 BR, 2 bath cape (built 2007) on 1.8 acres w/ garage under. Timeless, quality craftsmanship & design; thoughtful modern updates. 2-story 22x36' barn (w/ electricity & water line) currently provides storage income.

Laconia: Iconic Tamarack Drive-In Business Opportunity. Own a Lakes Region landmark at the gateway to Weirs Beach, featuring high visibility and a turnkey seasonal restaurant operation. This prime corner lot sees up to 14,000 cars daily, offering massive potential for expansion or a fresh new concept.

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EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

Escape winter's chill with new exhibit at Lakes Region Art Association Gallery

TILTON — Tired of the endless gray skies, snow, and sub-freezing temps that define February in the Lakes Region? The Lakes Region Art Association (LRAA) has the perfect antidote: "Art in the Garden — Carved & Cultivated," a vibrant group exhibition bursting with the colors, textures, and life of gardens and nature's beauty. Fea-

turing original works from talented local artists, the show runs Feb. 19 through March 15 at the Lakes Region Art Gallery in Tanger Outlets, 120 Laconia Rd., Suite 300, Tilton.

This uplifting collection transports visitors from winter's grip straight into lush, sculpted gardens—think carved elegance, blooming abundance, tex-

ured landscapes, and serene organic forms brought to life through pastels, watercolors, mixed media, and more. It's an early glimpse of spring's promise, right when New Hampshire needs it most, celebrating the creative spirit of our community and the enduring allure of cultivated beauty.

A lively Opening Reception

welcomes everyone on Friday, Feb. 20, from 4 to 6 p.m. Meet the artists, sip and mingle, enjoy light refreshments, and soak in the garden-fresh inspiration in a warm, friendly setting.

Adding extra fun to the evening, a Reverse Paint and Sip — "Forest Stillness" runs concurrently from 5 to 7 p.m. in the gallery. No experience required—guided

instruction helps you create your own tranquil forest scene while you unwind (supplies included; \$40 per person; register ahead via the gallery Web site).

The Lakes Region Art Gallery continues its long tradition (rooted in the 1940s as the Laconia Art Association) as a welcoming hub for local creativity, with rotating shows of orig-

inal art in diverse media. Open Thursdays through Sundays—check lakesregionartgallery.org for current hours and details.

For more info on the paint-and-sip registration, contact the Lakes Region Art Association Gallery at (603) 998-0029 or visit www.lakesregionartgallery.org.

Britt Connors brings soulful Americana to The Loft at Hermit Woods

MEREDITH — The Loft at Hermit Woods Winery & Eatery welcomes Britt Connors and her band for an evening of heartfelt songwriting, rich harmonies, and genre-blending Americana in an intimate listening room setting Thursday, March 12.

Britt Connors slips nimbly between soulful ballads, pop-rock, folk, and gospel-infused Americana. Backed by an exceptional lineup — Mike Connors (drums), Ed Lucie (bass), and Bethany Weiman (cello) — the band delivers performances that are both powerful and deeply personal.

Raised in a household steeped in folk, rock, jazz, classical, and 80s/90s pop, Britt's music reflects a lifetime of wide-ranging influences. A graduate of Ithaca College with a degree in vocal performance, she moved to Somerville, MA to find her voice as a songwriter and guitarist in the Boston music scene. Since then, she has released three albums — "The Bad Side of Good," "Warmer Season," and "Longitude" — each showcasing her ability to move authentically across genres while remaining unmistakably herself.

Critics have taken notice. Natali Abernathy

of Indie Boulevard writes, "Britt doesn't fit into genres, and that's her triumph — she just sounds the way she sounds... sometimes a pause and silence can speak louder than any shout."

This performance takes place in The Loft's signature listening room environment — an up-close and attentive space designed for true musical immersion. Guests are asked to refrain from talking during the featured performance so both artists and audience can fully experience the music.

Make a full evening of it:

Complimentary Wine Tasting: 5:30–6 p.m.

Doors Open & Dinner Served: 6 p.m.

Dinner Service Closes & Show Begins: 7 p.m.



