

Three Raymond artists dazzle in Maine Audubon fundraising exhibition

By Kendra Raymond

STAFF WRITER

Three Raymond residents recently had their works chosen for a selective exhibition hosted by Maine Audubon. The “Taking Flight” exhibition features abstract and realistic bird art, which is displayed at the Gisland Farm Falmouth Audubon location through the new year.

The juried art show and sale is currently running and open to the public. Most of the pieces in the show are for sale and 20 percent of the proceeds serve as a fundraiser and go to help support various Maine Audubon programs.

Bruce Small is a Raymond photographer who specializes in capturing images from nature.

“Maine Audubon sent out a request for submissions in one of their newsletters, via email. Three pieces could be submitted in early November,” he said. “I was notified that one of my metal photographic prints was selected to be part of the exhibit. I have had images selected to be in several calendars over the years, but not for a juried exhibit. Last summer, I participated in an art show and sale at the Hawthorne House after being asked to take part by members of the Hawthorne House



A photo collage shows images by Raymond residents chosen for a selective exhibition at the Gisland Farm Falmouth Audubon location. The juried art show and sale supports various Maine Audubon programs. Clockwise from left are ‘Yellow warbler’ by Trish Kohler, ‘Snowy Owl’ by Brien Richards, and ‘Piping Plover with Chicks’ by Bruce Small. COURTESY PHOTOS

Association. That was my first time exhibiting in a show.”

As a photographer fairly new to the scene, Small says he is deeply honored to have his work chosen for the exhibition. He said that this selection is special to him.

“I was told there were 90 people that submitted works. I was very hon-

ored to be one of just over 40 pieces selected for the show,” he said.

Small is proud of his heart-warming winning piece and finds his time in nature fulfilling on many levels.

“My metal print is entitled ‘Piping Plover with Chicks.’ It is an image I took while volunteering as a beach monitor, helping to educate and pro-

tect the endangered, nesting, piping plover population at Higgins Beach in Scarborough. My wife and I monitor in the spring and early summer, once a week. I always bring my camera with me as a bonus to volunteering,” he said.

Small and his wife Gail have lived in Raymond for 28 years, previously residing in Windham.

“I grew up in Falmouth and have been interested in photography since my grandparents gave me an old Brownie camera when I was about 8,” Small said. “I reluctantly switched to digital photography at first, but now I am hooked. I carry a camera almost everywhere I go. I am into wildlife and bird photography but take photos of anything that interests me.”

He sells his pieces at various venues and online.

“I am happy to sell prints of various kinds as well as photo frame cards. I do not make a living at this but have sold some photos,” he said.

→ see ARTISTS Page 6

Windham Economic Development Corp. report details TIF activity to Windham Town Council

By Ed Pierce

STAFF WRITER

The Windham Economic Development Corporation has issued a report updating the Windham Town Council about the status of the town’s Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Program and estimated fund balances.

By definition, TIFs are flexible finance tools that allow municipalities to use new property taxes to fund public and private projects within a defined geographic district. Any portion of the new taxes may be used to finance public or private projects for a specific period of time.

Both the total acreage and the amount of acreage in individual TIF’s are limited. A single TIF cannot exceed 2 percent of the town’s total municipal acreage, and the total of all acreage, with certain exclusions, cannot exceed 5 percent. Currently, 476.28 acres of the total of 35,572 acres or 1.34 percent of Windham are in TIF Districts. With 5 percent of the total municipal acreage of 1,779 acres, the town could place up to an additional 1,302.72 acres into TIF Districts, provided that, under state law, no more than 711.44 acres are in any one district.

Here are fund balances and valuations from the WEDC report which



The Windham Town Council has received a report from the Windham Economic Development Corporation updating the status of Tax Increment Financing fund balances at the end of the last fiscal year and municipal valuations for TIF districts. PHOTO BY ED PIERCE

was issued to the town in November:

Windham’s 2000 Pipeline TIF District runs through June 30, 2030, and was extended in 2015. It is a development program for Route 302 roadway, intersection, sidewalk and sewer engineering and construction, GIS system, environmental study, and economic development administration. As of June 30, 2024, its Fund Balance was \$718,344 based upon current municipal valuation of \$10

million.

The 2006 Roosevelt Promenade TIF District expires in 2036 following Windham Town Council action and approval of a 15-year extension in March 2021. The district consists of 37.39 acres including the Home Depot and Lowe’s parcels in Windham. It is a development program funding costs for a local transportation study, growth study, public infrastructure study and WEDC staffing as

well as infrastructure improvements including roadway and intersection improvements in the district, roadway and intersection improvements on Route 302, wastewater facilities’ engineering and construction in the district, and wastewater facilities engineering and construction on Route 302. As of June 30, 2024, its Fund Balance was \$490,502.

The 2014 New Marblehead Manor Affordable Housing Development

District expires in 2044. The district consists of 3.7 acres consisting of one phase of New Marblehead Manor. The Development Program consists of a Credit Enhancement Agreement with Avesta New Marblehead. Its unaudited Fund Balance was \$0.00, and its Current Municipal Valuation is \$2,157,900.

The 2015 Gateway North A TIF District runs through June 30, 2045 after an extension in 2023. The district consists of 99.77 acres of various parcels in the North Windham commercial district. The development program includes making roadway and intersection improvements in the district, roadway and intersection improvements on Route 302, wastewater facilities engineering and construction in the district, and utility services relocation either above or underground in the district. As of June 30, its Fund Balance was \$265,666 with current valuation of \$19,597,041.

The 2019 Gateway North B TIF District runs through June 30, 2048. The district consists of

→ see COUNCIL Page 4

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INSIGHT

Visitors from the great beyond

There are some topics up for discussion on social media that I'd prefer not to take part in. Recently I saw one that asked if you could bring back someone from your past who is no longer living, who would it be and why?

Since I chose not to answer that one for the whole world to see, I thought about it and decided to share a few people I would like to see again and speak to somewhere in The Great Beyond.

When I was a sophomore in college in 1972, my mother called to let me know that a good friend of our family, Elma Jolley, had passed away in Rochester. She was in many ways like a sister to my mother, who had been orphaned at 12. After being placed in a succession of brutal foster homes and orphanages during the Great Depression, my mother and her sister found a permanent home with a devout Catholic family in Rochester, New York.

The family had three teenage daughters but welcomed two other girls into their household. One of the family's daughters was Elma, who became lifelong friends with my mother. Elma married a man who worked at Eastman Kodak Company, and they did not have children, but after her father died of a sudden heart attack in the 1950s, she and her husband took in her mother and cared for her for the rest of her life.

We frequently visited them and spent several memorable Christmas Eves with them over the years. Elma's mother, Philomena Shay, was my godmother, and when I was confirmed by the Catholic Church, I chose the name of Elma's father, Louis, as one of my confirmation names.

Whenever our family went to their house, Elma would instruct me to go to their basement and bring up some soda pop for myself and my brother. They kept 10-ounce bottles of Coca Cola, Orange Crush and 7-Up in a cooler down there.

In the summer of 1971, about a month before I left for my freshman year of college, Elma and her husband, Bert, came to our house because they wanted to tell our family some news. It was one of the saddest days of my life when Elma sat in our living room and told us she had inoperable cancer and would soon die. She was only in her 50s and I burst into tears. I told her that I wasn't going to go to college with this happening and she immediately stopped me.

She told me that I had to live my own life and going to college was something that she never had an opportunity to do. She encouraged me to go and make something of myself and that God had other plans for her. She said she would be watching me and pulling for me from wherever she was going.

Five months later she was dead, and 52 years later, I still find myself thinking about Elma from time to time. It is comforting to believe she is up there advocating for me and somehow, she sees what I have accomplished in life. I sure would want to speak with her again.

My father left this world so suddenly on May 19, 1991. He had just turned 65 and was driving home after a day of visiting his elderly sister. While going 55 mph and in his own lane, a drunk driver headed in the other direction crashed into him near Kissimmee, Florida and he died after being cut out of his station wagon and airlifted to Orlando Regional Medical Center.


I never got a chance to say goodbye to him, but I know he was proud of me. From time to time when I was covering an event for the newspaper I was working for, I'd spot him unexpectedly while he watched me interview a football player after a high school game or in the stands at a college basketball game I had been assigned to write about.

When I submitted my college admissions application, it had originally listed my major as physical education. I wanted to be a basketball coach but was shocked when I arrived at college to discover that I was registered for numerous journalism classes. I thought there certainly must be some sort of mistake, so I asked to see my original application and found that before signing it as my parent and mailing it for me to the school, my father had erased "Physical Education" as my college major and replaced it with "Journalism." It was there in his unique handwriting for all to see.

I decided to mention it to him on the phone that weekend when I called home. He laughed and said, "father knows best." I didn't press the issue because after my first few classes of "Journalism 101," it seemed like something I was good at, and it changed my life.

The conversation with my father took place more than 53 years ago and I am still in awe that he had the foresight to envision a lengthy career in journalism for me. He's definitely someone that I'd like to see again someday and to say thanks. < ~ Ed Pierce

Today in HISTORY



DECEMBER 13

1636 – The U.S. National Guard is created when militia regiments are organized by the General Court of the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

1809 – The first abdominal surgical procedure is performed in Danville, Kentucky and was done without an anesthetic.

1862 – An estimated 11,000 Northern soldiers are killed or wounded when Union forces are defeated by Confederate forces under the command of General Robert E. Lee at the Battle of Fredericksburg.

1913 – Authorities in Florence, Italy recover the "Mona Lisa" which had been stolen from the Louvre Museum in Paris in 1911.

1918 – U.S. President Woodrow Wilson arrives in France becoming the first U.S. chief executive to visit a European country while holding office.

1966 – The rights to the first four Super Bowls are sold to CBS and NBC Television for total of \$9.5 million.

