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Winnisquam Echo

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2026

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

Celebrate Christmas in Sanbornton at historic Lane Tavern!

SANBORNTON — The Sanbornton Historical Society is again celebrating in style! Shop and enjoy the ambiance of an Old Time Christmas at the Lane Tavern on Saturday, Dec. 5, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

We'll have our famous Cookie Walk, locally craftspeople and artisans presenting their creations and a raffle for locally made treasures. We'll also offer a light lunch and our gift shop will be open. If you've preordered a wreath, pick up is 9-11 a.m. We'll also have a few wreaths available for sale.

Are you looking for beautiful, unique, locally made artisan gifts for that special someone or maybe even yourself? We have a wonderful variety of special gift items available.



Do you like cookies? You don't want to miss our famous cookie walk. We'll have dozens of festive homemade cookies. Choose your favorites!

Do you like shopping in an Historic Tavern with the smell of mulled cider in the air? Would you like a light lunch to keep up your strength? Maybe take a chance to win locally made items? Then don't miss our Christmas Fair!

We'll also have a limited number of wreaths to decorate for the season.

The Lane Tavern is mobility friendly and located at 520 Sanborn Rd. (Route 132) in the Square of Sanbornton. Free parking is available across the street. And, while you're in town, stop by the Sanbornton Congregational Church and First Baptist Church for more local crafts and treasures. It's Christmas in Sanbornton!

Email the Sanbornton Historical Society at info@LaneTavern.org or call 603 591-5176 for more information.

Belmont tax rate set at $19.61

BELMONT — The New Hampshire Department of Revenue Administration (NHDRA) has finalized the 2026 property tax rate for the Town of Belmont at $19.61 per $1,000 of assessed value. This represents an increase of $2.22, or 12.77 percent, from the 2025 rate of $17.39.

The 2026 tax rate is broken down into the following components:

County – 99 cents (5.05 percent of the total rate) — an increase of 7 cents from the 2025 rate of 92 cents.

Municipal – $6.40 (32.63 percent of the total rate) — an increase of $1.01 from the 2025 rate of $5.39.

Local School – $11.14 (56.81 percent of the total rate) — an increase of $1.16 from the 2025 rate of $9.98.

State Education – $1.08 (5.51 percent of the total rate) — a decrease of 2 cents from the 2025 rate of $1.10.

The combined Local and State Education rate is $12.22, accounting for 62.32 percent of Belmont's total tax rate.

It is important to provide some additional context regarding the municipal portion of the tax rate. The increase is largely reflective of the town having been in default for 2024 & 2025. The financial impact of that default is now being reflected in the municipal tax rate, and this is where the increase in the municipal portion stems from.

Belmont's total assessed property value for 2026 is $1,524,900,061, an increase of $20,374,813, or 1.35 percent, from the 2025 total assessed value of $1,504,525,248.

While the Town has experienced a modest increase in overall assessed valuation, there is another important factor worth noting. The Town's last full sales update was conducted in 2024, with the final re-val not occurring until 2029. Since that time, property sales and market values have continued to rise.

Without incorporating those more recent sales into the town's assessments, we are not capturing the additional market value growth that could otherwise help increase the Town's overall valuation. A stronger overall valuation helps spread the tax burden across a larger tax base and can help offset the tax rate for property owners. In other words, when market values increase and those changes are appropriately reflected in the town's assessments, it can help reduce the pressure on the tax rate. The lack of a more current sales update means the Town is missing an opportunity to capture that market growth.

We understand that property taxes are a significant expense for our residents, and we do not take these increases lightly. The town remains committed to responsible financial management, and making thoughtful decisions that serve the best interests of our community. We recognize the importance of being good stewards of taxpayer dollars while continuing to provide the services and resources our residents depend on.

Tax bills are expected to be mailed by November 25, 2026, with payment due by Dec. 29.

Two deceased after house fire in Sanbornton

SANBORNTON — New Hampshire State Fire Marshal Sean P. Toomey, Sanbornton Fire Chief Paul Dexter, and Sanbornton Police Chief Kevin McIntosh announce that two people are deceased following a house fire.

At 1:52 a.m. Thursday, Nov. 19, New Hampshire 911 received a report of a fire at 181 Hueber Dr. in Sanbornton, a single-family log cabin-style home. When firefighters arrived, the home was fully engulfed in flames. Crews entered the home shortly after arriving and located two people deceased. Another resident, who lives in a separate building on the property, suffered minor smoke inhalation and was treated at the scene.

The fire was determined to be under control in less than 30 minutes. Firefighters remained at the scene to extinguish hot spots throughout the morning.

Additional firefighters from Franklin, Tilton-Northfield, New Hampton, Laconia, Hill, Ashland, Plymouth, Meredith, Belmont, Bristol, Gilford, and Andover also responded. Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid also assisted.

Members of the New Hampshire State Fire Marshal's Office have responded to the scene and assumed the lead of the investigation into the origin and cause of the fire. At this time, the fire is not considered suspicious.

Anyone with additional information is encouraged to contact investigators at (603) 223-4289 or fmo@dos.nh.gov.

The victims have been identified as Gloria Beck, 86, and Edwin Beck, 66, both of Sanbornton. The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner determined the cause of death for both victims was smoke inhalation. The manner of their deaths was ruled accidental.

Ryder, DeFrancesco earn golf All-State honors



JOSHUA SPAULDING

Belmont's Max Ryder earned Division III All-State Second Team honors for his play this fall.



JOSHUA SPAULDING

Jordan DeFrancesco of Belmont was named Division III All-State Honorable Mention for his senior season.

BY JOSHUA SPAULDING
Sports Editor

REGION — With the conclusion of the fall sports season, the golf coaches in Division II and Division III announced their selections for All-State honors.

In Division III, Belmont's Max Ryder earned Second Team honors while Honorable Mention went to Belmont's Jordan DeFrancesco, Gilford's Andy Taylor and Prospect Mountain's Gavin Gorton. Ryder led the Raiders in stroke average at 40.5 and was a medalist three times while DeFrancesco was the Raider captain and was second best in stroke average at 41.5.

Earning First Team honors for Division III were Mady Savary (Player of the Year) and Chase Connor of Bishop Brady, Caleb Skoog of Laconia, Hazen Wathers of Kearsarge, Tim Currier of Campbell, Keith Townsend of Derryfield and Garrett Clark of Monadnock.

Joining Ryder in earning Second Team honors were Henry Gardner of Derryfield, Maddie Giampa of Pelham, Perry Lund of Fall Mountain, Keirnan Farnham of Campbell, Cooper Gelinas of Hillsboro-Deering and Joe Rawnsley of Bishop Brady.

Also earning Honorable Mention were Ryan Maxwell of Derryfield, Jake Landry of Campbell, Carson Bruggis of Fall Mountain, Isaac Knox and Madden Gagnon of Kearsage, John Hermann of Trinity, Luke Bedard of Bishop Brady and Kiernan Fitzgerald of Monadnock.

Bubba Williams of Kearsarge was named the Division III Coach of the Year.

In Division II, Plymouth's Ross Smith earned Second Team honors while teammates Andrew Butson and Braeden McCoil each earned Honorable Mention.

Earning First Team honors in Division II were Ryan Allard (Player of the Year), Cooper Coate and Finn Perry of St. Thomas, Jacob Gancarz of Bow, Joey Alvarez of Oyster River, Ian Kaveney and Jake Wilson of Souhegan and Matt Howie and Ben George of Hollis-Brookline.

Joining Smith in earning Second Team honors were Andrew Bernsden and Erikson Lowery of Lebanon, Yash Joglekar of Oyster River, Alex Perry of Bow, Patrick Bryson of Souhegan, Jackson Quinn of Alvirne and Connor Carson of John Stark.

Joining Butson and McCoil in earning Honorable Mention were Logan McCullen of Merrimack Valley, Kendall Wishart of St. Thomas and Colbin Barker and Andrew Fitzgerald of Pembroke Academy.

Den Coffey of St. Thomas was named the Division II Coach of the Year.

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

Franklin Opera House seeks donations for 14thAnnual Festival of Trees

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

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

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

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

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

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

Northfield man dies in crash on I-93

CONCORD — The New Hampshire State Police are investigating a deadly crash on Interstate 93.

At approximately 2 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 17, State Police dispatch received a report of a single-vehicle crash on I-93 northbound, in the area of mile marker 43.4, in Concord.

The preliminary investigation determined that the vehicle, identified as a white 2013 Cadillac, struck a guardrail and went off the right side of the road. The Cadillac then traveled down an embankment and went through a fence before coming to a stop near some trees, approximately 150 feet from the interstate.

A responding Trooper immediately began to perform lifesaving measures on the driver until emergency medical services arrived. The driver was then transported to a regional hospital, where he died as a result of his injuries.

The driver was identified as Robert Cullen, 75, of Northfield.

Additional Troopers from the Collision Analysis and Reconstruction (C.A.R.) Unit and members of the Concord Fire Department assisted at the scene.

The cause of the crash remains under investigation.

Belmont police log

BELMONT — The Belmont Police Department reported the following arrests during the week of Nov. 9-16.

Martin Luther Clark, Jr., age 54, of Bristol was arrested on Nov. 10 for Driving After Revocation or Suspension of license (subsequent) and in connection with multiple bench warrants.

