

'Mission Working Dogs' showcases service training in Windham

By Ed Pierce
STAFF WRITER

A new Maine organization which trains service dogs, therapy dogs, and facility dogs for those with disabilities made a stop in Windham on Wednesday, showcasing its work for veterans and their families at the Windham Veterans Center.

Based in Oxford at a 10-building facility on a 12-acre site, Mission Working Dogs was founded by Christy Gardner as a non-profit to help Mainers in need. Gardner was serving in the U.S. Army overseas when she was attacked and sustained a serious a brain injury, facial fractures, internal injuries, a spinal cord injury, and the amputation of both of her legs in the line of duty. Her initial diagnosis was that she would be 100 percent disabled and never lead a normal life.

Spending more than a year and a half in the hospital, doctors at Walter Reed Medical Center in Washington, D.C. paired her with a service dog named Moxie to help her recover. That act boosted Gardner's

confidence, and it eventually led her to return home to Maine, to reestablish her life, and to become a member of the United States National Sled Hockey team, and an alternate for Team USA in the 2020 Tokyo Paralympics.

She had been involved in training puppies in Maine for about 10 years before founding Mission Working Dogs in July 2020.

"My own service dog, Moxie, made me want to start Mission Working Dogs," Gardner said. "She was incredible and allowed me so much more independence than was imaginable after I was injured in the Army. I had volunteered at a Labrador breeder and helped other organizations temperament test puppies for possible service work and eventually became a puppy raiser."

She said Mission Working Dogs has partnered with the Maine Department of the American Legion for a year-long project to support service dogs for Maine veterans and she traveled with several of her dogs to Wind-

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Christy Gardner of Mission Working Dogs visits with service dog Libby. Gardner, a double amputee, trains service dogs in Maine for veterans and others with disabilities and brought two dogs to a presentation in Windham on Wednesday. COURTESY PHOTO

WMS Theater Club stages "The Addams Family"

By Masha Yurkevich
STAFF WRITER

Need a cure for your winter depression? Here's a humorous one as members of the Windham Middle School Theater Club will present their take on "The Addams Family."

The show runs Jan. 10, Jan. 11, Jan. 12, Jan. 17, Jan. 18, and Jan. 19 at the Windham High School Performing Arts Center. Friday and Saturday performances are offered at 7 p.m. with matinee shows also running Saturdays and Sundays at 2 p.m.

April Monte is the head of the theater program at WMS and the director/choreographer of the current show, "The Addams Family."

"I teach the students how to build public confidence on stage and to develop respect for the entire technical process of how to put on a show," says Monte. "Performing is what brought me out of my shell as a young kid, and I did it professionally for many years and it brings me so much joy to see the next generation of performers developing a love and respect for the performing arts. It also gives them confidence; for example, being able to learn about body language and how to respond to an environment, which I think is so important socially and when trying to communicate any employment situation."

Monte has been involved with the WMS Theater Club for about eight years and took over as the head of the department three years ago when the previous director retired. Three years



The Addams Family cast gathers for a rehearsal at the Windham Performing Arts Center, Shows run Jan. 10 to Jan. 19 at Windham High School with tickets available at the door. PHOTO BY MASHA YURKEVICH

ago, there were about 40 students in the WMS Theater Club. Today, there are 68 student participants.

"That does not count all the high school students who are eager to come back and be a part of the process," says Monte.

The club is open to anybody from the school that signs up, as well as homeschooled students in the community in grades 6 to 8.

"When the WMS Theater Club first started, it was more focused on just the performers on stage, but now we have expanded the program to include 'techies.' These are students that don't necessarily want to be on stage but still be a part of the process," says Monte. "Three years ago, one of our 'techies,' Alex Snow, now a 9th grader at WHS, started off as a techie in 7th grade. She

decided to audition the next year and got a featured leading role, and then moved on to the high school drama program as a performer, and now she is back running lights for the Middle School show. It is absolutely wonderful to see how that has come full circle."

There are few musical things quite as recognizable as "The Addams Family" theme song. The story of this delightfully dark and twisted family has entertained audiences over the years as they find themselves in plenty of kooky situations. Still, the most interesting part to see is the Addams family dynamic. They have as much love for each other as they have for the macabre, and in every production or film over the years, including this one, that remains true.

"Throughout this process, we have

had so much fun exploring that chaotic, sometimes dysfunctional family dynamic as the Addams navigate several suspiciously normal challenges; I like to say, 'Let's put the fun into Dysfunction,'" says Monte. "As we look through the gothic lens of the Addams, we can see how much we have in common with this gloomy family, and in the same moment, we see them overcome their troubles with an outpouring of love and support," Monte says.

It is fun to introduce the students to this style of humor; there is something for every age.

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INSIGHT

Into the deep freeze

Stepping outdoors at this time of year can be a chilling experience but for me, the coldest conditions that I have ever been in happened to be when I covered sled dog racing in Laconia, New Hampshire for the daily newspaper there.

In a tradition that harkens back to 1929, sled dog teams and mushers gather in Laconia every winter to compete in a three-day race in various classes on a 15-mile course around Lake Opechee and Paugus Bay. Some of the top sled dog racing teams from across the globe compete in what is billed as the “World Championship Sled Dog Derby.”

The first year I worked for the newspaper in Laconia the event was scrubbed because of a lack of snow and ice but by the time the second year rolled around, temperatures dropped below zero and there was plenty of snow to hold the races.

As the editor of the newspaper, I could have assigned a reporter to provide coverage of the sled dog races, but it was something I wanted to do myself. Being a longtime sportswriter, I had watched televised reporting of the 1,000-mile Iditarod sled dog race in Alaska through the years and thought it would be interesting to attend this race in New Hampshire and write about it.

