



Valovanie sworn in as TNFD's new Chief



COURTESY
After Tilton-Northfield Fire District Commissioners swore Sean Valovanie as their new chief last week, Valovanie's daughter Ellen had the honor of pinning the new badge to his uniform.



Following the swearing in of Tilton-Northfield Fire District's new chief on Dec. 1, many members of the department gathered round Chief Sean Valovanie as they celebrated his appointment.

Sanbornton Central Kindergarten students create Thanksgiving Parade balloons



COURTESY
Pictured above Kindergarten Teachers Christine Lavoie and Emily Harris prepare to lead the parade; Jacob Hatch proudly marches with his balloon; and Kinzley Lamprey, Everly Lacroix, Foster Dickinson, Ryleigh Garden, Charlotte Osgood, Nora Morrisette, Cole Potter and Jacob Hatch anxiously wait for the parade to begin.

SANBORNTON — After reading the book, “Balloons Over Broadway: The True Story of the Puppeteer of Macy’s Parade” by Melissa Sweet, Sanbornton Central School Kindergarten students designed balloons representing their favorite characters and marched throughout the school sharing their creations with students and staff. The book tells the story of the puppeteer who invented the giant balloons that are such a special part of the Macy’s Thanksgiving Parade.

After reading the story of Sarg, each child conceptualized and constructed their own unique balloon character using recycled materials, cardboard and lightweight fabric. The project required them to consider balance, scale, and structure, transforming simple craft materials into

monumental, parade-worthy figures

The book also offers positive messages about finding your talent, problem solving, perseverance and the positive impact art can have on the lives of many. The students enjoyed creating their own Thanksgiving Parade and the cheers from the bystanders could be heard throughout the building.

Bears wrestle to win at Kingswood Kickoff Tournament

Durphey, Brigante, Griffin, Parenteau win weight class titles

BY JOSHUA SPAULDING
Sports Editor

WOLFEBORO — The Winnisquam wrestling hit the road to Wolfeboro on Saturday for the first Kingswood Kickoff, featuring wrestlers from 12 teams. With four weight class

champions, the Bears were the top dogs amongst all the teams, taking the win over host Kingswood.

Winning at 113 pounds was Lucas Durphey. He started with a technical fall win over a Kingswood wrestler and pinned a John

Stark wrestler in the finals to take the top spot.

At 126 pounds, Dayton Brigante got a technical fall win over a Winnacunnet athlete then got a technical fall win over an athlete of

SEE BEARS, PAGE A8

BY DONNA RHODES
Contributing writer

TILTON — The Tilton-Northfield Fire District Commissioners announced last week that they have promoted Deputy Chief Sean Valovanie to the new position of Chief of Tilton-Northfield Fire and EMS and on Dec. 1 swore him into office.

The position of TNFD Chief was vacated on Nov. 5 of this year when Commissioners Paul Auger, Timothy Sattler and Jason Wright made the decision to execute a separation agreement between the district and then Chief Michael W. Sitar, Jr., who headed up the department for many years. Because the decision involved a personnel matter, no further information was released. They then appointed Deputy Chief Valovanie to serve as the interim chief as the commission considered what the next step would be to permanently fill the position.

That led to a later interview process with Valovanie, and the decision to offer the full-time position to him was made shortly thereafter.

After being sworn in by the Tilton-Northfield Fire District Commission last week, the new Chief’s daughter, Ellen Valovanie, had the pleasure of pinning the new badge to her father’s uniform.

Valovanie has served

Tilton-Northfield in many capacities for almost two decades. Starting out as a firefighter, he soon began working his way up through the ranks to Lieutenant, Captain, and then finally to Deputy Chief.

In his earlier career, which led up to his full-time job with the Tilton-Northfield Fire District, was as a call firefighter with the Gilford Fire Department and service in the U.S. Navy.

That experience, the

commission said, helped him develop leadership skills and a service-focused mindset that they have seen him maintain to this day.

In their announcement, the commission further stated, “Throughout his career, Chief Valovanie has been known for his professionalism, commitment to training, and strong support for both his colleagues and the community. His experience, leadership, and deep understanding of

SEE VALOVANIE, PAGE A8

Holidays mean early deadlines

With Christmas and New Year’s Day both falling on Thursday, when the Winnisquam Echo would ordinarily be arriving in subscribers’ mail boxes, the submission deadline for our Dec. 25 and Jan. 1 editions will also be set earlier than usual.

Any press releases and letters to the Editor intended for publication the week of Dec. 25 should be submitted no later than 4 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 18.

For the week of Dec. 31, the submission deadline will be Friday, Dec. 26 at 4 p.m.

Submissions can be e-mailed to Editor Brendan Berube at brendan@salmonpress.news.



JOSHUA SPAULDING
Winnisquam teammates Jack McGranaghan (in blue) and Bennett Ponder (in grey) wrestle at 138 pounds at the Kingswood Kickoff Tournament on Saturday.

Gunstock opens for 2025/2026 season with most terrain ever



GILFORD — Gunstock Mountain Resort opened for the 2025/2026 ski and snowboard season, as scheduled, on Friday, Dec. 5, with more open terrain than ever before.

“We opened for our 89th season with more runs than we’ve ever had on opening day and this was the first time we’ve ever had a black-diamond trail on day one,” said Gunstock President and General Manager

Robert Drake.

“With early season snowfall and favorable snowmaking temperatures in store for an extended period, we expect to increase our open trail count significantly in the week ahead,” Drake added.

Gunstock opened to hundreds of eager skiers and snowboarders with 47 acres of skiable terrain on 13 trails serviced by three

lifts. There were two runs from the summit and beginner terrain accessed by the wonder carpet and Penny Pitou Silver Medal chairlift. Gunstock’s Nordic Center and cross country trails began the season with 100 percent of its 26 kilometers open and 12 kilometers groomed.

Gunstock team members spent the summer preparing for a successful winter season by refurbishing the Panorama quad lift – a two-year process that began with upgrades to communication lines that transfer critical safety information between operators at the terminals and at every tower along the line. The computerized chair-spacing system that resulted in a disruption in lift service last season has been replaced. These upgrades are critical elements of a larger investment in the full renovation of the

Panorama lift. Further enhancements include new lift structures to house lift components and shelter lift attendants at the base and summit. The haul rope has been replaced on the Ramrod lift, and Gunstock’s Pistol lift gear box was upgraded. Tiger, Pistol, and Ramrod lift drive replacements were also completed. In addition, resort electrical systems have been inspected and upgraded as needed to ensure reliability.

Snowmaking improvements for this winter include the installation of 24 new energy-efficient HKD Impulse tower guns that provide high production output of quality snow through a wide range of temperatures and Klik hydrants that improve snowmaking utility and efficiency. When it comes to managing the snow surface, Gunstock has reinforced its reputation for superlative conditions with the help of two new Prinoth grooming machines – one equipped with a winch for managing the snow on Gunstock’s steepest terrain.

Winter enthusiasts who prefer to earn their turns will be happy to learn that Gunstock has extended uphill access hours this winter and has joined Uphill New England, a local non-profit organization that has created the first ever multi-mountain pass, building a community of engaged, responsible, and empowered uphill enthusiasts. In addition to offering Gunstock-only uphill-access season passes, the resort has joined 21 resorts to offer a multi-mountain uphill season pass.

Gunstock season passes are still available for purchase, including a very affordable four-mountain college pass that makes an ideal holiday gift for young skiers and riders pursuing higher learning. To ensure the best on-mountain experience for all guests, Gunstock limits the number of day tickets sold each day and limits the number of season passes sold each year. Season pass sales end when the maximum number of passes are sold. More information is available at gunstock.com.

Unitarian Universalist Society of Laconia to host Celtic Christmas concert Dec. 21

LACONIA — Shelby Trevor and Noelle Beaudin present A Celtic Christmas—a vibrant, foot-stomping celebration of high-energy fiddle and piano music from Cape Breton, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Scotland, Ireland, Galicia, and Wales. The concert takes place on Sunday, Dec. 21 at 4 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Society of Laconia.

Tickets are \$25 for adults and \$10 for children. The church is located at 172 Pleasant St., Laconia. Light refreshments will be served, and guests can also enjoy a festive Cookie Walk, filling a box from a tempting selection of homemade holiday treats. Tickets may be reserved by emailing uusl@myfairpoint.net or calling 603-848-2469. This concert often sells out, so reserve your tickets early.