Robert T. St. Onge II, age 55, of Manchester was arrested on Nov. 11 for Operating a vehicle with an Expired License (subsequent), Driving After Revocation or Suspension of license, and in connection with multiple bench warrants.

Donald Burton Suiter, Jr., age 45, of Belmont was arrested on Nov. 11 for Multiple counts of Domestic Violence.

A 20-year-old male from Canterbury received a summons in lieu of arrest on Nov. 13 for multiple counts of Driving After Revocation or Suspension.

David Piper, age 55, of Plymouth was arrested on Nov. 13 for Receiving Stolen Property, Disobeying an Officer, Operating a vehicle after being certified as a Habitual Offender, Breach of Bail, Resisting Arrest or Detention, and Obstructing Government Administration.

Kenneth David Malone, age 71, of Belmont was arrested during the same incident for Resisting Arrest or Detention.

Stanley Michael Medley II, age 26, of Gilmanton was arrested on Nov. 13 for Driving Under the Influence-Impairment.

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Wolves co-owner releases six-book children's series

LACONIA — New England Wolves co-owner and general manager Andrew Trimble has released a six-book children's collection inspired by the Wolves Kids Show, using hockey stories and activities to introduce young readers to sports and the lessons they can learn through participation.

The collection includes five illustrated storybooks and a hockey coloring book. Featuring the show's characters, the stories explore passing, handling mistakes, welcoming a new teammate, standing up for others, and persevering when a game gets difficult.

"I want kids to fall in love with playing, being part of a team, and working toward something together," Trimble said. "Sports give children opportunities to build friendships, learn responsibility, and discover what they're capable of. My hope is that these books encourage a child to try a sport, support a teammate, or keep going after a tough day."

The five storybooks follow the young Wolves through experiences familiar to youth athletes. Herbie learns to share the puck. Bear discovers how his choices affect his teammates. The team welcomes a new player and supports Blake when she faces the claim that hockey isn't for girls. A championship game story follows the Wolves as they work their way back from a five-goal deficit.

The accompanying coloring book gives younger children another way to engage with hockey through creative play.

Trimble, who also founded Scoring Concepts, developed the collection as an extension of the animated Wolves Kids Show. To date, the animated kids show has been viewed by thousands of people and in six different countries. The books give families a way to revisit the characters and their lessons together away from a screen.

Based in the Lakes Region, Trimble works with young athletes through the Wolves and Scoring Concepts camps, clinics, and instructional content. He hopes the collection reaches children who already play hockey as well as those discovering sports for the first time.

The six-book collection is available through Andrew Trimble's Amazon author page. Families can also explore the books, videos, and activities through Scoring Concepts Kids.

Winnisquam Regional High School announces honor roll

TILTON — Winnisquam Regional High School congratulates the following students on being named to the honor roll for the first quarter of the 2026-2027 school year.

Eloise Abbott, Nolan Abbott, Robbie Abed, Simon Ahlgren, Taylor Akers, Ryan Albert, Rosemary Allaire, Eliza Allen, Katherine Allen, Jayden Alleyne, Lazar Arbutina, Zohaib Azam.

Eduardo Balmisa, Trinity Berry, Margaret Boucher, Dayton Brigante, Maddux Chapman, Salman Chaudhry, JunYu Chen, Dierks Cicchetti, Ella Cohen, Charlotte Colby, Madilyn Collins, Alanna Cruz, Kendall Curley.

Cullen Desrochers, Ava Dodge, Kevin Dore, Deegan Dorval, Caroline Dubord, Mason Dubreuil, Jameson Dunn, Caelan Flanders, Colton Flynn, Kilean Fredette, Olivia Fredette.

Kaitlyn Greenwood, Anna Guerra, Logan Hanson, Claire Hart, Oliver Hatfield, Matthew Hibbert, Kellan Hilliker, Hayden Hoey, Shane Huckins, Kierra Jean-Lord, Kaylee Jeanson, Davilyn Jones, Emerald Kenny, Madison Kuhns, Teagan LaBrie, Elisabeth Langevin, Luke Larrabee, Anna Laughy, Ava Lavin, Livia Lavoie, Kaylin Liesner, Carter Lloyd, Jaxon Loutrel.

Ariana Maxwell, Jack McGranahan, Penelope Mcsweeney, David Messier, Abigail Meunier, Kinzie Nelson, Aaliyah Nolin, Ethan Orr, Sophia Orsini, Andrew Paquette, Taylor Pelkey, Braeden Perrault, Milan Pham, Anthony Porter, Olivia Power, Valerie Pudsey, Lillian Quartochi.

Savannah Raxter, Kaylynn Reagan, Chloe Richardson, Liv Riendeau, Cole Ringer, Paityn Rudd, Jacob Russell, Jypsy Russell, Clara Sancho Yague, Autumn Sarette, Athena Searles, Erilyn Searles, Solomon Shartar-Howe, Guilherme Silva, Ivory Spencer, Aire St. Gelais, Kane St.Hilaire, Ariana Stone, Stone Subocz.

Kaito Tamaru, Mattea Taylor, Travis Tibbetts, Addison Todt, Owen Tupeck, Ethan Turgeon, Rebecca Turgeon, Lina Veseli, Hennessy Vieira, Danica Weymouth, Natalie Wolfe, Lorea Zobel-Lee.

PETS OF THE WEEK

Meet Salt!



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

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

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

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

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

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Brookford Farm brings German Christmas traditions to Canterbury with "Christmas with the Cows"

CANTERBURY — A cherished German holiday tradition is finding a new home in New Hampshire this season as Brookford Farm prepares to welcome visitors for "Christmas with the Cows," a three-weekend celebration featuring traditional German food, holiday music, local vendors and, of course, the farm's resident cows.

The event, scheduled for Nov. 28-29, Dec. 5-6 and Dec. 12-13, will bring a taste of Dresden, Germany, to the family-owned farm at 250 West Road in Canterbury. Festivities will take place from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day.

The inspiration for the celebration comes from Annekathrin, the mother of Brookford Farm co-owner Catarina Mahoney, who has made the farm her home after years of traveling between Germany and New Hampshire.

Originally from Dresden, Catarina and Annekathrin have deep ties to the German city, which is home to one of the world's oldest Christmas markets. The famous Dresdner Striezelmarkt dates back to 1434 and has become a beloved holiday tradition, drawing visitors to experience German food, crafts, music and seasonal festivities.

For years, Annekathrin traveled from Germany once annually to visit Catarina, her husband and fellow farm co-owner, Luke Mahoney, and their four children. During those visits, she developed a love for Brookford Farm and the surrounding community.

Five years ago, she decided to make New Hampshire her permanent home, settling into a red yurt on the farm.

Today, Annekathrin remains actively involved in farm life, helping pack online orders and tending a permaculture herb garden where she grows ingredients for her own organic loose-leaf teas and salves.

Her connection to both her German heritage and her adopted New Hampshire home inspired the family to introduce some of the holiday customs she remembers from Dresden.

The result is "Christmas with the Cows," a celebration that combines the atmosphere of a traditional German Christmas market with the agricultural character of Brookford Farm.

Visitors will find the farm decorated for the holidays using natural materials, while traditional German Christmas carols provide a festive soundtrack.

Food will be another highlight, with German farm-to-table specialties including Opa's Goulash and Oma's Dresden Stollen. The latter is a traditional German Christmas bread prepared by Catarina and Annekathrin using a secret family recipe passed down through the generations.

Stollen, a holiday favorite closely associated with Dresden, is among the best-known culinary traditions of the city's historic Christmas market.

While the German influences will be prominent throughout the celebration, Brookford Farm is adding a distinctly New Hampshire agricultural touch.

The farm's cows, returning from their warm-weather pastures to their winter shelters, will be part of the festivities, giving visitors an opportunity to see the animals that help make the farm's agricultural operations possible.

In addition to the food, music and animals, visitors will have opportunities to shop with local vendors offering holiday merchandise and gifts.

The farm's newly expanded store will also be open, featuring Brookford Farm's own grass-fed meats, dairy products and USDA-certified organic produce.

For the Mahoney family, the celebration represents an opportunity to share traditions that have been part of their family's history while welcoming neighbors and visitors to experience the farm during the holiday season.

It also reflects the connection Annekathrin has developed with the community since leaving Germany and making her home in Canterbury.

"Christmas with the Cows" will be held Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 28-29, Dec. 5-6 and Dec. 12-13, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Brookford Farm, 250 West Rd., Canterbury.

Admission is ticketed, with tickets available in advance at www.brookfordfarm.com or at the door. Some activities require an additional fee.

For more information, visit the farm's Web site.

Tanger Outlets welcomes holiday shopping season with Black Friday savings, extended hours

TILTON — Holiday shopping kicks off early this year at Tanger Outlets Tilton with Black Friday savings every day in November. Shoppers in the festive spirit can get a jump start on scoring the best deals and hottest gifts all month long. Offering winter fashion and footwear, beauty must-haves, cozy home décor and more, Tanger Tilton's leading brands are stocked and ready to welcome guests looking for the latest trends to delight everyone on their list.

Shoppers can stretch their dollar with Tanger Deal Days leading up to Thanksgiving week's traditional doorbuster sales. Through Nov. 22, guests can access early deals online or through the Tanger app, offering up to 25 percent off top brands like American Eagle, Under Armour and Gap.