On the day that the Laconia races were to be held, the thermometer started dropping and fell 13 degrees overnight. When I started my car in the newspaper parking lot to drive to the event, it was minus 18 degrees and sunny at 10 a.m.

I had been forewarned to dress warmly and so I was wearing thermal underwear, a heavy sweater, a wool cap, a scarf, gloves, and an insulated parka. But even that combination did not prepare me for spending time interviewing racing participants in that sort of cold.



- JANUARY 10**
- 1812 – The first steamboat on the Ohio River or the Mississippi River arrives in New Orleans just 82 days after departing from Pittsburgh.
 - 1861 – Florida becomes the third state to secede from the U.S. at the start of the Civil War.
 - 1870 – John D. Rockefeller incorporates the Standard Oil Company.
 - 1901 – Oil is discovered at the Spindletop Oil Field in TX.
 - 1911 – Major Jimmie Erickson takes the first photograph from an airplane while flying over San Diego, California.
 - 1946 – The first meeting of the United Nations General Assembly takes place with 51 nations represented.
 - 1984 – Luis Aparicio, Harmon Killebrew and Don Drysdale are elected to the National Baseball Hall of Fame by the Baseball Writers of America Association.
 - 1990 – Time Inc. and Warner Communications Inc. complete a \$14 billion merger, becoming Time Warner.

In under 10 minutes outside, I was told by a race administrator to go back to my car to warm up. He suggested that I conduct interviews and photography for the newspaper in 10-minute stretches, and in the meantime, he told me to leave my car running with the heat turned on and to retreat back there when I needed to warm up.

First off, I decided to interview a racing team musher from Syracuse, New York. He and his wife and son had brought their six-dog team to Laconia for the event. It was the second time they had competed there. He told me that all his dogs were Siberian Huskies, and they had recently replaced the team’s dog harnesses.

He told me that racing sled dogs each wear individual harnesses and then what are called tuglines are attached to those forming a loop which connects to a master gangline for the musher to guide the team. To keep each dog in the proper position, they can also be attached to a neckline for maximum control by the team’s musher.

Not every dog racing team was made up of huskies. I found out that some teams had Samoyeds or Malamutes, while other had Chinooks or German Short-haired Pointers. All the dogs competing on the Syracuse team weighed between 35 and 65 pounds and their lead dog, a huskie named “Bo,” was placed in front because he was the oldest and the strongest of the entire team.

According to the musher, the team had practiced on their farm over the summer and fall. Each of the dogs’ meals were calculated and maintained by a veterinarian to keep their weight under control and to provide the dogs with plenty of power and energy for the racing circuit. This particular team from New York state would travel to events in Illinois and Ohio and throughout New England and Canada every winter to compete in sled dog racing and in six years had won eight different trophies and cash prizes.

They drove to the events each winter in a pickup truck pulling a camper which housed their dogs in crates when they weren’t racing. He said that his dogs weren’t bothered by the cold because they were accustomed to sub-zero temperatures.

I also interviewed a race official who monitored the start of the races. He told me that there were two categories for racing teams with one being for six-dog sleds and the other being “unlimited,” containing between 14 and 16 dogs in each team. Because each race was 15 miles and compiled over three days, he said the winning team was trying to log the best aggregate time accumulated in that time frame.

By the time those interviews were finished, I was absolutely freezing. Despite the layers of clothing I was wearing, the cold still penetrated and each trip back to the car to warm up took longer and longer. I stepped to a position on a snowbank near the starting line and got photographs of dog teams and mushers beginning that day’s race.

Being outside in minus 18-degree weather was not something I would prefer to do again, and it was the coldest I have ever been in my lifetime, but experiencing the sled dog races and writing about it is something I can say can be checked off my bucket list. <

~ Ed Pierce

Inspirational Quote of the Week

“Sometimes we can only find our true direction when we let the wind of change carry us.” – Mimi Novic

ON THE SPOT

What’s the best movie you have watched in the past month?

- “We had a mother and daughter night out and it was totally Wicked.” – Jennifer Harmon
- “Six Triple Eight was amazing. I was in the first groups of WACs who needed to qualify with the M-16 rifle.” – Julie Mallett
- “Speak No Evil.” – Pamela Afthim Wing
- “A Complete Unknown.” – Julie Reilly
- “Wicked.” – Mikha Brown
- “The Six Triple Eight.” – Carolee Parsons Beaulieu
- “My wife and I thought ‘Conclave’ was outstanding and we also liked ‘We Live In Time’ and ‘Juror #2.’” – Ed Pierce
- “Watched an old film from the 1960s called ‘The Lion in Winter’ and thoroughly enjoyed it.” – Oscar F. Kellner
- “Nosferatu was incredibly scary and kept me on the edge of my seat.” – Mariah Williston
- “Took the kids to see Mufasa and it was very good.” – Mia Potenzio-Ransey
- “I recently saw ‘Amadeus’ on Amazon and loved it.” – Anne Glotchshuk
- “Gladiator II.” – Deirdre Schulte
- “On Christmas Day our family watched ‘The Boy and the Heron’ on TV. I thought it was awesome.” – Mitchell Robinson
- “M3GAN.” – Rick Seacroft
- “6 Triple 8 was a fantastic movie.” – Carol L. Hjort
- “My 6-year-old grandson and I saw ‘Sonic the Hedgehog 3’ last weekend. He loved it.” – Dean A. Smalley
- “Babygirl was excellent with Nicole Kidman.” – Isabella Mongon
- “My husband and I watched ‘A Complete Unknown’ and we both enjoyed it.” – Sarah Singer-Miller
- “Mr. McMahon on Netflix. Highly watchable. Learned a lot about professional wrestling.” – Jerry Greene

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'Windham's Got Talent' set to showcase local performers

By Ed Pierce
STAFF WRITER

Simon Cowell probably won't be on hand as a judge, but that's not going to stop Windham residents of all ages from showcasing their abilities during the first-ever "Windham's Got Talent" competition next month.

