

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2025

COVERING ALTON, BARNSTEAD, & NEW DURHAM - WWW.SALMONPRESS.COM

FREE

Gilford alpine girls race to win at Bretton Woods

BY JOSHUA SPAULDING
Sports Editor

BRETTON WOODS — It wasn’t quite the meet that was planned, but the Gilford alpine ski team did kick off the new season on Bretton Woods on Wednesday, Dec. 17, and the Golden Eagle girls picked up the win, with the boys in second.

The day was originally scheduled to have two runs of giant slalom and one run of slalom, but timing problems and other issues made for a very long first run (the girls alone took more than an hour) and the format was changed to two giant slalom runs and an optional third run at 2 p.m. Gilford did not take part in the optional third run.



JOSHUA SPAULDING

Mckenna Howard led the way for the Gilford alpine girls in the opening meet at Bretton Woods last week.

Mckenna Howard led the way for the Golden

Eagles with a third place finish in a time of 56.55 seconds for the two runs

with Lily Bishop in fourth place in 56.85 seconds. Riley Coutts was sixth

overall in 57.92 seconds and Emilia Burlock finished out the scoring with

a time of 1:00.56 for 17th place.

Natalie Villareal was 38th overall in 1:04.94, Brooke Baron was 40th in 1:05, Josie Arrighi was 64th in 1:17.22, Alicia Lyman finished in 1:22.72 for 69th place and Madison Thompson rounded out the field of Golden Eagle girls in 1:22.85 for 70th place.

Bode Badger led the way for the Gilford boys, finishing in a time of 56.61 seconds for eighth place overall. Joel Wernig was 15th in a time of 58.89 seconds and Zachary Arenstam was 26th in 1:00.85. Oliver Leandro rounded out the scoring for Gilford in 29th place in 1:01.53.

Jack Fountain was

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Mount Major Snowmobile Club opens meetings to public

ALTON — The Mount Major Snowmobile Club meets on the second Tuesday of the month from September to April, at 6pm, and meetings are open to the public. If you ride the trails in Alton, your input is important, and you can join the meeting and get involved.

We are currently meeting at the American Legion Post 72, 164 Wolfeboro Hwy, Alton, NH 03809. Check our Facebook page (Mount Major Snowmobile Club Riders) for trail conditions and other news. Snowmobile trail maps can be found at www.sled-nh.com/nh-snowmobile-trail-map.

We have a minor

reroute on corridor 22 near the end of Alton Mountain Rd (the trail now goes behind the new houses). That section is a little rough this year, and will be improved next year. We rely on the generosity of landowners in order to have trails, so trails are closed when snowmobiling would damage the land. Please respect the landowners and only ride on designated trails. Since many folks share the trails (hikers, families, cross country skiers, snowshoers and occasional wildlife) Please ride responsibly.

Be well, and “Keep the Track Side Down.”

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service in North Barnstead

BARNSTEAD — Welcome Christmas this year gathered with neighbors at a beautiful country church for carols and a reading of the Christmas story.

The Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at the Congregational Church

of North Barnstead, UCC is a lovely time to center yourself in the beauty of Christmas as we await the birth of Jesus. There will be carols, scripture and message and the service will end with lighting our candle in the darkened

church while singing “Silent Night, Holy Night.” You and your family, old and young alike, are invited to join us and Rev. Kate Atkinson at 7 p.m.

Directions: From Route 28, take Peacham Road, turn right at the

end and go a short way to 504 North Barnstead Rd., Center Barnstead. If coming from Alton Circle, go left on Hamwoods Rd., continue straight on Hollywood Beach and Walker Roads to North Barnstead Road.

Oscar Foss Memorial Library announces January programs

BARNSTEAD — Good to Know Info: We are closed for staff training on the second Thursday of every month until 3 p.m. (Jan. 8). We are closed Thursday, Jan. 1, for New Year’s!

“Pets of OFML” 2026 desk calendars are for sale for \$8! Proceeds from our desk calendar sales go to fund library programs. This would make a great gift for all the pet lovers in your life, and support literacy at the same time. Supplies are limited, so hurry in or get your copy today!

Home School Group:

Run by group members and takes place at the library meeting room on Fridays from 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Involves a mix of stories, simple science/learning activities, and a creative art/craft activity that all go along with a theme for the week. The activities are geared towards kids ages four and up, and younger siblings are welcome to come along. There will be an event posted ahead of time on the group’s Facebook page (Barnstead NH Library Homeschool Group) for each weekly meet-up, so you’ll always know what to expect and if you need to bring any-

thing.

Music and Movement Storytime, aka Little Love to Learn! Join us on Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m. for an interactive storytime filled with stories, songs, and loads of sensory play designed specifically for toddlers.

Every Wednesday at 10:30 a.m. is Children’s Storytime. Visit us at the library for stories, crafts, and singing. Then experience the cozy ambience in the children’s area, which has all sorts of neat things to do. Make new friends. Set up playdates. Check out books, movies,

and games, play with the trains, Legos, and puppets. Come for the learning, stay for the fun!

Start your week off with Yoga Monday! Gentle Hatha-Flow runs from 10:15-11:40 a.m., Senior/Beginner/Chair Yoga is noon to 1 p.m., and Intermediate Hatha-Flow lasts from 5:30-6:50 p.m. Classes are by donation (suggested \$8). All are welcome and encouraged to attend, regardless of ability to donate.

Jamming Tuesdays at OFML: 6-8 p.m. (ages 18 and up). Do you play

SEE **OFML**, PAGE **A11**



COURTESY

Huge applause to Alton Central School’s 4–8 chorus and band for an absolutely spectacular holiday concert! Our talented students shone on stage, and their hard work was evident in every song and performance. A heartfelt thank-you as well to our amazing band and choral directors, Greg Neveu and Sarah Grasso for their dedication, guidance, and passion. What a wonderful way to celebrate the season! Photos courtesy of the school’s Facebook page.

Alton Parks and Recreation Community Connection

Reiki gathering
The Alton Parks and Recreation Department is sponsoring a Reiki Gathering with Reiki Master Teacher, Carol Wallace at the Gilman Library on Saturday, Jan. 31 from 10-11:30 a.m. in the Agnes Thompson Meeting Room. Join us for a relaxed Reiki meet-up to refresh the basics of Reiki One and Reiki Two. Share experiences, ask questions and reconnect with Reiki energy and each other. The gathering is geared toward Reiki practitioners with at least Reiki One training. This program is free. Please RSVP to 603-875-0109 or

parkrec@alton.nh.gov by Jan. 23 to reserve your seat.

Weight Training classes — Mondays and Wednesdays
The Alton Parks and Recreation Department is sponsoring Weight Training Classes on Mondays and Wednesdays, with AFAA Certified Instructor Kellie Troendle, from 1:30-2:30 p.m. at the Gilman Library for adults of all ages and abilities. This program is ongoing. Build strong muscles and bones, increase flexibility and develop better balance. Bring light hand weights, a

mat and water. For more information, contact parkrec@alton.nh.gov or 603-875-0109. Try a class for free. \$20 per month/session or \$5 drop in. Class not held Dec. 31.

Pilates classes in Alton Bay — Tuesdays and Thursdays
The Alton Parks and Recreation Department is sponsoring Pilates classes at the Alton Bay Community Center on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:30-10:30 a.m. with certified instructor Donna Lee. All level adults are welcome for a full body, low impact class that will improve

muscle tone, flexibility, balance and strength. Pre-registration is \$10 per class or \$15 drop in. Bring a mat and water. For more information/register contact Donna at breathepilates1@yahoo.com or parkrec@alton.nh.gov.

Dungeons and Dragons
Alton Parks and Recreation is sponsoring a weekly Dungeons and Dragons adventure on Wednesdays at the Alton Bay Community Center from 6-8 p.m. The program is free for

ages 18 and up. Sign up at parksrec-asst@alton.nh.gov or 603-875-0109 to secure your game slot. Join in the fun with friends or plan on meeting new people.

Great Waters Summer Concerts announces 30th Anniversary season

WOLFEBORO — Great Waters Summer Concerts announces its 2026 Summer Season, celebrating 30 years of presenting world-class live music to the Lakes Region and beyond. This anniversary year features a diverse lineup across genres, offering music for all ages. From Broadway and rock ‘n roll to classical, country, a cappella, and pop tributes, Great Waters provides something for everyone. Tickets go on sale in January 2026, including lawn seats, season tickets, and Cloud Club packages. The Concerts in the Clouds series, held under the acoustic tent at Castle in the Clouds in Moultonborough, opens Saturday, July 11, with Arrival from Sweden – The Music of ABBA, a renowned ABBA tribute band. The series continues on Friday, July 17, with Neil Berg’s Peace,

Love, and Rock & Roll, a high-energy tribute to the music of the 1960s. On Saturday, Aug. 1, Blank Space: The Unofficial Taylor Swift Tribute offers a family-friendly recreation of Taylor’s Eras Tour. Enjoy an evening of music and celebration with friends and family. The series continues with Rhinestone Cowgirls on Aug. 15, a powerhouse celebration of classic and contemporary country music, and closes on Aug. 29 with One Night of Queen, featuring Gary Mullen & The Works in a thrilling tribute to Freddie Mercury and Queen. The Concerts in Town series in Wolfboro opens Thursday, July 24, with the return of the Grammy-winning a cappella ensemble Chanticleer. They are recognized for their Renaissance music interpretations and a broad

repertoire including jazz, gospel, and contemporary classical music. On Aug. 8, Broadway performer Mandy Gonzalez takes the stage. Ms. Gonzalez originated the role of Nina in In the Heights and currently stars in Hamilton. The Concerts in Town series concludes Aug. 20 with Gentlemen’s Quartet, known for their fusion of classical and popular music. Their arrangements of works by Beethoven, John Legend, and others are performed by David Shenton (piano/violin), Peter Sachon (cello/mandocello), Matt Scharfglass (guitar/bass), and Ben Saprito (drums). Returning artist David Shenton will be joined by his wife, Erin, whose vocal talent will enhance the evening. To celebrate three decades of Great Waters, the 30th Anniversary Gala will open the 2026 season on Thursday, July 9, at the Grayson Student Center at Brewster Academy. The evening will feature uplifting entertainment and emerging talent. Additional details will be announced soon. Tickets for all Great Waters performances go on sale this January, 2026, and are available at www.greatwaters.org or by calling 603-569-7710. Great Waters Summer Concerts is a nonprofit organization dedicated to presenting diverse musical performances to residents and visitors of New Hampshire’s Lakes Region.