To celebrate Black Friday, Tanger Tilton will open doors on Friday, Nov. 27 at 6 a.m. with extended shopping hours throughout the weekend. Guests can find the best Black Friday deals and doorbusters at their favorite retailers, including American Eagle, Banana Republic, Old Navy, Skechers and Under Armour. Downloading the Tanger App unlocks even more savings and helps visitors map out the ultimate Black Friday shopping adventure.

More than a retail destination, Tanger Tilton is a gathering place at the heart of the community, bringing people together to celebrate the season, create meaningful memories and enjoy experiences that extend beyond the shopping trip. For more information on events and festivities planned this season, visit tanger.com/tilton.

Loon Center hosting Holiday Open House Saturday

MOULTONBOROUGH — Get ready for festive fun and a free event at the upcoming Holiday Open House at The Loon Center! Join us on Nov. 28 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. for a celebration packed with holiday cheer. The perfect opportunity to bring the whole family together for fun and joy.

We have planned a fantastic lineup of activities to make the day truly special. Little ones will be thrilled to meet St. Nick, create a loon-themed holiday craft, marvel at the incredible creations from our balloon twisting station, and everyone can enjoy the charm of horse and wagon rides. We are thrilled to host acclaimed author Michael Caduto, who will be joining us to celebrate the release of his latest children's book featuring a loon, titled "The Day the Pond Flew South." Families and nature enthusiasts of all ages are invited to visit with the author, and enjoy a special reading of the book. We'll also have plenty of seasonal refreshments on hand to keep you fueled while you enjoy the festivities. We can't wait to see you there!

Directions to The Loon Center: From Route 25 in Moultonborough, turn onto Blake Road at the Central School. Go one mile to the end and turn right onto Lee's Mill Road. The Loon Center will be on your left! For more information, call the Loon Center at (603) 476-5666.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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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.

Rising property taxes demand clear answers and careful planning

For Belmont homeowners, the arrival of property tax bills this year will bring an unwelcome reality. The town's 2026 tax rate has climbed to $19.61 per $1,000 of assessed value, an increase of 12.77 percent over last year.

At a time when families are already managing higher costs for groceries, utilities, insurance and other necessities, another significant expense is the last thing many households need. The numbers deserve attention, but so do the circumstances behind them.

For a home assessed at $300,000, the new rate translates to an annual property tax bill of $5,883, compared with $5,217 at last year's rate, assuming the assessed value remained unchanged. That is an additional $666. For a property assessed at $400,000, the difference would be $888.

These are not insignificant amounts, particularly for retirees living on fixed incomes, young families trying to establish themselves and longtime residents who have watched the cost of remaining in their hometown steadily increase.

Understanding where the money goes is an important part of the conversation. Education accounts for the largest share of Belmont's property tax rate, with local and state education taxes totaling $12.22 per $1,000 of assessed value. That represents more than 62 percent of the overall rate. Municipal expenses account for approximately one-third, while county taxes make up a considerably smaller portion.

These figures illustrate a challenge familiar to communities throughout New Hampshire. Property taxes are expected to support essential public services, from classrooms and emergency response to road maintenance and municipal operations. Those services cost money, and their expenses do not remain immune to inflation.

However, recognizing the necessity of public services does not mean residents should be expected to accept every increase without explanation.

Belmont officials have pointed to the town's operation under default budgets in 2024 and 2025 as a significant factor behind the increase in the municipal portion of the rate. That explanation deserves further discussion, particularly regarding which expenses were affected, how those decisions influenced the current tax rate and what steps might prevent similar financial pressures in future years.

There is also the question of property assessments. The town reports that its overall assessed valuation increased by approximately 1.35 percent, even as real estate market values have continued to rise. With the last full sales update conducted in 2024 and the next revaluation scheduled for 2029, officials have raised concerns that the town's tax base may not fully reflect current market conditions.

That concern is worth examining, although it is important to remember that higher assessments do not automatically mean lower tax bills. A broader assessed tax base can reduce the rate needed to raise a given amount of revenue, but the actual amount homeowners pay depends on both their individual assessments and the total taxes being collected.

The larger issue is fairness. Property assessments should reflect market conditions as accurately and consistently as possible so that the responsibility for funding local government is distributed equitably.

As Belmont approaches another budget season, town officials have an opportunity to provide residents with a clearer picture of the financial decisions ahead. That means explaining proposed expenditures in understandable terms, identifying opportunities for savings and distinguishing between necessary investments and expenses that might reasonably be postponed.

Residents also have a responsibility to remain informed. Budget hearings, public meetings and annual voting provide opportunities to ask questions and influence decisions before the next tax bills arrive.

It is possible to support good schools, reliable emergency services and well-maintained roads while also insisting on fiscal restraint. Those priorities are not mutually exclusive.

Belmont's challenge is to find a sustainable balance between maintaining the services residents depend upon and preserving the affordability that allows families to remain in the community.

A 12.77 percent increase should serve as a reminder that every budget decision eventually reaches someone's kitchen table. The goal moving forward should not simply be to explain why taxes have increased. It should be to demonstrate what can be done to keep future increases manageable, predictable and fair.



Courtesy Photo

The Tilton Parks Commission presents Santa!

It's that very special time of year – especially on Saturday, Dec. 5 in downtown Tilton. Santa and Mrs. Claus are coming to our riverfront community to kick off the holiday season. First, there will be a parade with cars, trucks, police cars, fire engines, marchers, businesses, and more which is scheduled for 4:15 p.m. that will travel from Compass Classical Academy in Northfield, across the Cannon Bridge to downtown Tilton before passing Riverfront Park and ending at Winnisquam Regional High School. Santa and his wife will greet youngsters at Riverfront Park after the parade. Hot chocolate, coffee, and cookies will be provided when the parade concludes. And the program will finish with a beautiful fireworks display over the Winnipesaukee River next to Riverfront Park. Come early and visit the downtown Tilton businesses, stay for the parade, and then try one of Tilton's many restaurants for dinner. Sponsored by the Tilton Parks Commission, it's a great event for people of all ages to celebrate what a small town can offer. For more information, email parks@tiltonnh.org.

The Thanksgiving table gets smaller, but the memories get bigger

Kind Hearts, Cold Winters
By CHIPPY

There's a funny thing about Thanksgiving. When you're young, you spend half the day wondering when the turkey will be ready and the other half wishing the grown-ups would stop talking so you can get back to whatever you were doing. Then, somewhere along the way, you become one of those grown-ups, sitting around the table telling stories nobody under 30 seems particularly interested in hearing. And you wouldn't trade it for anything.

I've been thinking about Thanksgiving a little differently these past few years. Maybe it's because the kids are grown and the house doesn't sound like a bowling alley anymore. Maybe it's because I've reached the age when I can remember more Thanksgivings than I can reasonably expect to have ahead of me. That's not meant to sound gloomy. It's simply the kind of arithmetic that sneaks up on a fellow when he's looking for the good carving knife.

When our children were little, Thanksgiving was a production. My wife would begin planning days ahead, and I'd be assigned various jobs that apparently required very little intelligence but considerable lifting. Move the extra chairs. Find the folding

SEE **CHIPPY**, PAGE A10

Letters to the Editor

NH should honor veterans with access to natural resources

To the Editor:

Veterans Day, which we recently observed, is a way to honor our military veterans, both deceased and still living. It is the one day of the year when Americans take a pause in our everyday lives to thank those who have given so much to preserve our freedom. There are parades, solemn ceremonies at cemeteries, veterans' homes and battlefields, and lots of flag waving. But it is just one day.

Honoring veterans could last a lot longer than one day and be more meaningful if New Hampshire dedicates a property on Lake Winnipesaukee to camping for kids, veterans, and veterans' families. In my role as the Senator-Elect for District 2, which includes many towns in the Lakes Region, I support the effort to save Camp Menotomy in Meredith for our children and veterans.

The future of Camp Menotomy, a 95-acre undeveloped property with 4,500 feet of shoreland on Lake Winnipesaukee, is the subject of a court case in Massachusetts. In 1961, the property was placed into the Camp Menotomy Trust with the clear intent that the property be held in trust and remain a camp unless no other organization can be found to utilize the site for camping purposes.

Several news reports and op eds over the past year have outlined the specifics of this story and its legal complexities: a developer signed a purchase and sale agreement with the trustees of the Camp Menotomy Trust, expressing his intent to build luxury homes on the property. The trustees failed to comply with the Trust's terms by first seeing if Camp Menotomy could remain as a camp. At least two camp operators came forward with offers to uphold the mission of the Trust by continuing to run a camp on the property, but the trustees ignored them.

One of these interested camp operators serves veterans and their families, and the other offered to run a nonprofit summer camp for girls just as the property has always been used. My understanding is that the proposed camps could work together to lease the property at different times to continue to operate camps on the property.

I am a retired Army officer and a founder of the Patriot Resilient Leader Institute which runs Camp Resilience retreats for military veterans, first responders, and their loved ones. I am also a founder and President of the Board of Directors of the Lakes Region Veterans Coalition. Thus, I am very familiar and supportive of therapeutic camping experiences for both kids and veterans. Veterans and their families deserve the chance to experience Lake Winnipesaukee and the natural beauty of our Lakes Region at a camp property like Menotomy.