Designed as a fundraiser to support Windham Middle School activities, "Windham's Got Talent" is open to residents, of any age, who wants to step on stage before an audience and display their aptitude for singing, dancing, magic, playing a musical instrument, juggling, dramatic readings, a comedy skit, or any other creative skill.

The event will be held at 6 p.m. Friday, Feb. 7 at Windham High School's Performing Arts Center.

"Any creative endeavor will do," said WMS seventh grade math teacher Shelly Cook, who is helping to organize the event. "It could even be solving a Rubic's Cube in under 30 seconds. That would sure be something we'd all like to see."

Cook said the talent show organizers see a critical need in funding in Windham for certain school activities such as field trips and other programs and are hoping whatever amount

is raised at the talent show will help serve a need for WMS students.

"We hope to make this an annual event and although we don't know how this first one will turn out, we're excited about the concept and hoping the community will support this," she said.

According to Cook, she became involved in charitable causes more than 30 years ago when her husband, now a retired Maine State Trooper, was asked to bring Christmas gifts for ill children during a visit to Barbara Bush Children's Hospital in Portland as part of the "Hops for Hope" program.

"One boy caught his eye, and he wanted a trooper's hat," Cook said. "It gave him some joy. Years later I asked if we could do something for the school district and we formed 'Dancing with the Staff. Within a year we had raised \$35,000 for the district."

She did that for a few years and said it was fun but eventually that program ended, and Cook thought of what else could be done to help her students.

"We wanted to bring something back to the community," Cook said. "We are looking to create a sense of

community, to bring people together and to showcase our local talent while fundraising and fostering a sense of community spirit."

Cook said organizers believe "Windham's Got Talent" will have a positive impact upon the Windham community and help local residents to create positive and lasting connections with each other.

"This is not just for students," she said. "We are opening this up to anyone of any age and we expect have participants sign up for 'Windham's Got Talent' from all age groups, both young and older."

The competition will include one round and feature a panel of four judges. Richie Vickers will serve as the emcee for the event.

For participants, trophies will be awarded to acts finishing in first, second and third place.

A QR code to sign up to compete has been posted on local community

boards on Facebook or signups may be done by visiting www.bit.ly/windhamsgottalent

Tickets for "Windham's Got Talent" will be \$10 and \$12 for adults and may be purchased at the door on the evening of the competition.

"We invite everyone from the community to come out and see some amazing performers that night and support our school," Cook said. "It's going to be a lot of fun and at the same time will benefit our amazing students."

If you would like more information about "Windham's Got Talent," send an email to Cook at: scook@rsu14.org



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Chamber's Annual Meeting and Dinner celebrates achievements

By Kaysa Jalbert
STAFF WRITER

The 2025 Sebago Lakes Region Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting and Awards Dinner will foster the theme Seeds of Growth, implying a focus on fostering development, progress, and the nurturing of new ideas, initiatives, and relationships within the organization and community, says SLRCC President and CEO Amber Rankine.

The meeting will host special guest speaker Diane Dunton Bruni, Board Chair and President of Sebago Lakes Region Fuller Center for Housing.

“The theme “Seeds of Growth” implies a focus on fostering development, both personally and collectively, with a forward-looking approach that values continuous improvement and sustainable progress,” Rankine said. “The metaphor of seeds emphasizes the importance of planting the right foundations and cultivating an environment where growth can take root and flourish over time.”

The chamber’s annual meeting and awards dinner will be held from 4:30 to

8 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 16 at Camp Sunshine, 35 Acadia Road in Casco. It will begin with a social hour and a welcome, followed by a meal and a guest speaker and then the presentation of awards for 2024.

Rankine said that the 2024 Businessperson of the Year Award will go to Hayley Moon. This award recognizes an individual or business operating in our region that has set an example in leadership, innovation and quality, and/or has provided noteworthy economic opportunity to the people of the Sebago Lakes Region.

The Community Leadership Awards will be presented to two recipients. Timothy Graham of Modern Woodman and a posthumous award to Lyle Merrifield of Merrifield Farm. This award recognizes a civic-minded individual or group that has made a significant contribution to the quality of life in the Sebago Lakes Region. Rankine said that nominees for Community Leadership Awards should be passionate about a cause, work tirelessly for the greater good and inspire others to become in-

involved in their community, and are not required to be a chamber member.

Lastly, the Frank Koenig Chamber Hall of Fame will be presented to Sandy Donnelly posthumously. This highly distinguished honor is presented to an individual whose commitment of time, resources and talent have made the Sebago Lakes Region a better place to pursue one’s livelihood and dreams.

Rankine said that Frank Koenig was passionate about the Chamber and worked tirelessly for the betterment of our region and his local Chamber of Commerce. Like Frank, she said Donnelly was passionate and an active contributor to the Sebago Lakes Region Chamber of Commerce and made an impact on the Chamber and the local community while maintaining the highest integrity.

This year, the Chamber will install four new Board Members and a new Treasurer during the annual meeting.

New Board Members include Tom Nash of Windham Adult Education to replace Michael Paradise, Denise Clavate of the Town of Gray to replace Laurie Noel, John Daniel of Edwards Jones to replace Pete Neelon and Lindsay Drumm of Saint Joseph’s College to replace Shelli Pride. The terms of Paradise, Noel, Neelon and Pride have expired. The new Treasurer will be Sara Thomas of Androscoggin Bank, replacing Maxwell Bangs. Also retiring from the chamber board this year are Joe Mclean and Maureen Lasalle.

“The annual meeting for the Sebago Lakes Region Chamber of Commerce serves as a gathering for local business

owners, community leaders, and stakeholders,” said Rankine. “It’s an opportunity to network, discuss key issues, and look back on the achievements of this past year while planning for the future.”