HIGH SCHOOL SLATE

Friday, Dec. 26 KENNETT
Boys’ Hockey vs. Berlin-Gorham (Holiday Tourney); 4
Boys’ Hoops vs. Coe-Brown (Holiday Tourney); 12:45
Girls’ Hoops vs. Coe-Brown (Holiday Tourney); 11:30
KINGSWOOD
Boys’ Hockey vs. Western Maine (Holiday Tourney); 5:15
Boys’ Hoops vs. Concord Christian (Holiday Tourney); 11:30
Girls’ Hoops vs. Franklin (Holiday Tourney); 12:45
PROSPECT MOUNTAIN
Boys’ Hoops vs. Epping (Holiday Tourney); 10:15
Girls’ Hoops vs. Epping (Holiday Tourney); 9

Saturday, Dec. 27 KENNETT
Boys’ Hockey vs. Western Maine (Holiday Tourney); 3:30
Boys’ Hockey vs. Kingswood (Holiday Tourney); 7:45
Boys’ Hoops vs. Belmont (Holiday Tourney); 10:15
Girls’ Hoops vs. Epping (Holiday Tourney); 11:30
KINGSWOOD
Boys’ Hockey vs. Berlin-Gorham (Holiday Tourney); 4:45
Boys’ Hockey vs. Kennett (Holiday Tourney); 7:45
Boys’ Hoops vs. Epping (Holiday Tourney); 12:45
Girls’ Hoops vs. Prospect Mountain (Holiday Tourney); 2
Indoor Track at UNH; 2:30
PROSPECT MOUNTAIN
Boys’ Hoops vs. Portsmouth Christian (Holiday Tourney); 3:15
Girls’ Hoops vs. Kingswood (Holiday Tourney); 2
Indoor Track at UNH; 2:30
Wrestling at Lebanon; TBD
Sunday, Dec. 28 KENNETT
Boys’ Hockey vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); TBD
Boys’ Hoops vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); TBD

Girls’ Hoops vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); TBD
KINGSWOOD
Boys’ Hockey vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); TBD
Boys’ Hoops vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); TBD
Girls’ Hoops vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); TBD
PROSPECT MOUNTAIN
Boys’ Hoops vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); TBD
Girls’ Hoops vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); TBD
Monday, Dec. 29 KENNETT
Boys’ Hoops vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); TBD
Girls’ Hoops vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); TBD
KINGSWOOD
Boys’ Hoops vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); TBD
Girls’ Hoops vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); TBD
PROSPECT MOUNTAIN
Boys’ Hoops vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); TBD
Girls’ Hoops vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); TBD

Tuesday, Dec. 30 KENNETT
Boys’ Hoops vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); 7
Girls’ Hoops vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); 5:30
KINGSWOOD
Boys’ Hoops vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); 7
Girls’ Hoops vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); 5:30
PROSPECT MOUNTAIN
Boys’ Hoops vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); 7
Girls’ Hoops vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); 5:30
KINGSWOOD-PROSPECT MOUNTAIN
Girls’ Hockey at Concord; 2:15
Wednesday, Dec. 31 KINGSWOOD
Wrestling at Manchester West; 12
All schedules are subject to change.

Gilford Public Library Classes & Special Events Dec. 25 – Jan. 1

Thursday, Dec. 25 CLOSED FOR THE HOLIDAY
Friday, Dec. 26 CLOSED FOR THE HOLIDAY
Saturday, Dec. 27
Beginner Line Dancing, 10:30-11:30 a.m.
Monday, Dec. 29
Fun and Fitness With Joyce, 9-10 a.m.
Mahjong, noon to 3 p.m.
Tuesday, Dec. 30
Feel Good Fitness with Dottie, 9-10 a.m.
Senior Sculpt, 10-11 a.m.
Bridge, 10 a.m.-noon
Less Ache, More Awake, 11 a.m.-noon

Aches and pains from arthritis may become a barrier to regular exercise. Join Granite VNA Health Educator Brooke Noonan as we learn how exercise can increase strength, reduce joint pain, control swelling, and boost energy for those living with arthritis. Dungeons and Dragons, 3-4:30 p.m. Intermediate Line Dancing, 4-5 p.m.
Wednesday, Dec. 31
Geri Fit, 9-10 a.m.
Senior Stretch Yogaaah!, 10-11 a.m.
Card Games, 10 a.m.-noon
Check out an Expert, 10 a.m.-noon
Paint Group, 1-3 p.m.
Thursday, Jan. 1 CLOSED FOR THE HOLIDAY

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Local students earn academic awards at Brewster

WOLFEBORO — Among Brewster Academy’s Fall Trimester Academic Award recipients, 35 call the Lakes Region home, each receiving honor roll status for their scholarly work since the school year began in September. Day students from local towns make up about 20 percent of Brewster’s 340 students, living at home but learning on campus. And though they don’t sleep on campus, day students are assigned to residence halls so they can take part in the social fun that each house or hall enjoys throughout the year, from holiday decorating contests and food drives to movie nights and s’mores around the firepit.

Faculty, staff, and fellow students cheered as each received a special pin at an All-School Meeting earlier this month. At Brewster, Summa Cum Laude designation goes to students with grades of 92 or higher, and all courses must be at the Accelerated or AP level. An honor of Magna Cum Laude indicates grades of 90 or higher in all courses. A Cum Laude designation is awarded to students with grades of 85 or higher in all courses. For more information about Brewster’s academic program, Instructional Support options, and admissions deadlines for the 2026-27 school year, visit www.brewsteracademy.org.

Alton Bay:
Turner Flood ’26 (cum laude)

Belmont:
Brady Jewell ’26 (cum laude)

Center Barnstead:
Casey Shea ’26 (cum laude)
Benjamin Tedcastle ’28 (cum laude)
Cullen Tierney ’28 (cum laude)

Center Tuftonboro:
Isabella Bailey ’27 (summa cum laude)

Farmington:
Kaden Minnis ’28 (magna cum laude)

Franklin:



The Lakes Region students who earned the highest academic honors (summa cum laude) at Brewster Academy this fall are Anelya Caesar, Ever Sarnoff, Gabriela Reynolds, Isabella Bailey, Leah Clayton, and Mark Wallace.

Brennan McBride ’28 (magna cum laude)

Gilford:
Leah Clayton ’28 (summa cum laude)
Madison Clayton ’26 (magna cum laude)
Evangeline Hardy ’29 (cum laude)
Klavdia Worthen ’27 (magna cum laude)

Gilmanton Iron Works:
Levi Sweatt ’27 (cum laude)

Meredith:
Estelle Good ’26 (cum laude)

Moultonborough:
Ever Sarnoff ’29 (summa cum laude)
Charles Tucker ’29 (cum laude)
Owen Tucker ’27 (cum laude)

New Durham:
Chloe McLain ’28 (magna cum laude)
David Mason ’26 (cum laude)

Ossipee:
Mila Bahr ’27 (cum laude)

Sanbornville:
Audrina Crowell ’28 (cum laude)

Wolfeboro:
Liam Burr ’29 (magna cum laude)
Lucy Burr ’29 (magna cum laude)
Anelya Caesar ’27 (summa cum laude)
Bradyn Connell ’26 (cum laude)
Kaia Duffy ’27 (magna cum laude)
Bailey Gross ’29 (magna cum laude)
Charles Martin ’27 (cum laude)
Meghan Reilly ’28 (cum laude)
Gabriela Reynolds ’27 (summa cum laude)
Jacob Varney ’28 (cum laude)
Alexa Vetanze ’26 (cum laude)
Mark Wallace ’28 (summa cum laude)
Addison Wallat ’27 (cum laude)
Greeley Ward ’26 (magna cum laude)

COURTESY

Last Night Wolfeboro Community Supper & Trivia hosted by First Congregational Church Wolfeboro, UCC

WOLFEBORO — Celebrate the arrival of the New Year with friends, family, and neighbors at Last Night Wolfeboro on Wednesday, Dec. 31. As part of the town-wide celebration, the First Congregational Church of Wolfeboro, UCC is hosting two welcoming, family-friendly community activities: a Community Supper and an all-ages Friends & Family Trivia Night.