One of my priorities as a Senator for District 2 is to protect the climate and environment so that the communities in the Lakes Region will remain great places to live and visit. Lake Winnipesaukee is a local, regional, and state treasure, but it is clearly overdeveloped now. Putting more houses, driveways, boathouses, septic systems, and lawns on the lake makes no sense when a rustic camp could be used for kids and veterans, with far less of an environmental impact and much more of a humanitarian impact.

Because the land in question is in New Hampshire and there is a Deed that addresses the Trust requirements embedded in it and recorded here in Belknap County, the NH Attorney General should weigh in and prevent the unnecessary forfeiting of the charitable trust. To date, he and his Charitable Trust Division have not done this. I think it is a mistake to let this story play out in Massachusetts with no input from New Hampshire. I respectfully suggest that the Attorney General and his staff step in, and soon.

Executive Councilor Joe Kenney has moved this forward to the Governor and Council level, and, based on my conversations with several incoming Executive Counselors, I am confident that the incoming Council will keep the pressure up when they take office in January. In the meantime, all of us – citizens, newly elected officials, friends and families of veterans - need to speak up and encourage the State of New Hampshire to protect the intent of the Camp Menotomy Trust and do the right thing. Camp Menotomy is a gem worth saving, and continuing it as a camp is a meaningful way to honor our veterans, their families and all future generations of children.

Kurt Weber
Senator-Elect, District 2
Gilford

Winnisquam Echo

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Dr. Marc Bard named Lakes Region Good Scout by Scouting America New Hampshire

REGION — Dr. Marc Bard has been named the Lakes Region Good Scout by Scouting America New Hampshire, an honor recognizing his lifelong commitment to service, community and giving back. Dr. Bard was celebrated at an evening event at The Winnipesaukee Playhouse honoring his life, career and charitable work, and the spirit of service that connects him with Scouting America NH.

MVSB (Meredith Village Savings Bank) President Marcus Weeks led the ceremony, sharing highlights of Dr. Bard's career and his journey as an artist—from illustrating medical textbooks to put himself through medical school to giving back to the community decades later through the Paintings for a Purpose Art Show.

Paintings for a Purpose is Dr. Bard's annual art show featuring his New Hampshire-inspired watercolors, with all proceeds donated to local nonprofit organizations. This year's show raised more than $20,000 to benefit The Circle Program and The Winnipesaukee Playhouse.

Scouting America NH Scout Executive & CEO Jay Garee shared that Marc "lives all 12 points of Scout Law in the way he conducts his work. Marc brings these ideals to life not only by giving but bridging neighbors together around causes that matter. He reminds us that service is not defined by a title; it's defined by what we do for others. And that's exactly what Scouting strives to teach."

A former Scout himself, Dr. Bard reflected on the values, lessons and lifelong friendships Scouting provided him. He encouraged current and future Scouts to "be selfish" by pursuing a life balanced with meaningful work and community involvement to find true joy and purpose.



Courtesy Photo

Scouting America NH recently honored Dr. Marc Bard with the Lakes Region Good Scout Award. Pictured left to right: Marcus Weeks, MVSB President; Carol Bard, Dr. Bard's wife; Dr. Marc Bard; Lisa Bard Levine, his daughter; and Richard Adler, his lifelong friend.

About Dr. Marc Bard

Now in double overtime of a fulfilling career as a medical illustrator, practicing physician, author, health care executive, and national health care consultant, Marc Bard currently devotes his time to embracing the Squam Lake environs with his wife Carol and, whenever possible, his children and grandchildren. He enjoys studying watercolor painting and contributing to the success of local non-profit charitable organizations by donating all proceeds from his artwork to support their missions.

About Paintings for a Purpose

Paintings for a Purpose is an annual art show featuring the New Hampshire-inspired watercolor paintings of Dr. Marc Bard. All proceeds from the sale of artwork are donated to local nonprofit organizations. Beneficiaries of the annual have included Meredith Food Pantry, Restoration Acres Farm, CASA of NH, End 68 Hours of Hunger - Wolfeboro, Kingswood Youth Center, Meredith Public Library, Squam Lakes Association, Squam Lakes Conservation Society, Seacoast Repertory Theatre, Got Lunch! Laconia, The Winnipesaukee Playhouse and The Circle Program. Learn more at paintingsforapurpose.org.



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Shoemaker earns soccer All-State Honorable Mention

BY JOSHUA SPAULDING
Sports Editor

REGION — With the conclusion of the fall season, the New Hampshire Soccer Coaches Association has announced honorees for postseason honors for girls' soccer players around the state.

In Division III, First Team honors went to midfielder Olivia Lorenz of White Mountains Regional while Second Team was presented to forward Brooklyn Gagne of Berlin. Honorable Mention was presented to Belmont defender Josephine Shoemaker, Gilford defender Mckenna Howard and forward Macy Sawyer, Prospect Mountain midfielder Amelia Gentile, Newfound forward Julia Reynolds and White Mountains Regional forward Lia St. Cyr.



JOSHUA SPAULDING
Belmont defender Josephine Shoemaker earned Division III All-State Honorable Mention for her first varsity campaign.

First Team honors also went to goalie Khloe Shanahan of Pelham, defenders Gabrielle Ledoux of Raymond, Jessie Phillips of Pelham, Lilli Wilson of Campbell and Maddy Chambers of Stevens, midfielders Faith Norton of Stevens (Player of the Year), Khloe Letourneau of Pelham and Nora Comrie of Raymond and forwards Kylie Carr of Raymond, Tatum Dzierlatka of Pelham and Liza McManus of Stevens.

Joining Gagne in earning Second Team honors were goalie Raegyn Brothers of Stevens, defenders Kayleigh Ferland of Stevens, Amely Collado of Trinity, Maddy Paolino of Derryfield and Lia Chapin of Hopkinton, midfielders Gemma Guadagno of Hopkinton, Zoey Friesen of Stevens, Emily Ouellette of Campbell and Addison Pekalsky of Raymond and forwards Amelia LaPlante of Campbell and Eleanor Brewitt of Raymond.

Also earning Honorable Mention were goalies Lia Freeman of Bishop Brady, Clara Johnson of Derryfield, Molly Gray of Mascoma, Gracie Dean of Monadnock and Gabby St. Cyr of Sanborn, defenders Kendall Asara of Campbell, Sarah Yzzogh of Derryfield, Pippa Lang and Brooke Pickering of Hopkinton, Madden Huff of Kearsarge, Daizey Shute of Laconia, Amelia Cintron of Monadnock and Lily Markee of Sanborn, midfielders Kaylie Geiger and Ashlynn Guay of Campbell, Ella Desrosier of Conant, Emma Sloper and Mackenzie Edmonson of Derryfield, Suzie Tiebout of Fall Mountain, Bella Collins of Kearsarge, Ellen Valovanie of Laconia, Montana Ballard and Karley Hollis of Mascoma, Jasmine Nagle of Monadnock, Ellie Rankin of Sanborn and Olivia Arnois and Olivia Pearson of Trinity and forwards Gabby Jackson of Bishop Brady, Kalie Ainslie of Hillsboro-Deering, Avery Chase of Hopkinton, Isabella Gott of Raymond and Lizzy Bristol of Sanborn.

Rick Morgan of Pelham was named the Division III Coach of the Year and Haley Brook of Kearsarge was named JV Coach of the Year.

In Division IV, First Team honors went to Groveton goalie Lucia Garcia, Profile defender Izzy Lawton and midfielder Caitlin Detamore and Lisbon forward Ellie Wilcox. Second Team honors went to Groveton defender Sophia Kenison and midfielder Addison Hamilton, Lin-Wood defender Ali Oddis and forward Caroline Hiltz and Littleton defender Tessa Grabowski. Earning Honorable Mention were Lin-Wood defender Penelope Weeden and midfielder Greta Krill, Littleton midfielder Nevaeh Monahan and forward Leah Poulton, Moultonborough midfielders Molly Sturgeon and Ally Gleeson, Woodsville midfielder Brooke Loud, Gorham forward Lilah Howard, Groveton forward Molly Deblois, Lisbon forward Arya Kimball and Profile forward Ella Torres.

Lucia Garcia, Addison Hamilton and Kara Hamilton of Groveton, Hazel Schuft and Lilah Howard of Gorham and Sarah Caron and Dena-Marie Presby of Profile all earned All-Tournament Team honors.

Also earning First Team honors were defenders Lydia Edgerly of Newmarket, Ruthie Sherrill of Portsmouth Christian and Maya Bourque of Sunapee, midfielders Jaela Stockbower (Player of the Year) and Sophie Anderson of Portsmouth Christian and Avery Szelog of Newmarket and forwards Sylvie Wamberg and Tilly Arico of Portsmouth Christian.

Second Team honors were also presented to goalie Avery Miller of Sunapee, defender Paige Sweitzer of Newmarket, midfielders Alyvia Jaimes of Pittsburg-Canaan and Rayelle Nester and Zoe McClelland of Sunapee and forwards Kaitlyn Anderson of Sunapee and Dimitra Zygouri of Newmarket.