Shelby Trevor is a performing artist, composer, and educator whose work explores sound and musical ideas beyond the limits of any single genre. He is a founding member of Cosmic Collection Service, an ensemble pushing into new sonic territories with original albums available on Spotify and YouTube. Trevor’s past projects reflect a wide-ranging and dynamic career. He is the founder and former director of the Amelia Island Community String Orchestra, a founding member of both the Subtropical String Trio and the Spiral Song concert series, conductor for the Jacksonville Symphony Youth Orchestra, staff musician for the Berklee College of Music, and a founding member of the Granite String Band. As a violin soloist, he has appeared with the Suzuki School of Newton Faculty



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Orchestra, the Lakes Region Symphony Orchestra, and First Coast Opera. His work as an orchestral and studio musician includes collaborations with the Cape Ann Symphony, First Coast Opera, WGBH Studio Orchestra, the Beantown Swing Orchestra, and many others.

In addition to performance, Trevor has held teaching and leadership roles as faculty and concertmaster of the Great Woods Chamber Orchestra at Wheaton College, faculty member at the Suzuki School of Newton, and program developer and educator with both the Amelia Island Chamber Music Festival and Arts Alive Nassau.

Noelle Beaudin (piano & hurdy-gurdy) studied piano performance and composition at the Boston Conservatory and was an active performer throughout the Boston area before continuing her musical career in France and the United Kingdom. Now based in New Hampshire’s Lakes Region, she maintains a thriving teaching studio and music summer camp, while performing widely across New England as both a soloist and accompanist.

Beaudin is also recognized as one of the leading hurdy-gurdy performers and educators in the United States. As co-founder of GurdyWorld.com, her dynamic online presence has attracted a rapidly growing international following. She has released two genre-bending albums—Savage and Wisp—which showcase her innovative approach to the piano, organ and hurdy-gurdy. She is also featured in a forthcoming film set to premiere in 2026.

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Franklin Savings Bank grants \$10,000 to Operation Delta Dog’s efforts to aid veterans



Pictured, left to right: Rick and Waylan; Avianna and Hershey; Brian Bozak, President & CEO, Franklin Savings Bank; Meg Miller, Board Member, Franklin Savings Bank; Steve and Pippin; and trainer Audra with office mascot, Archie.

FRANKLIN — Franklin Savings Bank recently granted \$10,000 to Operation Delta Dog’s effort to rescue and train more dogs that are specialized service companions for veterans. This grant helped the organization expand its initiative and surpass the number of dogs that have been trained in the history of the

organization. “Supporting Operation Delta Dog is a powerful way to honor our veterans while also giving rescue dogs a second chance. It is a mission we are proud to stand behind,” comments Brian Bozak, President & CEO, Franklin Savings Bank. Operation Delta Dog is

a new non-profit organization dedicated to reducing veteran suicide rates by rescuing homeless dogs and training them to be psychiatric service dogs for veterans suffering from PTSD, traumatic brain injuries, and military sexual trauma. By bringing together veterans and rescue dogs, they can provide healing, support,

and a new lease on life for both. “Operation Delta Dog is responding to the emerging veteran mental health crisis in New Hampshire by training and placing more life-saving service dogs than ever in our history,” explains Charlotte Troddyn, Executive Director, Operation Delta Dog. “The

OPDD Training & Enrichment Center in Hollis will enable our team to double the number of veteran/dog teams training together. Our service dog program is unique, in that we never charge veterans, and strive to respond with immediate assistance to every veteran asking for help... Our veterans have given so

much already, and deserve this transformative and life-saving support. The only way that this is possible is through the support of our generous partners. The \$10,000 grant from Franklin Savings Bank directly supports this critical program expansion, enabling us to say ‘Yes’ to more veterans in our community.”

Visit them online: <https://operationdelatadog.org/>.

Established in 1869, Franklin Savings Bank is an independent, mutually-owned community bank, offering an array of commercial lending, personal banking and investment services. The Bank also offers investment and financial planning services through its wholly-owned subsidiary, Independence Financial Advisors. A recognized leader in providing the latest in financial services technology, Franklin Savings Bank remains committed to serving the needs of businesses, families and the communities it serves, through a dedicated team of employees, a diverse line of financial products and services, and continued investment in emerging technology. Visit www.fsbnh.bank to learn more or follow the bank on Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, and YouTube.

A tradition of caring MVSB’s Mitten Tree drive brings warmth to local families

REGION — MVSB (Meredith Village Savings Bank) welcomes community members to take part in their annual Mitten Tree Drive. The Bank will be collecting donations of

new, handmade or store-bought cold-weather accessories at all MVSB offices now through New Year’s Eve. A full list of locations and hours is available at mvsb.com/locations.

All items donated will be distributed to local schools and nonprofits to help keep neighbors warm this winter. In addition, for every item donated, the Bank will contribute \$2 to

local organizations working to combat childhood food insecurity.

“For more than four decades, the Mitten Tree Drive has brought our communities together in the spirit of giving,” said Stacy Trites, Senior Vice President, Senior Retail Banking Officer. “Each year, we’re inspired by the generosity of those who help us bring warmth and nourishment to so many local children and families.”

The Bank’s matching donation will benefit End 68 Hours of Hunger programs serving Alton, Exeter, North Conway, Portsmouth, Rochester and Wolfeboro, as well as local Got Lunch! programs serving Gilford, Ashland & Holderness, Inter-Lakes, Laconia and Plymouth.

MVSB has been serving the essential banking needs of people, businesses, nonprofits and municipalities for more than 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 custom-

ers 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 visitmvsb.com.



MVSB branch office locations are collecting donations of new mittens, hats, gloves and scarves for their annual Mitten Tree drive through New Year’s Eve.

Belmont man arrested following pursuit on seacoast

DURHAM — A Belmont man was taken into custody following a pursuit on the New Hampshire seacoast that ended in a multi-hour standoff.

On Saturday, Dec. 6, the New Hampshire State Police received information to be on the lookout (BOLO) for a 2017 Dodge Ram 3500 in connection with an ongoing investigation in Belmont. At approximately 9:42 p.m.,

Troopers learned the Strafford Police Department had located the vehicle and was attempting to conduct a traffic stop in Strafford; however, the driver did not stop, and a pursuit was initiated.

State Troopers responded to the area and assumed command of the ongoing pursuit. The driver of the

Dodge traveled through multiple communities, including Somersworth, where a minor passenger was let out of the vehicle. The minor was not physically injured in the pursuit and was brought by police to a family member, while the pursuit continued.

Tire deflation devices were used multiple times before the suspect ultimately stopped on Route 4 in Durham. However, the driver refused to get out of the vehicle, the road was closed, and a prolonged standoff ensued while Troopers negotiated with the driver.

Ultimately, the driver exited the vehicle and was taken into custody before being identified as Scott E. Newcomb, 55, of Belmont. He was later released to the custody of the Belmont Po-

lice Department in connection with their investigation. Newcomb will be charged by the State Police with kidnapping, reckless conduct, and disobeying an officer in connection with the pursuit and standoff.

Officers from the communities of Durham, Belmont, Somersworth, Strafford, and Dover, as well as members of the Durham Fire Department and McGregor Memorial EMS, assist with bringing this incident to a safe conclusion.

Newcomb’s court date is currently pending and no booking photo is available at this time. Anyone with information that may assist the ongoing investigation is asked to contact Trooper First Class Nathan J. Sleight at Nathan.J.Sleight@dos.nh.gov.



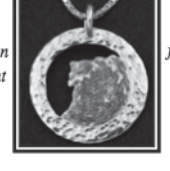
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Opinion

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.

Why local weather stations matter more than ever

Across the Lakes Region, the weather is more than a backdrop. It shapes commutes, school decisions, outdoor work, lake levels, and emergency response. Yet the way communities gather and use weather data has changed significantly in recent years, and that shift is becoming increasingly important for our local towns.

While national forecasts serve a purpose, local officials often rely on more precise, real-time information when determining road treatment plans, issuing advisories, or preparing for storms. A snow squall in the Winnisquam corridor may look very different from conditions just a few miles away, and that micro-scale variability can affect everything from school bus routes to staffing at fire and police departments.