Rankin says the Chamber plans to enhance community engagement, support local businesses, and strengthen the organization’s presence and influence in 2025.

This year’s annual meeting and awards dinner sponsors include Sabre Yachts as the Happy Hour Sponsor, CCFCU as the Music Sponsor, Saint Joseph’s College as the Award Plaques Sponsor, and this year’s Signature Sponsor is Maine Community Bank.

Rankine has been President and Chief Executive Officer of the Sebago Lakes Region Chamber since Oct. 1, succeeding Robin Mullins in the leadership position for the Chamber. She previously served as the Executive Director at the Greater Fort Kent Area Regional Chamber of Commerce.

“So far it has been an amazing community, I have already made such amazing connections, and I am looking forward to the growth of those connections and continuing to build those new relationships in 2025,” says Rankine.

The Sebago Lakes Region Chamber of Commerce was launched 60 years ago by a group of innovative business owners and was called the North Windham Business Association. It is now made up of 14 Board Directors and seven officers whose mission is to foster economic growth and prosperity throughout the region. <

Casco Bay Cremation Services James (Jip) Edward O’Brien



STANDISH – James (Jip) Edward O’Brien, 76, passed away on January 1, 2025, at his home, surrounded by his loving family.

James was born on January 13, 1948, in Portland, the son of Robert F. and Emilda (Eliason) O’Brien.

He was a 1966 graduate of Windham High School, where he served as Captain of the basketball team. Along with his teammates, he won the 1966 State Triple C Championship.

After high school, he attended Loyola College in Montreal, Canada, graduating summa cum laude in 1970. While at Loyola, he was a proud member of the Phi Kappa Beta Fraternity, which he was initiated into on January 19, 1969.

On May 10, 1969, James married his beloved wife and best friend, Sandra Goodwin, beginning a journey that would span an incredible 55 and a half years. Their love story began when they were just 12 years old, blossoming into a bond marked by unwavering commitment and deep devotion. Together, they shared a lifetime of joy, support, and cherished memories.

James spent many years in sales, working for U-Haul, Ryder, and C.A. Turner. He also worked as an overnight manager at Wal-Mart.

He was a loving and supportive person to everyone he met, always willing to help others in need. His devotion to his family was unwavering, and he cherished any opportunity to be with them. He also enjoyed snowmobiling and was an avid fan of crossword puzzles. He also was a life time fan of the New England Patriots and the Boston Red Sox.

James also cherished his dog Mollie who was his best friend and companion.

James was predeceased by his brother, David R. O’Brien Sr.

He is survived by his loving and devoted wife, Sandra (Goodwin) O’Brien; one son, Scott O’Brien; and one daughter, Kelly O’Brien Cross and her husband, Michael Cross. He is also survived by his sister, Kathy O’Brien, and his sisters-in-law, Beckie (and her husband, John Lawrence), and Kim (and her husband, Andy Moyen), as well as one brother-in-law, Douglas Goodwin. Additionally, he leaves behind four grandchildren: Morgan, Mallorie, Zachary, and Marleigh.

James is also survived by his nephew, David R. O’Brien, who looked up to James as a father figure. They shared a close connection, and James was deeply committed to being there for David.

A celebration of Life will be held in the Spring/Early Summer.

If friends or family wish to make a memorial contribution, it can be made in James’s name to the Animal Refuge League of Greater Portland, PO Box 336, Westbrook, ME 04098, or by visiting www.arlgo.org/memorial. Or to the Standish Rescue (175 Northeast Road Standish, ME 04084) for their extremely compassionate care they provided to James, his family is deeply grateful to them.

To share memories of James or to leave his family an online condolence, please visit www.cascobaycremation.com.

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Cyclists gear up for 2025 rides to support Fuller Center

By Masha Yurkevich

STAFF WRITER

Winter isn't usually a time that Maine cyclists love to be out riding, but for two Windham residents it's a perfect time to begin preparations for lengthy charity rides they will undertake this year.

For Diane Dunton Bruni and Bill Turner, taking pledges to ride and support the Sebago Lakes Region Fuller Center for Housing which is dedicated to helping families of older residents in the Lakes Region to stay in their homes.

As Board Chair and President of the Sebago Lakes Region Fuller Center, Dunton Bruni says community support is crucial for what the organization does and the families it serves through home repairs and individual projects throughout the year.

In leading by example in taking pledges for each mile that she rides this winter, Dunton Bruni says she's helping to spread the word about the Fuller Center's mission and engaging with volunteers.

Having community support is critical to success in helping the families the Fuller Center serves.

"In 2024, we helped 20 families with 1,150 volunteer hours repairing roofs, building ramps, adding handrails, and various other projects," Dunton Bruni said. "Since we started doing projects in 2020 during COVID, we have completed 63 projects for 78 families and 4,436 volunteer hours."

This year, Dunton Bruni is cycling with the Home Team as part of the

Fuller Center Bike Adventure.

"For the past few years, I have ridden in different parts along the East coast," she says. "This year, I will cycle, hike or walk 800 miles locally to raise \$3,000 for materials for home repairs."

Despite setting her goal, Dunton Bruni said she would be delighted if she could raise that number to \$5,000.

"All of my funds I raise stay local," she says. "People have two basic needs: food and shelter. The families we serve are the motivation to keep me going. When I learn about a senior, veteran or a person who is disabled and in need of repairs for their home, basic shelter, for safety reasons, I am humbled. Being able to help a family is a privilege for me."

Bill Turner is also gearing up to help raise money for the Sebago Lakes Region Fuller Center for Housing later this year. Many years ago, Turner used to participate in the Trek across Maine with his bike and his children.

"At some point in 2017, I decided to see if I could bike across the country," Turner says. "I began to look for trips and came across the Fuller Center Bike Adventure, and so I signed up for a trip from San Francisco to Santa Fe to see how my body would react."