(Drinks and dessert served during the show)

Arrive early to enjoy thoughtfully prepared food alongside our wines, meads, ciders, local craft

beer, and cocktails. After the performance, guests are invited to meet the artists and explore available merchandise.

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licious food. Fine wine. An evening worth settling in for.

Tickets and details: hermitwoods.com/music.

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Energysavers

Full-Time Installers Apprentice

Energysavers Inc, a 50 year old hearth & spa product retailer in the Lakes Region, is looking for a motivated individual that wants to learn the trade of installing hearth products. You must be comfortable working on roofs when necessary and able to work with an installer to move heavy items. Energysavers pays for all educational costs to get and maintain NFI wood, gas and pellet certifications as well as a NH gas fitters license for gas hearth installations and service. Starting pay, \$18-\$20 hour based on experience.

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Community, Collections, and Commitment

Laconia Historical & Museum Society marks a milestone year



COURTESY

Pamela Clark, LHMS Treasurer, presents Jacob Tryon with the Warren D. Huse Honorary LHS Student Membership. Jacob was recognized for his academic excellence in social studies, participation in National History Day with a project on the Laconia State School, and his positive contributions to his school community.

LACONIA — The Laconia Historical & Museum Society held its Annual Meeting on Feb. 17 at The Archives in Laconia, welcoming members and guests to reflect on a year of growth and share plans for the year ahead.

2025 was a milestone

year with the August opening of The Archives, LHMS's new museum, which has flourished thanks to dedicated volunteers. The Society also completed a major roof repair to better protect the building and the city's collections. Community programs and

events—including the Irish Brew Tasting, History Happened Here walking and food tour, the sold-out cemetery tour, the first Trivia Live event, and a full-house performance by the New England Irish Harp Orchestra—drew strong participation throughout the year.

Ongoing building needs remain a priority. Phase II of the Protect the Collections Campaign will focus on critical brick repair and full repointing to address deterioration and safeguard artifacts and archives. Collections work and new exhibit initiatives are also progressing steadily.

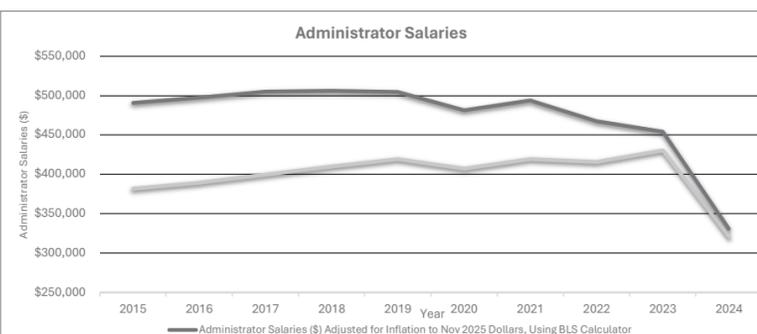
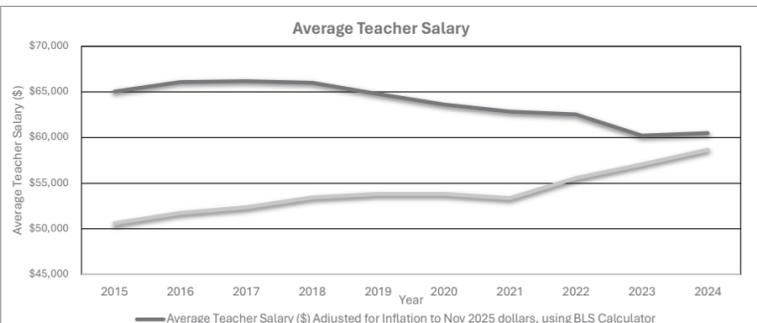
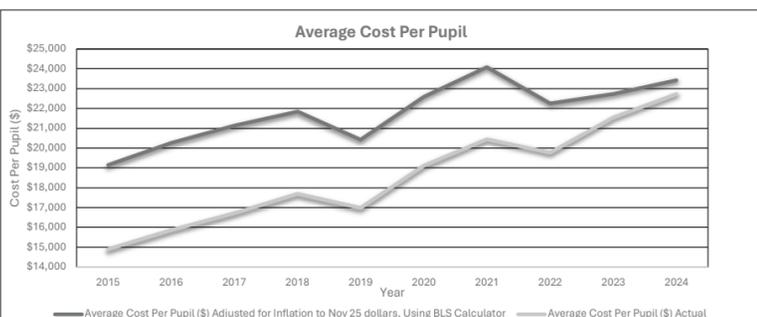
Board leadership was recognized, with thanks extended to outgoing board member Lynn Brody for her dedicated service. Members elected to the 2026–2027 Board of Directors are Marie Leahy, Charlene Harkness, Raymond Peavey, Jr., Ethan Wood, Tara Shore, Pamela Clark, and Warren Huse.