The Last Night Wolfe-

boro Community Supper will be served from 4 to 6:30 p.m. in the church’s Fellowship Hall, located on the ground floor at 115 South Main St., directly across from Carpenter School. Guests are invited to enjoy a buffet featuring home-baked macaroni and cheese, chili, jumbo all-beef hot dogs with toppings, broccoli, salad, beverages, and yummy desserts. Dinner is affordably priced at \$10 per adult, \$30 per fam-

ily, with children under five eating free.

Following the 6 p.m. fireworks over Wolfeboro Bay (weather permitting), the celebration continues at the church with Friends & Family Trivia Night, beginning at 6:30 p.m. This free, all-ages Last Night Wolfeboro activity invites participants to test their knowledge, share some laughs, and connect with community members. Teams of up to eight players may

register in advance or form teams upon arrival. Refreshments will be provided, and prizes will be awarded to the winning team. Pre-registration for Trivia Night is encouraged, though walk-ins are welcome. Registration is available at wolfeboroucc.breezechms.com/form/53dd3879.

In addition to the dinner and trivia, Last Night Wolfeboro will feature live performances at the church, including Marimba Mischief at 1 p.m. and The Carolyn Ramsay Band at 4 p.m. in the church Sanctu-

ary. The First Congregational Church Wolfeboro, UCC is proud to host these Last Night Wolfeboro activities and warmly welcomes the community to come together to celebrate the close of the year and the promise of the year ahead.

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When the calendar turns, so do our responsibilities

The stretch between Christmas and New Year's often feels like borrowed time. The decorations are still up. The routines are still on pause. And the new year waits just far enough ahead that it does not yet demand our full attention.

But in towns like ours, the turning of the calendar carries a quieter meaning. Jan. 1 does not arrive with fireworks here. It arrives with select boards, school districts, fire departments, and volunteer groups already thinking about what the next twelve months will require. While many of us are reflecting on personal goals, our communities are preparing for practical ones.

Winter is the first test. Snow and ice put immediate pressure on public works crews, emergency responders, and town budgets. Roads have to be cleared. Equipment has to hold up. Overtime adds up quickly. When storms come in clusters, there is no recovery period. The work simply continues. That reality is easy to forget when the plows do their job well and the lights stay on.

This is also the season when town government becomes most visible, even if it rarely feels dramatic. Budgets drafted in quiet offices shape what happens later in the year, from road repairs to library hours to school programs. Decisions made now determine how prepared our towns will be for both routine needs and unexpected challenges. The work is not flashy, but it is foundational.

As residents, the new year is a good time to reengage with that process, even in small ways. Reading meeting agendas. Signing up for town email alerts. Attending a meeting or watching a recording. Asking questions respectfully and early, rather than waiting until a decision feels final. Local government works best when participation is steady, not just loud when something goes wrong.

There is a personal side to this, too. Winter can isolate people, especially older residents and those who live alone. The holidays pass, visitors leave, and the long evenings settle in. A new year resolution does not have to be ambitious to be meaningful. Checking in on a neighbor once a week. Offering a ride when roads are icy. Making sure someone knows who to call if the power goes out. These small actions reduce pressure on emergency services and strengthen the social fabric that towns rely on when systems are strained.

Local institutions matter in this moment as well. Libraries, recreation departments, and community organizations provide structure and connection when daylight is short and options feel limited. Their budgets and staffing depend, in part, on public understanding of their value. Supporting them does not always mean spending money. It can mean showing up, volunteering, or simply recognizing that their presence is part of what makes winter manageable.

The new year invites optimism, but it also invites responsibility. In a small community, those two ideas are not in conflict. They reinforce each other. When people pay attention, stay involved, and look out for one another, towns function better. Problems are addressed earlier. Resources stretch further. Trust holds.

As the calendar turns, the best resolution may be a simple one: to stay connected to the place we live, not only when it is convenient or celebratory, but throughout the quieter months when that connection matters most.



Prospect Mountain's Ms. Hollie Kelley was a mystery guest reader for Ms. Tabitha Kelley's second grade class at Barnstead Elementary School as part of the Holiday Bucket List the future Timberwolves are using to celebrate the holiday season!

LETTERS FROM EDWIN Options

I spent another year hunting the elusive antler bearing deer. It wasn't as super cold as it could have been. But even still, I put in the time and saw nothing. A friend of mine totaled his van into one. Other than that, only tracks and scrapes and scat.

After the previous snowstorm, I went for a ski out behind my house and came across some large hoof prints out around the stone wall. The tracks were solitary, which is characteristic of bucks. They came in from the woods on the right, crossed my property, zig zagging over the stone wall, then headed off onto my neighbor's property on the other side.

We had a couple more inches the other night. When I looked out my bathroom window in the morning, I saw another lone set of deer tracks that came from the stone wall all the way up to behind the house where remnants of the broccoli remained. I figured that

he must have cleaned up whatever there was left.

Judging from the size of the tracks, he's a pretty good-sized buck. It would certainly be nice to get a look at him, the season being now over, he's safe till next November. As long as he keeps himself off the roads.

We had another few inches the other night. It's so amazing! This is actually December. There hasn't been this much snow before Christmas in years. It's wonderful, but will it last. There always comes a January thaw and Christmas week always seems to bring rain.

The reasonable forecasts are now telling me that by the end of the week, the temperatures will be nudging fifty along with rain. That spells disaster for all the nice snow we've been enjoying for a week now. We need to be thankful for what we've had and hope it doesn't get totally de-

stroyed and all go away. Here's to wishing that at least some could remain as an icy base, shielding the rocks below. It may not be very skiable, but at least it would protect the skis once we get more snow.

I finally realized that it's almost Christmas. Everything comes and goes so quickly. I still haven't gotten a tree or even started decorating the house. I'm wondering if it will even be accomplished this year.

Caroling anyone? What ever happened to that? I remember going out with groups of people singing Christmas songs to strangers. I also remember walking the streets of Rochester, Dover and Portsmouth playing Christmas songs on my baritone horn.

In fact, while checking out a farmers market this summer with a friend, we stopped at a booth to be greeted by hearing my name being called out. The woman there used to work with me at a local factory and she extolled her fond memory of the time I walked throughout the assembly floor playing Christmas songs on my horn. It's nice that somebody remembers.

Speaking about memories, a friend just sent me a link to a "thing" that talked all about those of us who grew up in the sixties, what we went through, and did some psychoanalysis there upon. Those psycho-people drive

me nuts. It amazes me what some people get paid to do.

I just got back from a ski lesson with a nice young lady. She was actually a senior, but to me, the vast majority of women are younger these days. Being an alpine skier, she quickly took to all the basics, so we then just went skiing. We went all around the mountain.

It's overwhelming how nice the snow is at present. A rarity for this time of year. I think it should continue being so through tomorrow afternoon, then a warm spell is expected to encroach upon the area and do nasty things to this beautiful crystal-line carpet.

By the time I get home it'll be too dark to head off into the woods to find a tree. I kind of prefer the Charlie Brown variety. There were actually some prime specimens growing close to my house that it didn't occur to me till right after cutting them down and tossing them over the stone wall that they'd make good Christmas trees. So now I'll need to search elsewhere.

They were white pines, and I'd prefer a spruce, so I'll need to expand my radius of search. They're out there. I've found them before.

E.Twaste
Correspondence welcome at edwintwaste@gmail.com

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.



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Powerhouse earns 20 semi-finalist nominations at NH Theatre Awards!



COURTESY

Semi-finalists in the Performer in a leading role categories are Kyle Sidders and Rachel Hunton as Quasimodo and Esmeralda in “The Hunchback of Notre Dame,” and Jakob Stone and Maci Johnson as Otto and Anne Frank in “The Diary of Anne Frank.”

LACONIA — Powerhouse Theatre Collaborative, the resident theatre company of the Colonial Theatre, has received 20 semi-finalist nods at the NH Theatre Alliance’s annual Theatre Awards for the 2025 season. Powerhouse entered two productions into this year’s competition, May’s production of “The Hunchback of Notre Dame” and October’s production of “The Diary of Anne Frank.”

To participate in the Awards, process a theatre company has to provide at least one trained adjudicator for each show submitted who will go see other entered shows throughout the state during the year. Each show entered has six adjudicators attend the show and then submit their scores to the NHTA organization, which oversees the adjudication process and produces the end of season awards show each year. There are shows entered across three divisions: professional, community, and youth. Powerhouse participates in the community theatre division where no performers are compensated for their participation.

“Hunchback” was recognized in almost every category in the community musical division: Rachel Hunton as Esmeralda and Kyle Sidders as Quasimodo in the performance in a leading role category; Alex Hunton as Phoebus, Jakob Stone as Frollo, and Adam Beauparlant as Clopin in the performance in a supporting role category;

Tyler Soucy for lighting design; Samantha Tutas for set design; Gay Bean and Heather Vitale for costume design; Laura Iwaskiewicz and Jillian Spring for music direction; Meg King for choreography; Bryan Halperin and Meg King for direction; and best production of a community musical. Powerhouse has won the community musical award two years in a row with Captains Courageous the Musical and Tuck Everlasting.