In recent years, more municipalities and school districts across New Hampshire have turned to local weather stations—small, high-quality monitoring units that provide continuous readings of temperature, wind speed, precipitation, and road surface conditions. These stations can supplement regional reports, offering a layer of detail that helps officials make decisions grounded in what is actually happening on the ground, not what is expected in a broad zone.

The value of accurate local data extends well beyond storms. Road agents use it to time the freezing of pavement, helping crews address black ice before it develops into a hazard. Recreation departments track wind and conditions before youth practices begin. Lakefront homeowners monitor rainfall totals that influence shoreline runoff. Even small businesses—from construction firms to landscaping crews—benefit from localized forecasts that help schedule work safely and efficiently.

For rural communities, where terrain and elevation change quickly, this level of detail matters. A hilltop in Sanbornton can pick up freezing fog while downtown Tilton remains clear. Belmont’s valleys may see different wind patterns from the open stretches of Northfield. Without localized measurements, those distinctions are too easily lost in regional models that cannot account for the nuances of local geography.

Supporting reliable weather monitoring does not require large investment, but it does require consistent attention. Maintaining equipment, ensuring accurate calibration, and making data accessible to the public and local agencies all contribute to a more informed community. When residents and local departments share the same information, decisions about travel, storm preparedness, or event cancellations become more transparent and easier to understand.

At its core, good weather data builds resilience. It helps communities prepare, respond, and adapt with fewer surprises. And as seasonal patterns continue to shift in New Hampshire, that preparation becomes increasingly important.

The weather will always be unpredictable. But with accurate local information, our towns can meet that unpredictability with clarity rather than guesswork. It is one of the simplest ways to support public safety, strengthen communication, and help the region navigate whatever conditions come next.



Belmont High School freshman Cam Glennon already has gained a fair amount of sports photography knowledge on his own by snapping pictures at high school games. He had a chance to watch a pro when he had a job shadow experience with Danielle Cook at “Media Day” for the BHS Varsity Boys Basketball team on Dec. 4. She took multiple photos of individual players as well as group shots, and Cam saw just how she did it, from set-up to take-down. Her business, Danielle Cook Photography, is well known in the Lakes Region. She is happy to serve as a mentor for Glennon as he develops his own skills during high school. Photo courtesy of the Shaker Regional School District’s Facebook page.

Comfort Keepers

Pneumonia in seniors: Prevention and treatments

BY MARTHA SWATS
Owner/Administrator
Comfort Keepers

There are many benefits that come with getting older, and there are also factors to be aware of when it comes to our health and wellness. As we age our body’s natural defenses become less reliable and as a result, seniors are more susceptible to infection - including pneumonia. Pneumonia is an infection that affects one or both lungs and can range from mild to severe.

The additional steps that older adults take to protect their health can have long-lasting physical and mental effects. And staying healthy is the best way for seniors to continue living the highest quality of life.

Why pneumonia is more common in seniors

Changes to the lungs as we age: Because of changes to the respiratory system that happen with age, seniors can’t always effectively clear secretions as well from their lungs. Those secretions can go down into bronchial tubes, causing the infection. Weakened immune systems: A senior’s immune system has a harder time fighting off infection. And, some health issues can an even greater negative effect on a senior’s ability to fight off an infection – issues like

an organ or bone marrow transplant, chemotherapy (treatment for cancer), or long-term steroid use. Senior health conditions: Diabetes, Parkinson’s disease, chemotherapy, and HIV put seniors at a higher risk for pneumonia, as well as cystic fibrosis, asthma, COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), and bronchiectasis. Surgery can also expose seniors to infections that can lead to pneumonia.

Signs of pneumonia

Symptoms can include coughing, fever, chills, shortness of breath, chest pain, green or yellow sputum that comes up during coughing, fatigue, and the sudden worsening of a cold or the flu.

Pneumonia treatments

Typically, a physician will do a chest X-ray and/or blood test to determine if a senior has pneumonia. Bacterial pneumonia is usually treated with antibiotics. If the infection is viral, an anti-viral medicine may be prescribed. In addition to medication, doctors may give the patient fluids, oxygen, pain relief and medical support.

Reducing the risk of pneumonia in seniors

Seniors should discuss pneumonia prevention with their physicians to determine the best plan. Some options to help reduce the

risk of pneumonia include:

Get vaccinated. All people over age 65 should get an annual flu shot, as well as a pneumococcal vaccine, a one-time shot that protects against the pneumococcus, or pneumonia bacteria.

Practice good hygiene: Wash hands regularly or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

Don’t Smoke or Take Steps to Quit: Smoking negatively impacts just about everything in our bodies, but the lungs obviously receive a significant amount of damage. Those who smoke are at a greater overall risk of pneumonia because the lungs’ defense mechanisms become compromised.

Practice a Healthy Lifestyle: Seniors should follow a physician-approved diet and exercise regimen. This will help bolster their immune system and reduce the risk of pneumonia.

Comfort Keepers® can help

Whether senior clients are recovering from pneumonia or looking to protect themselves, the trusted care team at Comfort Keepers® can help. Our caregivers remind clients to take medication, provide transportation to scheduled appointments, and support physician-prescribed exercise regimens and diets. Above all, our goal is to

see that clients have the means to find the joy and happiness in each day, regardless of age or acuity.

About Comfort Keepers

Comfort Keepers is a leader in providing in-home care consisting of such services as companionship, transportation, housekeeping, meal preparation, bathing, mobility assistance, nursing services, and a host of additional items all meant to keep seniors living independently worry free in the comfort of their homes. Comfort Keepers have been serving New Hampshire residents since 2005. Let us help you stay independent. Please call 603-536-6060 or visit our Web site at nhcomfortkeepers.com for more information.

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Greater Lakes Region Children’s Auction to host Family Night

LACONIA — The Greater Lakes Region Children’s Auction will host a family night on Wednesday, Dec. 10 from 4:30-6:30 p.m., and all are welcome to attend free.

Have your picture taken with Santa, meet the Grinch, build a toy in Santa’s workshop, decorate a holiday cookie, have your face painted, sing Christmas songs with the Snow family and hear holiday stories read aloud.

The Kiwanis Club will take part in the event and

give away free books to children who attend.

The site for the 2025 Greater Lakes Region Children’s Auction is at the Belknap Marketplace, where CVS was formerly located, and the event will be held on Tuesday, Dec. 9 through Friday, Dec. 12, from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Come experience the magic in person.

The auction will be streamed live at ChildrensAuction.org, LaconiaDailySun.com and [Facebook.com/](https://www.facebook.com/ChildrensAuction.org)

ChildrensAuction. Watch live on LakesRegionPublic Access TV Channel 25, or listen on Lakes FM 101.5.

Viewers can bid online at ChildrensAuction.org, starting on Black Friday, Nov. 28. Bidders who create an account at ChildrensAuction.org, can bid early on high-value items. New this year, any bidder can also put a maximum bid on any items that will close during the week of the auction.

Donations for the auction are being accepted at

more than 30 business locations from Nov. 1 through Dec. 5. Click here for a complete list of collection sites or visit childrensauction.org.

Donations can also be dropped off at the Belknap Marketplace from Nov. 28-30 and Dec. 6-8 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Have extra time and want to volunteer to help prepare the auction site? Check out these opportunities here.

If you’d like to become a sponsor, view options

at childrensauction.org/ sponsorship, email Jenn@ChildrensAuction.org or call 603-527-0999.

About the Greater Lakes Region Children’s Auction

Numerous fundraising events in the Lakes Region throughout the year support the Greater Lakes Region Children’s Auction, including our four-day signature event every December. In the past four decades we have distributed more than \$9.2 million to more than 80 nonprofits that serve low-income families and children in the Lakes

Region, all through volunteer efforts, community donations and corporate sponsorship. The Auction falls under the umbrella of the Greater Lakes Region Charitable Fund for Children, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that helps local community organizations that serve children and families in need. For more information about the Auction, the nonprofits it supports and how you can help, visit ChildrensAuction.org.

Jon Jones promoted to SVP, Senior Loan Officer at Franklin Savings Bank



Jon Jones

FRANKLIN — Franklin Savings Bank is pleased to announce the recent promotion of Jon Jones, Senior Vice President, Senior Loan Officer. In his expanded role, he will oversee Lending and help drive the strategic direction at FSB.

“This promotion is well deserved,” states Brian Bozak, President & CEO. “Jon has an unwavering commitment to both FSB, and our customers that we are proud to support each and every day. He is a strategic thinker, and I have no doubt that our commercial portfolio will continue to

expand under his leadership.”