Inspirational Quote of the Week

"Sometimes the best Christmas present is remembering what you've already got."

– Cathy Guisewite

ON THE SPOT

Describe a Christmas present that you wanted badly as a kid, but never received.


- "Barbie Dream House." – Julie Mallett
- "LifeSavers Book of Candy." – Christine Nadeau Coughlin
- "A Daisy Red Ryder BB gun." – David Warchol
- "A doll in a suitcase with clothes." – Ellen Ruth
- "A bicycle." – Stephen Signor
- "I always hoped for a kitten when I was younger. Now I have two." – Fi Brickel
- "Secret Sam Attache Case." – Nancy Pierce
- "A green 10-speed bike." – Chris Macklin
- "A mini replica of the General Lee car from The Dukes of Hazzard television show." – Oscar F. Kellner
- "Any 45 recorded by Jimmy Osmond. I loved him so much." – Rachele Lockett
- "A new pair of shiny Mary Jane shoes." – Mia Potenzio-Ransey
- "A toy rocking horse." – Jerry Greene
- "A drum set." – Dean Smalley
- "I would always write to Santa and tell him I wanted a Paint by Numbers art set but never got one." – Sarah Singer-Miller
- "A pony or riding lessons." – Isabella Mongon
- "I'm probably dating myself here, but I always wanted tickets to see Jim Plunkett and Randy Vataha play when they were with the New England Patriots in the 1970s." – Anne Glotchshuk
- "McDonald's Christmas Bucks." – Deirdre Schulte
- "A boom box radio and cassette player." – Mitchell B. Robinson
- "Every year growing up I wanted He-Man and the Masters of the Universe action figures and it never happened." – Rick Seacroft
- "A Nintendo Game Boy." – David W. Tettley



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Upcoming wreath-making class raising money for RSU 14 Travel Club educational trip to Spain

By Masha Yurkevich
STAFF WRITER

Looking for an activity to put you into the holiday spirit, while also supporting a good cause? There's one coming up this weekend in Windham.

Participants will be able to create a customized and personalized Christmas wreath at 11 a.m. Sunday, Dec. 15 at Petals Farm and Garden Design, 11 Brick Hill Road in Windham. The fundraiser is the idea of Alissa Messer, a parent whose daughter is a student at Jordan-Small Middle School in Raymond and part of the Travel Club, which is raising money to travel to Spain. Messer will be chaperoning the Spain trip and said she had the idea to do a wreath-making class as a fundraiser for the Spain trip.

"I think it is very important that when we do community events that we support one another," Messer said. "This wreath-making class is a great way to celebrate the season, spend family time together, and support a local business at the same time; it's a win, win, win. Lyndsay Stretch was super gracious to quickly say 'yes' and supportive for this event."

The wreath-making class will be led by Lyndsay Stretch, owner and operator of Petals Farm and Garden Design, whose child also attends RSU 14. Stretch is an expert in everything floral and is also a designer for landscaping. She is very involved with RSU 14 and field hockey.

The wreath-making class will be held inside of a greenhouse where Stretch will walk participants through

how to make their own wreaths and show them how different supplements can be added to the wreath. Stretch is very artsy and creative and says participants will not leave this class with a generic, box-stamped wreath, but with something that is unique, different, and special, along with the memories of making it.

She said that the wreaths can then be used to hang on the door, entryway, or give as a beautiful gift.

This planned trip to Spain will be a first for students attending Windham Middle School and Jordan-Small Middle School.

"Last spring, I partnered with EF Tours to be able to offer tours for middle schoolers," says Mandy Lavallee, a Windham Middle School eighth-grade Language Arts teacher and EF Tours group leader. "We chose Spain because it was specifically designed for middle schoolers, and we also wanted to make sure that it was equitable not just for students who were studying Spanish. We are taking seventh and eighth graders from both Jordan-Small Middle School and also Windham Middle School. We wanted the kids to be able to experience something different."

Even though each student has their own fundraising page with a specific link, they have been working on other ways to raise funds. Students have gone to local businesses looking for donations and most recently the group participated in the district's Athletic Booster's craft fair.

Still, teachers and parents sought a way to help alleviate costs. They did



Petals Farm and Garden Design, 11 Brick Hill Road in Windham, is hosting a wreath-making class at 11 a.m. Sunday, Dec. 15 to help the RSU 14 Travel Club raise money for an educational trip to Spain for students at Jordan-Small Middle School and Windham Middle School next spring. SUBMITTED PHOTO

not just want the students to have the trip paid for them, but for the kids to also get involved and see the process. They just finished up in November with the craft fair where many talented and artistic students made things such as cards, woodworking projects, and other works of art and they were able to raise more than \$700 for the trip through the craft fair.

"We also have a Clynk account and will be having a car wash in April along with some other fundraisers," says Lavallee.

The Spain trip is scheduled to take place during April vacation for students.

"The eight days include airfare, a 24/7 tour guide, breakfast, lunch and all excursions," says Lavallee. "Traveling to Spain is a great opportunity for our students to experience other cultures and ways of life. They will learn new skills such as tile making, olive oil farming and Flamenco dancing in Seville. Zip lining in Toledo is just the icing on the cake."

If anyone would like to donate to the group, they may do so by writing

a check out to EF Educational Tours. Please send to Windham Middle School, Attention Mandy Lavallee, 408 Gray Road, Windham, Maine 04062.

The wreath-making class costs \$60 to participate and while the event will be held inside a greenhouse, organizers advise participants to dress seasonally. <

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COUNCIL *Cont. from page 1*

42.81 acres of various parcels in the North Windham commercial district. Its development program includes roadway and intersection improvements in the district, roadway and intersection improvements on Route 302, wastewater facilities engineering and construction in the district and streetscape improvements in and/or adjacent to the district and on Route 302. Its Fund Balance as of June 30, 2024 was \$359,284, and its current Municipal Valuation is \$26,269,900.

Established in 2021, the Boody's Corner TIF District runs through June 30, 2051. The district consists of 16.31 acres improved as the Cross Insurance/Bangor Savings Bank building and apartments on Dusty Rhoades Lane in Windham. The development program includes making roadway, intersection, and sidewalk improvements in the district, roadway, intersection, and sidewalk improvements in North Windham, wastewater facilities engineering and construction in and serving the district, streetscape improvements in and/or adjacent

to the district and on Varney Mill Road, and transit improvements. As of June 30, 2024, its Fund Balance was \$368,293 and its Current Municipal Valuation is \$13,560,600.

2021's SWFS Depot Street Apartments TIF District runs through June 30, 2051. The district consists of 0.35 acres so improved as a municipal fire station and 2.08 acres improved as the Depot Street Apartments in the South Windham Village for a total of 2.43 acres. The development Program includes roadway and intersection improvements in South Windham Village, roadway and intersection improvements on River Road, wastewater facilities engineering and construction in SW Village, and streetscape improvements in and/or adjacent to the SW Village and on River Road. As of June 30, 2024, its Fund Balance was \$185,061 and its Current Municipal Valuation is \$2,548,200.

The 2022 Enterprise Development A TIF District runs through June 30, 2052. The district consists of 67.13 acres improved as commercial buildings and parcels in the Quarry Ridge Business Park and adjacent to Route 302 in Windham. The Development Program includes roadway, intersection, and sidewalk improvements in the district, roadway, intersection, and sidewalk improvements in North Windham, wastewater facilities engineering and construction in and serving the district, streetscape improvements in and/or adjacent to the district and on Route 302 and transit improvements. As of June 30, 2024, its Fund Balance was \$65,059 and its Current Municipal Valuation is

\$4,495,600.

2023 Boody's Corner B TIF District runs through June 30, 2053. The district consists of 14.06 acres improved as the Badger Run Apartments (1.79 acres), 55 Tandberg Trail Apartments (0.3 acres), commercial land currently improved as a mobile home park on Robin Lane (9.49 acres), and a portion of 718 Roosevelt Trail improved as a municipal fire station (2.48 acres) in Windham. The development program includes roadway, intersection, and sidewalk improvements in the district, wastewater facilities engineering and construction in and serving the district, utility services relocation either above or underground in North Windham, and transit improvements. Its Fund Balance as of June 30, 2024 was \$42,110 and its Current Municipal Valuation is \$7,904,200.

2023's South Windham Industrial Zone TIF District runs through June 30, 2053. The district consists of 62.99 acres improved as commercial buildings and parcels on or adjacent to Gambo Road in the South Windham Industrial Zone. The development program includes roadway, intersection, and sidewalk improvements in the district, roadway, intersection, and sidewalk improvements in South Windham, streetscape improvements in and/or adjacent to the district and in South Windham, transit improvements, Windham Economic Development Corporation administration and the design and development of economic development facilities including maker space, co-working space, and shared commercial kitch-

en space in Windham. As of June 30, 2024, its Fund Balance was \$10,568 and Current Municipal Valuation is \$2,076,200.

The 2024 Boody's Corner C TIF District runs through June 30, 2054. The district consists of 72.60 acres of commercial property on Franklin Drive, Tandberg Trail, Turning Leaf Drive, and along Route 302 in Windham. The development program includes roadway, intersection, and sidewalk improvements in the district, roadway, intersection, and sidewalk improvements in North Windham, and wastewater facilities engineering and construction in and serving the district. As of June 30, 2024, its Fund Balance was not available. Its Current Municipal Valuation is \$8,275,700.

2024's Gateway South TIF District runs through June 30, 2054. The district consists of 40.85 acres of commercial property on First Light Drive, and along Route 302 in Windham. The development program includes roadway, intersection, and sidewalk improvements in the district, wastewater facilities engineering and construction connecting to the district, Commercial Façade improvement programming and transit improvements. As of June 30, 2024, its Fund Balance was not available. Its Current Municipal Valuation is \$542,200.