Also earning First Team honors were goalies Cambri Hubbard of Hinsdale, Raygen Couch of Pittsburg-Canaan and Eliza Arwood of Portsmouth Christian, defenders Lindsey Eldridge of Colebrook, Annabelle Syvertson of Concord Christian, Alanna Hackett of Epping, Clarie Thibault of Holy Family, Lily Moore of Mount Royal, Laylnn Sierad of Pittsburg-Canaan and Katherine Schuster of Pittsfield, midfielders Addison Waters of Epping, Lucy Treece of Mount Royal and Cora Daley of Pittsburg-Canaan and forwards Ryenn Pedone of Holy Family, Jubilee Tremblay of Mount Royal, Lizzie Deloge of Newmarket and Callie Gauthier of Wilton-Lyndborough.

Gorham's Karyssa Lachance was named the Division IV Coach of the Year while Annaliese Schmidt of Newmarket was named JV Coach of the Year.

In Division II, Kingswood defender Norah Pelletier was named First Team All-State while Second Team honors went to Kennett goalie Sara Boewe, defender Letty Zipf and midfielder Summer Laine and Plymouth defender Mikayla Walker and Honorable Mention was presented to Plymouth goalie Emma Franz and defender Shelby McDonald and Kingswood midfielder Taylor Allar.

Joining Pelletier in earning First Team honors were goalie Delaney Barber of Milford, defenders Zoey Lupien of Bow, Adrienne Thibault of Hollis-Brookline and Maya Remella of Milford, midfielders Kinsley Matis of Milford, Kai Swart of Hollis-Brookline, Avery Pellerin of John Stark and Marissa Reyes of Bow and forwards Madison Lamothe of John Stark (Player of the Year), Cara Van Dyke of Bow and Livie Ward of Hollis-Brookline.

Also earning Second Team honors were defenders Giuliana Davis of Pembroke and Carissa Littlefield of Souhegan, midfielders Lily Ricci of Pembroke, Lila Gray of Merrimack Valley and Lily Royer of Pembroke and forwards Ava Alberico of Pembroke, Ellie Escabi of Coe-Brown and Mallory Baker of St. Thomas.

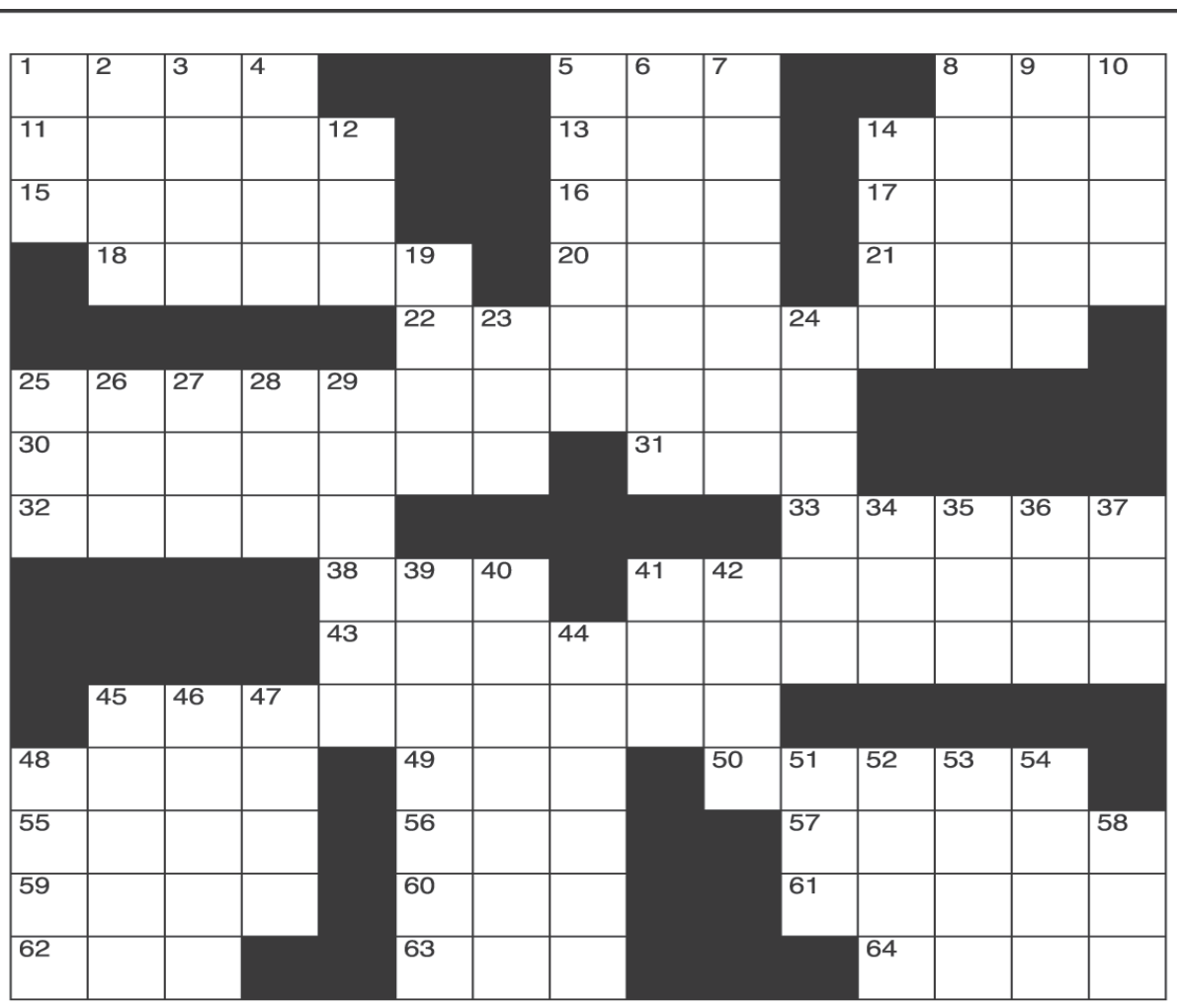
Honorable Mention was also presented to goalie Ally Desrochers of Manchester Memorial, defenders Lexi Purington of John Stark, Avery Niquette of Milford, Catherine Robinson of Oyster River and Ansley Ball of St. Thomas, midfielders Jolee Trudel of Bow, Gia Lothrop of ConVal and Brenna Crean of John Stark and forwards Samantha Disco of Hollis-Brookline, Rowan Landry of Lebanon, Paige Bemis of Pembroke and Fiona Nolan of St. Thomas.

Kennett coach Scott Laine was named the Division II Coach of the Year while Glenn Peck of ConVal was named the JV Coach of the Year.

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







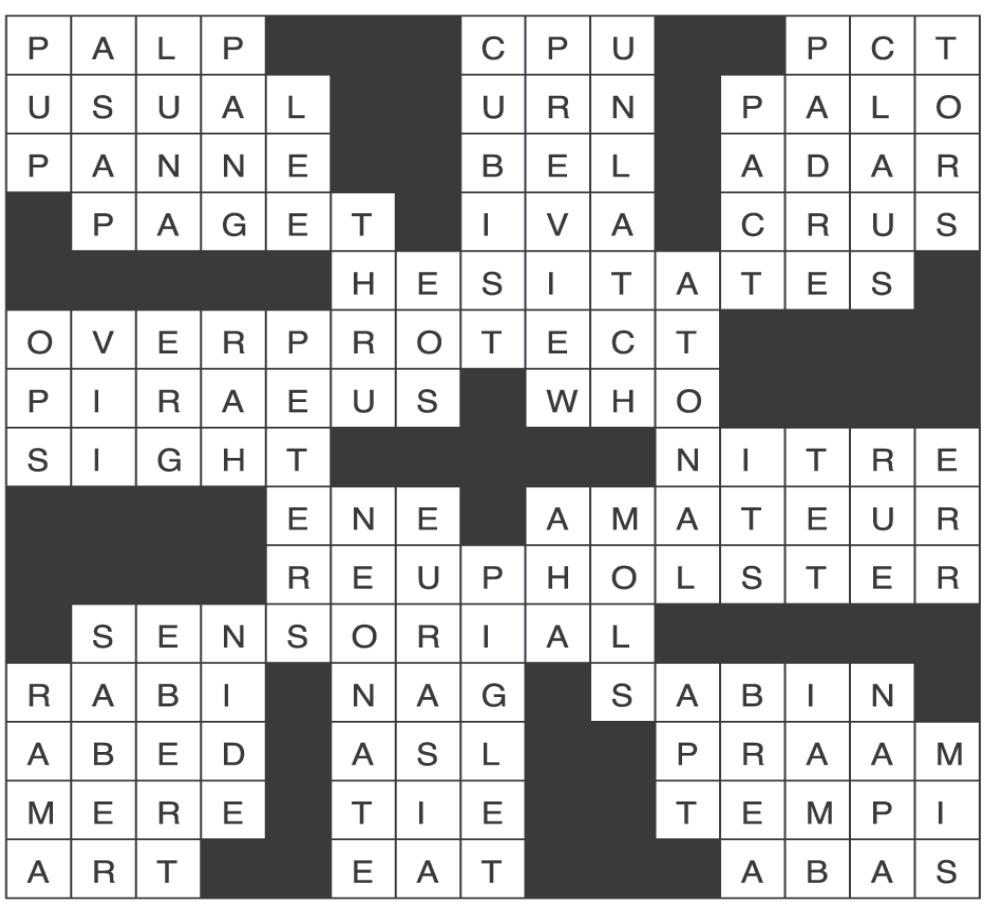
CLUES ACROSS

1. Insect feeler
5. Central processing unit
8. Part of (abbr.)
11. Typical
13. Tall, rounded vase
14. __ Alto, California city
15. Lustrous, velvet-like fabric
16. "Fresh Prince of __ Air"
17. Hebrew calendar month
18. British surgeon who discovered bone disease
20. Agreement between debtor and creditor (abbr.)
21. Elongated part of anatomical structure
22. Acts slowly on
25. Keeps a little too safe
30. Greek seaport
31. "Baba O'Riley" rockers
32. Vision
33. Potassium nitrate in mineral form
38. Midway between northeast and east
41. Not a pro
43. Give a new look
45. Sensational
48. Nobel Prize-winning physicist
49. Annoy constantly
50. Vaccine developer
55. Lying down
56. Type of language (abbr.)
57. Flat-bottomed boat
59. Smallest or slightest
60. Bind
61. Speeds
62. The products of human creativity
63. Consume food
64. Ancient Greek sophist