“Anne Frank” was Powerhouse’s first entry into the play category after only entering musicals the prior two years. This production is well represented in the semi-finalist lists as well, with Maci Johnson as Anne and Jakob Stone as Otto in the leading role category. Tamara McGonagle as Mrs Van Daan and Kenny Aber as Mr Van Daan are in the supporting category. Lighting designer Tyler Soucy and set designer Samantha Tutas were both recognized in their categories for this show as well. Bryan Halperin is also a semi-finalist in the play director category and the production is up for best production of a community play.

Halperin is no stranger to the NHTAs, as he has won the best director award eight prior times including the past two years for Powerhouse. Johnson was a winner in the leading performer in a musical category last year for playing Winnie Foster in “Tuck Everlasting.”

“While Powerhouse produces theatre to challenge and inspire our

participants and share stories and connect with our community, it is still nice to be recognized for consistently producing quality productions in New Hampshire. Win or lose, we are extremely proud of all the productions in our 2025 season and grateful for all those who participated on-

stage, behind the scenes and by attending!” says Halperin.

This year’s winners will be announced on Jan. 31, 2026 at the annual NHTA Awards Show at the Capitol Center for the Arts in Concord. A large contingency of Powerhouse’s Power Players will at-

tend together and celebrate the year in NH Theatre with the rest of the theatre community. If you are interested in attending with the Powerhouse group reach out to info@powerhousenh.org or individual tickets can be purchased directly from the CCA’s website ccanh.com after the

group sales are completed on Jan. 6.

Tickets for Powerhouse’s 2026 Colonial season, including the 5 show Colonial Series subscription package, will be onsale in the new year. Check out powerhousenh.org for all the details.

Finding hope in hardship

A family’s message to the community about mental health and substance use

LACONIA — When people met Todd Taylor, they saw a devoted father, a steady job, and a close-knit family. What they didn’t see was his lifelong struggle with mental health challenges, a family history of addiction, and years spent trying to find the proper treatment before passing away from an accidental overdose in 2018.

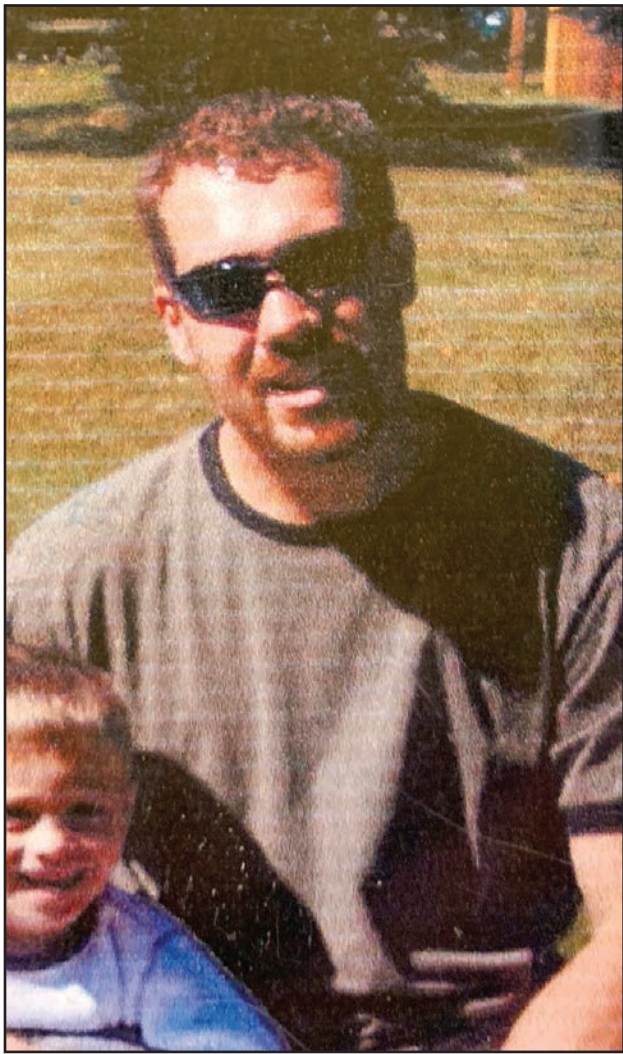
Today, his family shares his story to help others feel less alone and to encourage those struggling to reach out sooner.

“My husband wasn’t defined by his illness,” said Tarah Morel-Taylor. “He tried so hard. You’re not alone, and you’re not broken. There are people who understand and want to help.”

Local providers agree that early support can be lifesaving. The Director of Substance Use Services for Concord Hospital - Franklin and Laconia, Corey Gately, MLADC, says many patients face barriers like Todd’s.

“No one should have to wait for help,” said Gately, who also oversees the Recovery Clinic in Franklin and Gilford as well as Laconia’s Doorway. “Asking for help is courageous. Whether someone is taking their first step or has struggled for years, we meet people exactly where they are without judgment.”

For many, symptoms can begin subtly: seasonal sadness, overwhelming stress, isolation, exhaus-



COURTESY PHOTO

Todd Taylor

tion, changes in sleep or appetite, or a loss of interest in once-loved hobbies. Todd’s fight began with depression and anxiety that he struggled to stabilize despite trying multiple medications.

Gately emphasizes that it is the act of reaching out, not the absence of struggle, that defines strength.

“Asking for help is not failure. It’s courage. And there is a whole team ready to walk alongside you,” he said.

Resources are available throughout the re-

gion. Concord Hospital Health System’s primary care practices can help patients recognize early signs of depression, anxiety, or substance abuse and connect them to counseling or medica-

tion support. The Doorway offers 24/7 access to treatment, recovery coaches, and referrals for long-term care. The Recovery Clinic at Concord Hospital – Laconia provides evidence-based care for opioid and alcohol use disorders.

By offering grace, eliminating stigma, and encouraging others to reach for help sooner, families like Todd’s are helping transform heartache into hope.

“We can’t change what happened to my husband,” Tarah said. “But we can change what happens to someone else. If sharing his story encourages even one person to reach out for help, then his struggle wasn’t for nothing.”

Mental health struggles and substance use disorders touch every community. If you or someone you love is struggling with mental health or substance use challenges, help is available now, and there is no wrong time to reach out. For information on mental health and substance use resources, visit concordhospital.org or contact The Doorway in your region.





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Two Loons rescued from lakes as cold snap hits New Hampshire

Public urged to look out for loons in danger of becoming iced-in as larger lakes begin to freeze

MOULTONBOROUGH — As temperatures cooled in early December, many of New Hampshire's smaller lakes froze over, some with Common Loons still lingering on the water. The Loon Preservation Committee (LPC) responded to multiple reports of loons at risk of becoming trapped on frozen lakes, ultimately rescuing two.

"We received calls from several lakes where loons were in danger of becoming iced-in," said Harry Vogel, Senior Biologist and Executive Director of LPC. "Fortunately, most of the loons reported to us were able to make it off of the lakes on their own, at the last minute. But intervention was needed in two cases."

The rescued loons included a juvenile from Big Diamond Pond in Stewartstown and an adult from Deering Reservoir in Deering.

Loons are heavy-bodied birds that need to run across a long stretch of open water, up to a quarter of a mile on a calm day, to build up enough speed to generate lift and take flight. If loons remain on lakes as they start to freeze, they can become confined to small patches of open water. Without enough runway space to take off, iced-in loons will eventually be forced up on top of the ice, where they are vulnerable to starvation, the elements, and predators such as bald eagles.

Most loons migrate to their ocean wintering grounds during the fall, well before ice forms. But each year, at least a few linger into the winter. LPC has rescued over 70 loons from the ice since 2005. In some cases, underlying issues such as lead poisoning, injury, or sickness explain why a loon failed to migrate on time. However, many rescued birds show no obvious physical impairment.

Biologists are not yet certain why otherwise healthy loons sometimes stay long enough to risk becoming iced-



COURTESY

LPC Field Program Coordinator, Ashley Keenan, releases a loon rescued on Deering Reservoir onto the Atlantic.

in. Climate change may play a role, Vogel notes, as LPC tends to see an uptick in the number of ice rescues in years with warmer fall and early winter temperatures. If a warm fall causes loons to remain on lakes longer than they normally would and is then followed by a quick cold snap that rapidly freezes lakes, or if ice in is delayed and coincides with the molt of adult loons' flight feathers, loons can become trapped. Vogel said that each winter rescue allows LPC to learn more about why loons get iced-in.

Both loons rescued in December were evaluated by veterinarians. The juvenile rescued on Big Diamond Pond had no signs of physical impairment. The adult from Deering Reservoir had damage to several feathers on her left wing, preventing her from being able to fly. After veterinary evaluation, both loons were deemed fit for release and were banded and

released on the New Hampshire coast.

"Loons winter all along the Atlantic Coast, so these loons have been brought directly to appropriate winter habitat," said Vogel.

He noted that the Deering loon's missing flight feathers are not a concern on the ocean, where she will have no need to fly.

"The Deering loon will molt and regrow all of her flight feathers in January or February, so

come spring, she should be in good shape to migrate back to her breeding lake," Vogel said.

Although the early December cold snap froze most of New Hampshire's smaller lakes, larger lakes remain open and are likely to freeze over in the coming weeks. LPC asks members of the public who spend time on or around lakes that are still open to keep an eye out for loons in danger of icing in. Anyone who sees a loon con-

fined to a small patch of open water is asked to contact the Loon Preservation Committee at (603)476-5666. LPC urges the public not to attempt to rescue loons themselves, as these rescues can be dangerous for both the human rescuer and the loon without proper protective gear and training.