The Warren D. Huse Honorary LHS Student Membership was awarded to Jacob Tryon, a hard-working student recognized for academic excellence in social studies, participation in National History Day with a project on the Laconia State School, and his positive contributions to his school community.

Looking ahead, 2026 will feature programming highlighting Laconia's Native American heritage, returning community favorites, the new Sunday Series programs, and a special July 4 celebration to mark the nation's 250th anniversary.

The Society remains energized by the progress made and the opportunities ahead.

Newfound Area School District MANDATORY REPORT TO VOTERS ON SCHOOL EXPENSES



Top Administrator Salaries

Administrator Title	Current Salary
Superintendent	\$135,200
Business Administrator	\$113,300
Student Services Administrator	\$93,000
Curriculum Administrator	\$87,550

New fire art collection on display at League of NH Craftsmen Gallery

MEREDITH — The League of New Hampshire Craftsmen, Meredith Fine Craft Gallery is proud to present a curated collection of wearable fiber art by various talented artists, each bringing warmth, sustainability, and timeless craftsmanship to their work. Rooted in natural materials and traditional techniques, these pieces celebrate comfort with character.

The collection features Donna Townshend Wilson's cozy wool-felted hats crafted from her own sheep and lamb's wool, and luxurious Angora Goat Mohair. Each one of Donna's hats is hand-formed for warmth, durability, and a beautifully organic feel. Tom Hayward's soft Tibetan lamb boas add an element of texture and elegance, offering both warmth and dramatic flair.

Complementing the wool pieces are Doug Masurey's 100 percent bamboo scarves, hand-dyed in rich, luminous colors. Lightweight yet insulating, these scarves drape effortlessly and showcase the unique variations that only hand-dyeing can achieve.

Rounding out the collection are Joyce Castiglione's fleece-lined mittens thoughtfully upcycled



from vintage wool sweaters. Each pair is one of a kind, blending sustainability with cozy practicality and giving new life to well-loved textiles.

Together, these works highlight the artistry of fiber, the beauty of natural materials, and the value of handmade goods designed to be worn, loved, and lived in. Perfect for cold days and thoughtful gifting, this collection invites visitors to wrap themselves in warmth while supporting skilled makers and sustainable practices.

So come into the Meredith Fine Craft Gallery and enfold yourself in the cozy craftsmanship of beautifully unique and wearable

fiber art created by our talented juried-in artists. For more information, please call the Gallery at 603-279-7920 or visit our website meredith.nhcrafts.org. The League of NH Craftsmen Gallery is located at 279 DW Highway, Meredith.

The League of NH Craftsmen is a non-profit organization that encourages and promotes the creation, use and preservation of fine contemporary and traditional hand crafts. The League represents the signature of excellence in fine craft, through the work of its juried members and its rigorous standards for self-expression, vision, and quality craftsmanship. Top of Form

Kayla Briere joins Roche Realty Group, Inc.



Kayla Briere

MEREDITH — Frank Roche, President of Roche Realty Group, Inc. in Meredith, has announced that Kayla Briere recently joined the real estate firm.

With nearly a decade of experience in the hospitality industry and retail customer service experience, Kayla Briere brings a client-first mindset, attention to detail, and prompt, clear communication to every real estate relationship.