CLUES DOWN

1. A young canine
2. As fast as can be done
3. Soviet moon probes
4. Sharp spasm of pain
5. One who adheres to a specific art movement
6. Show parts of
7. Unfasten
8. San Diego ballplayer
9. Santa
10. Rocky peaks
12. "Matt Houston" actor Horsley
14. A written agreement between two sides
19. Beginning to end (abbr.)
23. Greek goddess of the dawn
24. Not written in any key
25. Organized missions
26. Seven
27. Work unit
28. Bravo! Bravo! Bravo!
29. Broadway legend Bernadette
34. Belonging to a thing
35. Vietnamese offensive
36. Bitterly regret
37. Make a mistake
39. Newborn child
40. A combined landmass
41. Satisfaction
42. Hilly peninsulas in Denmark
44. Young swine
45. Type of sword
46. Siskel's partner
47. Brood of pheasants
48. Hindu model of ideal man
51. Suitable in the circumstances
52. La __ tar pits
53. Unstressed-stressed metrical foot
54. California wine country
58. Badly

PUZZLE SOLUTION



Colonial Theatre partners with NH Food Bank to fight hunger

LACONIA — The Colonial Theatre is partnering with the New Hampshire Food Bank to host a food drive supporting individuals and families experiencing food insecurity throughout New Hampshire.

Guests are encouraged to support the food drive by donating non-perishable food items to help nourish neighbors in need. Donations can be dropped off in the brown donation box located in the Colonial Theatre lobby, Monday through Friday during box office hours of 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., or while attending one of Colonial Theatre's shows, listed below.

The New Hampshire Food Bank, a program of Catholic Charities New Hampshire, is the state's only food bank, supplying millions of pounds of food annually to more than 400 partner agencies, including food pantries, homeless shelters, soup kitchens, children's programs, and senior centers. Through this statewide network, the Food Bank helps provide essential food resources to communities across all 10 New Hampshire counties.

The most-needed items include canned fruits and vegetables, canned tuna and chicken, beans and lentils, whole-grain pasta and rice, rolled oats, peanut butter and other nut butters, shelf-stable milk and non-dairy milk, and 100 percent fruit juice. Low-sodium and no-added-sugar options are especially encouraged when available.

Through this partnership, Colonial Theatre is proud to help support the New Hampshire Food Bank's mission to alleviate food insecurity, nourish communities, and work toward a hunger-free New Hampshire where all Granite Staters have access to the food they need to thrive.

Food Drive will run through the following Colonial Theatre events:

Safe Haven Ballet Presents The Nutcracker – Sunday, Nov. 29

For more information about the food drive, please contact ColonialLaconia.com or by calling 1-800-657-8774.

New Hampshire Food Bank

The New Hampshire Food Bank, a program of Catholic Charities New Hampshire, has been working to relieve hunger in the Granite State since 1984. In 2025, as the state's only food bank, the New Hampshire Food Bank efficiently procured and distributed more than 20 million pounds of food to people experiencing hunger through more than 400 partner agencies. Agencies include food pantries, neighborhood centers, low-income housing sites, senior nutrition centers, family crisis centers, hospices, soup kitchens, emergency shelters, after school programs and day care centers. In addition to food distribution, the NH Food Bank leads innovative programming that helps fight the root causes of hunger.

Spectacle Live

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

Garden Island Laundromat & Tanning named official Toys for Tots drop-off location

LACONIA — Garden Island Laundromat & Tanning is proudly partnering with Toys for Tots for our very first annual toy drive!

This holiday season, we're asking our amazing community to come together and help make Christmas a little brighter for children in need. Whether you're stopping in to do laundry, dropping off your wash & fold, or coming in for a tan, consider bringing a toy along with you!

How You Can Help:

Bring a new, unwrapped toy to Garden Island Laundromat & Tanning at 585 Union Ave., Laconia, and we'll make sure it gets into the hands of Toys for Tots to help spread some Christmas magic! Donations are being accepted now through Dec. 13!

Every toy makes a difference, and every child deserves a little Christmas magic. We're incredibly grateful to be part of such a wonderful community, and we can't wait to see what we can accomplish together!

Let's fill our donation box and make our first Toys for Tots drive one to remember!

Garden Island Laundromat & Tanning

585 Union Ave., Suite 10

Laconia, NH 03246

Open Daily: 7 a.m. – 9 p.m.

(603) 524-9067

For more information about Garden Island Laundromat & Tanning, email info@gardenislandlaconia.com or visit Garden Island Laundromat & Tanning | Laundry & Mystic Spray Tan in Laconia.

Independent Order of Odd Fellows supports LHMS building preservation

LACONIA — The Laconia Historical & Museum Society (LHMS) extends its sincere gratitude to the Independent Order of Odd Fellows of Belknap County for their generous contribution to the Society's 2025 brick repair and restoration campaign.

Representing Winnipiseogee Lodge #7, chartered in 1844, and Chocorua Lodge #51, chartered in 1869, the Odd Fellows provided meaningful financial support to restore the exterior masonry of LHMS's historic building.

Earlier this year, LHMS undertook an important effort to address deteriorating brickwork and preserve the building for future generations. Many individuals, businesses, and community organizations made the project possible through their generosity. The Odd Fellows were among those who stepped forward to support this important preservation work, and we are pleased to recognize and thank them for their contribution.

Their gift is especially meaningful in light of the organization's long-standing commitment to the values of Friendship, Love, and Truth. These principles reflect the spirit of community partnership and shared responsibility that make local preservation efforts possible.

"We are truly grateful to the Independent Order of Odd Fellows for their generosity and their commitment to preserving our community's story. Every contribution, large or small, played a part in moving this project forward. We appreciate the Odd Fellows being among those who recognize the importance of protecting our shared history," Tara Shore, President, LHMS.

LHMS is fortunate to have the support of a community that values its history and recognizes the importance of preserving it. We thank Winnipiseogee Lodge #7 and Chocorua Lodge #51 for being part of that ongoing commitment.



Courtesy Photo

Representatives from Winnipiseogee Lodge #7 and Chocorua Lodge #51 joined members of the LHMS Board of Directors to celebrate the completion of the most extensive portion of the building's necessary brickwork repairs. Work on the remaining three sides of the building is planned for 2027. Pictured, left to right: Patrick Tierney (IOOF), Ray Peavey, Marie Leahy, Warren Huse, Tara Shore, Pam Clark (LHMS Board of Directors), and Peter Karagianis (IOOF).

Safe Haven Ballet brings "The Nutcracker" to the Colonial stage

LACONIA — The Colonial Theatre of Laconia will present the Safe Haven Ballet's "The Nutcracker" on Sunday, Nov. 29, at 4:30 p.m. Tickets to the show are on sale now at ColonialLaconia.com or by calling 1-800-657-8774.

Safe Haven Ballet is thrilled to bring our spirited, full-length ballet of "The Nutcracker" to The Colonial Theatre of Laconia! This dynamic performance includes all of your favorite characters including a strong-minded Clara to the eccentric Drosselmeyer, the spooky Rats, as well as our beloved Sugarplum Fairy danced by artistic director, Lissa Curtis. In the Land of Sweets you will be introduced to a variation unique to Safe Haven Ballet called The Brave American. Come sing and clap along to this spirited, patriotic piece!

SHB is located in beautiful Portsmouth, New Hampshire and exists to offer free trauma sensitive classes to survivors of sexual/domestic violence and trauma. Many of these brave survivors will be in the production as they help bring the magic of the season to you. We would love your energetic applause!

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

Founded in 2012, Spectacle Live offers venue operations, booking, programming, marketing, and production services across New England from offices in Lexington, MA, Lowell, MA, and Laconia, NH. The company partners with over a dozen venues to manage facilities and promote a variety of events, including concerts, comedy, theater, and family entertainment. For more information, contact Pete Lally at plally@spectaclelive.com or 617-531-1257. www.spectaclelive.com

Garden Island Laundromat & Tanning named official Toys for Tots drop-off location

LACONIA — Garden Island Laundromat & Tanning is proudly partnering with Toys for Tots for our very first annual toy drive!

This holiday season, we're asking our amazing community to come together and help make Christmas a little brighter for children in need. Whether you're stopping in to do laundry, dropping off your wash & fold, or coming in for a tan, consider bringing a toy along with you!

How You Can Help:

Bring a new, unwrapped toy to Garden Island Laundromat & Tanning at 585 Union Ave., Laconia, and we'll make sure it gets into the hands of Toys for Tots to help spread some Christmas magic! Donations are being accepted now through Dec. 13!