The Loon Preservation Committee monitors loons throughout the state as part of its mission to restore and maintain a healthy pop-

ulation of loons in New Hampshire; to monitor the health and productivity of loon populations as sentinels of environmental quality; and to promote a greater understanding of loons and the natural world. LPC was formed in 1975 in response to a severe decline in New Hampshire's common loon population. For more information, please visit the Loon Preservation Committee Web site at www.loon.org



JOSHUA SPAULDING

Bode Badger paced the Gilford boys at Bretton Woods last Wednesday in the season opening meet.



JOSHUA SPAULDING

Lily Bishop carves through a giant slalom gate during Gilford's meet at Bretton Woods last week.



JOSHUA SPAULDING

Joel Wernig races in the giant slalom at Bretton Woods during last Wednesday's opening meet of the season.

ALPINE

(continued from Page A1)

32nd in 1:02.84, Brady Alessandro was 61st in 1:14.17, Cooper Hale was 65th in 1:16.27 and Kyle Johnson finished in 1:17 for 67th place.

Gilford will return to the slopes on Jan. 9 at Gunstock.

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

Holiday Gift & Shopping Guide

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Last Night Wolfeboro presents new events and favorites on Dec. 31

WOLFEBORO — Last Night Wolfeboro’s slate of day and evening activities on Dec. 31 includes two new, free, festive events for Lakes Region friends, families and visitors celebrating New Year’s Eve.

More than a dozen events and activities are on the Last Night Wolfeboro schedule from 10 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. New for the December 31st community-wide event is Magic by George, featuring the mystical talent of award-winning magician George Saterial. He’ll thrill the Last Night Wolfeboro audience at 12:30 p.m. at the Wolfeboro Free Library.

Last Night Wolfeboro’s partnership with the First Congregational Church of Wolfeboro, UCC (FCCW) across from Carpenter School on S. Main Street is expanding. New December 31, FCCW’s enthusiastic team is presenting Friends & Family Trivia at 6:30 p.m. All ages are welcome for an evening of friendly competition, laughter and free snacks.

FCCW spokesperson Lorraine Connell says families, friends and neighbors can form teams of up to eight or join a team on site.

“Trivia rounds will include topics including music, local fun, fashion and we’ll have prizes, too,” Ms. Connell states.

Friends and Family Trivia pre-registration is welcomed online (wolfeboroucc.breezechms.com/form/53dd3879).

Leading into the new trivia event, FCCW hosts its New Year’s Eve buffet supper at the church. Thoughtfully prepared by their team, the menu includes: home-baked macaroni and cheese, chili, jumbo all-beef hotdogs and toppings, broccoli, salad, beverages and homemade desserts; gluten free options available. Dinner is served from 4-6:30 p.m., and is priced at \$30 per family; \$10 per person; under aged five, free. No reservations are needed – just come as you are; cash or check only.

Also new this New Year’s Eve, it’s a concert by locally grown Marimba Mischief. Sway to the relaxing rhythmic tunes of this captivating ensemble of talented musicians. Tap to the beat at 1 p.m., for this free performance at the First Congregational Church, 115 S. Main St.

The Last Night Wolfeboro scavenger hunt returns and takes place from Dec. 26-31. A QR code will be published Dec. 26 on the Last Night Wolfeboro Facebook page. Then the all-ages scavenger hunt takes you on a delightful journey to visit Wolfeboro-area businesses, cultural and historical stops. Prizes include gifts from NH Cruise, Wright Museum of World War II, New Hampshire Boat Museum and Great Waters Music Festival. Winners will be notified by Jan. 3. Check the Last Night Wolfeboro Facebook



page for updates. Participants are advised that business hours at some scavenger hunt stops will vary; and proper footwear may be needed at some locations due to weather conditions.

- Last Night Wolfeboro programming schedule includes:**
- Events at Wolfeboro Town Hall, Great Hall:
 - o 10 a.m. – noon. Games + crafts: New Hampshire Boat Museum craft and C3Brix LEGO fun; Kingswood Youth Center; Yum Yum Shop gingerbread decorating; kiddie “ax” throwing and target games.
 - o 2:00 p.m. Jason Tardy returns with his impressive, high-energy juggling performance on the Great Hall stage.
 - o 3:30 p.m. Wildlife Encounters, live animal show, sponsored by The Children’s Center
 - 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. Escape Room: Developed and presented by The Resistance from KRHS robotics team. Morning sign-up is mandatory at Wolfeboro train station building, 32 Central Ave.
 - 12:30 p.m. Magic by George! Hosted by the Wolfeboro Library, Bradley Room.
 - 1 and 2:15 p.m. Two bingo sessions; Hosted by Wolfeboro Lions; prizes; snacks available (\$). Brewster Estabrook Hall- 80 Academy Drive off S. Main Street.
 - 1 p.m. Marimba Mischief concert; First Congregational Church of Wolfeboro (FCCW) 115 S. Main St., across from Carpenter School.
 - 2:30-3:30 p.m. Free Ice skating; skate rentals and snacks available (\$).
 - Pop Whalen Ice and Arts Center, 390 Pine Hill Rd., Wolfeboro adjacent to Abenaki Ski area.
 - 4 p.m. A twilight performance by the ever popular The Carolyn Ramsay Band; First Congregational Church of Wolfeboro (FCCW) 115 S., Main St.
 - 4 – 6:30 p.m. FCCW buffet supper: tickets at the door- \$30 per family; \$10 per person; free under age five; (cash/check).
 - 6 p.m. Fireworks over Wolfeboro Bay off Town Docks, Wolfeboro – weather permitting; (If needed, cancellation will be announced by noon Dec. 31.)
 - 6:30 p.m. Friends & Family Trivia at FCCW; free snacks and prizes.

“Our partners, sponsors, volunteers and supporters have helped make



BRENDA JORETT — COURTESY

Last Night Wolfeboro presents free, family-friendly events Dec. 31, including magic, ice skating, escape house, games, bingo, two concerts, trivia, buffet supper, plus New Year’s Eve fireworks scheduled over Wolfeboro Bay. Updates on Facebook at LastNightWolfeboro.

Last Night Wolfeboro a New Year’s Eve tradition,” says Linda Murray, chair of Wolfeboro’s Special Events Committee.

“Support from hundreds of people across the Wolfeboro area have helped our team develop programming that provides positive exposure for our community and businesses,” she adds.

Last Night Wolfeboro fireworks at 6 p.m.– weather permitting – are sponsored by: Hunter’s Shop ‘n Save; Piscataqua Landscaping and Tree Service and Black’s Paper Store and Gift Shop.

All programming and updates will be posted on Facebook @LastNightWolfeboro, and the Wolfeboro Parks and Recreation Web page: <https://www.wolfeboronh.us/672/Last-Night-Wolfeboro>. Events and times are subject to change. Wolfeboro Community TV will offer a schedule of recorded concerts, shows and special programming on New Year’s Eve.

2025 Last Night Wolfeboro lead sponsors include Hunter’s Shop n’ Save, Black’s Paper Store; Piscataqua Landscaping; Lake Winni Team, Leone, McDonnell & Roberts, CPA; Paul Zimmerman, The Windrifter Resort, Taylor Community, Avery Insurance, Brewster, and Melanson Real Estate, Inc.

Other top sponsors include: Yankee Pedlar; Lake Wentworth Inn, Harmony Coffee House, Bailey’s Bubble, Dockside Grille & Dairy Bar, Wolfeboro Corinthian Yacht Club; Edward Jones, Financial Advisor Kevin Lawlor; and Bradley’s Hardware.

The Wolfeboro Special Events Committee of the EDC produces Last Night Wolfeboro; Chair, Linda Murray; Members: Christine Collins, parks and recreation director; Alexys Austin, parks and recreation program coordinator; volunteer producers Brenda Jorett; Kate Turner, Libby Peard; with support from Wolfeboro Parks and



Recreation, Wolfeboro and First Congregational Church of Wolfeboro.

Barnstead Parade Congregational Church announces Christmas Eve service

BARNSTEAD — The community is invited to the Christmas Eve Service at the Barnstead Parade Congregational Church, located at 1 Parade Circle.

Our service will begin at 4 p.m. on Dec. 24, with many familiar carols to be sung and music provided by our music director Jon Taber. Christmas stories will be told and the Christ candle to be lit, along with the singing of “Silent Night” closing out the service.

We look forward welcoming new and old friends to celebrate the birth of our



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Food

FACT:

This sweetened beverage was once a bitter drink made from roasted cocoa beans.

Answer: Hot chocolate

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THIS DAY IN HISTORY

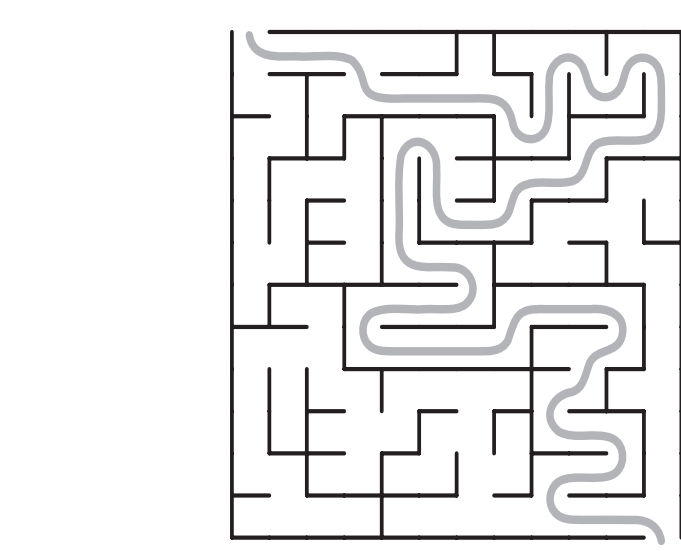
DEC

29

1607: Pocahontas pleads for John Smith's life when tribal leaders attempt to execute him.