For 2025, new TIF Districts in Windham will include 2025 Anglers Road Senior Affordable Housing Development and Tax Increment Financing District and the 2025 Andrew School South Windham TIF District. <

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Wrangler



\$20 Fleece Lined Pants

Dickies



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\$20 Chamois Shirts

ARTISTS *Cont. from page 1*

“The Hawthorne House show was pretty successful with 12 pieces sold. I post a lot on my personal Facebook page as well as on ‘Bruce Small Photography’ Facebook page.”

Handpicked

Trish Kohler is a Raymond artist whose watercolor was handpicked for the show. She is grateful for the opportunity to share her work and is humbled by the outpouring of support.

“It is a significant honor to have artwork selected for display by the Audubon organization which was spawned by the great artist John James Audubon,” she said. “I am inspired by the bird paintings of J.J. Audubon, Roger Tory Peterson and JF Lansdowne.”

Kohler’s winning yellow warbler watercolor is a perky eye-catching, maybe even “vocal” piece. She typically works in watercolors but occasionally uses colored pencils. This was her first time responding to Audubon’s call for artwork.

As a youngster, Kohler fondly recalls spending a lot of time in nature.

“I grew up in Bridgton but have many happy memories of staying at my grandparent’s camp on Wild Acres on the tip of the Cape,” she said.

Transcendent photos

Amazingly, a third Raymond resident had their work win a spot in the exhibit. Brien Richards is a local photographer who focuses on night sky and wildlife photography. Richards’ ethereal photograph of a snowy owl transcends traditional photography to a point where the observer is interacting with the photo.

“The snowy owl was photographed in a snow-covered field south of Ottawa, Canada. The owl was looking right at me, and he will be looking at anyone who sees the image. With all my images, the photo is a vivid reminder of the exact moment that I took the picture. I’m right back there in that very cold snowy field,” he said.

Richards is a veteran, both in photography and in the United States Armed Forces.

“I’ve always been fascinated by photography and started many years ago with a film camera. Part of my Army career I was stationed in Kuwait, before the rest of the world could find it on a map. There were no facilities there and we were told to bring our own entertainment,” he said. “So, I bought a basic darkroom and learned to develop my own photos.

The time was way before the internet, so I learned by trial and error, strong on the error part. One of my Army colleagues was going to Hong Kong and offered to buy me a Nikon camera for a great price. So, that’s how I got started.”

Richards spends a good deal of time travelling to hone his craft and in search of that perfect shot.

“I attend a lot of photo workshops in lots of interesting places including Costa Rica, Antarctica, Iceland, Norway, Greenland, and a lot of national parks out west,” he said. “Last month I went to Churchill, Manitoba, Canada and photographed the polar bears waiting for the ice to form on the Hudson Bay so they could get out to the seals. To help cover the costs of these expensive workshops, I do sell my images usually on 20 X 30-inch metal prints at various shows, fairs, and festivals nearby to recoup at least a little of the cost.”

While he’s not a “native Mainer”, Richards and his wife have made their home in Raymond for the past 11 years, since retiring here after living and working in Belgium for 30 years.

While Richards appreciates the recent recognition, he remains humble.

“Yes, it is an honor, but I never place too much emphasis on being selected. There are many very good photographers out there and I realize that someone just happened to like my image. My selection is a welcome addition to getting known in the community as a local photographer,” he said. “For me, my photography represents the opportunity to capture a moment in time that I can visit and relive at will. If someone likes the image, that’s great. If not, it certainly doesn’t bother me. The great thing about your photography: If you like the photo, nothing else matters.”

Gisland Farm Gallery

Jenn Schmitt is part of the Communication and Marketing team and the Gallery Curator at Gisland Farm.

“We have an informal multi-use space here (at Gisland) that doubles as a gallery. People can purchase the pieces at our nature store. If possible, we’d like to have the art left until the end of the exhibit, but customers are more than welcome to take them for the holidays, if needed,” she said.

Schmitt said that this is the first time they have featured bird art. She said that shows are held once or twice a year. “We are holding this around the holidays to help support local artists,” she said. “We have 43 artists featured, mostly from Maine, including all types of media and price ranges.”

Looking forward, Schmitt said that an upcoming educational outreach project planned will integrate art and education through the Birdsafe Maine effort.

According to Maine Audubon, on June 17, 2024, the Portland City Council voted unanimously to approve a city-wide bird safe buildings ordinance. In 2023, Maine became just the fourth state to take statewide action on bird-safe architecture with the passage of LD 670, An Act to Protect Birds in the Construction, Renovation and Maintenance of Public Buildings.

The new law will bring together stakeholders across Maine to develop guidelines for bird safety in public buildings and Maine Audubon is looking forward to working with the city and the state to create sensible and effective guidelines.

The “Taking Flight” exhibit will run through Jan. 6, 2025 at Maine Audubon Gisland Farm Visitor Center Gallery located at 20 Gisland Farm Road in Falmouth. The exhibit is open daily from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

For more information about the show, call 207-781-2330 or send an email to info@maineaudubon.org

To see more photography from Bruce Small: FineArtAmerica.com, search Bruce Small and view a gallery. Or visit ‘Bruce Small Photography’ on Facebook.

Trish Kohler does not sell her works at the present time, though she does have a gallery full of impressive, complete pieces.

Check out Brien Richard’s polar bear photos here: <https://brienrichards.smugmug.com/Churchill-Polar-Bears/n-DGG3Nf>



From keeping your loved one safe to questions you should think about this is your Home For the Holidays Guide.

It can be difficult to tell how your senior parents are really doing at home when you don’t live near them. This guide will help you know what to look for when you are visiting with your parents this holiday season. Print it out and keep it close by!

Personal Health and Well-Being

- Are they neglecting their personal hygiene?
- Do you notice unkempt hair, dirty or lengthy nails, poor oral hygiene or body odor?
- Are they wearing the same clothes repeatedly?
- Do you see a significant change in their weight?
- Are they eating a healthy diet/nutritious meals?
- Are they repeating themselves? Do they seem lost or confused during regular conversations?
- Do they still get out and do the activities they enjoy, or are they hesitant to leave the house?

Around the House

- Is their home, that was once tidy, now being neglected?
- Are things as clean as they used to be?
- Do you see potential tripping hazards, such as cords, rugs or newspapers piled up in the middle of the floor?
- Is there enough bright lighting inside and outside of the home as well as stairwells?
- Is there a lot of unopened mail or unpaid bills piled up on the desk or counter?
- Do they have expired or spoiled food in the refrigerator or pantry?

Overall Safety

- Do they lose track of their medications...or skip them altogether?
- Are they having trouble with mobility – getting in and out of bed or a chair; in and out of the bathtub or shower; on and off the toilet?
- Are they navigating the stairs OK, or would they benefit from more secure railings on both sides of the stairs?
- Do they repeatedly forget to turn off the oven or stove?
- Has driving become an issue, especially at night?
- Are there new dents or scratches on their vehicle?

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How some popular holiday traditions got their start

Christmas is a season rich with traditions that bring people together and fill the holiday with warmth and joy. From decorating evergreen trees to exchanging gifts, the customs we cherish often feel timeless. Yet, many of these beloved traditions have fascinating origins that reveal their cultural and historical roots. Here's a closer look at how some of the most popular.

Santa Claus

Santa Claus, the jolly man in red, has a rich history rooted in folklore and legend. The figure is inspired by Saint Nicholas, a 4th-century Greek bishop known for his kindness and secret gift-giving. Over centuries, his story merged with local myths, including the Dutch Sinterklaas, who delivered gifts to children on December 6th. In the 19th century, American

writer Clement Clarke Moore's poem "A Visit from St. Nicholas" (commonly known as "The Night Before Christmas") helped shape the modern image of Santa as a cheerful, bearded man with a sleigh full of toys.

Christmas Trees



The tradition of decorating evergreen trees dates back to pre-Christian times, when ancient civilizations like the Egyptians and Romans used

evergreen boughs to symbolize eternal life during the winter solstice. The modern Christmas tree tradition is believed to have originated in 16th-century Germany. Legend has it that Protestant reformer Martin Luther was the first to add candles to a tree, inspired by the beauty of stars shining through forest evergreens. German immigrants later brought the tradition to America, and by the mid-19th century, Christmas trees were a staple in many households.

Gift Giving

The practice of giving gifts during Christmas has its roots in several traditions. Early Christians exchanged gifts to honor the Magi's offerings to the baby Jesus. Over time, this custom merged with the Roman festival of Saturnalia, a winter solstice celebration that included gift-giving. The tradition became more widespread in the 19th century, thanks to the influence of figures like Saint Nicholas, who was known for his generosity. Today, gift-giving is one of the most anticipated aspects of Christmas, symbolizing love and goodwill.

Christmas Carols

The tradition of singing carols dates back to medieval times, when carols were not exclusively tied to Christmas but were festive songs for all seasons. By the 13th century, Saint Francis of Assisi popularized Christmas caroling in Italy, encouraging people to sing joyful hymns outside of church. Over time, the practice spread across Europe and evolved into the door-to-door caroling we know today. Songs

Christmas Carols

→ see TRADITIONS Page 10

During the holiday season remember to breathe and really soak in the small yet magical moments. Go easy on yourself and take it slow. Do things that fill your soul. This time of year is about fun, laughter, family, and connection - be present, savor these days and appreciate the people in your lives and all you have.



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Helpful tips for last-minute Christmas shopping

1. Make a plan

Before heading out or browsing online, take a moment to jot down a list of the people you need gifts for and brainstorm quick, thoughtful ideas for each. Prioritize stores or websites that cater to multiple needs, saving you valuable time. Having a clear plan minimizes impulse purchases and keeps you focused.