Along the way, bikers are asked to participate in projects for the national Fuller Center.

"I am not used to asking people for money, but for such as good cause as the Fuller Center Bike Adventure, it seemed like the right thing to do," Turner said.

In 2018, he decided to ride across the country with the Bike Adventure, and signed up for a ride from Portland, Oregon, to Portland, Maine. He managed to ride the entire distance.

Turner has had a lot going on since then. Two years ago, he learned that he had cancer. After getting it removed, he has tested cancer-free ever since. He also had his shoulder replaced a year and a half ago, from which he has recovered and is doing well, and recently had another shoulder surgery just three weeks ago.

Still, Turner was able to ride 1,000 miles in three weeks in 2024 from Seattle, Washington, to Salt Lake City, Utah.

This year Turner has decided that he will be undertaking an epic bicycle ride at home to give his body a bit of a rest. He plans to ride and hike on his

own in 2025, often accompanied by his rescue dog Tucker, with a personal goal of raising \$10,000 this year and riding 1,000 miles.

According to Turner, he currently hikes about two miles a day, as his shoulder is still recovering. He will soon switch out his fat bike with studded tires to his road bicycle and will also begin doing 5-mile hikes.

"The community has always helped our local riders accomplish their goals and help others throughout our country," Turner said.

To assist Dunton and Turner reach their 2025 fundraising goals, send a check donation payable to "The Fuller Center for Housing" with the rider's name in the memo line and mail them to Attn: Bike Adventure, The Fuller Center for Housing, PO Box 523, Americus, GA 31709. <



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Raymond launches beginner pickleball program

By Kendra Raymond

STAFF WRITER

With the winter doldrums kicking into high gear, what could be better than a bit of physical activity, making acquaintances, and a chance to learn a new skill? Raymond Parks and Recreation Department might have the perfect solution to boost your spirits.

The Pickleball Intro and Skills & Drills program provides a great opportunity to escape the house and get active. Maybe you're a beginner or just curious about pickleball. If you're even a little interested in pickleball, but don't know where to start, this program is for you.

Meeting once a week, the program aims to teach the basics of pickleball, helps improve your skills, plus you can meet other players and make some social connections. Participants

can learn the rules and strategies, and work on some drills to develop skills.

Raymond Parks and Recreation Director Joseph Crocker said that the beginners' program was developed to cater to people who have never played pickleball before.

"The addition of Skills & Drills into our pickleball program focuses on a different type of player who wants to work up to playing games with a partner," he said. "It is a more leisurely pace where they can build the skills needed for intermediate and advanced levels. It is less competitive and allows people to learn comfortably."

So what is all this pickleball hype, you might ask?

People love pickleball because it is great physical exercise, requires strategy, and is very social. The game is fairly inexpensive compared to other



Raymond Parks and Recreation is now offering pickleball five nights a week with games for players beginner to advanced. Visit raymond.recdesk.com for more information. SUBMITTED PHOTO

sports, as you can find pickleball paddles under \$100 and most courts are free to play on."

The rules are as follows:

"On the first game, losers sit and winners stay for one more game; After that players rotate out after 2 games. Play to 11 points unless there are people waiting to come into play, then play will be to 9 points. Any ball that hits the basketball nets/backboards, that was clearly going to be in play otherwise, is a replay. Any ball

that hits the rafters or ceiling is out of bounds. Players may step over the service line on all serves. On nights that are full there will be a separate winners and losers group after play. 4 new players from these groups will rotate in alternatively."

Raymond Rec pickleball is taught by Crocker, and Donna Morton. The Intro Skills & Drills program is coordinated by Roger Bennett.

The Raymond pickleball scene has grown to become popular with events running five nights a week.

"We've just been so inundated with participants. We are hoping this new level will help with organization in the program," said Crocker.

The Raymond Parks and Rec website lists the following schedule for pickleball: Mondays - Intermediate/Advanced Play; Tuesday - Beginner/Intermediate Play; Wednesdays - Beginner/Leisurely Play; Thursdays - Intermediate/Advanced Play; Fridays - Pickleball Intro & Skills

Beginner Pickleball Intro Skills & Drills will be held at the Raymond Elementary School gym from 6 to 8 p.m. on Fridays. Sessions are limited to adult players 25 and over.

To learn more, check out Raymond Parks and Recreation on Facebook or Instagram. To register go to: raymond.recdesk.com/Community/Program

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TALES FROM THE OUTDOORS

Deer-less in Raymond

► **By Bob Chapin**
SPECIAL TO THE WINDHAM EAGLE



— Bob Chapin, Columnist

Well, another deer season has passed, and this writer is still without a deer. I am beginning to think that if our family is to have any venison in the freezer, I better work out an arrangement with the Animal Control Officer to see if I can claim a recent roadkill deer!

It is not as though I haven't had any opportunities though. Through poor planning on my part, I scheduled some family travel out west to visit my sons and grandchildren during most, but not all, of the deer season. On the days I was home to hunt, the weather was ugly many of the days or I had must-do "Honey-dos."

Sounds like whining to me.

By the time I got to it, it was muzzleloader season. Fortunately, I have had a muzzleloader for about 20 years and though I have carried it afield during the restricted seasons. I never had a shot opportunity – until this

year. Muzzleloaders fall into the "primitive weapons" category of firearms for a reason. They require a little more planning and foresight than a modern rifle where you can simply load a complete shell, and you are ready to go.

With a muzzleloader, you actually build the round in the rifle. First, with a measured load of black powder, then with a ramrod you force a bullet down the barrel on top of the powder. When you get where you're going to hunt, then you add a percussion cap in the breech of the rifle (the end toward you) and you are ready to go. Skip any of those steps and you do not have an operational gun.