Briere understands that buying or selling a home is both a major financial decision and an important life milestone. She is committed to making the process smooth, informed, and enjoyable, from the first conversation through closing. Whether guiding first-time buyers, helping clients find the perfect Lakes Region retreat, or ensuring sellers receive exceptional marketing and representation, she handles each step with care and professionalism.

Briere grew up and resides in Northfield. She is a graduate of Winnisquam Regional High School and holds an Associate's degree in Criminal Justice from NHTI in Concord. She is a member of the National Association of Realtors, the NH Association of Realtors, and the Lakes Region Board of Realtors.

She offers clients genuine local insight and a deep appreciation for the communities she serves. From scenic mountain views and pristine waterfronts to the small-town charm that defines the region, she understands what makes this area so special and how to match clients with the lifestyle they're seeking. Her familiarity with local neighborhoods, seasonal rhythms, and recreational opportunities helps buyers and sellers alike make confident, well-informed decisions. One of her strengths is problem-solving; she comes from a hard-working, close-knit family, and she has excellent computer and technology skills.

According to Roche, "Kayla has excellent communication skills and has always had a strong interest in real estate in the local area. She is very empathetic, hardworking, and is great at working with people. Her background in customer service will be a huge plus for our company; we are excited to have her join our firm."

In her free time, Briere enjoys spending time with family and friends and embracing the Lakes Region's outdoor lifestyle, including boating, fishing, local motorsports events, and exploring area lakes, rivers, and trails.

Briere can be reached via email at kbriere@rocherealty.com or on her cell phone at 774-278-8898 or at the Meredith Office at 603-279-7046.



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Tilton Senior Center participants enjoying a meal and musical entertainment.

COURTESY

Tilton Senior Center hosting dinner to benefit CAPBM meals program

TILTON — For more than 50 years, Community Action Program Belknap-Merrimack (CAPBM) has been providing nutritious meals to homebound seniors and disabled adults, as well as congregate meals to seniors who attend the eight CAPBM Senior Centers. In the fiscal year 2024-25, CAPBM Senior Centers served 34,514 meals to 1,451 individuals & provided 208,400 home-delivered meals to 1,423 individuals. 1,138 individuals picked up 24,310 Meals to Go.

Since 2002, the month of March has been designated as a time to celebrate the proven collaboration of local community organizations, local businesses, all levels of government, and compassionate individuals who ensure that seniors do not go hungry. The essential Meals on Wheels (MOW) program could not be possible without the teamwork and financial assistance of many. Go to <https://capbm.org/Meals-On-Wheels> for more information and to learn how you can make a donation or to volunteer.

A Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser to benefit the CAPBM Meals on Wheels program will be held at the Tilton Senior Center on Saturday, March 14, from 4 to 7 p.m. Spaghetti and meatballs, salad, garlic bread, dessert, and coffee will be served. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children ten and under. Tickets will be sold at the door. For more information, please call 603-527-8291.



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I have been practicing law since 1985, after graduating from Vermont Law School. Before starting my legal career, I earned a Master's Degree in counseling from SUNY, Plattsburgh, and completed my undergraduate studies in education at Temple University in Philadelphia. Before entering the legal field, I worked as an inner-city high school teacher and ran a cactus business, selling plants as a street vendor in downtown Philadelphia. My legal career began in Saranac Lake and Lake Placid, New York, where I practiced law until 2002. In that year, I passed the New Hampshire Bar and relocated to New Hampshire to continue my practice. I am an active member of the New Hampshire Bar Association. Over the years, I have served as President of the Grafton County Bar Association and as Chair of the Alternative Dispute Resolution Section. I also served on the New Hampshire Bar Association Board of Governors for 2 terms. Currently, I am a member of the New Hampshire Bar Legislative Committee and a Fellow of the New Hampshire Bar Foundation.

I also hosted a weekly radio show called "Family Law Talk Radio," which featured professionals with expertise in various related subjects. In recent years, I have focused my practice on Estate Planning and administration. This includes drafting wills and trusts, as well as probate and trust administration.

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