Jones joined FSB in 2001 and has held several roles within the bank. He joined Commercial Lending in 2016 as a Credit Analyst, was promoted to Commercial Loan Portfolio Manager in 2016, and then to AVP, Commercial Loan Officer in 2017. In 2019 Jon was elevated to VP, Commercial Loan Officer. In 2024, he became SVP, Commercial Loan Officer, and is now the bank’s SVP, Senior Loan Officer.

“I’m committed to the growth of FSB because it’s

shown me time and time again that it is a financially-solid and customer-focused institution that is committed to helping businesses grow and succeed in New Hampshire,” explains Jones. “I am looking forward to my new role, and working with the dedicated team here at FSB.”

Established in 1869, Franklin Savings Bank is an independent, mutually-owned community bank, offering an array of commercial lending, personal banking and investment services. The Bank also offers investment and financial planning services

through its wholly-owned subsidiary, Independence Financial Advisors. A recognized leader in providing the latest in financial services technology, Franklin Savings Bank remains committed to serving the needs of businesses, families and the communities it serves, through a dedicated team of employees, a diverse line of financial products and services, and continued investment in emerging technology. Visit www.fsbnh.bank to learn more or follow the bank on Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, and YouTube.

“A Christmas Carol” returns to the Colonial Theatre!

LACONIA — Powerhouse Theatre Collaborative, the resident theatre company of the Colonial Theatre, brings Ebenezer Scrooge back to the Colonial stage Dec. 11-14 in this annual holiday production, Powerhouse’s most popular show! This year, 68 performers aged seven to 70 (and older!) will bring some holiday spirit and theatre magic to the Lakes Region when they perform “A Christmas Carol: The Musical Ghost Story” for four performances only. Thursday and Friday evening performances are at 7:30 p.m., with Saturday and Sunday matinees at 2 p.m.

This original musical adaptation of the Dickens classic is penned by Joel Mercier, and will once again be directed by Powerhouse’s Bryan Halperin with choreography by Jenna Rogato. Vocal direction is by Lorraine Barrows, and the caroling choir will once more be performing “pre-show” as audiences arrive so come early!

Ebenezer Scrooge will be performed by Jim Gocha, who keeps getting better every year. This is his fourth year playing the role for Powerhouse, and he says “Scrooge is my all-time favorite literary character. Being able to play him onstage is such a privilege. It’s something I look forward to sharing with the audience each year.”

More than 60 performers return from last year’s stellar cast, with some taking on new roles this year.

Says director Halperin, “It’s great to have continuity in the cast from year to year so people can grow with their roles, but it is also nice to be able to give some people new challenges and



COURTESY

Jim Gocha as Scrooge with “A Christmas Carol” cast mates.

add some newcomers into the mix to keep everyone on their toes and to help the show feel exciting and fresh.”

“A Christmas Carol” is sponsored by Franklin Savings Bank, The Common Man, and Lovering Volvo and is part of the 2025 Colonial Series sponsored by The Home Beautiful and BNH. Powerhouse’s 2025 season is sponsored by La-

valley/Middleton Building Supply, Grappone Automotive Group, and Meredith Village Savings Bank.

Tickets and all the details can be found at powerhousenh.org or colonial-laconia.com. Please only use ticket links from these two websites as searches will turn up third-party sites that charge a premium for tickets. Prices range from \$18-\$24 (before fees) so if

you see higher prices please find the correct websites. Make Powerhouse’s “A Christmas Carol” a part of your annual Lakes Region holiday traditions if you haven’t already! And for those who can’t get enough Christmas Carol, check out Powerhouse’s new Christ-

mas revelry for adults - Fezziwig’s After Dark on Saturday Dec. 13!

Contact info@powerhousenh.org for more details and other opportunities to get involved or become a 2026 sponsor.

Anestis leads PSU wrestling at Southern Maine

GORHAM, Maine — Graduate student Chase Anestis (Belmont) finished fourth at 165 pounds to lead the Plymouth State University wrestling team at the Ted Reese Invitational hosted by the University of Southern Maine on Saturday.

Anestis opened the day with a pair of dominant wins, earning a 17-1 technical fall before pinning his next opponent in just 1:01 to advance to the semifinals. After falling by a 6-1 decision, he rebounded with another pin – this time in 1:49 – in the consolation semifinals to reach the third-place match, where he was edged in a tight 5-4 decision to finish fourth overall.

Freshman Kaio Debritto (Deerfield Beach, Fla.) bounced back from a first-round setback to record his first career pin, then added an 8-4 decision to finish 2-2 on the day.

Classmate Sam Cowette (Bedford) earned a win by fall at 184 pounds, while sophomores John Allmers (Rivervale, N.J.) and Brody McDonald (Salem) each picked up wins by decision in their respective weight classes.

Plymouth State finished seventh in the team standings.

After a break for final exams and the holiday, Plymouth State returns to action at the Mariner Duals hosted by Merchant Marine Academy on Jan. 10. NYU and Hunter College will also be in attendance.

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Third annual Christmas show to benefit Lakes Region Children's Auction at Winery

MEREDITH — Embrace the joy of the Christmas season in the Loft at the Hermit Woods Winery in Meredith as three local musician favorites join together as a trio to celebrate the season through a mix of holiday classics and original compositions. Come and share what promises to be a wonderful evening of music wrapped around the theme of Christmas presented by artists Katie Dobbins, David Lockwood, and Andriana Gnap. This year's show marks the third annual presentation of a Christmas celebration in song by these musicians. For this year's one-night-only show at the Loft, they're back on stage together with additional musical support from the talents of New Hampshire artist Mike Moran on bass and percussion. Come and experience a special evening of Christmas magic.

In the spirit of the season of giving, 50 percent of show proceeds from ticket sales and tips will be given to the Lakes Region Children's Auction in support of local area children and related charities. So purchase a ticket with family members or friends and come with a joyful and generous heart knowing that you'll be supporting a great local business, three talented local musicians, and the good works of the



Children's Auction. In the midst of the Christmas season, come and enjoy some of the music and songs that remind us all of its meaning and purpose.

This special show will take place on Thursday, Dec. 18, starting with a complimentary wine tasting at 5:30 p.m., Loft seating at 6 p.m., and musical performance starting at 7 p.m. A menu offering delicious foods and wines is available once the Loft has opened for seating. Food orders are taken prior to the musical performance while wine is available through-

out the entire evening event. The Loft provides an intimate setting and is a listening room during show times.

Tickets for the show are \$12 - \$15 and available for purchase online at hermitwoods.com or at the Hermit Woods Winery located at 72 Main St. in Meredith. Seating is limited so be sure to purchase your tickets early.

About the artists:

Katie Dobbins
Dobbins' music captivates with its authentic

voice, seamlessly weaving through various styles and genres. Her wholesome and sultry vocals create a comforting connection, making you feel truly understood in the tapestry of life and love. Awarded Best Solo Act (Gold) at the 2024 & 2025 Best of Lakes Region Awards, and nominated Performer of the Year at the 2024 & 2025 New England Music Awards, Katie leaves a lasting impression with her honest lyrics and natural ease on stage. Her intentionality is evident in everything she does - from the music she creates to the details of each live show,

making her performances a unique and beautiful experience. Her most recent Holiday single, a creative acoustic rendition of "Silent Night," is available everywhere, along with several other tunes released this year.
katedobbinsmusic.com

David Lockwood has gigged around New England for 40+ years as a member of Straight No Chaser and Little Davey & The Aberrations, in freelance trios and duos, and as a soloist. His mobile piano adventures as Little Davey & The Rolling 88s

has been featured several times on New Hampshire Chronicle. His most recent album of original songs is The Rest Is History (2021). Two albums of solo piano music No More A Stranger: Hymns & Songs (2020) and Comfort & Joy: Christmas Hymns + Carols (2022) have enjoyed wide success, gaining listeners from New Hampshire to New Zealand. Learn more at: davidlockwoodmusic.com.

Andriana Gnap is an American born singer/songwriter with a strong connection to her Ukrainian heritage. She has appeared in theater and music productions in Boston, New York, Los Angeles, Toronto, and online with Ukraine's Lviv Music Room. You may have heard Andriana and her family trio Heavenstar at a local benefit for Ukraine, or opening for Jonathan Edwards at New Hampshire's Cold River Radio Show. With rich harmonies and heartfelt vocals, Andriana's recordings can be heard on all streaming platforms, including her Holiday originals, "This Christmas" and "Christmas You and Me." Gnap is also the author of the family friendly romance "Two Worlds of Christmas." For more information and music videos, visit www.Andriana.org.