2. Shop local

Local stores and boutiques have unique items that make perfect last-minute gifts. Handmade crafts, gourmet treats, or locally sourced products often carry a personal touch that larger retailers can't match.

3. Embrace gift cards

Gift cards are incredibly practical

and appreciated by many. Pair a gift card with a handwritten note or small token like candy or coffee to add a thoughtful touch. Digital gift cards also make this an ideal choice.

4. Think experience over objects

If physical gifts are hard to find, consider giving an experience instead. Tickets to a show, a gift certificate for a nice restaurant, or a subscription service can make for memorable and meaningful presents.

5. Opt for DIY gifts

If stores are too hectic or your budget is tight, embrace your creative side. Baked goods, personalized photo frames, or a simple hand-written coupon book for favors and experiences can be thoughtful and heartfelt gifts.

BRIEFS

Breakfast with Santa

The Windham Lions Club is sponsoring a free Breakfast with Santa and all children are invited. The event will be held from 8 to 10 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 14 at the Veterans Center, located at 35 Veteran's Memorial Drive, Windham. Parents can bring their cameras to take pictures of their kids with Santa. There will also be arts and crafts for the children to make and bring home. FMI, call 207-272-9085.

Christmas Party

The annual Hawthorne House Christmas Potluck-Dinner Party will be held at 6 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 14 at 40 Hawthorne Road in Raymond. A \$5 entrance donation will grant each participant five raffle tickets for valu-

able prizes. Reservations are required. Email hawthorne@maine.rr.com or call/text Becky Tracy at 207-329-0537.

Holiday Sound Journey

The Unity Center for Spiritual Growth at 54 River Road, Windham will present a free event called Sound Journey for the Holidays from 3 to 4:30 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 15. Presenters Jason and Rebecca LaWind will offer an evolving sound journey. FMI, call 207-893-1233.

Blood Drive

The American Red Cross will conduct a blood drive from noon to 5 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 18 at the Windham Veterans Center, 35 Veteran's Memorial Drive in Windham. To schedule an appointment, call 1-800-733-2767.



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TRADITIONS Cont. from page 8

like "Silent Night" and "O Holy Night" remain beloved staples of the season.

Hanging Stockings

The custom of hanging stockings by the fireplace originates from the legend of Saint Nicholas. According to one story, a poor man had three daughters who couldn't afford dowries. Saint Nicholas secretly dropped gold coins down their chimney, which landed in their stockings hanging by the fire to dry. This act of kindness inspired the tradition of filling stockings with small gifts and treats. Today, stockings are a cherished part of Christmas morning for children and adults alike.

Mistletoe

Mistletoe, a plant with ancient symbolism, has been associated with winter celebrations for centuries. The Druids considered it a sacred plant that brought good luck and protection. Norse mythology contributed the idea of kissing under mistletoe, linking it to the goddess Frigg and themes of love and reconciliation. By the 18th century, the practice of kissing under mistletoe became a popular Christmas tradition in England and later spread to other parts of the world.

Christmas Cards

The tradition of sending Christmas cards began in the 1840s in England. Sir Henry Cole, a civil servant, commissioned artist John Horsley to design the first commercial Christmas card, featuring a festive scene and a holiday message. The cards became popular as printing technology improved, allowing people to send warm wishes to loved ones near and far. Despite the rise of digital greetings, exchanging Christmas cards remains a heartfelt

way to connect during the season.

Advent Calendars

Advent calendars, used to count down the days to Christmas, originated in 19th-century Germany. Families would mark the days by lighting candles or drawing chalk lines on walls. In the early 1900s, printed advent calendars with little doors to open became popular, often revealing Bible verses or images. Today, advent calendars range from traditional designs to elaborate versions filled with chocolates, toys, or other surprises.

Gingerbread Houses



The tradition of making gingerbread houses at the holidays is thought to have originated in Germany during the 16th century. While gingerbread itself had been popular in Europe since medieval times, the decorative gingerbread houses became especially associated with Christmas after the Brothers Grimm published the fairy tale Hansel and Gretel in 1812.

In the story, the children stumble upon a house made of candy and gingerbread in the forest, sparking the imagination of bakers and inspiring the creation of similar houses. German bakers began crafting elaborate, edible gingerbread houses decorated

with icing, candies, and other sweets.

The tradition spread to other countries in the 19th century, particularly in the United States, where German immigrants introduced the practice. Over time, gingerbread houses became a beloved holiday craft and a symbol of festive creativity and togetherness. Today, making gingerbread houses is both a decorative art and a fun family activity that continues to be cherished during the holiday season.

Christmas Lights

The tradition of illuminating Christmas trees and homes began with candles. Early Christmas trees were adorned with real candles, a risky practice that was eventually replaced by electric lights in the late 19th century. Thomas Edison's assistant, Edward H. Johnson, is credited with inventing the first string of electric Christmas lights in 1882. The custom of decorating homes with lights has since evolved into dazzling displays that brighten the holiday season.

Eggnog

Eggnog's association with Christmas dates back centuries, with its origins rooted in medieval Europe. The drink evolved from a British beverage called posset, a hot, milky ale or wine mixture spiced with nutmeg and cinnamon. Over time, eggs were added to posset, creating a richer, more custard-like drink.

During the 17th century, eggnog became a popular drink among the British aristocracy, as its key ingredients—milk, eggs, and spices—were expensive and considered luxuries. Brandy or sherry was often added as a preservative and to enhance the flavor.

When eggnog made its way to the American colonies in the 18th centu-

ry, it found a warm reception. Colonial farmers had abundant access to eggs, milk, and rum—a cheaper, readily available spirit imported from the Caribbean. Rum eventually replaced brandy or sherry, giving the drink a distinct American twist.

Eggnog's connection to Christmas likely stems from its luxurious, celebratory nature and its warm, rich flavors that suited the winter season. By the 19th century, it was firmly associated



with holiday gatherings and Christmas festivities in both Britain and America. Its enduring popularity is tied to its nostalgic, indulgent qualities, making it a quintessential holiday treat.

Yule Log

The Yule log tradition has roots in ancient Norse and Celtic winter solstice celebrations. Families would burn a large log in the hearth to symbolize the return of the sun and bring good luck for the coming year. The practice evolved into the modern Yule log cake, a delicious dessert shaped like a log, which is enjoyed as part of Christmas feasts.

From ancient rituals to modern innovations, Christmas traditions reflect centuries of history and culture. Understanding their origins adds depth to our celebrations, reminding us that the joy of the season is a shared legacy passed down through generations.

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Varsity football athletes mentor third-grade players

By Jolene Bailey
STAFF WRITER

Within the Windham school community, students are offered opportunities to interact with not only their classmates in the grade they attend, but with every grade.

“I had an idea early in the school year to connect the high school football players with my third-grade football players. I had been asking around about the best way to do this” said Savannah Lemieux, a Windham Primary School teacher.

Lorraine Glowczak’s name was shared with Lemieux a few weeks later. Glowczak is the Director of Community Connections for Windham schools. She is also the coordinator for the WHS capstone project and extended learning opportunities available to high schoolers. She then connected a handful of high school football players who were interested in helping Lemieux.

The mentorship of WHS varsity athletes with Windham Primary School students reinforced the lesson that being a student takes priority before athletics.

“This mentorship connects to the habits of work rubric. Prior to meeting the high schoolers, my students came up with questions for them,” Lemieux said. “My students wanted to learn about how important it was to keep good grades, take school seriously, and finish their work. The high schoolers stressed the importance of being a student before an athlete and discussed what it meant to be a stu-



Members of Windham High School’s Varsity Football Team served as mentors for students in the Windham Primary School third grade class of Savannah Lemieux this fall. The football players stressed the importance of academics for student-athletes. PHOTO BY JOLENE BAILEY

dent athlete.” High school athletes practice the importance of time and stress management balancing out school life, athletic life, and their own personal life. Those are all critical and crucial skills important for growing minds to learn.

“I think for both the older and younger students they both walked away feeling like it was a great experience,” Lemieux said. “There was lots of laughter and connections made because of their shared interest in football.”

The high school students said that people look to them to be role models on and off the field. They said setting an example for your peers and touching upon picking each other up and supporting others when you fall down are crucial for young kids to learn.

“I have used this experience as a

reminder when they don’t want to do work in class, and it has been a great motivator for them. I hope they were

able to take away the feeling of pride in how hard they have worked to be where they are today,” said Lemieux.

The older students took the time to explain the importance of school in a student perspective rather than a teacher’s way that had come across more effectively to some students at a level that they understood.

“My students haven’t stopped talking about how fun it was and how cool they thought the older students were,” Lemieux said. “After seeing how successful it was this time, I will be looking to find other ways to make these connections.”

She said that connections throughout the community can go a long way in one’s individual life and having positive role models builds personal growth. <



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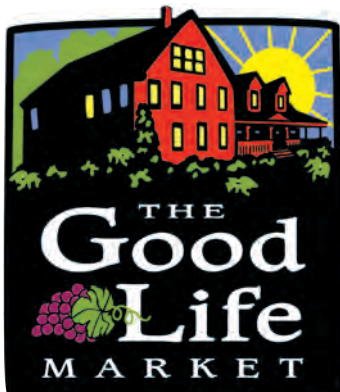
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TIDINGS OF COMFORT AND JOY - AND MOD PODGE

By Michelle Cote
SPECIAL TO THE WINDHAM EAGLE



— Michelle Cote, Columnist

We've got this, Mamas – Let's close out this calendar year on a note of hope.

We've got to cross this holiday finish line together before we then jump to next year's track, which

from this vantage point might look ahead to be a big ol' confetti blast of unknown.

But in this final stretch, I'd like to assure all that you can be the joy in this time of uncertainty.

Joy to the world, sure, but joy for your household is also an important endeavor.