Additionally, when you are done hunting or at the range you cannot



simply unload the bullet, you must fire the gun to make it safe for transport or storage.

I already had a couple of deer stands, or elevated platforms allowing the hunter to conceal his or her presence and scent by positioning themselves 1- to 18 feet above the forest floor. However, there was a good

piece of this property that I planned to hunt that I did not have coverage for, so I bought a new stand at Cabela's.

I underestimated what it would take to put this new stand together. This thing had more nuts and bolts and straps and bars than my grandson's Erector set. It took me a whole day to assemble it in my shop. It took a half-day to get it positioned in the woods with my wife's grateful help.

On the fateful day I was ensconced in the stand before legal daylight with all the anticipation you can image. After a couple of hours of listening and watching the woods wake up, I heard the telltale sounds of a larger animal moving through the crusted snow behind me. I leaned around the corner and saw a doe with not one, not two, but three large bucks trailing right behind her.

The first buck was very close to her,

→ see OUTDOORS Page 9

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→ DOGS *Cont. from page 1*

ham to promote the effort. "The Legion, Legion Auxiliary, and Sons of the American Legion posts across the state are hoping to raise funds to sponsor the cabin where veterans will stay to learn how to use their new service dog and bond with the dog as well as earmark funds to help make the fully trained service dogs free to veterans in need," Gardner said.

According to Gardner, it takes Mission Working Dogs about two years to train the dogs to their standard as they work toward international accreditation.

"Every dog gets a minimum of 120 hours of training in our owner-trained program and typically at least 2,000 hours for the fully trained dogs we provide," she said. "Those dogs master at least 59 commands to

help with mobility assistance and/or PTSD."

Mission Working Dogs selects puppies with the best health possible to train as service dogs.

"We start them as puppies, so they have the right exposure to different stimuli at a young age and use early neurological stimulation to make more resilient dogs who have a drive to work and the temperament to be caring, balanced and tailored to the individual's needs and interests," Gardner said.

Gardner says that service dogs can assist those with physical disabilities to accomplish tasks normally taken for granted such as fetching dropped items, opening doors, and turning lights on and off. During her presentation, she said the trained dogs can assist people suffering from PTSD to recognize increases in anxiety, carry an individual's medications, and pro-

vide deep-pressure therapy to calm or redirect the dog handler.

She said that some dogs who are working as facility dogs are often trained to recognize a patient's affected side in the case of a stroke and to approach them on the side the patient pets the animal with or to throw a ball. Through this, Gardner said that patients can work on developing fine motor skill movements used in petting or caring for the dog.

Dogs are trained at the Mission Working Dogs facility Mission and typically takes about two years as the dogs undergo assessments of their physical health, temperament, and whether they can perform necessary tasks or skills to make sure they can

properly support their handler.

Establishing Mission Working Dogs is something Gardner takes immense pride in.

"It's changing lives," she said. "It's incredible to see how freeing a service dog can be for the handler but also the farther-reaching impacts that dog has on the family, friends, and sometimes even the whole community where they live."

As a 501c3 nonprofit organization, Gardner said the public is able to support Mission Working Dogs through donations which can be on their website at: www.missionworkingdogs.org or by mailing them to Mission Working Dogs, 152 Moxie's Place, Oxford, ME 04270. <



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Maine CASA prepares for next training sessions

For those interested in advocating for the best interests of a child, the Maine Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) Program will conduct its next training sessions for volunteer advocates from March 10 to March 14.

This free five-day training session is designed to prepare participants for certification as volunteer guardians ad litem in child protection cases. CASA trainee volunteers may participate virtually via ZOOM or in person.

The in-person training sessions are held in Augusta and accommodations may be available for participants.

The foundation of a CASA's work is to learn about the case and then provide advice to the court about what a CASA believes is in the child's best interest. CASAs come from a wide variety of professional and personal backgrounds and are guided throughout the entire process by CASA Program staff members.

Last year hundreds of children in Maine had a volunteer CASA who served as the child's voice in court. Right now, there are more foster children than CASAs. If you have a big heart and are willing to speak up for a Maine child, you are invited to apply

to become a CASA.

Volunteers who wish to participate in the training sessions must be at least 21 years of age and have a high school diploma or a HiSET equivalent. You do not need special training other than what CASA provides. Along with completing an application, you will need to provide three references, attend and complete the CASA training sessions and you must also successfully complete all criminal and Child Protective Services background checks.

CASA guardian ad litem are responsible, caring adults working on behalf of the children while their parents' cases move through the child welfare system.

The CASA guardian ad litem builds a relationship with a child. During the child protection case, the CASA is one of the few consistent adults in the child's life and for that reason the volunteer advocate's recommendations are important and significant to the court.

For further information and details about becoming a CASA volunteer, call CASA at 207-213-2865 or send an email to casa@courts.maine.gov

OUTDOORS *Cont. from page 7*

and they never slowed down, gradually moving out of range. The other two bucks, who were approximately the same size with at least six antler points each, stopped right behind me. I could not believe my good fortune!

As a right-handed shooter it took a while to reposition and get my rifle pointed at the second buck. I had the crosshairs settled right on his rib cage as I was allowing for my elevated position and the location of his vitals. Mentally, I was already frying up his loin steaks when I squeezed the trigger.

Imagine my surprise when all I heard was the short report of the percussion cap only – no black powder and no bullet – I had forgotten to load

the rifle. Of course, at the sound, and the appearance of a large white cloud of smoke the second deer was off like a shot.

For reasons known only to him, the last deer did not move but continued to feed on something he found enticing at his feet. Not one to pass up an opportunity, I thought just maybe I could get this muzzle loader loaded while he still stood there. Well, I got the powder in and the bullet in and just got the cap in when he couldn't stand it anymore and bolted up the hill.

My chance for a deer this year went with him.