MVSB spreads joy to celebrate Loon Preservation Committee's 50th anniversary



From left, Betsy McCoy, Loon Preservation Committee Director of Development and Membership; Harry Vogel, LPC Senior Biologist and Executive Director; Marcus Weeks, MVSB President; Toon Devito, MVSB Branch & Business Development Manager; Ariana Roy, MVSB Business Development Officer; and Deb Sturgeon, MVSB Branch & Business Development Manager, stand together at the Loon Center in Moultonborough.

MOULTONBOROUGH — MVSB (Meredith Village Savings Bank) is proud to support the Loon Preservation Committee in celebration of its 50th anniversary with a \$5,000 donation to further the organization's mission of protecting and restoring New Hampshire's loon population.

"For 50 years, the Loon Preservation Committee has been a leader in wildlife conservation and environmental education in New Hampshire," said

Marcus Weeks, MVSB President. "Their work not only protects an important and beloved species, but also helps preserve the health of our lakes and ecosystems. We're honored to support their efforts and celebrate this remarkable milestone with them."

"MVSB's generous support helps us continue our mission to safeguard loons and the habitats they depend on," said Harry Vogel, Senior Biologist and Executive Director of the Loon Preservation Com-

mittee. "As we mark our 50th anniversary, we're grateful for community partners who share our commitment to protecting New Hampshire's loons for future generations."

Founded in 1975, the Loon Preservation Committee works to restore and maintain a healthy population of loons throughout New Hampshire; to monitor the health and productivity of loon populations as indicators of environmental quality; and to promote a greater understand-

ing of loons and the natural world. Through research, outreach and conservation initiatives, the Loon Preservation Committee continues to make a lasting impact on the health of New Hampshire's lakes and wildlife.

In addition to the donation, MVSB has partnered with the organization to share facts about loons and the Loon Preservation Committee on Facebook and Instagram throughout the month of December. Follow MVSB on Face-

book and Instagram for these and other fun facts:

The Common Loon is the only loon species that breeds as far south as New Hampshire.

Loons are expert divers and can stay underwater for up to five minutes while chasing fish.

Their haunting calls serve as communication between mates and to defend territory.

Loons are migratory, spending summers on inland lakes and winters along the ocean coast.

A loon's bones are much denser than those of most other birds, making them less buoyant and allowing them to dive as deep as 200 feet in search of food.

Visit loon.org to learn more about the Loon Preservation, donate or purchase commemorative gifts.

MVSB has been serving

the essential banking needs of people, businesses, non-profits and municipalities for more than 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, Gilford, Exeter, Laconia, Melvin Village, Meredith, Moultonborough, North Conway, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Rochester or Wolfeboro, call 800-922-6872 or visitmvsb.com.

Sanbornton tax rate delayed

SANBORNTON — The town of Sanbornton has been notified that the 2025 tax rate will be delayed due to ongoing review and processing by the New Hampshire Department of Revenue Administration (DRA).

At this time, the town has not yet received a confirmed release date. We understand that this delay may cause concerns for our taxpayers, particularly regarding the issuance of the second tax bills and associated timelines. The Select Board will review the documents from the DRA in order to determine what amount of fund balance (if any) that will be used to offset the tax rate. Then the Town Clerk/Tax Collector can issue the warrant to collect taxes, and citizens will have 30 days to pay without a penalty. The town is actively monitoring the situation, and will provide updates as soon as additional information becomes available.

Please feel free to contact the Town Administrator, Trish Stafford at townadministrator@sanborntonnh.org or 603-729-8090 with any questions or concerns.

HoliYAY FUN

Christmas Eve fun for families



The day and evening before Christmas is a time of much anticipation for young children, particularly those awaiting the arrival of Santa Claus. What children do not realize is their parents have been working hard behind the scenes for many weeks to help maximize the holiday magic, and Christmas Eve often is the final push to get everything done before the big day (and man in red) arrives.

Keeping children happy and entertained on Christmas Eve can free up time for adults to check off their to-do lists and savor some of the holiday spirit themselves. Here are some traditions to explore on Christmas Eve that are entertaining for kids and adults.

- Bake some cookies.

Santa is going to want a fresh batch of cookies to refuel for a long night of delivering presents. Therefore, having children prepare and bake some cookies can be a Christmas Eve tradition that keeps little ones occupied. When cooled, and after sampling one or two themselves, kids can feel pride placing a dish of cookies out for the jolly old elf.

- Decorate gingerbread houses. Christmas Eve is a great night to decorate gingerbread houses. Families who do not freshly bake the panels for the gingerbread houses can rely on pre-made kits available at various stores. It's a smart idea to have some extra icing available, especially if kids are anxious to "glue" on extra candy embellishments.
- Attend evening ser-

vices. Most churches hold Christmas Eve services, with some offering a Midnight Mass for parishioners. Spending time at these services enables families to slow down and celebrate their faith.

- Do a Christmas pajama reveal. It's traditional in some families to buy matching PJs to wear to bed on Christmas Eve and then lounge around in them on Christmas morning. Whoever is in charge of wrapping gifts can set apart the Christmas PJs by wrapping them in a different patterned paper. Then everyone opens the pajamas at the same time for the big reveal.
- Leave out reindeer food. Kids can have a fun time putting together a batch of special reindeer food. After all, Santa isn't

the only one doing the heavy lifting delivering gifts; his reindeer probably get hungry, too. Reindeer food can be made using a few different ingredients, namely oatmeal, shredded carrots and glitter. Children can decide where to toss this reindeer food, with some opting to make a path along the front lawn leading toward the house.

- Watch a holiday classic. Choose a Christmas movie and gather the family around to watch it. Some options include "National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation," "Miracle on 34th Street," "Elf," or "A Christmas Story." Set up a pop-

corn bar nearby where everyone can customize their popcorn with different add-ins, like chocolate candies, cheese or seasonings.

Christmas Eve traditions can be fun for kids and families as they anticipate all the festivities to come on Christmas morning.

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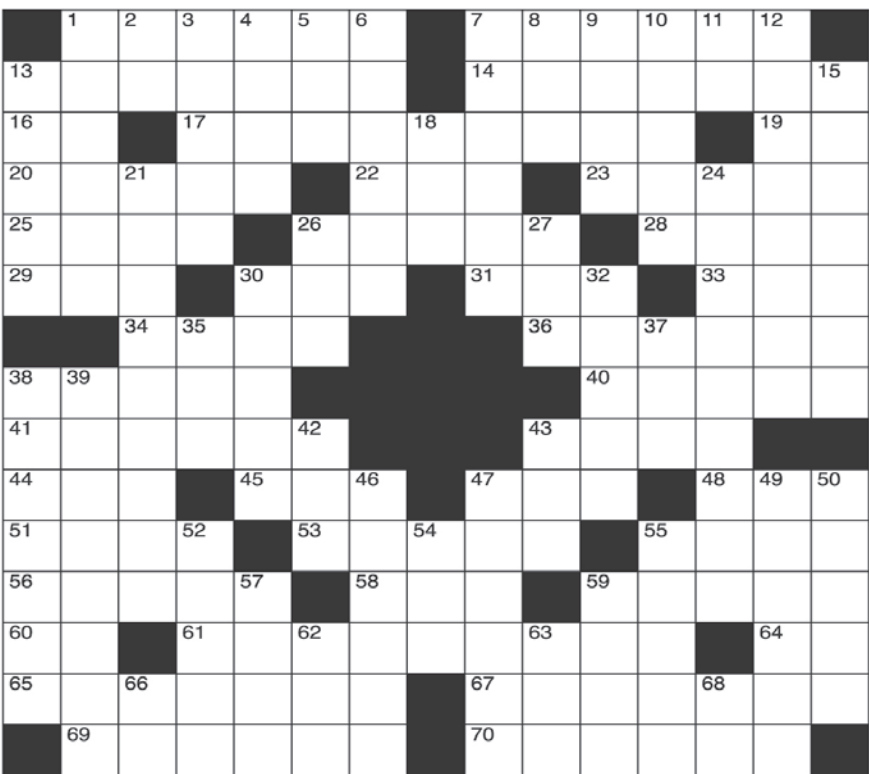
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CLUES ACROSS