1845: The United States annexes the Republic of Texas.

1913: Cecil B. DeMille begins filming Hollywood's first feature film.



NEW WORD

COCOA

a hot drink made from cocoa powder mixed with sugar and milk

How they say that in...

English: Mug

Spanish: Taza

Italian: Tazza

French: Mug

German: Tasse

Did You Know?

A mug of hot cocoa can be made more delicious with the addition of whipped cream and miniature marshmallows.

Get the PICTURE?

Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

Answer: Hot chocolate

Church Service SCHEDULE

ABUNDANT HARVEST FAMILY CHURCH
Sunday School for children up to age 12, service 10:30 a.m. Greater Wakefield Resource Center, 254 Main St., Union.
Pastors Daniel and Sherrie Williams, 473-8914.
For more information, please visit abundantharvestnh.org or e-mail ahf@faith.com.

ALTON BAY CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE CENTER
Sundays throughout the summer 10am & 7pm; 875-6161.

BEFORE COMMUNITY CHURCH, ALTON
Alton 9:30 a.m. Sun. Meeting at Prospect Mountain High School. Pastor Ben Kuhl, www.befrechurch.net.

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ccopp@praisegathering@gmail.com

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ccnorthbarnstead.com

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Sunday School: 10:15 AM Sept. To June
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Shop handmade, support local

Visit the Makers Market at Makers Mill this holiday season

WOLFEBORO — Shoppers are invited to choose thoughtful, hand-made gifts at the Makers Mill Makers Market, located at 23 Bay St. in Wolfeboro. In addition to a wide selection of locally made goods, Makers Mill gift certificates are available and can be used toward classes, memberships, the Makers Market shop, and day passes—making them a flexible and meaningful gift for makers and creatives of all kinds.

“Many of the items in the Makers Market are one-of-a-kind, and the selection is always changing,” said Aynne de Beer, Makers Market and Front Desk Manager.

The Makers Market features work created by Makers Mill members and instructors, highlighting the craftsmanship, care, and time that go into handmade goods. Each piece reflects the maker behind it—something you simply can’t find in big-box stores. For questions about the Makers Market



COURTESY

Jess Cole in a handmade garment by Jeanne Flanagan, surrounded by one-of-a-kind gifts made by makers and available at the Makers Market at Makers Mill, 23 Bay St., Wolfeboro. or to inquire about available items, please call 603-569-7232.

Shoppers will find a wide variety of items, including stained glass pieces; holiday cards; felted ornaments; wool pillows; handbags; reversible aprons; leather goods such

as wallets, belts, hairpins, coasters, leashes, and collars; woodturned bowls, ornaments and utensils; handwoven baskets; children’s tie-dyed t-shirts, and fine jewelry—along with many other unique and beautifully crafted goods.

Buying handmade goods supports local artists and makers while strengthening the local economy, and it adds a deeper layer of meaning to holiday gift-giving. Each purchase represents time, skill, and creativity, and helps sustain opportunities for makers to share their work with the community.

The Makers Mill Makers Market is open

Monday through Friday, 9 a.m.–5 p.m., and on weekends when the flag is out. Inventory changes regularly, so visitors are encouraged to stop in often throughout the season.

Makers Mill is a non-profit community makerspace dedicated to hands-on learning, creativity, and connection. Community support helps keep programs accessible and

provides space for local makers to thrive. As Makers Mill works toward a \$150,000 year-end goal to keep classes, tools, and community programs running, every purchase at the Makers Market—and every act of support—helps sustain these opportunities. Those who feel moved to support this work can learn more or make a donation at makersmill.org/donate.

Charlie Dowd to retire from MVSB after 24-year career in banking

MEREDITH — Charlie Dowd will retire from MVSB (Meredith Village Savings Bank) at the end of this year, concluding a distinguished 24-year career in the banking industry. Dowd joined MVSB in 2021 as Vice President, Residential Mortgage Sales NMLS# 737415, and has since played a key role in expanding the Bank’s mortgage lending team and strengthening its reputation as a top choice for homebuyers across New Hampshire.

Under Dowd’s leadership, MVSB’s mortgage team has experienced remarkable growth, supported by a dedicated group of Mortgage Loan Officers who share his commitment for exceptional service, efficient technology and strong community relationships. This philosophy has helped MVSB earn consistent recognition as one of New Hampshire’s top mortgage lenders by the Registry Review (data compiled by The Warren Group) and as the recipient of Best Mortgage in the Laconia Daily Sun’s Best of the Lakes Region competition. His collaborative approach and steadfast leadership have been instrumental in sustaining MVSB’s success in helping individuals and families achieve their dreams of homeownership.

Dowd has brought spirit and enthusiasm to many volunteer roles in the community, including serving as announcer for the MVSB Children’s Tractor Pull at the Sandwich Fair, supporting the Alton Winter Carnival, attending fundraisers for My Breast Cancer Support, and advocating for organizations such as NeighborWorks Southern New



COURTESY PHOTO

Charlie Dowd

Hampshire and New Hampshire Housing. His passion for homeownership education has inspired him to lead community financial education sessions, presenting on MVSB loan products, financial literacy, and homeownership for schools and the public. He is a 2023 graduate of Leadership Lakes Region and earned his Certified Mortgage Professional designation in 2025.

“Charlie’s leadership and dedication have had a tremendous impact on our Residential Lending team,” said Jaime Frederes, Senior Vice President, Residential Mortgage Lending. “His strategic vision guided the division through significant growth and change, and his commitment to mentoring others has built a strong foundation for continued success. We will greatly miss his expertise, integrity and humor, but are so grateful for all he has contributed to MVSB. We wish him a very well deserved, happy and healthy retirement.”

Dowd looks forward to spending more time with family and friends in retirement and plans

to divide his time between New Hampshire and Florida - enjoying the best of both worlds while staying connected to the local community he loves.

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 customers and neighbors. To learn more, visit any of the local branch offices located in New Hampshire in Alton, Ashland, Center Harbor, Exeter, Gilford, Laconia, Melvin Village, Meredith, Moultonborough, North Conway, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Rochester or Wolfeboro, call 800-922-6872 or visitmvsb.com.

Gary Dionne retires from Ameriprise Financial after serving Laconia residents for 32 years

LACONIA — Gary Dionne has announced his retirement from Ameriprise Financial Services, LLC. Dionne has served families in the Lakes Region area for 32 years as a Financial Advisor. Dionne is part of LPM Advisory Group, a private wealth advisory practice of Ameriprise Financial Services, LLC. The practice, which includes Private Wealth Advisors and Managing Partners Lee Petersen and Brendan Mann, and their team of experienced Financial Advisors and support staff will continue to serve residents at their office locations in Meredith, Concord, Bedford, Lebanon and Keene.

“Helping Lakes Region families reach their financial goals – and then working with their kids and even their grandkids reach their own financial goals – has been the highlight of my career. It’s been an honor to serve these families throughout the years alongside my talented team,” said Gary Dionne, Financial Advisor.

“It’s been a pleasure to work alongside Gary on our mission to help Lakes Region families feel confident about their financial future. We will miss him, but our team is excited for him to enjoy his well-deserved retirement,” said Lee Petersen, Private Wealth Advisor and Managing Partner of LPM Advisory Group.

Dionne started his career in 1992 as a Financial Services Representative with MetLife, and advanced to become a Financial Advisor in 1999. He joined Ameriprise Financial in 2017, and LPM Advisory Group in 2022.

Dionne graduated from University of New Hampshire with a degree in Political Science &



COURTESY PHOTO

Gary Dionne

History.

Dionne is an active member of the community, including membership in the Laconia Rotary Club, the Lakes Region Symphony Orchestra, the Laconia Planning Board, and serving as a volunteer driver with the ‘Got Lunch – Laconia’ program.

As a private wealth advisory practice, LPM Advisory Group provides financial advice that is anchored in a solid understanding of client needs and expectations and provided in one-on-one relationships with their clients. For more information, please contact LPM Advisory Group at 603.227.6139, visit the Ameriprise Meredith office at 14 Plymouth Street, Level 1, Meredith, NH by appointment or the Concord office at 210 Rumford Street, Concord, NH during business hours, or visit the team website lpmadvisorygroup.com.

About Ameriprise Financial At Ameriprise Financial, we have been

helping people feel confident about their financial future for more than 130 years¹. With extensive investment advice, asset management and insurance capabilities and a nationwide network of 10,000 financial advisors, we have the strength and expertise to serve the full range of individual and institutional investors’ financial needs.