And oh, what an endeavor during the month where it's already easy enough to monumentally stress over the holiday season, let alone give a thought to the unknowns to come in the new year like bonus Yankee swap gifts you weren't expecting.

Many of us polar plunge directly into this festive season with warm intentions to pace ourselves with a holiday head start, but the Sisyphean extraneous tasks find a way to tack on to our lists, along with concern for things beyond our control, beyond our immediate homes.

In this whirlwind world that at times may feel more like a Christmas ball of nerves, you can be the peace and hope in your own household for your littles.

In your home is where you can be the comfort and joy.

My ensemble of six spends December days steeped in sweet time-honored traditions that are not extravagant in cost, but rich in core memory-making.

A touch of frugal to our fa-la-la.

We make salt dough ornaments to frame small photos for loved ones – one of my favorite excuses to go bananas with Mod Podge – and we movie-marathon the heck out of our favorite holiday films as we eat microwave s'mores made with leftover Halloween chocolates.

Because those things have got to go.

I have enough musketeers in my household.

Another time-honored custom of ours is decorating gingerbread houses.

In the spirit of simplifying to be kind to ourselves during this time of year, we buy prebuilt.

Trust me on this.

As much as I pride myself in scratch-making lots in the kitchen, I have no shame in buying prebuilt gingerbread houses prior to SweetTarts and gum drop madness – Too many tears were once shed over royal icing and caved in walls years ago, and that solitary ho-ho-ho hum incident was more than enough for us to walk away from that sticky disaster forevermore.

Lesson learned, just like the time our family declared ourselves independent from hunting down a suitable live tree

and permanently migrated to faux fir, in all its pre-lit artificial glory.

But I digress.

Many simple Cote customs have become beloved over the course of our decade-plus of boy-raising.

We relish the magic (though it's mustard for pork pies – a column for another day).

But the frugal tradition I love most is spending a day baking up a winter storm of fudge, cookies and reindeer chow to box up gingerly and deliver to friends and neighbors as we tour the local lights we've mapped out.

For more years than I'd like to admit – okay, 13, a whole teenage worth of 'em – we've referred to this night as 'platzing and the schussing,' because it's how Bing Crosby wondrously describes anticipation for snow when headed to Vermont in "White Christmas."

It sounds like a beautiful way to describe 'plotting and planning' so ever festively, as if you had, say, magical

sleighbells attached.

But as it turns out, 'platzing and schussing' are actually German words to describe skiing, and have nothing whatsoever to do with twinkling lights and delivering buckeye fudge.

Nonetheless, we're sticking to the phrase like wet snow on sealcoating because we've invented the quirky new context for it.

Platzing and shussing – Catchy, right? – is about much more than those beaming lights.

It's about our beaming kiddos as they become instilled in the work of creating something and giving to others.

It's about spending our time, warming hearts, counting blessings – rather than sparkling gifts – and does not cost much to do.

It's about a means to keep connected, to share emotions via warm conversations, not via social media posts for a moment.

Tidings of comfort and joy, in uncertain times around us.

So let's close out this year on a hope-filled note.

Here's to peace on earth, buckeye fudge, and platzing and shussing for all.

Be that joy for your little ones, and have the merriest holiday season yet.

And don't forget the Mod Podge.

Columnist Michelle Cote lives in southern Maine with her husband and four sons, and enjoys camping, distance running, biking, gardening, road trips to new regions, arts and crafts, soccer, and singing to musical showtunes – often several or more at the same time! <

HERE ARE A FEW OTHER IDEAS TO MAKE FAMILY MEMORIES THIS SEASON:

Transform your home into a mini holiday carnival with game booths, such as "Pin the Nose on Rudolph," "Snowball Toss" (using soft balls or cotton), and a cookie-decorating station. Everyone can take turns running and participating in the games.

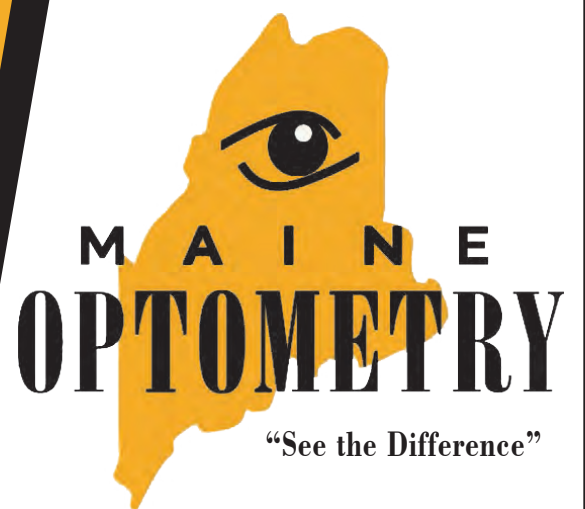
Organize a scavenger hunt with quirky Christmas tasks: find the most over-the-top decorated house, spot a reindeer ornament, or take a photo with a Santa (real or inflatable). You could even add creative challenges like singing carols to strangers.

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Annual Loon Count results show healthy loon population

It was a very good year – for Maine loons. When every single number associated with the Annual Loon Count goes up, scientists at Maine Audubon say it's a great indication that the Common Loon population is healthy. All the numbers of adult loons, loon chicks, lakes counted, and volunteers were higher in 2024 than in 2023.



Estimated results of the 2024 Maine Audubon Annual Loon Count reveal that the adult loon and chick population in the southern half of Maine has more than doubled in the past 40 years. PHOTO BY WAYNE FOOTE

Every year on the third Saturday in July, people get up early and head out onto lakes and ponds across the state to look and listen for loons. On July 20, 1,624 volunteers (up from 1,503 last year) headed out to 407 lakes across the state (up from 374 last year) to gather data that allows Maine Audubon to calculate a population estimate for southern Maine and keep an eye on trends over time. Sebago Lake is a prime location for Maine Audubon loon counters each year.

The Maine Audubon Annual Loon Count may only last half an hour, from 7 to 7:30 a.m., but the regional coordinators spend many hours assigning people to lakes, conducting outreach, compiling and checking data, and tallying numbers, from Aroostook to York. Volunteers look for loons in every one of Maine's 16 counties.

To determine an estimate for adult and chick population in the southern half of Maine (south of the 45th parallel, where enough lakes are covered by counters to produce a reliable estimate) Maine Audubon uses a stratified random sampling method, which has been used since 1983.

Based on those calculations, Maine Audubon estimates a population of

3,146 adults and 420 chicks for the southern half of Maine. In comparison, in 1983, it estimated a population of 1,417 adult loons and 176 loon chicks in the southern half of Maine, suggesting a doubling since the initial year of the loon count.

Audubon officials say that there is not enough coverage in the northern portion of Maine (north of the 45th parallel) to confidently provide an estimate of the loon population for that part of the state. But the number of lakes and volunteer counters is also trending up there.

Last year, Maine Audubon had 69 northern lakes counted; this year, and 353 counters gathered data for 96 northern lakes. On those lakes, volunteers tallied 509 adults and 50 chicks. This number cannot be used as a straight comparison to the south, but it can serve as a reference for changes in loon numbers on individual lakes and for northern coverage.

Maine Audubon wishes to thank the volunteers who turned out to count northern lakes and hope to see more

coverage in future years.

"The data volunteers collect is used to track population trends over time," says Maine Audubon Director of Conservation Sally Stockwell. "We expect some fluctuations year to year, but the numbers indicate a healthy loon population, with a slowly increasing adult population and relatively stable chick numbers." Maine has the largest population of loons in the eastern United States, which makes the breeding success of loons here critical to the regional population at large.

The Common Loon faces all kinds of threats—boat strikes, nest flooding, lead tackle, eagle predation—and yet, with the help of an ever-growing volunteer base, the population remains robust.

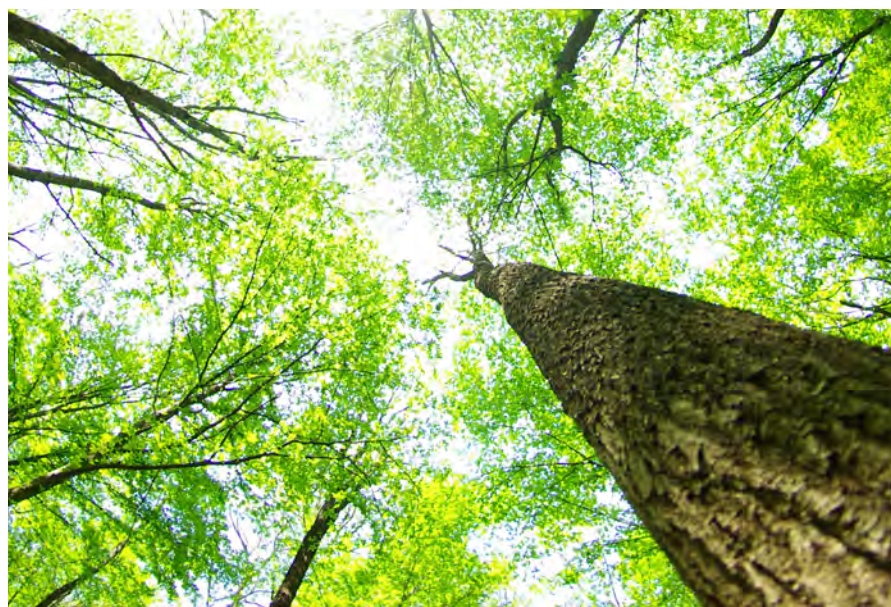
"There are so many people looking out for loons," says Loon Count Data Coordinator Ethan Daly. "Loons are something Mainers can appreciate and unite behind. More people are educating their neighbors, more people are involved in our loon restoration program, more people are getting rid of lead tackle, and more people are considering how shoreline management can impact freshwater ecosystems."