1. Spiritual leaders

7. A type of solution

13. Fortified wine

14. Edible mollusk

16. They precede C

17. A way to compare

19. Government lawyer

20. “Game of Thrones” actor Ciaran

22. The eighth month (abbr.)

23. Very willing

25. ___ ex Machina

26. Makes happy

28. Type of berry

29. A doctrine

30. Popular Dodge truck model

31. Dekagram

33. Naturally occurring solid

34. Company officer

36. Villains

38. Cricket frogs
40. Influential German psychologist

41. Endured

43. A female domestic

44. You can get stuck in one

45. Cigarette (slang)

47. Fiber optics network

48. Group of blood disorders (abbr.)

51. Employee stock ownership plan

53. Belonging to the bottom layer

55. Sound

56. MLB legend Hank

58. Very attractive person

59. Late beloved sportscaster Craig

60. South Dakota

61. Mocking

64. Symbol for gold

65. Longtime Braves pitcher Julio

67. Humor

69. Shawl

70. Preliminary patient assessment

CLUES DOWN

1. Animal disease

2. Commercial

3. Necklace material

4. Containers

5. A way to save for your future

6. Colorado Heisman winner Rashaan

7. Dipped down

8. Head injury (abbr.)

9. Lay about

10. Intestinal

11. Opposite of yes

12. Caused to be loved

13. Spiritual leader of Islam

15. Businesslike

18. Not in

21. Number above the line in a fraction

24. An animal with its own day

26. Pouch

27. Swedish krona

30. Start over

32. Field flowers
35. Fourteen

37. A visual way to interact with a computer

38. Up-to-date

39. Campaigns

42. Touch lightly

43. “Boardwalk Empire” actress Gretchen

46. Violent seizure of property

47. Supporter of the Pope

49. Anxiety

50. Body fluid

52. One who’s faking it

54. Title of respect

55. Chilean city

57. City in central Japan

59. Silk garment

62. A form of dance

63. Automobile

66. The man

68. Justice Dept. head honcho

PUZZLE SOLUTION

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VALOVANIE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE A1

the district make him exceptionally well-suited to guide the department into its next chapter.”

Valovanie said he looks forward to this new oppor-

tunity to help the department progress and that he is very proud of those he works with each day.

“I’m excited to lead this department of excellent and experienced staff as we look ahead, and lead them into the future,” he said last

week.

He added that they will be fully focused on the two communities they serve and work hard to provide them both with the quality of service and protection the residents, businesses and visitors deserve.

BEARS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE A1

Nashua North to advance to the finals and he got a pin of a Kingswood foe in the finals to win the weight class.

In a huge field at 138 pounds, Dylan Griffin took the overall win. He opened with a 10-7 win over a Winnacunnet foe and pinned teammate Bennett Ponder to advance to the finals, where he got a pin of a Winnacunnet athlete to claim the title.

The other weight class win for the Bears came at 165 pounds where Colin Parenteau bested the field. He started with a pin of a Conant wrestler then pinned wresters from Nashua North and Kingswood before besting another Kingswood grappler in the finals by a 6-5 score to get the win.

At 120 pounds, Kane St. Hilaire finished in second place, starting with an 11-3 win over a Winnacunnet wrestler, beat teammate Brandon Ponder by a 7-0 score and fell to a Nashua North wrestler in the finals by a 5-4 score to finish in second place.

Jameson Dunn finished second place at 157 pounds, starting with a 10-2 win over a John Stark foe then pinned a wrestler from Lebanon. He got a 14-9 win over Winnacunnet to advance to the finals and was pinned by another Warrior wrestler in the finals to finish second.

Despite suffering a cut on his eyelid in his first match of the day, Lazar Arbutina wrestled his way to third at 175 pounds. He opened with pins over Winnacunnet and King-

swood before being pinned by a John Stark opponent. He got a technical fall win over Winnacunnet and came back with a pin of teammate Isaac Timmons to finish in third. Timmons got pins of Nashua North and Kearsarge opponents to start his day, was pinned by another Kearsarge athlete before coming back to beat Kingswood by an 11-8 score to advance to the third-place match, where he fell to his teammate.

Anna Drinkwine picked up a fourth place finish at 120 pounds. She was pinned by a Winnacunnet opponent and came back to pin teammates Brandon Ponder and Sophia Orsini before falling to a Nashua North wrestler in the third-place match. Bennett Ponder also finished in fourth at 138 pounds. He got pins of a Nashua North wrestler and teammate Jack McGranaghan before falling to Griffin. He then pinned teammate Nate Tassey before being pinned by a Nashua North foe to place fourth. Andrew Field was also fourth at 285 pounds. He pinned a Lebanon foe to start, was pinned by a Kingswood opponent but came back to pin a Lebanon wrestler before getting pinned by a John Stark foe to place fourth. Kyle Voight pinned a Nashua North foe to start at 215 pounds, was pinned by a Winnacunnet foe, came back to pin a Conant opponent and finished out being pinned by a Kearsarge opponent to place fourth. At 150 pounds, Romain Berghmans was pinned by a Nashua North opponent, got pins over two other Nashua North opponents

before falling by technical fall to place fourth overall.

At 120 pounds, Orsini was pinned by a Winnacunnet foe and Drinkwine, Brandon Ponder pinned a Kingswood foe, lost to St. Hilaire by a 7-0 score and was pinned by Drinkwine to end the day.

At 138 pounds, McGranaghan pinned a Dover foe, was pinned by Bennett Ponder, came back to get a technical fall win over Dover before falling to a Nashua North foe. Tassey was pinned by a Kearsarge foe, beat Kingswood 13-9 and was pinned by Bennett Ponder. Kaito Tamaru was pinned by a Kingswood foe, came back to get a 3-1 win over teammate Daniel Blodgett and was pinned by a Nashua North foe to finish the day. Blodgett fell by technical fall to Winnacunnet before falling to Tamaru.

Lucas Fournier was pinned by a Kearsarge foe at 144 pounds, came back to get a pin over Nashua North before falling by technical fall to a Kingswood foe to end the day. Kyra Russell wrestled at 150 pounds, lost by technical fall to Nashua North and lost by an 8-1 score to a Conant foe. At 157 pounds, Brady Nelson started with a pin of Kingswood before being pinned by foes from Winnacunnet and John Stark. Hunter Mulinski at 285 pounds was pinned by foes from John Stark and Oyster River.

The Bears are scheduled to be in action on Saturday, Dec. 13, at ConVal at 9 a.m.

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



Colin Parenteau wrestled to the win in his weight class at the Kingswood Kickoff Tournament on Saturday.

PETS OF THE WEEK

Meet Charlotte!

Charlotte is an adult female feline with plenty of personality—and she’s not afraid to show it! This confident lady knows exactly what she wants, when she wants



it, and she’ll be sure to keep you informed. She adores affection... as long as it’s on her terms. When she’s had her fill of pets and compliments, she’ll give you a polite (or not-so-polite) reminder.

Previously an indoor/outdoor explorer, Charlotte is street-smart, curious, and an excellent mouser—she’s basically a tiny, whiskered security system.

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- Key Features:
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 - Enjoys attention—until she doesn’t
 - Indoor/outdoor experience
 - Skilled mouser
 - Ideal for humans who respect boundaries but love a little spice
 - Is Charlotte the monarch your home has been waiting for?

Meet Simi!

Simi is the total package — handsome, loyal, and full of energy! This athletic boy loves to run, jump, and show off his playful spirit, so a home that can give him plenty of exercise and adventure is a must. Whether it’s a long walk, a backyard sprint, or a good game of fetch, Simi is always ready to move.



Once his zoomies are out of the way, though, he’s all about snuggles.

True to his velcro-dog nature, Simi loves nothing more than being right by your side, soaking up all the love he can get. When he gets excited, he proudly picks

up his favorite toy to show it off — and yes, he insists his harness goes around both him and his toy. Simi would prefer to be the only dog in the home without other pets- he loves to chase and hunt smaller animals for fun.

A man knows what he wants, after all!

Simi always looks dashing in his signature bandana and is ready to steal hearts (and maybe a few squeaky toys) wherever he goes. If you’re looking for a loyal best friend with energy, style, and endless affection, Simi is your guy.