Every toy makes a difference, and every child deserves a little Christmas magic. We're incredibly grateful to be part of such a wonderful community, and we can't wait to see what we can accomplish together!

Let's fill our donation box and make our first Toys for Tots drive one to remember!

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For more information about Garden Island Laundromat & Tanning, email info@gardenislandlaconia.com or visit Garden Island Laundromat & Tanning | Laundry & Mystic Spray Tan in Laconia.

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE A4

table. Get the good dishes down. Stay out of the kitchen.

That last one was usually my specialty. The kids would be underfoot, somebody would spill something, and at least one relative would arrive with a dish nobody had requested but everybody was expected to compliment. There was always too much food, never enough refrigerator space, and a spirited discussion about whether the turkey was done.

Looking back, those were some mighty fine days.

These days, the holiday is quieter. Our daughter has her own schedule, and our son has a life that doesn't necessarily revolve around his parents' dining room. They still come around, and we're grateful when they do, but we've learned that grown children bring calendars, obligations and occasionally somebody else's family traditions into the equation. That's how it's supposed to work, I reckon.

Still, there's something about setting the Thanksgiving table that makes you notice who's sitting there and who's missing.

I remember my father at the head of the table, never much for speeches or sentimental declarations. He'd carve the turkey with the same concentration he brought to nearly everything he did. He wasn't a man who talked much about his feelings, but he made sure everybody had enough to eat. In his own way, that said plenty.

There are people I'd give a great deal to have sitting across from me for one more Thanksgiving. Not for some grand conversation, either. I'd be happy to hear them complain about the weather, ask somebody to pass the salt, or tell a story I'd already heard a dozen times.

Funny how the things that once seemed ordinary become the things you miss most.

Of course, Thanksgiving isn't all nostalgia and warm memories. Anybody who's hosted a holiday dinner knows there's plenty of work involved, and not every family gathering belongs on a greeting card.

Somebody's going to be late. Somebody will bring up a subject better left alone. Somebody will insist the stuffing isn't as good as it used to be, which is a dangerous observation to make within earshot of the person who spent three hours preparing it.

And somewhere in New Hampshire, a fellow will be standing in his driveway wondering why he agreed to deep-fry a turkey in November.

But here's what I've come to appreciate about Thanksgiving: It doesn't have to be perfect to be wonderful. The potatoes can be lumpy. The rolls can be a little too brown. The conversation can wander into territory that makes everybody suddenly interested in their cranberry sauce. None of that matters much when you consider what a privilege it is to have people you care about gathered in one place.

I think we've gotten awfully good at measuring holidays by how closely they resemble the pictures in magazines. The perfectly browned turkey. The beautifully decorated table. The smiling family dressed like they're waiting for a photographer.

Well, in my experience, the best Thanksgivings usually involve somebody wearing an old sweater, a dog hoping for an accident beneath the table, and a kitchen that looks like a small tornado passed through.

And the best part often comes afterward, when the dishes are finally done and the house settles down. Maybe there's a football game on television. Maybe somebody's fallen asleep in a chair. Maybe you're standing at the sink beside the person you've shared most of your life with, wondering how another year managed to slip past so quickly.

That's when the gratitude really settles in. Not the kind you announce before dinner, although there's nothing wrong with that. I'm talking about the quieter sort. The realization that you've had another year with people you love. That you've made it through some difficult days. That the ordinary routines of life, which can sometimes feel like a burden, are actually pretty remarkable gifts.

This Thanksgiving, I hope our table is crowded. I hope the kids stay longer than they planned. I hope somebody tells an old story, even if we've heard it before.

And if the turkey's a little dry, I'll keep my mouth shut. After all these years of marriage, I've learned a thing or two.

Happy Thanksgiving, neighbors. Save me a piece of pie.



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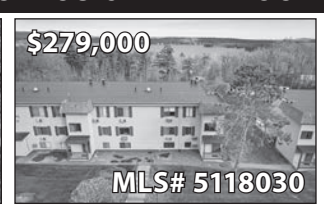

Laconia: Offered fully furnished near Weirs Beach, this remodeled 848-sq-ft, 3-bedroom, 2-bath end-unit condominium features an open-concept layout with views of Lake Winnipesaukee and surrounding mountains.



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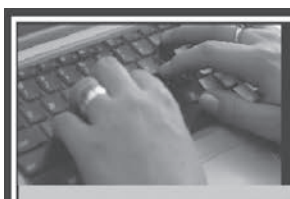

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Mill Falls Marketplace to host annual Holiday Open House Dec. 6

MEREDITH — The sights and sounds of the holiday season will fill Mill Falls Marketplace on Sunday, Dec. 6, as the popular shopping destination welcomes visitors to its annual Holiday Open House from 1 to 4 p.m.

A longtime Lakes Region tradition, the free, family-friendly celebration will feature a visit from Santa Claus, horse-drawn wagon rides, holiday entertainment, children's activities, festive refreshments and opportunities to shop for holiday gifts.

The festivities will begin at 1 p.m. with the arrival of Santa Claus aboard a horse-drawn wagon. Following his grand entrance, Santa will be available to visit with children and families in one of the Marketplace's four buildings.



Young visitors can also enjoy face painting on the third floor of the Mill Building, while families are invited to gather with "Miss Karen" from the Meredith Public Library for one of three special readings of the beloved holiday classic "The Polar Express."

Adding to the festive atmosphere, the Rhythm of New Hampshire Chorus will present holiday musical performances in one of the Marketplace's buildings. Visitors can also take a horse-drawn wagon ride and enjoy seasonal refreshments offered by participating Marketplace shops and restaurants.

Holiday shoppers will have an opportunity to explore the Marketplace's collection of specialty shops, dining establishments and other businesses while taking in the elaborate seasonal decorations. Guests can also enter for a chance to win a Marketplace gift basket valued at $500.

Situated in the heart of Meredith, Mill Falls Marketplace offers a distinctive shopping and dining experience amid historic buildings, brick walkways, sculptures and landscaped gardens. Its centerpiece is a picturesque 40-foot waterfall, with views of nearby Lake Winnipesaukee adding to the setting.

The annual open house provides an opportunity for residents and visitors alike to experience the Marketplace during the holiday season, combining traditional family activities with shopping, dining and entertainment.

The event is sponsored by the Mill Falls Marketplace Merchants' Association and is free and open to the public.

For additional information and a complete schedule of activities, visit Mill Falls Marketplace on Facebook at www.facebook.com/MillFallsMarketplace or Instagram at www.instagram.com/themillfallsmarketplace. Details are also available on the event's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/events/1153441563783620.

Comedy heavyweight Big Jay Oakerson brings raw, no-holds-barred humor to Laconia!

LACONIA — One of comedy's most recognizable and beloved voices, Big Jay Oakerson, is bringing his signature blend of laid-back storytelling, outrageous observations and unapologetically dirty humor to Colonial Theatre in Laconia on Friday, Jan. 22, 2027. With a career spanning more than two decades, Oakerson has earned a devoted following for his fearless approach to comedy and ability to turn everyday experiences into hilariously unpredictable stories.

Oakerson's television and comedy credits include Netflix's "The Degenerates" and Kevin Hart's Roast, FX's Emmy-winning "Louie," Inside Amy Schumer, Conan and Late Night with Jimmy Fallon. He is also a co-host of SiriusXM's "The Bonfire" and the popular podcasts Legion of Skanks and The SDR Show. A veteran of major comedy festivals including Just For Laughs Montreal, Bonnaroo, Moontower and SkankFest, Oakerson most recently released his hour-long special Dog Belly on YouTube, which has amassed more than 1.7 million views.

Audiences can expect an unforgettable night of unfiltered stand-up featuring Oakerson's signature crowd work, brutally honest storytelling and sharp, off-the-cuff humor. Never one to shy away from a subject, he brings a refreshingly candid perspective to relationships, personal experiences and the absurdities of everyday life, making every performance its own unique experience.

For additional information, visit ColonialLaconia.com or call 1-800-657-8774.

About Outback Presents

Outback Presents is the leading independent, full-service promoter of live entertainment in North America. Since 1996, Outback has promoted and produced thousands of concerts, events and festivals, ranging from clubs and theatres to arenas and stadiums.

The Colonial Theatre of Laconia

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

Spectacle Live

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

Powerhouse announces 2027 season!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Lakes Region Food Pantry grateful for community's support

MOULTONBOROUGH — Lakes Region Food Pantry of Moultonborough is truly grateful and thanks everyone who has supported its mission over the past 14 years.

The pantry currently serves around 500 families from 19 different communities in the Lakes Region every month, and this has only been possible because of the generosity and support of so many donors from near and far. The programs that we offer include monthly food vouchers, weekly food assistance, children's summer lunch voucher/sneaker/backpack program, senior winter boot program, monthly senior gas cards and education scholarship program. Additional program suggestions are welcome. The thrift shop is a source of revenue that covers our overhead expenses and also helps support our programs.

More information can be found at lakesregionfoodpantry.org or on Facebook. The family of Lakes Region Food Pantry wishes all a happy holiday season and a wonderful new year!