All these steps can help ensure our lakes are clean and clear, which loons depend on to find and catch their prey. These efforts also help increase loon nesting success and survival. Maine's loons are lucky to have so many incredible volunteers watching out for them.

This fall, a new law which prohibits the sale of painted lead jigs went into effect, closing a dangerous loophole. Lead poisoning has long been one of the leading causes of death for adult loons in Maine. Common Loons can ingest lost or discarded lead fishing tackle when it sinks to the bottom of a lake or pond, causing illness and death. It has been illegal to sell and/or use lead sinkers and bare "unpainted" jigs (weighing less than an ounce in weight or measuring less than 2.5 inches in length) in Maine since 2017.

Now the sale of painted lead jigs within these size and weight limitations is prohibited and the use of them will be illegal in 2026, bringing Maine's waterways one step closer to being safer for loons. Maine Audubon is helping remove this dangerous lead tackle from circulation by buying and recycling newly illegal lead tackle directly from retailers, and by collecting old lead tackle items from anglers who want to get rid of it from their tackle boxes.

For more info. about the annual count, the Fish Lead Free program, or the Maine Loon Project, or to volunteer visit maineaudubon.org/loons. <



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Senator Tim Nangle takes oath for second term in Maine Senate

State Senator Tim Nangle, D-Windham, was sworn into the Maine Senate taking his oath of office on Dec. 4 after having been elected to his second term serving in the Maine Senate in November.

Maine Gov. Janet Mills administered the oath of office to Senator Nangle and his Senate colleagues, all of whom have been elected to serve two-year terms. Nangle represents Maine Senate District 26, which includes Casco, Frye Island, Raymond, Windham, and part of Westbrook.

"I am deeply grateful to my community for placing their trust in me



District 26 State Senator Tim Nangle joined friends from Windham after taking the oath of office in Augusta for his second term. From left are Allan Phinney, Doris Poland, Senator Nangle, Lori Poland, Linda Parenteau, and Steve Parenteau. SUBMITTED PHOTO

again," said Nangle. "Together, we will work to ensure a brighter future for

our children, support our local businesses, and protect the unique character of our towns."

Senator Tim Nangle has called Maine home for over three decades and served 27 years as a Medcu paramedic with the Portland Fire Department. Following his time serving on the Windham Town Council, he was elected to his first term in the Maine Senate in 2022. During his first term in the Maine Senate, Nangle

championed a new law empowering municipalities with additional tools to address shoreland zoning violations, preserving Maine's tradition of local control.

The swearing-in ceremony was held in the Senate Chamber and attended by the senators' family and friends, and the general public. A live stream of the event was made available to the general public and can be viewed online at legislature.maine.gov/senate.

The Maine Legislature will convene at the start of the New Year.

Learn more about Senator Tim Nangle at www.mainesenate.org.

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Veterans connect with students during school visits

► **By John Facella**
SPECIAL TO THE WINDHAM EAGLE

During November, members of American Legion Field-Allen Post 148 and VFW Post 10643 visited elementary school and middle school students in Windham and Raymond in honor of Veterans Day.

Starting on Nov. 6, the Legion provided a Color Guard for the Raymond Elementary School. Then on Nov. 7 two Legion members attended Windham Christian School's Second Grade Breakfast for veterans. That same day three Legion veterans met with two classes of Raymond Elementary School fourth graders.

On Nov. 8, Legion and VFW veterans met with eighth graders from Windham Middle School, and 24 comic books explaining Veterans Day were provided to teachers at the school to share with students. On that same day another 100 comic books were delivered to the Windham Middle School sixth graders.

Six American Legion and VFW members met with four groups of



Seventh graders in classes taught by Pam Mallard and Shaun Durfee at Windham Middle School made posters to thank local veterans for visiting their classrooms in November. The posters are currently displayed at the Windham Veterans Center. PHOTO BY JOHN FACELLA

Windham Middle School seventh graders on Nov. 12 to wrap up the visits with 90 comic books delivered to the teachers of those groups.

The veterans explained to students that the purpose of Veterans Day is to honor America's veterans for their patriotism, their love of country, and their willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good of all Americans. The visits also help to connect students with local veterans in their communities and the 16-page comic book pro-

vides students educational information

about veterans and their contributions to our country and the world.

At each event, local veterans from Windham and Raymond sat down with the students to share their stories of service and to help the kids learn more about Veterans Day and its significance to them and the community.

The Windham American Legion Field-Allen Post 148 and VFW Post 10643 members wish to thank the principals and teachers from participating schools for facilitating our veterans to meet with the students and answer their questions about the services our veterans have provided to the country. <

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A Matter of Historical Record: Shocking accident on July 4, 1908 claims lives of four popular and promising Windham youth

► **By Walter Lunt**
SPECIAL TO THE WINDHAM EAGLE

Saturday, July 4, 1908 began with games and merriment as young church goers celebrated the nation's birthday with a fun-filled picnic and sailing excursion on Sebago Lake. The day would end with a horrific tragedy that would grip the Windham community in unimaginable grief.

Among those attending the outing at Whites Bridge, sponsored by the Friends Church of Windham, were Popeville residents Gertrude Lowell, 19, and Benjamin Larrabee, 29. Also, Margaret Louise Hawkes, 21 and Harvey Jaquis, 19, both of Windham Center – all four had been close friends since childhood.

The decision to sail was a spontaneous idea; George Moses, known to be an expert boatman, agreed to take the four in his 21-foot boat that had

one sail. The plan was to sail three-to-four miles from White's Bridge to Moses' cottage on the east shore near the Images (Frye's Leap). The lake was free of heavy waves and in some spots described as dead calm, so the trip until just before arriving at Moses' landing was uneventful.

The first sign of distress occurred when the vessel was about 10 feet from the landing at Moses' cottage; speculation was that one of the boat's occupants may have reached or leaned in to grab the landing causing the single sail to jibe, capsizing the boat, and throwing all five occupants into the water. Only two, Moses and Larrabee, could swim. Moses managed to right the boat and climb back in; he then attempted to pull one of the girls back into the craft, but the effort only caused the boat to again overturn, throwing them both back into the wa-

ter. Moses tried several more times to save his four young passengers as they splashed about helplessly; their watery scuffle becoming an agonizing and futile attempt to save themselves. Ultimately, Moses made his way to shore, breathless and exhausted.

Larrabee also tried in vain to save the others, but according to later speculation it was believed that he suffered a hard bump to the head against the overturned boat, causing him to go under.

The screams and cries for help brought residents from nearby cottages to the scene. Several tried swimming out to help, but all four of the doomed quartet, exhausted from their hapless, panicky attempts to stay afloat and weighted down by the heavy clothing of the day, were now disappearing from the surface.

The whole ordeal occurred within 10 feet of George Moses' landing, in 6 feet of water. No one, including

Moses, could explain the cause of the mishap. There were no eyewitnesses.

All the victims were retrieved from the bottom of the unforgiving lake with the use of boat hooks. Resuscitative efforts began immediately and went on for over an hour, but to no avail.

A steamer (vessel) was summoned to the scene to transport the bodies back to Whites Bridge. Aboard was a Dr. Parker, Rev. Thomas Ingraham, pastor of the Friends Church and relatives of Miss Lowell. From there, undertakers took the victims to their respective homes where it was reported their families were inconsolable.

Equally distressed, George Moses blamed himself for, in some way, causing the whole incident. His friends, however, would offer him comfort by recalling the respect he earned over his many years of successful sailing.

Margaret Louise Hawkes and Ger-

→ see HISTORY Page 21

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HISTORY *Cont. from page 20*

trude Lowell had graduated from the Gorham Normal School the previous month. They were said to have been “unusually bright,” respected and well-liked throughout the community and had a great many friends. Their deaths stunned the residents of Windham and neighboring towns and caused a deep malaise to envelop over the entire region. The late Florence Hawkes, a descendant, told *The Windham Eagle* several years ago that Margaret’s father, Frank N. Hawkes, did not speak of the incident for the rest of his life. And if the subject came up, he would walk away. Margaret was a sister to the well-known Windham Center farmer Alley Hawkes.

Funeral services for the four drowning victims were held in their respective homes; the pastors of Friends Church and Windham Hill Church officiated. Floral tributes swamped each home, including a bouquet of pinks from Margaret and Gertrude’s ’08 classmates of Gorham Normal School, where they were held in high esteem and predicted to be great teachers.

Margaret and Gertrude were buried in Friends Cemetery, Benjamin and Harvey in nearby Smith Cemetery, both located at Windham Center. Longtime Windham residents will recognize the names of the pall bearers at the various services: Leon Hawkes, Lincoln Lamb, Orville Haskell, Fred Lowell, Phillip Allen, William Hawkes, Charles Hall, Harry Philpot, Harry Kennard, Alley Hawkes, Burleigh Loveitt and Phillip Hawkes.

A Portland Press Herald story de-



Benjamin Larrabee, 29, Gertrude Lowell, 19, Margaret Hawkes, 21, and Harvey Jaquis, 19, all from Windham, were bright, popular and highly respected. They drowned tragically in Sebago Lake while celebrating the July 4 holiday in 1908. PHOTOS COURTESY OF WINDHAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY

scribed the 4th of July outing as “... one of the saddest accidents that has ever occurred on Sebago Lake.” Of the families of the four victims, the newspaper reported that all were “members of well-known and respected families that are among the best in town.”

The tragic event of 1908 dampened 4th of July festivities for decades. Folks acknowledged and celebrated the national holiday, but did not forget the painful event that brought deep anguish to so many. <



Lilia Gonzalez

Grade: Second Grade
School: Raymond Elementary School
Teacher: Mrs. Aileen Pelletier
Parents' names: Kaela and Miguel Gonzalez
Favorite subject: Writing, because the more she writes the better her handwriting gets, and she can tell my stories to others.
Reason for selection: Lilia is a model student, quietly showing respect and kindness to everyone. She enthusiastically engages in new learning with a growth mindset. She does her best quality work and willingly shares her learning and strategies. Lilia is such a great person all around. She will continue to shine at RES and beyond.