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Defending champs reloaded for another run

BY JOSHUA SPAULDING
Sports Editor

BELMONT — Last year was a dream season for the Belmont boys’ basketball team and while the Raiders lost some talent from last year’s Division III championship team, coach Tony Martinez is happy with what he has back on the bench this season.

“The guys came in right away and were focused with excellent energy and effort in every facet of the game,” said Martinez. “That same energy has carried over into our preseason

as the guys attacked tryouts like I’ve never seen.

“They are a close group who know how and love to win,” the Raider coach added. “The goal is always the same, compete at the highest level and compete for a state championship.”

The Raiders return just two seniors, point guard Wyatt Carroll and guard/forward Brady Fysh. The returning junior class includes forward/guard Brody Ennis, forward Owen Viar, guard/forward Wyatt Divers, forward Wyatt Bamford and point guard

Jack Binder

For newcomers, senior guard/forward Gino Montalto and freshman guard/forward Evan Martinez have really impressed in the early preseason.

“Gino has not played in a couple of seasons but has come in and competed right away,” the Raider coach said. “He is big and very athletic, both great attributes that will help our team in many areas.

“Evan has not been your typical freshman,” he continued. “He has come in and earned the respect of

his teammates and coaches with his skill, work ethic and competitiveness from day one. His size, strength and speed will all be great additions to our team.”

Other newcomers include junior forward/center Kyle Bryant, junior guard Spencer Cate, junior forward/center Cam Lemay, senior guard Brayden Townsend and junior forward Niko Smith.

“The offseason was great,” Martinez noted. “We worked very hard and played a ton together.”

The Raider coach noted

that the team has lots of fun events planned throughout the season, including the Jake Deware “We Are One Kindness” game, Belmont spirit nights, alumni appreciation, Shaker Regional Youth Basketball nights, Crush Cancer night and Senior Night. He urged fans to check the team’s Instagram page at belmont_boysbasketball.

The champs will play two games each with Berlin, Gilford, Winnisquam, Campbell and Inter-Lakes and single games with Derryfield, Somersworth,

Prospect Mountain, White Mountains Regional, St. Thomas, Newfound, Raymond and Conant.

The season kicks off on Friday, Oct. 12, at Berlin and continues on Monday, Dec. 15, at Gilford and Wednesday, Dec. 17, at home against Winnisquam, all with 6 p.m. scheduled starts.

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

Raider girls looking to take another step forward

BY JOSHUA SPAULDING
Sports Editor

BELMONT — The bad news for the Belmont girls’ basketball team is that the Raiders lost five seniors to graduation.

The good news for second-year head coach Roger Carroll is that he returns five players who contributed last year.

“There are opportunities for players to step up and help move us forward,” Carroll said. “The keys to our season are to stay healthy, take care of the basketball and play

smart, unselfish basketball at both ends of the floor.

“If we can do that, I feel good about our chances to compete,” he added.

The Raiders return just one senior in Sami O’Connor as well as juniors Bailey Perkins and Lyla McSheffrey and sophomores Jenna Laramie and Amelia Smith.

Belmont welcomes junior Olivia Nedobity, sophomores Gabriella O’Hara and Charli Ekberg and ninth grader Payton Ellis.

“We figure to be fairly

strong along the perimeter where Perkins, Laramie and Ellis are capable shooters and ballhandlers and have a good feel for the game,” Carroll noted. “McSheffrey is a strong inside player, probably our best all-around athlete and like Perkins, has two years of varsity play under her belt.”

The Raider coach pointed out that O’Connor and Smith will work around the rim to score points and grab rebounds while Nedobity is new to the sport but is athletic and shows a

lot of promise. O’Hara and Ekberg have taken some steps forward and Carroll notes they will be competing for minutes as the season rolls along.

The Raiders will be playing a schedule that includes two games each with Berlin, Gilford, Winnisquam, Campbell, Somersworth and Inter-Lakes and single games with Prospect Mountain, White Mountains Regional, St. Thomas, Newfound, Raymond and Conant.

The season kicks off on Friday, Dec. 12, at home

against Berlin and continues on Monday, Dec. 15, at home against Gilford, both at 6 p.m. and will be at Winnisquam at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 17.

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

HIGH SCHOOL SLATE

Friday, Dec. 12
BELMONT
Boys’ Hoops at Berlin; 6
Girls’ Hoops vs. Berlin; 6
GILFORD
Boys’ Hoops at White Mountains; 6
Girls’ Hoops vs. White Mountains; 6:30
Swimming at Upper Valley Aquatics; 6:30
WINNISQUAM
Boys’ Hoops vs. St. Thomas; 7
Girls’ Hoops at St. Thomas; 6
Saturday, Dec. 13
BELMONT
Indoor Track at UNH; 10
GILFORD
Indoor Track at Phillips Exeter; 1
WINNISQUAM
Indoor Track at UNH; 10
Wrestling at ConVal; 9
Sunday, Dec. 14
GILFORD
Swimming at Oyster River (UNH); 9:30
Monday, Dec. 15
BELMONT
Boys’ Hoops at Gilford; 6
Girls’ Hoops vs. Gilford; 6
GILFORD
Boys’ Hoops vs. Belmont; 6
Girls’ Hoops at Belmont; 6
WINNISQUAM
Boys’ Hoops vs. Inter-Lakes; 7
Tuesday, Dec. 16
WINNISQUAM
Girls’ Hoops vs. Raymond; 7
Wednesday, Dec. 17
BELMONT
Alpine Skiing at Bretton Woods; 10
Boys’ Hoops vs. Winnisquam; 6
Girls’ Hoops at Winnisquam; 7
BELMONT-GILFORD
Hockey vs. Berlin-Gorham; 6
GILFORD
Alpine Skiing at Bretton Woods; 10
Boys’ Hoops vs. Somersworth; 6
Girls’ Hoops at Somersworth; 6
WINNISQUAM
Boys’ Hoops at Belmont; 6
Girls’ Hoops vs. Belmont; 7
Hockey vs. Monadnock; 4

All schedules are subject to change.

Winnisquam Regional High School seniors prepare for college with ApplyNH



Pictured above are student event participants Isabella Dalzell and Georgia Shartar-Howe; Caidyn Carter gets advice from one of the college admissions counselors.

TILTON — Earlier this month, Winnisquam Regional High School seniors gathered for the ApplyNH event, an initiative designed to help students complete their college applications with expert guidance from college admission representatives. The event provided an opportunity for students to submit applications to colleges and universities, trade schools, and professional programs with the support they need to navigate the process successfully.

During the event, participants received hands-on assistance from college admissions counselors from Johnson & Wales University, Community College System of New Hampshire, Colby Sawyer College, Keene State College, Southern New Hampshire University, and Granite Advance, ensuring that their applications were polished and ready for submission. In addition to the personalized help, students were also given application fee waivers for all New Hampshire schools, removing a financial barrier that often deters students from applying. A special incentive for attending the event was the chance to win a \$500 scholarship, with all participants automatically entered into a raffle. This additional benefit added to the excitement and motivation for students looking to further their education.

The event was a resounding success, with 16 students submitting more than 70 applications to a variety of New Hampshire institutions. ApplyNH is part of ongoing efforts to support New Hampshire’s high school seniors in their pursuit of higher education, ensuring that all students, regardless of their background, have the resources they need to succeed in the college application process.

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Melvin Village Community Church Hiring: Church Life Coordinator (Part-Time)

Melvin Village Community Church (MVCC) is seeking a Church Life Coordinator (CLC) to support and strengthen the mission and ministry of our vibrant, Christ-centered congregation in Melvin Village, NH. The position complements the pastor’s focus on preaching and pastoral care by nurturing congregational life, spiritual growth, and community outreach. The CLC will work collaboratively with the pastor, staff, and lay leadership to foster a warm, engaged, and spiritually enriching church community. This is a salaried position (25 hours/week) with an annual salary of \$30,000-\$35,000, based on experience.

Key Duties: Lead/organize adult Bible studies, oversee youth Christian education, plan fellowship events and support congregational care, assist with outreach activities and community events, help with newsletters, communication, and staff support, as well as preach bi-monthly and assist in worship services.

Requirements: We seek a committed Christian who loves God’s Word and affirms the MVCC Statement of Faith. The ideal candidate will speak comfortably before groups and enjoys working with people of all ages, has a passion for helping others grow in their faith and in community, brings creativity and fresh ideas for spiritual and congregational growth, and is willing to deepen their understanding of Scripture and the life of the church. Ordination is not required.