PETS OF THE WEEK

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



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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THE REAL REPORT
RECENT REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS

Town	Address	Type	Price	Seller	Buyer
Barnstead	Beauty Hill Road	N/A	\$13,800	Town of Barnstead	David E. Tiede
Barnstead	96 Damsite Rd.	Single-Family Residence	\$120,000	Stephen J. Marchacos	Catherine F. Macdonald and Robert A. Stephanian
Barnstead	9 Nutter Circle	Single-Family Residence	\$325,000	Sara J. Abell	Maggie and Jerry Phontharaksa
Barnstead	Route 28	N/A	\$375,000	Drolet Fiscal Trust and Susan Drolet	Nanillah Properties LLC
Barnstead	N/A	N/A	\$190,000	Jonathan R. and Kathleen N. Yelle	Mark P. Choquette and Sophia Okyere-Choquette
Barnstead	N/A	N/A	\$140,000	Kevin B. Hingston	Robert Abbott
Barnstead	N/A (Lot 2)	N/A	\$475,000	Kevin L. Roberts	Martha Rasbridge and Marcus Munroe
Gilford	N/A	N/A	\$9,575,000	J&T Real Estate Group LLC	Amerco RE Co.
Gilmanton	202 Sargent Rd.	Single-Family Residence	\$30,000	Daniel and Shaina Laurin	Bradley Laurin
Gilmanton	N/A	N/A	\$310,000	Renee N. McMahon	Kathleen N. Baum
New Durham	47 Brienne Rd.	Single-Family Residence	\$35,000	Cheyenne L. Verley	O'Brien Fiscal Trust and Robert E. O'Brien II
New Durham	Kings Highway	N/A	\$850,000	Flexibility For The Future	Southeast Land Trust of NH

ABOUT THE REAL REPORT

Here are recent real estate transactions in Alton and the surrounding areas. These sales summaries are informational only, not a legal record. Names shown are usually the first listed in the deed. Sales might involve additional parties or locations. Prices are usually based on tax stamps and might be inaccurate for public agency sales. Refer to actual public documents before forming opinions or relying on this information. Additional publicly recorded information on these sales, prior sales and data from Department of Revenue Administration forms is available at www.real-data.com or 669-3822. Copyright 2011. Real Data Corp. In the column "Type": land= land only; L/B= land and building; MH= mobile home; and COND=condominium. Transactions provided by The Warren Group, Boston Ma., publishers of The Registry Review and Bankers and Tradesman newspapers, Phone: 1-800-356-8805. Website: www.thewarrengroup.com

Warmth & More Fund helping to keep the heat on

WOLFEBORO — Five years ago, the Warmth & More Fund was created to help members of our community who need help making it through the winter, keeping their homes livable, the lights on, and the pipes from bursting. Thanks to so many generous donors in the community, the fund has distributed tens of thousands of dollars to help elderly and families. Recent assistance includes providing heating oil for seniors and young families, furnace and water pump repairs, and payment of electricity bills. This year is particularly challenging with the high costs of housing, insurance, and basic necessities; even two income families can have a hard time making ends meet. Federal fuel assistance often isn't enough to get people through the winter. Come February some need help buying fuel to get them to the warm weather. A divorce can cut income in half and may mean trying to stretch dollars even further. For seniors living solely on Social Security, a broken furnace or water pump can be life threatening. Thanks to so many in the community, the Warmth & More Fund has been there to help. Recent donations from The Wolfeboro Lion's Club and the First Congregational Church Gifts of Hope Market, as well as local businesses and private donors, large and small, have helped the Fund start building its coffers to provide assistance for the upcoming heating season. The fund is hoping to raise \$35,000. If you would like to join others in the community by donating to the Fund, send a check made out to Town of Wolfeboro with Warmth & More Fund noted in the memo to: Amy Capone-Muccio, Town Manager's Office, Town of Wolfeboro, PO Box 629, Wolfeboro, NH 03894, or drop it off at Town Hall. For more information call Amy at (603) 569-8161. Every penny donated goes directly to assist those in need. If you are interested in donating in honor of a special event or person, the Fund can arrange to send a letter of acknowledgement to the recipient. It is the perfect gift for the person in your life who has everything.



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Season's Greetings from Roche Realty Group!
We're reflecting on a wonderful year and are incredibly thankful for the trust placed in us by our clients and community.
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HIGH SCHOOL SLATE

Friday, Dec. 26 BELMONT Boys' Hoops vs. Portsmouth Christian (Holiday Tourney); 3:15 Girls' Hoops vs. Portsmouth Christian (Holiday Tourney); 2	(Holiday Tourney); TBD GILFORD Boys' Hoops vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); 4 Girls' Hoops vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); 2:30 WINNISQUAM Boys' Hoops vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); 1 Girls' Hoops vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); 11:30
Saturday, Dec. 27 BELMONT Boys' Hoops vs. Ken-nett (Holiday Tourney); 10:15 Girls' Hoops vs. Nute (Holiday Tourney); 9 GILFORD Boys' Hoops vs. Plymouth (Holiday Tourney); 4 Girls' Hoops vs. Plymouth (Holiday Tourney); 2:30 Indoor Track at UNH; 10 WINNISQUAM Boys' Hoops vs. Moultonborough (Holiday Tourney); 1 Girls' Hoops vs. Moultonborough (Holiday Tourney); 11:30 Indoor Track at UNH; 2:30	Monday, Dec. 29 BELMONT Boys' Hoops vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); TBD Girls' Hoops vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); TBD GILFORD Boys' Hoops vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); 6 Girls' Hoops vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); 4:30 WINNISQUAM Boys' Hoops vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); 6 Girls' Hoops vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); 4:30 Tuesday, Dec. 30 BELMONT Boys' Hoops vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); 7 Girls' Hoops vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); 5:30 All schedules are subject to change.
Sunday, Dec. 28 BELMONT Boys' Hoops vs. TBD (Holiday Tourney); TBD Girls' Hoops vs. TBD	

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year from Our Family to Yours!
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EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY



MVSB celebrates President Marcus Weeks for 30 years of leadership, service, and community impact

MEREDITH — MVSB (Meredith Village Savings Bank) proudly celebrates President Marcus Weeks for 30 years of dedicated service. Born and raised in the Lakes Region, Weeks began his banking career in 1995 as a student teller at MVSB’s Center Harbor Office. Over the past three decades, he has grown alongside the Bank — gaining experience across nearly every area of the organization and developing a deep appreciation for the vital role mutual banks play in supporting the people, businesses, and communities they serve.

After beginning as a student teller, he was promoted to Mortgage Loan Officer in 2003, transitioned to Business Development Officer in 2007, and became Assistant Vice President in 2009. In 2012, he took on the role of Branch and Business Development Manager for the Bank’s then-new Wolfeboro Office, where he played a key role in earning trust and building relationships within the community.

His success in Wolfeboro led to a promotion to Vice President, Business Development Officer, where he oversaw business banking relationships and supported the advancement of a number of business banking services and online tools. His leadership continued to grow as he was promoted to Senior Vice President and Senior Retail Banking Officer in 2018, contributing at the senior management level for both MVSB and New



Marcus Weeks

Hampshire Mutual Bancorp (NHMB). In 2022, he was named President of MVSB.

During his three decades with MVSB, Weeks has witnessed tremendous change within both the organization and the banking industry. Highlights include MVSB’s roll-out of bank-by-phone service, the launch of debit cards, and the introduction of the Bank’s first Web site, online banking, and online applications for checking and savings accounts, as well as residential and commercial loans. During this time, MVSB also grew significantly — from five branch offices to fifteen — joined forces with The Merrimack, NHTrust, and Savings Bank of Walpole through the New Hampshire Mutual Bancorp alliance, and experienced four presidential transitions.

His leadership and

community involvement have earned him numerous honors, including recognition as Business Leader of the Year by Business NH Magazine, Community Banker of the Year by the New Hampshire Bankers Association, and recipient of the NH Business Review Business Excellence Award in the Financial Services category.

“Marcus’s journey to President is a true reflection of his dedication, integrity, and deep commitment to the people and communities MVSB serves,” said Gregg Tewksbury, President and CEO of New Hampshire Mutual Bancorp. “He leads with humility and heart, inspiring those around him to make a difference every day. His leadership has strengthened MVSB’s culture and positioned the Bank for continued success.”

Weeks’ leadership

extends far beyond the Bank’s walls. Throughout his career, he has been an active volunteer for numerous non-profit organizations and currently serves on the President’s Advisory Council for Lakes Region Community College, as Vice President of the Board for Geneva Point Center, and as a Board Member for the Boys & Girls Club of Central and Northern NH and Spaulding Academy & Family Services. He also supports community giving initiatives at MVSB and serves on the MVSB Fund Distribution Committee.

“MVSB has always been guided by a simple yet powerful principle — to do what’s right for our customers, our employees, and the communities we call home,” said Weeks. “I’ve been fortunate to learn from incredible mentors as I’ve built my career here and to work alongside so many talented and caring individuals. I am deeply proud of all we’ve accomplished together and excited for what lies ahead.”

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 customers and neighbors. To learn more, visit any of the local branch offices

located in New Hampshire in Alton, Ashland, Center Harbor, Exeter, Gilford, Laconia, Melvin Village, Meredith, Moultonborough, North Conway, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Rochester or Wolfeboro, call 800-922-6872 or visitmvsb.com.