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SPORTS



Trail Blazers launch with 7-1 home-opening victory

By Matt Pascarella
STAFF WRITER

In the first game of the regular youth ice hockey season, the Windham/Bonny Eagle/Westbrook Trail Blazers pummeled Biddeford/Old Orchard/Massabesic, or Boom, on Thursday, Dec. 5 at the University of Southern Maine in Gorham. The Trail Blazers scored five goals in the first period, kept up the intensity and earned a 7-1 win.

“If we show up prepared, we can take it to them and win,” said Windham senior and captain Sam Foley. “It depends on how we preform, how we start off; if we start hard early, it’s going to be easy for the second and third period. Just keeping that energy early, getting the locker room going, and being positive helped. Shooting (went well); we were getting every puck to the net. Moving as a line, getting everyone through and moving our feet made it a lot easier. Defensive zone ... needs work, because once we get up two or three goals we start focusing more on offense and making it harder to get the puck out.”

The Trail Blazers got the sticks going early when, less than a minute into the first period Foley scored. A very short time later, Windham senior Shaun Traina flicked the puck past the goalie and the Trail Blazers led by two.

Windham senior Philip Traina scored, then Bonny Eagle sophomore Colby Bailey scored for the Trail Blazers. Philip Traina scored again, and the Trail Blazers defense held off Boom for the entire first period. Trail Blazers led 5-0 after one period of play.

“We really just want to make sure we play our game, play hard, physi-



(L to R) Trail Blazers senior Sam Foley of Windham fires a shot on goal at the University of Southern Maine in Gorham on Thursday, Dec. 5 during the youth ice hockey team’s home opener against Biddeford/Old Orchard/Massabesic. Senior Philip Traina of Windham navigates by a defender. PHOTOS BY MATT PASCARELLA

cal, outskate teams, outwork teams, we want to play heavy in the offensive end,” said Trail Blazers coach Bobby Fothergill. “Having a young goaltender, we wanted to make sure we protected him; the best defense is a good offense. We got the firepower, we’re three lines deep; the offensive rotation – moving pucks high to low – playing positionless in the offensive zone and having a shooter’s mentality getting pucks on the net early. (The Trail Blazers) were hungry, they’ve been itching to get out there and play. The way last year ended left a sour taste in their mouths, they want a playoff win. We’re going to stay with that attack mentality, shooter’s mentality, pucks to the net, forechecking and back-checking, and good D-zone coverage. We’re also going to talk about just because you’re up five goals doesn’t mean the game is over, you don’t want to let teams back in. We’ll learn and grow from it and get better each game.”

The second period brought just as much hustle from the Trail Blazers players, although Boom’s goalie stopped a few more shots. Bonny Eagle junior Mason Caron scored on a power play. Then Windham senior Erik Dupont sent the puck right through the goalie’s legs.

In the third period, the Trail Blazers did not take their foot off the gas; the game was theirs to win, and they were going to do so. The Trail Blazers consistently had the puck and took shot after shot on goal. Boom’s goalie made several key stops but the Trail Blazers outshot their opponents, 53-11.

“I think we decided we were going

to come out, play the body a little bit, get some nice quality shots on goal and try to put the puck in the net – get a nice lead to start,” said Bonny Eagle junior Colby Haskell. “After the first goal, we figured it’s just a 0-0 game, we still got to work as hard as we can and bury some goals. We did play for the full 45 minutes. I liked how we played physically, our shots were nice, selected and our hits were on-point. Our passing needs some work and definitely ... just moving our feet, keeping up with the pace. I think once that second and third period hit us with that long change, it really slowed us down after the first.” <



Trail Blazers junior Mason Caron of Bonny Eagle keeps possession of the puck as he heads toward the goal.

ATHLETE OF THE WEEK



Shawn Traina

Age: 17
Team: Windham/Bonny Eagle/Westbrook Trail Blazers ice hockey
Coach: Bobby Fothergill
Parents’ names: Lauri and Brooks Traina
Reason for selection: The points leader from last year for the Trail Blazers, Shaun is a strong offensive presence and tough to defend. Coaches say that he is a quiet leader, and it’s the way he plays the game, he never takes shifts off and plays hard all the time. The way he competes and fights is second-to-none and Shaun shows the team’s younger guys how to play this game the right way. Shaun is a team-first player.

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WHS boys' basketball downs Gorham for road win

By Matt Pascarella

STAFF WRITER

In their second game of the season, Windham varsity boys' basketball showed they can battle against tough teams on the road. The Eagles hit the court to take on rival Gorham on Tuesday, Dec. 10 at Gorham High School. These are two completely different teams from last year and Windham fought hard early in the game. Although Gorham made up some ground in the fourth quarter, Windham secured a 75-67 win.

"Coming into this game we wanted to play our best basketball and try to get better at the things we've been working at," said Windham varsity boys' basketball coach Chad Pulkkinen. At times we played pretty well and we kind of let our guard down at other times; at the end of the day our guys found a way through. Staying together (went well), continuing to keep the lead, all those things that help you win come February, March. It's a good experience for our guys to come into a great atmosphere. Continuing to trust one another and continuing to move the basketball more; on the defensive end, shrinking space - making it harder for the offense (need work). All fixable things. We're not trying to reinvent something new; it's just getting better at some of the basics, we'll get there; our guys are smart, and they're motivated."

Windham started the game with extreme hustle. Both teams played a fast-paced game where Windham secured turnover after turnover early on. They rebounded well and moved the ball but despite an Eagles lead, Gorham wasn't far behind. Windham defense did make it hard for the Rams' offense.

In the second quarter Windham junior Tyrie James hit two three-pointers. Windham sophomore Colin Janvrin also sunk a three-pointer. Moments before the first buzzer sounded, Gorham went in for the dunk and missed, and after the first half, Windham led 37-30.

"We think of every opponent as the same," said James. "We're going to work as hard as we can for each opponent, we're not going to look past

(Right) Sophomore Isabella Vassoler passes to a teammate.



(L to R) Windham junior Tyrie James is shown mid-air and about to take a shot at the hoop against Gorham on Tuesday, Dec. 10. Senior Creighty Dickson pushes up against a Gorham defender before getting a shot off. Senior Joseph Blige prepares to get by his Gorham opponent. PHOTOS BY MATT PASCARELLA

anyone; we're going to try our best the entire game. We made reads of how (Gorham) played defense. We had to adjust to their offense in the first half. I think we didn't play our best game, but everyone was playing defense, everyone was hustling, you could tell we had energy. You can always improve. Anything can get better."

Windham held onto a substantial 10-point lead early in the third quarter. Janvrin knocked down two more three-pointers. Windham held a 15-point lead late in the third quarter.

"The mindset of the game was to ... get a win by playing together as a team and keeping ourselves composed against a team we are rivals with," said Janvrin. "I think we handled adversity well. Some things we need to work on as a team is hustling back on defense and stopping people from getting open shots."

Five minutes remained in the game and 10 points separated the teams. Gorham worked hard to close that gap, and succeeded a little, but

Windham wasn't going to let them have this one. The gap fluctuated, but Windham remained out in front until the final buzzer.

"We knew they were a totally different team," said Windham senior Creighty Dickson. "They got new guys, but they still shoot the ball like

a lot, and we needed to come out with energy and play our defense. There were certain times when we just let off the gas and let them come back. I thought our trapping was pretty well on defense. Our ball movement in the first half wasn't very good, but we improved in the second half." <

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Her Mainely Girl Adventures: Deer season

► **By Staci Warren**
SPECIAL TO THE WINDHAM EAGLE



Staci Warren, Columnist

Deer season began on Nov. 2. I spent the pre-season setting game cameras and hoping to see a big buck, but the cameras showed nothing but a couple spikehorn bucks and does. As opening day approached, the deer went elsewhere. Not seeing any action on my game cameras, I opted for a spot I didn't have a camera hung, and that is "tried and true" in annual deer behavior, with hopes I'd see a buck chasing a doe. That's not something I've seen often, but the rut and does in heat tend to bring in big bucks that don't normally hang in my area. I've only shot one buck that I'd say was "big." In 2011, I shot an 8-point buck, but it wasn't big enough for The Maine Sportsman's Big Buck Club.

The first morning, I gave myself a half hour to get into my stand. The walk was long, and I have to navigate over a brook and a boulder field before I hike up the hill to my stand. I

struggled getting in. I felt like I was exceptionally clumsy in my boots, but I think it was all the tension my body was holding. Once in my stand, I settled in for the sunrise. I could feel myself relax. I listened for sound of deer. I saw a Barred owl, usually a good sign that I'll see other game. The first day didn't disappoint; I saw a group of three does that just appeared out of nowhere. I never heard them coming since the breeze was steady and the leaves rustled constantly. Cautiously they crossed the opening in front of me, only 20 yards away. With the wind in my face, they never smelled me. I watched as they stopped and fed off to my right before heading over a ridge. Not even a half hour later, I got a glimpse of movement. A deer was headed my way. It circled to my left and came up the hill parallel to my stand and then stopped to eat acorns. Luckily, it didn't smell me. Then three more joined in and I sat frozen in my stand as I watched them cross out in front of me and leave. I left feeling happy and for the first time in weeks, I felt refreshed and not anxious.



Staci Warren with her 2024 buck and the largest one she's harvested in her hunting career.