So, for reasons that were all my fault, another year passes without a deer. Hope you had better luck! <

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ENOUGH'S ENOUGH: COLLECT MEMORIES, NOT STUFF

► **By Michelle Cote**
SPECIAL TO THE WINDHAM EAGLE



— Michelle Cote, Columnist

New year, new gander at our old friend, “Minimalism.”

It's effortlessly easy to accrue physical items in our home with four young children.

And it's all the easier to find legitimate reasons to prioritize other, timely life things that render us unable to pause our family-of-six world and sort and toss all the donatable things.

My husband and I are aspirational minimalists, but not as disciplined in practice as we'd like to be. Yet, on occasion we do try to bring our mantra to top of mind: 'Our memories aren't in our things but inside ourselves'.

We also understand that storage is oftentimes organized clutter – Why keep purposeless items in boxes 'just in case'?

In case of what?

There have been events in our lives that forced our hand to downsize – Impending births of baby boys, moves, home renovations, pre-Christmas purges. But still – Life accumulates, manifesting itself a trail of breadcrumbs and Hot Wheels cars and LEGO sets and sweet-potato-spit-up-laden onesies and puzzles.

Therein lies the tougher part of said downsizing task – Convincing our little ones to be on board with decluttering; donating items they no longer play

with to make room for the new and trusted and true favorites.

In the spirit of sustainability, our family does repurpose what we can – torn clothing that's gone through four boys and is beyond repair sometimes has solid fabric pieces for patches or canning covers. Gift bags in good shape are neatly folded and sorted for reuse – The purpose of downsizing is not to unnecessarily buy new stuff. Au contraire, mes amies.

I often tell my children, 'Close your eyes and picture your dream bedroom. I bet it's not filled with junk.'

As much as it's hard for adults to let go, it's harder for children to do so – Sentimental attachment to knick-knacks runs deep.

But knick-knack, paddywhack, give these toys a home at the local Goodwill.

One tactic we've used with moderate success is convincing our children that toys we donate will be appreciated and loved by new families.

Toys that aren't worth re-bestowing because they've worn out their wear are trashed or recycled.

At the end of these conversations, oftentimes we parents are the ones who are worn out.

Always a work in progress but baby steps.

And speaking of babies – Each time I was expecting a new little guy, I'd pore over their stored baby totes, shocked at how much I'd saved that wasn't needed – Really, 20 hooded towels? – which thus gave me a perfect opportunity to declutter boxes of my own during each

nesting phase.

How much do we really, truly need?

As a culture, we strangely associate our 'stuff' net worth with personal worth.

We fill our homes with stuff, stuff, and more stuff, enough linens and dishes and kitchen tools to provision a hotel, in addition to our family at hand.

When bored, we hoard.

We forget that what truly counts – what is most memorable are one's life experiences, not things once owned.

Consider this, then read on for itchy statistics –

According to Becoming Minimalist, the average American home has tripled in size over the past 50 years, yet still 1 in 10 Americans rent offsite storage.

25 percent of Americans with two-car garages don't have room to park cars inside of them.

Nearly half of American households don't save any money but consume twice as many material goods today as were expended 50 years ago.

And over the course of an average American's lifetime, a total of 3,680 hours is spent searching for misplaced items. This research found that up to nine items are lost every day – 198,743 in a lifetime.

We forget how freeing a decluttered life can be – Organization is wonderful but having less to organize is all the more tremendous. Associated costs of your time with maintaining such a volume of paraphernalia can be reduced.

Again, baby steps.

One room at a time, one shelf at a

time. Toss, donate, recycle.

Items saved should be kept with a true and understood purpose.

As for items to be rid of, there are more creative ways to accomplish this than yard sale days of old.

Items in good condition can be sold – or offered free – via a simple social media post.

Our boys recently took it upon themselves to sell several DVDs and CDs they no longer use in exchange for some spending money by selling them to a local music store.

We are frequent fliers to our hometown library – a magnificent way to meet one's needs for free, then return the borrowed item without the burden of having to store the items oneself.

Baby steps.

We're making efforts daily to get rid of things we know we don't need; digital clutter included. We remind ourselves that our memories are inside us, not inside our things.

We get out and go on adventures, the best of which don't cost us a thing, such as exploring trails and nearby parks and beaches.

And so we imperfectly try, daily, to work on collecting memories – not stuff.

Makes you wonder whether consumer “goods” really are all that good.

Now if you'll excuse me, I've got another Goodwill run to make. I've just come across an unnecessarily large pile of more hooded towels. As for those baby food-stained onesies – Into the trash they go. <

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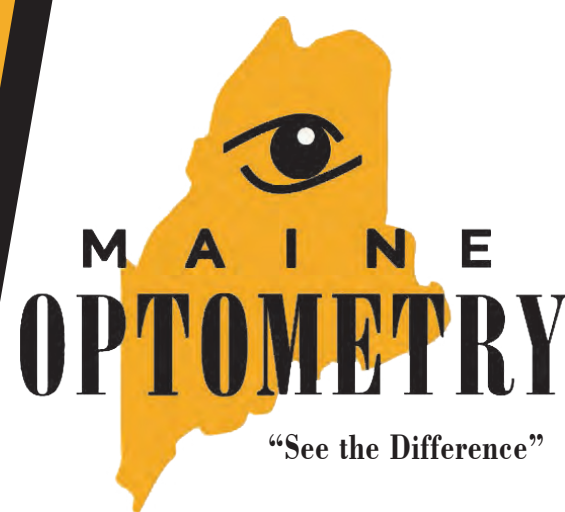


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What's in a name?

► **By Andy Young**
SPECIAL TO THE WINDHAM EAGLE



— Andy Young, Columnist

I have never played a round of golf in my life, aside from the miniature variety.