Gilford Public Library Top 12 requests

1. “Return of the Spider” by James Patterson
2. “The Black Wolf” by Louise Penny
3. “The Widow” by John Grisham
4. “Secret of Secrets” by Dan Brown
5. “The Seven Rings” by Nora Roberts
6. “My Friends” by Fredrik Backman
7. “The Academy” by Elin Hilderbrand
8. “The King’s Ransom” by Janet Evanovich
9. “Hamnet” by Maggie O’Farrell
10. “Nobody’s Girl” by Virginia Robert Giuffre
11. “The Picasso Heist” by James Patterson
12. “The Proving Ground” by Michael Connelly

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OMFL

(continued from Page A1)

a string instrument? Well then, dust it off and come make music with us! On the first (Jan. 6) and third (Jan. 20) Tuesdays of the month, join us for jam nights at the library (in the meeting room). No need to be an expert — just bring your instrument and a love of music. Share a few tunes, trade chords, get feedback (if you’d like), and most of all, have fun!

Our Read the Room Book Club (ages 18 and up) takes place on the first Wednesday of the month (Jan. 7), from 6-7:30 p.m., in the library. This month’s book will be “Thursday Murder Club” by Richard Osman. Next month’s book will be “Before We Were Yours” by Lisa Wingate. Books are available at the library. Bring food, bring thoughts, bring a friend!

This month we are doing a Gilmore Girls theme for our adult events! Starting on Wednesday, Jan. 14, from noon to 1 p.m., we are hosting a Knitathon at the library. Whoever can knit the most rows in the given time will be presented with a mystery prize! Please come with your own knitting needles and yarn.

Begin your 2026 reading journey with a beau-

tifully designed Book Tracker—your personal logbook for every story you explore. Start from scratch or use a template. We will be meeting at the library on Thursday, Jan. 15, at 5:30 p.m. For ages eight to 100 and up!

Family Crafternoon is a family-focused event that happens every third Friday of the month (Jan. 16), at 3:30 p.m. Join us this month for karaoke! Stop by OFML and belt out your favorite tunes! Light refreshments will be served.

On Saturday, Jan. 17, at 11 a.m., we are hosting a Children’s Tea Party! Children (and their grown-ups) are invited to join us for a delightfully good time. Be sure to dress up in your finest, then bring your awesome self and we’ll provide the rest! Space is limited, so please call or email the library to sign up.

On Friday, Jan. 23, from 6:30-8 p.m., join us for Books & Banter. This lively book club is open to everyone and invites you to share and explore a wide range of genres. Come ready to discuss up to three books you’ve recently read, giving a brief synopsis to spark conversation. Don’t miss out on the fun—come share your thoughts, learn about new books, and enjoy a cozy evening of discussion.

In keeping with the Gilmore Girls theme, on Saturday, Jan. 24, we are hosting a Screen to Table event from 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Bring a dish from everyone’s favorite comfort show to share while we watch “Gilmore Girls” in the library meeting room. We even have a Gilmore Girls official cookbook here at the library for you to peruse for culinary ideas!

It’s trivia night! Our last event celebrating Stars Hollow involves a test of your Gilmore Girls knowledge. On Thursday, Jan. 29, from 6-7:30 p.m., join us in the meeting room for a night of fun competition. Light refreshments will be served.

Let’s Write a Novel! Join us in the library’s meeting room for a series of structured classes on the how-to’s of writing a book. This class runs from 6-7:30 p.m. on the last Friday of the month (Jan. 30). Budding writers, 16 and older, ignite your passion for storytelling, discover how to build your hero’s journey, and take your novel from concept to can-do!

For events that require registration, please contact us at 269-3900 or ofmlstaff@gmail.com to reserve your spot!

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Golden Eagles battle but come up short against champs

BY JOSHUA SPAULDING
Sports Editor

GILFORD — Gilford and Belmont share a locker room at the hockey arena. And for a number of years, they shared a locker room at the football facility as well.

But when it comes to boys' basketball, you'd be hard-pressed to find a better rivalry in the Lakes Region than the Golden Eagles and the Raiders and the matchup between the two teams on Monday, Dec. 16, lived up to the hype.

The host Golden Eagles held a slight lead at the half-time break, but the defending champions pulled away in the second half and took the 57-47 win.

"It showed a lot of good things and some things the boys need to work on," said Belmont coach Tony Martinez. "Brody (Ennis) and Wyatt (Carroll) were the only ones who saw minutes in the championship game, so we're relatively inexperienced at this level."

"Look at that third quarter, we struggled to score, but we'll figure it out," said Gilford coach Rick Acquilano. "But we competed at the end of the day."

Evan Martinez scored the first two baskets of the game for Belmont before Mark Uicker and Henry Sleeper answered for the Raiders at the other end of the court. Ennis connected on a three-pointer for the Raiders but Uicker answered with a three-point play for the Golden Eagles.

Carroll then converted a three-point play for Belmont, Wyatt Bamford drilled a three-pointer and Wyatt Divers hit a hoop to open the Raider lead to 15-7. Uicker connected on a pair of free throws and Sleeper put back a rebound. Owen Hawkins finished out the first quarter with a pair



JOSHUA SPAULDING

Belmont's Brody Ennis drives to the basket against the defense of Gilford's Owen Wolpin in action last Monday in Gilford.

of free throws for the Golden Eagles and Belmont's lead was 15-13 at the end of the first quarter.

A Uicker hoop opened the second quarter and Sleeper hit a free throw to give Gilford its first lead of the game. Uicker finished off a steal for the 18-15 lead before Owen Viar hit a hoop to get the Raiders on the board. Hawkins drained a hoop and Ennis connected on a bucket to cut the lead to one point.

Sleeper came back with a three-pointer for the Golden Eagles before Belmont scored the next five points. Martinez started the run with a free throw then Ennis hit two from the line and Viar and Carroll each hit one from the line to give Belmont the 24-23 lead. Uicker then got the final basket of the first half and Gilford led 25-24 at the halftime break.

Viar got the Raiders on

the board to start the second half and after a Uicker free throw, Martinez hit a hoop. Ryan Folan drained a free throw to cut the lead to one but Martinez hit a three-pointer and a bucket and Brady Fysh hit a hoop to open the lead to 35-27.

Hawkins hit two free throws and Fysh drained one at the other end to answer. Gavin Forest finished off a steal for the Golden Eagles but Ennis finished out the third quarter with a hoop and Belmont led 38-31 heading to the final eight minutes.

Divers got the first basket of the fourth quarter and Sleeper connected on a pair of free throws at the other end. Carroll drained a bucket for the Raiders before Hawkins hit a three-pointer to cut the lead to 42-36. Bamford drained his second three-pointer of the game, Carroll hit a free throw and



JOSHUA SPAULDING

Mark Uicker fires off a shot during his team's game with Belmont last Monday night.

Martinez connected on a bucket and Belmont had the lead out to 12 at 48-36.

Hawkins ended the Raider run with a free throw but Divers got Belmont back on the board with a hoop and Viar hit a free throw. After another Hawkins hoop, Carroll got a free throw for Belmont and Uicker found the bottom of the net from long distance to cut the lead to 10. Ennis and Hawkins both hit a pair of free throws at opposite ends before Ennis hit two more from the line and Carroll added a free throw. Sleeper connected on a three-pointer to finish out the game's scoring and Belmont had the 57-47 win.

"Having an environment

like this against a good team like Gilford, it's great for the kids," Martinez said. "Teams will only get better as the season goes and so will we."

"We're the defending champions, we have a target on our back, but this was a good learning opportunity and we'll take it to practice," he continued. "We'll get back to work."

"We have to execute better and we know that," Acquilano said. "We'll get there."

Martinez led the Raiders with 14 points while Ennis finished with 13 points. Gilford was led by Uicker's 17 points while Hawkins added 14 and Sleeper finished

with 13.

The Raiders were in action after early holiday deadlines on Dec. 19 and Dec. 22, both against Campbell and Gilford was in action after early holiday deadlines Dec. 19, against Stevens and Dec. 23 against Conant.

Gilford will once again host the Lakes Region Holiday Hoop Tournament and kick off against Plymouth at 4 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 27. They will play again on Sunday, Dec. 28, against an opponent to be determined, with the tournament finals on Monday, Dec. 29, at 6 p.m.

Belmont will take part in the Mike Lee Holiday Basketball Bash in Farmington, starting on Friday, Dec. 26, at 3:15 p.m. against Portsmouth Christian. They take on Kennett at 10:15 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 27, and the tournament continues on Sunday, Dec. 28, and Monday, Dec. 29, with the finals set for Tuesday, Dec. 30, at 7 p.m.

GHS 13-12-6-16-47
BHS 15-9-14-17-57

Gilford 47

Uicker 6-4-17, Forest 1-0-2, Sleeper 4-3-13, Hawkins 3-7-14, Folan 0-1-1, Totals 14-15-47

Belmont 57

Carroll 2-5-9, Viar 2-2-6, Martinez 6-1-14, Ennis 3-6-13, Divers 3-0-6, Fysh 1-1-3, Bamford 2-0-6, Totals 19-15-57

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



COURTESY

The Wolfeboro Lions Operation Kid Sight team ventured out of the Governor Wentworth Regional School District on Tuesday, Dec. 16, to screen 303 students (from pre school through eighth grade) at Alton Central School. Pictured from the left: Lions Sharon Waid and Rhoni Harding, Operation Kid Sight coordinator John Adams, school health assistant, Pamela Nason, and school nurse April Elliott in her holiday cheer.

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