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Egan to host screening of Warren Miller's latest film

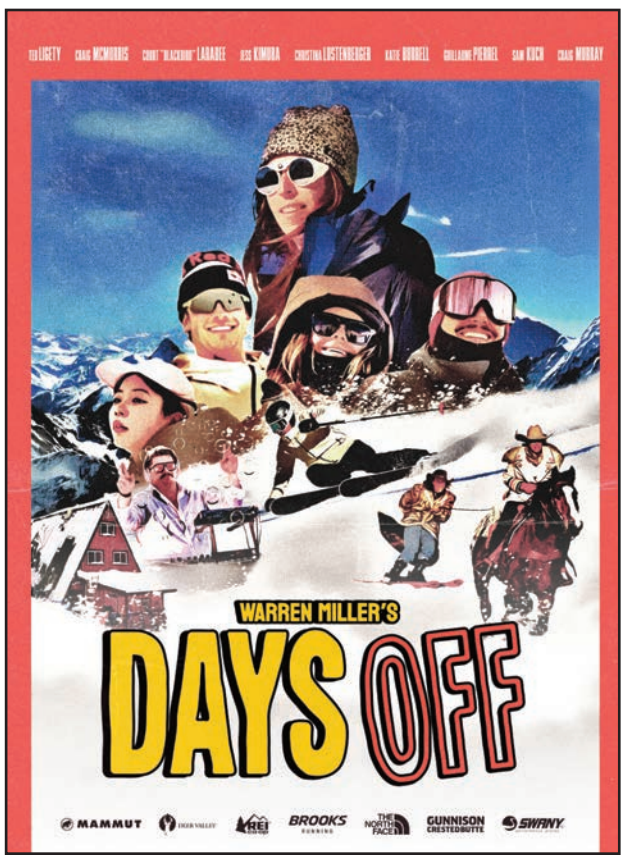
Flying Monkey in Plymouth hosts two screenings on Friday, Nov. 27

PLYMOUTH — Every year, the day after Thanksgiving, Main Street gets a little louder. Skiers and riders pack The Flying Monkey to see the new Warren Miller film. As one of the highest grossing nights at the venue every year, it's clear Warren Miller films are more than your average movie night, but rather a community celebration to kick off the winter season.

This year's film Warren Miller's Days Off, screens on Friday, Nov. 27, at 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. at the Flying Monkey Movie House and Performance Center, hosted by extreme skiing pioneer Dan Egan. Egan has emceed the annual Plymouth show since the Monkey opened its doors, making the tour stop a legend of its own. Few people can introduce a Warren Miller film the way Egan can. As a local ski icon, known for jumping out of the Cannon Mountain tram with his brother John Egan, a former General Manager of Tenney Mountain, and with more than a dozen appearances on screen with Warren Miller, Egan embodies the spirit and history of the Warren Miller tradition.

This year's screening marks 77 years of Warren Miller films, a tradition that has opened ski season for generations. The film features skiers and riders including Olympic champion Ted Ligety, Jess Kimura, Christina Lustenberger and Craig McMorris, and the film is hosted by the sensational comedian and actress Katie Burrell for this first time ever.

The Warren Miller films bring more than stoke to snow fanatics. The Flying Monkey shows are a testament to the strong community at the core of skiing in New Hampshire. Local non-profits and ski shops set up activations in the lobby to get the community involved and prepped for the season. New England Disabled Sports (NEDS) is a fixture at the show. Since 2019, raffle ticket sales at the Warren Miller screenings have raised $30,260 for the organization.



"Selling raffle tickets at the Warren Miller shows does so much more than increase NEDS' visibility in the community," says Terry MacDonald, Managing Director of NEDS. "The money raised helps individuals living with disabilities experience the joy of sports and recreation, regardless of their ability to pay."

The money also goes to equipment. "It also helps us purchase much-needed adaptive equipment that gives our athletes the opportunity to try something new, gain confidence, build independence, and experience the freedom of being active outdoors… Every raffle ticket sold helps us make a difference in someone's life," MacDonald added.

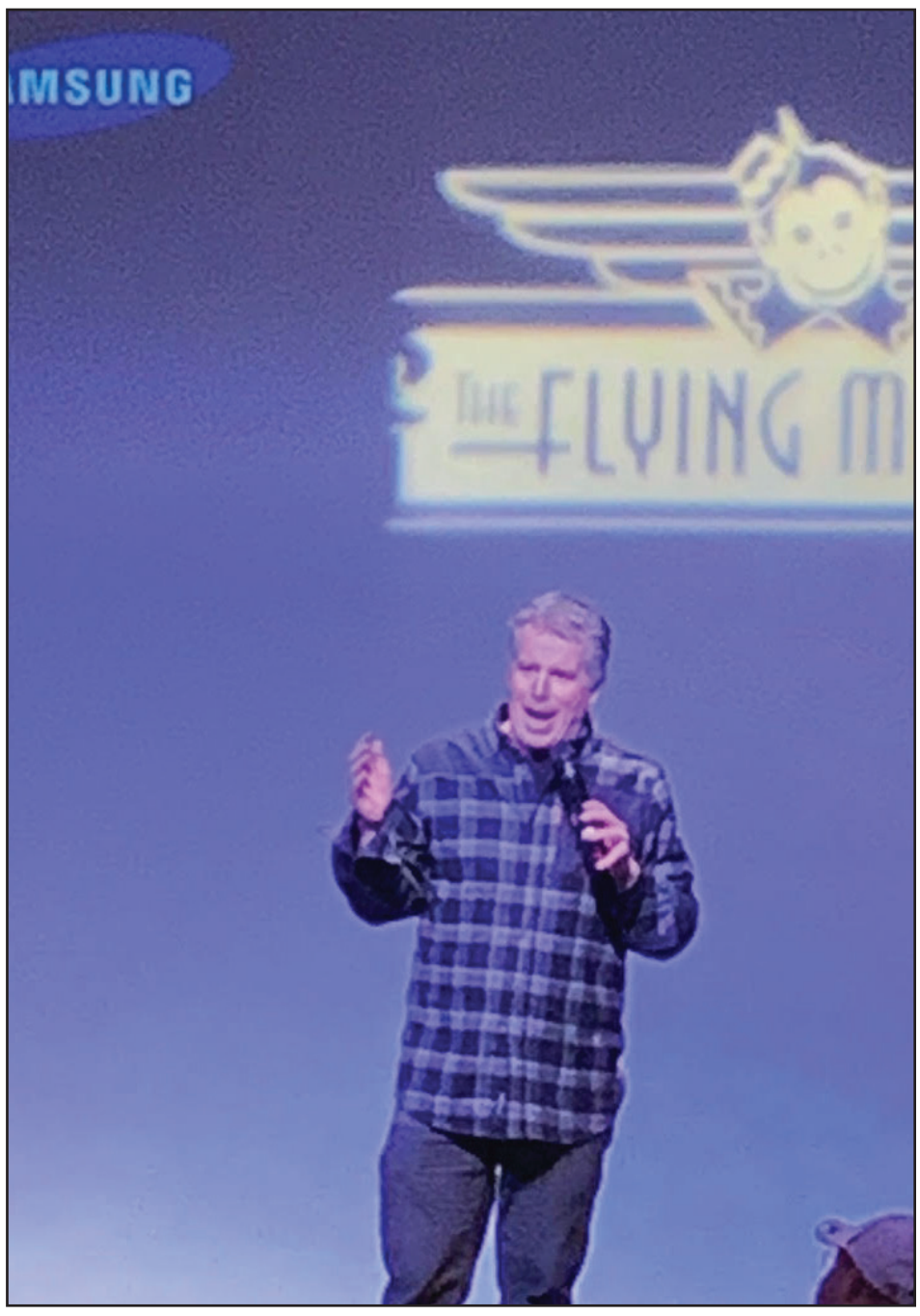
This year, every attendee at the Warren Miller show will get to experience the lively activation from community partners, have a chance to win some awesome swag during the giveaways, and for every ticket sold, guests will receive a buy one get one lift ticket to ski at Gunstock Mountain Resort and to ski mid-week at Waterville Valley Resort.

But the community roots go even deeper. Today the Monkey welcomes about 20,000 guests a year to more than 150 events, from concerts and comedy to silent films and community theater. More than 80 percent of those guests are from New Hampshire. This June, the Monkey started a new chapter. After 17 years of ownership, Alex Ray and the Common Man family donated the theater to Pemi-Valley Habitat for Humanity. Proceeds from the venue will now support affordable housing for low- and middle-income families. The non-profit builds homes in 27 towns across the Pemi-Valley and Lakes Region.

The shows, staff and management, led by Gina Leary, are staying. Habitat plans to add community events such as dance classes and an adult learning series, plus a digital video wall and new lighting.

"We're ready to take the Monkey into its third act," said Susan Mathison, president of the Pemi-Valley Habitat board.

That means attending this year's Warren Miller show does triple duty. It helps start the ski season in a festive way, raises funds for incredible organizations like New England Disabled Sports, and it supports housing for neighbors in the Pemi-Valley.



COURTESY PHOTO

Ski legend Dan Egan will host the screenings of the latest Warren Miller film at the Flying Monkey in Plymouth on Friday, Nov. 27.

The tour continues in the White Mountains with shows at the Littleton Opera House (Dec. 28), the Lakeport Opera House in Laconia (Dec. 29) and Jean's Playhouse in Lincoln (Dec. 30). Details are at warrenmiller.com/film-tour.