To Apply: Please go to www.mvccnh.org/apply



New Horizons Band of the Lakes Region announces 2025 Holiday Concert Series

REGION — The New Horizons Band of the Lakes Region is thrilled to invite the community to their 2025 Holiday Concert Series, featuring a delightful mix of traditional holiday tunes, familiar tunes with an twist, and fresh holiday music. Under the direction of Conductor Debbi Gibson, the band promises to bring festive cheer with both familiar tunes and new compositions, including a sing-along, offering audiences the chance to sing along with full band accompaniment. The concert series includes two performances: • First Concert: Saturday, Dec. 13 at 2 p.m. at the Gilford Community Church • Second Concert: Tuesday, Dec. 16 at 7 p.m. at the Laconia Colonial Theatre Both concerts are free to attend. However, tickets are required for the Laconia Colonial Theatre performance and can be purchased at the box office or online at www.coloniallaconia/tickets. Join us in celebrating the holiday season with musical joy and community spirit. For more information about the band or to inquire about joining, please visit newhorizons-lakes-region.org or follow us on Facebook.

Kids' Corner

Creative Coloring

Color in this picture to create your own masterpiece.



Double Word Puzzle

Unscramble the individual words to reveal letters for the phrase.

GPAES

1

2

CVROE

3

4

KAMR

5

AIED

6

4

2

1

6

1

B

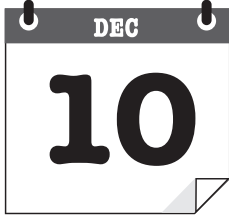
3

3

5

Answer: Read a book

THIS DAY IN HISTORY



1768: The first edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica is published.

1817: Mississippi becomes the 20th U.S. state.

1901: The first Nobel Prize ceremony is held in Stockholm on the fifth anniversary of Alfred Nobel's death.

NEW WORD

SYNOPSIS

a brief summary of something

Book FACT:

This term refers to reading texts quickly but not completely.

Answer: Skim

How they say that in...

- English:** Cover (book)
- Spanish:** Forro
- Italian:** Copertina
- French:** Couverture
- German:** Umschlag

Did You Know?

Some of the best ways to find new books to read is by asking friends for recommendations. You also can explore online reading communities.



Get the PICTURE?



Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

Answer: Little Free Library

Leadership Lakes Region holds successful History and Culture Program Day



LACONIA — Leadership Lakes Region (LLR) successfully completed its History and Culture Program Day, providing participants with an immersive experience into the unique heritage of the Lakes Region. The program connected the current class to the people and institutions that have shaped the area.

Program highlights

The day began at Meredith Village Savings Bank (MVS) with a welcome and a presentation on the bank's history. The morning featured historical talks: Kathy Fairman of the Wolfeboro Trolley Company discussed Wolfeboro's past, and John Cirello, President of the Tilton Historical Society, shared insights on the NH Veterans Home and the iconic Til-

ton Statues. The class then participated in a Laconia's Historical Scavenger Hunt, led by Class of 2025 Alumni Tara Shore and Robin Moyer, followed by lunch.

The afternoon centered on Prescott Farm Environmental Education Center. Executive Director Jude Hamel and Director Sophie Acampora shared the farm's history. Environmental Educator Mary

Doyle then led "The Big Tree Tour," a walk focused on land stewardship. The visit concluded with a look at Prescott's current mission.

Special thanks to sponsors

Leadership Lakes Region extends its sincere gratitude to the organizations that sponsored this program day. Their commitment allows LLR to

provide these meaningful experiences that connect leaders to our community's historical and cultural fabric.

A special thank you is extended to Taylor Community for its generous support of Leadership Lakes Region and to Meredith Village Savings Bank for hosting the morning session.

About Leadership

Lakes Region

LLR is a non-profit organization dedicated to fostering the development of community leaders through a comprehensive educational program focused on the challenges and opportunities within the Lakes Region. To learn more visit, www.leadershiplakesregion.org

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Speedway Children’s Charities distributes money to local organizations



The New Hampshire Chapter of Speedway Children’s Charities distributed \$155,600 in grants to 43 New England organizations during its 16th annual Grant Distribution Ceremony Wednesday at The Palace Theatre in Manchester.

LOUDON — Holiday spirit filled The Palace Theatre in Manchester Wednesday as the New Hampshire Chapter of Speedway Children’s Charities (SCCNH), the official charity of New Hampshire Motor Speedway (NHMS), held its 16th annual Grant Distribution Ceremony. Grants were handed out to 43 local non-profits totaling \$155,600 in front of the festive backdrop from “A Christmas Carol.”

“All of the hard work, all the fundraising and to see it all come to fruition today with 43 organizations across all of New England getting all of this money, it just makes your heart warm in the holiday season,” said New Hampshire Motor Speedway Executive Vice President and General Manager David McGrath. “It’s a tough time of year, and any chance that we can get

to raise more money from awesome fans across different spectrums – police officers, Harley Davidson riders and our bread and butter, our NASCAR fans – it really makes your heart full that there’s a charitable group of people out there that really want to help us support children’s organizations.”

Manchester Mayor Jay Ruais was in attendance and addressed the grant recipients during opening re-

marks of the ceremony.

“For those who don’t know, I worked in the non-profit space for about seven years before I ran for mayor ... and then before that, I worked at a national non-profit that helped people with addiction issues,” said Ruais. “I ran [for mayor] because I just wanted to help people because I love the work that I did in the nonprofit world, so I have a deep appreciation for what everybody in this room does on a daily basis.”

Since 2009, SCCNH has distributed more than \$2.3 million, supporting nearly 1.5 million children throughout the region.

“Everyone needs more money this time of year, so as much money as we can raise, we’re happy to help get it out to these very necessary organizations,” said Speedway Children’s Charities New Hampshire Chapter Director and New Hampshire Motor Speedway Director of Marketing Danielle Cyr. “What an amazing feeling. The Grinch’s heart grew three sizes, and mine grew six.”

Among the organizations receiving money were The Bridge Project in Woodstock, Canterbury Elementary School Advocates in Canterbury and Tappley-Thompson Community Center/Bristol Recreation Advisory Council in Bristol.

SCCNH is one of 11 chapters around the country, and combined in 2025, Speedway Children’s Charities distributed nearly \$5 million in grants to nearly 500 different charitable organizations across the country, bringing the total funds distributed since 1982 to more than \$77.6, ensuring many children in need are given the tools to build a better, brighter and healthy future. The money raised comes in large part thanks to the fundraising efforts of 11 Speedway Motorsports facilities and events: Bristol Motor Speedway, Charlotte Motor Speedway, Dover Motor Speedway, EchoPark Speedway, Las Vegas Motor Speedway, NASCAR at COTA, Nashville Superspeedway, NHMS, North Wilkesboro Speedway, Sonoma Raceway and Texas Motor Speedway.

at 4:30 p.m. nightly, depending on the weather. Admission is available for purchase online or at the event entrance for \$35 per car or \$60 per bus, limousine or RV. SCCNH has raised \$473,502 from Gift of Lights since 2011.

Need a holiday gift idea for a race fan? Cement their legacy as a NHMS fan for years to come by purchasing an engraved brick that can be customized with names, family names or even a special message. A 4” x 8” brick is \$200, and an 8” x 8” brick is \$350 with proceeds directly benefitting children in need throughout New England. Once a collection of bricks has been sold, they’ll be used to build a beautiful walkway on NHMS property, which will be unveiled during NHMS’s 2026 NASCAR weekend.

For more information on Speedway Children’s Charities, including sponsorship and volunteer opportunities, please contact Cyr at DCyr@NHMS.com.

Keep track of all of the New Hampshire Chapter of Speedway Children’s Charities events on the charity website and by following on Facebook (@SCC.NH), X (@SCCNHMS) and Instagram (@SCCNHMS). To donate directly to SCCNH, please visit Speedway-Charities.org/Donate/#NewHampshire.

Fundraising for 2026 grants has already begun during the 15th annual Gift of Lights, open nightly through Jan. 4 at NHMS. A portion of the proceeds from Gift of Lights admissions and s’more kit purchases will benefit SCCNH. The 2.5-mile drive-thru light show featuring four million LED lights opens

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