PHOTO BY JOHN WARREN

My second weekend was a lot like the first, only the deer that appeared from nowhere seemed to be a buck that had lost its antlers already. The top of its head had clear signs of a pedicle where an antler should be. It was a nice deer, but I chose to watch

it since I couldn't believe what I was seeing. I then had a doe come in on my right, but behind me. She didn't get that far before she blew, alerting others that I was there. She stomped off through the woods. I was actually having fun seeing all this wildlife and again, I left feeling more relaxed than when I got there.

After the first two weeks, things seemed to go dead. No deer sighting and no deer on camera, not even at night. It was a little disheartening since I, for the first time in my life, took the third week of deer season off to hunt, and after the election, I really needed some treestand therapy. I hunted the first of the week without seeing anything. In an effort to change things up, I decided to sit close by in a stand that had no sign, or not much sign, around it when we scouted earlier in the season. I hadn't sat there for two years. I rode my four-wheeler down to the paved road and parked. I crossed and then walked the remaining 100 yards into my tree stand. I left early because it was such a beautiful day. The sun was shining, and it was sort of cold. I wore my cold weather gear and even though the wind was pretty steady, I was very comfortable.

I knew I'd have to watch for movement since the wind and noise from traffic would drown out any footsteps of a deer. I looked to my left and began scanning the area for movement. I checked the time on my phone. I had two hours to hunt. I put my phone away and looked up. Straight out in front of me, I caught the hind end of a deer. About fifty yards out there is a line of trees, from which the deer appeared and disappeared. I took out my buck grunt and gave a couple grunts. Disgusted with myself for not seeing the deer earlier, I watched the woods. Then a doe appeared. It ate along the edge of the woods and walked through an opening and moved away from me. I gave a couple more grunts. About five minutes passed. I hadn't really gotten too excited since it was just more does, when a doe bound out of the tree line, and circled up and around me. She stopped to eat acorns. I then saw another doe, and I thought what if a buck was chasing her?! And then I saw the buck step out from the edge of the trees. He grunted, spotted her and headed my way with his head down as if being led by the tip of his nose. I got into position without moving quickly. It approached on my right, and I shoot right. I stood up and used the tree to brace myself. I waited for a clear opening, exhaled and squeezed the trigger. I got my biggest buck yet, but I still didn't make the Big Buck Club. Maybe next year.

Columnist Staci Warren provides a unique woman's perspective and column on the outdoors every month. She is a freelance writer whose blog, My Mainely Girl Adventures, is about a woman hunting, fishing, trapping, foraging and living in the Maine outdoors. She's an active member and board member of the New England Outdoor Writers Association and is a monthly columnist and feature writer for The Maine Sportsman Magazine. In her free time, she enjoys mentoring women hunters and trappers. Follow her at: mymainelygirladventures.com

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2025 housing market forecast

► **By Nicole Foster**
SPECIAL TO THE WINDHAM EAGLE



— Nicole Foster, Broker/REALTOR®

The housing market has demonstrated remarkable resilience in the face of rising mortgage interest rates, and we are now past the usual lull we see in the weeks and months leading up to a contentious presidential election. Despite initial fears of a market downturn following unsustainable growth during the pandemic, the data now shows that the housing market is stabilizing rather than crashing.

Economists predict a significant increase in the number of single-family home sales in 2025 and 2026 compared to the past few years. The recent period has been characterized by tight inventory and elevated interest rates, which created challenging conditions for many. However, as these pressures ease, the market is expected to regain momentum. While home prices are forecasted to continue rising, the pace will be more moderate and reflective



of the normalized growth observed in the latter half of 2024. This slower, steady appreciation is reminiscent of pre-pandemic trends, offering a sense of stability.

Home mortgage interest rates are also anticipated to stabilize at an average of approximately 6.08 percent for a 30-year fixed-rate loan. Although a significant drop in home mortgage interest rates is not expected, the stabilization will bring much-needed predictability to buyers. Additionally, increased inventory for both existing homes and new builds will provide relief to those who have been sitting on the sidelines, discouraged by the competitive conditions of recent

years.

One of the key trends affecting inventory has been the "lock-in effect." Many homeowners have felt tied to their current properties due to historically low mortgage rates of 2 percent to 3 percent, making the prospect of selling less appealing. However, this phenomenon is expected to diminish over time as market conditions normalize, encouraging more homeowners to list their properties and increasing the available inventory.

Currently, the median sales price for a single-family home in Wind-

ham stands at \$580,000. Projections indicate that prices will rise modestly, with increases of 2 percent to 4 percent expected in both 2025 and 2026. These growth rates reflect a healthier balance between affordability and market value creating more opportunities for buyers to enter the market without facing the extreme price surges of recent years.

Research from the National Association of REALTORS® reveals that the average homeowner has gained approximately \$147,000 in housing wealth over the past five years. This has widened the wealth gap between homeowners and renters, underscoring the long-term financial benefits of

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BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

No matter if you're looking for reliable auto repair, a set of new tires or the finest in aftermarket accessories, Northeast AutoWorks promises to significantly improve your driving experience.

Located at 650 Bridgton Road in Westbrook, Northeast AutoWorks is an excellent alternative to high dealership prices for many makes and models. As a certified NAPA Auto-Care Center, Northeast AutoWorks backs qualifying work through a nationwide warranty and the shop only uses high-quality parts and provides exceptional automotive service and courteous customer service that you value from a service provider.

Its dedicated team of ASE-certified technicians always strive to deliver the best workmanship and customer experience possible for your vehicle whether it's a passenger car, medium sized truck, mini-van, or an SUV.

"Great customer service means treating everyone who walks through our door with respect, we are fully transparent about repairs and costs, and ensure that our customers are heard and valued," said Vaughn DiBiase, NorthEast AutoWorks owner. "We go the extra mile to make their experience outstanding. We feel that it's about empathy. Car repairs are never convenient and great customer service means understanding the customer's situation and doing whatever



is within our means to build their trust in us and to help them."

DiBiase said that Northeast AutoWorks offers a range of services featuring new tires from leading national brands; effective automotive repairs to keep your vehicle running like it should, including A/C repair, battery replacement, belt and hose replacements, brakes, cooling system services, engine diagnostics, steering and suspension work, wheel alignments and more. Preventative maintenance services such as lube and oil changes, oil and air filter changes and spring/winter checkups are also available.

Parts and repairs are backed by NAPA's Peace of Mind Warranty and Northeast AutoWorks convenient local shuttle service or loaner vehicles can be requested while your vehicle is being serviced. The waiting room is clean and comfortable if you prefer to wait for work to be done, with free coffee and Wi-Fi.

Northeast AutoWorks also specializes in customization work, and it's never been easier for aftermarket additions like lift kits, custom wheels and

Magnum Truck Racks, rails and bed accessories installed right in the shop there.

Online reviews posted about Northeast AutoWorks are absolutely outstanding.

"Been going here for a while now and this place rocks I will not bring any of my vehicles anywhere else. I tell everyone about this place. It's so good to find a legit and honest place to bring your vehicle. I know I can trust NAW to make sure all my vehicles are safe and dependable after they work on them." ~ Gary Pike

"Highly recommend this business. We needed major frame repair on our truck. After days of skillful welding, the truck is as good as new. Equally impressive was the communication. We got phone calls during the week, updating us on the progress of the job. Fabulous quality and communication. Thanks, Guys!" ~ Jim and Elaine Dow

"I would recommend this place to everyone. Amazing service and excellent customer service. Thank you, Northeast Auto. You were a true blessing to me today." ~ Dennis Gignac

"Northeast installed a leveling kit for me, I had dropped my truck off after work and it was ready the next day around noon. Kit came out great and now taking it back to them for more work on the truck." ~ Alexander Bateman

"Vaughn and his team have been servicing and upgrading my personal and business vehicles since 2016. I have always got a straight answer, timely service and a fair price. Vaughn is reliable and loyal as they come. His shop also looks amazing. I highly recommend." ~ Stephen Bell

Hours for Northeast AutoWorks are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. A 10 percent military discount is offered for work for veterans over \$500 and mechanics are standing by to give you a reliable estimate of any automotive repair issue that you might be facing.

"We appreciate your patronage and believe in integrity and honesty," DiBiase said. "Our staff is available to answer any questions and ensure your experience is a positive one. Our goal is to keep you moving through the years with a reliable vehicle. We try to make sure everybody leaves here happy."

To make an appointment, call Northeast AutoWorks at 207-899-1355, visit them online at www.northeastautoworks.com or find them on Facebook under Northeast AutoWorks. <

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→ REAL ESTATE *Cont. from page 25*
 setts, New Hampshire, Florida, and New York. Notably, single women have emerged as a significant group, accounting for approximately 24 percent of home purchases. Another growing segment includes multigenerational buyers and those pooling resources, reflecting broader social trends in family dynamics and economic cooperation.
 Another development in recent

years has been the increased use of home equity by buyers. Many homeowners are leveraging their accumulated wealth to make cash offers on their next property. Buyers are also. Some 25 percent of first-time home buyers used a gift or loan from a relative or friend for their home purchase and another twenty percent borrowed from their 401Ks or removed funds from other financial assets. This underscores the resilience of the housing market, as buyers find creative ways

to navigate higher interest rates and other economic pressures.
 However, challenges to affordability persist. The cost of homeownership continues to rise, influenced by factors such as increasing property taxes and rising homeowner's insurance premiums. These expenses add to the overall cost burden, particularly for first-time buyers who may already face difficulties saving for down payments. Addressing these affordability challenges will be crucial in ensur-

ing a healthy and accessible housing market. By focusing on expanding inventory and addressing affordability challenges, the housing market can foster a more inclusive and sustainable environment for all participants.
This article was brought to you by Nicole Foster, a real estate Broker and REALTOR® with nineteen years of experience helping buyers, sellers and investors in southern Maine. Follow Nicole on Instagram 207nicolefoster or facebook.com/sellingmaine. <

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