Yet every year when I hang up a new calendar, I can't help recalling my youth, and a specific professional golfer whose name appeared in the agate type on the sports page every weekend when the newspapers reliably printed the results of whatever tournament was taking place.

Don January won ten tour events during his days on the PGA (Professional Golfers Tour). I didn't know anything about him, or any other golfer other than Jack Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer, and Gary Player, for that matter. But I quietly rooted for him, because who else had a month for a surname? Maybe there were other golfers with months for last names, but if there were, I never heard of them, so they don't count.

A few other months serve as surnames for accomplished individuals. Fredric March won Academy Awards for Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (1932) and The Best Years of our Lives (1946). Elaine May is a much-decorated writer, director, producer, actor, and comedian, and the world in general and baseball in particular has been fraught with people named May. Lee May and Carlos May were brothers. Dave May and Derrick May were father and son, as were Merrill "Pinky" May and Milt May. Fun fact: Milt and

Lee, though not related, were Houston Astros teammates in 1974. Other baseball-playing Mays, past and present, include Rudy, Jerry, Trevor, Darrell, Jakie, Lucas, Scott, Joe, Jacob, and Buckshot. However, aside from all the Mays, Don August, a Milwaukee Brewer pitcher from 1988-1991, is the only other major league ballplayer with a month for a last name. Sorry, Yankee fans, but "October" isn't Reggie Jackson's real last name.

Do any other months qualify as surnames? According to the website imdb.com, there are currently people in the entertainment industry named Luran September, Teddo November, and C. J. December. However, since I've never heard of them, they also don't count. And I don't feel guilty about omitting them, since to my knowledge Luran, Teddo, and C. J. haven't put me on any random lists they're compiling, either.

People named for days of the week names seemingly outnumber those with month names. Rick Monday played 19 seasons of Major League Baseball. Tuesday Weld was active as an actress from 1955 to 2001, winning a Golden Globe Award along the way. Although little Wednesday was fictional (as was her brother Pugsley), she was nonetheless an important member of the creepy, kooky, mysterious and spooky Addams family. A similarly fictitious day-of-the-week name from the classic TV era was Dragnet's Sergeant Joe Friday. However, those preferring people who actually existed can cite Bill Friday, a much-decorated National Hockey League referee who was the first president of the NHL's Officials



Association. Jeff Saturday spent 14 seasons as a National Football League offensive lineman before transitioning to a position as a sports analyst for ESPN. However, the best professional conversion ever performed by someone with a day of the week for a last name was by a man who, after playing

eight seasons of major league baseball switched over to a field far more appropriate for someone named Billy Sunday: he became a nationally known evangelist.

There are, of course, odder things than having a word on the calendar for a last name. Besides comedian Orson Bean, film producer Albert Broccoli, and author/journalist David Corn, there aren't many celebrated people with a vegetable surname.

But if there are actually people named Joe Cucumber, Mary Potato, or Pat Mushroom, well, they don't count either, because I've never heard of them. <

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→ **PLAY** *Cont. from page 1*

“This really is an incredible group of young people,” says Monte.

This show is a double-cast for the leading roles, which means that two children play the same character, but do it differently; it does give more students a chance to perform and more responsibility.

“I enjoy theater it is an opportunity to be someone who is not you, and you learn a lot about who you are from that,” says Rylee Robinson, eighth grader, who plays Wednesday Addams.

Eighth grader Mia Quigley, who plays also Wednesday Addams, says that one of her biggest challenges in her role is maintaining a dark, angry,

and I-hate-everything attitude for her character.

“Our director April is amazing,” says eighth grader Annabelle Riley, who also plays Morticia Addams. “She sees our potential and helps you be the best you can be.”

Eighth grader Autumn Avery who also plays Morticia Addam, says that one of the hardest things in this play is keeping a straight face.

“When you are not allowed to laugh, everything gets twice as funny,” says Avery.

There are a lot of parent volunteers and local businesses that are donating

their time and materials to make this show happen.

“We could not be able to put on this show without them,” says Monte.

Tickets for “The Addams Family” are \$14 for adults, and \$12 for students and seniors and will be available at the door prior to performances.

“Please come support these hard-working students,” says Monte. “Every person in a seat makes all of our team so proud and excited to make you be a part of our show with a mission to make you smile. You will understand that when you see the show.” <

STUDENT OF THE WEEK **Autumn Avery**



Grade: 8 **School:** Windham Middle School
Teacher: Team Shawnee
Favorite subject in school: English Language Arts
Parents' names: Michael Avery and Kerry Ellen Avery
Reason for selection: Autumn Avery is receiving Student of the Week honors for her kindness, diligence, and academic conscientiousness. Autumn is always willing to help her peers whether it is someone who needs a smile or help with a math problem. She cares about doing well and getting her work done in a genuine way that supports the learning of all students. She shows integrity every day and really emulates all four of our core values at WMS. Her curiosity and openness are unparalleled as she constantly displays a growth mindset. Autumn leads by example with her dependable and gentle nature, and Team Shawnee is better for having her as part of it.

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BRIEFS

Yoga class

The free Vinyasa Yoga series is back January to March and is offered from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. every Saturday in the Meeting Room at the Windham Public Library. While familiarity with yoga is of benefit, all levels are welcome. Bring a mat and block(s), and access through the side entrance. FMI, or to reserve a class spot send an email: ambercaron@yahoo.com

Caregivers meeting

The Windham Cancer Support group will be holding a Caregivers-only meeting at 6:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 13 at the Windham Public Library. All caregivers are welcome to attend. FMI, email: coppjanet@yahoo.com

Veterans' Health

Michael Labbe, the My HealtheVet coordinator for Maine, will be visiting the Veterans Coffee at the Windham Veterans Center from 9 to 11 a.m. Wednesday, Jan. 15 and will be available to answer VA health questions as

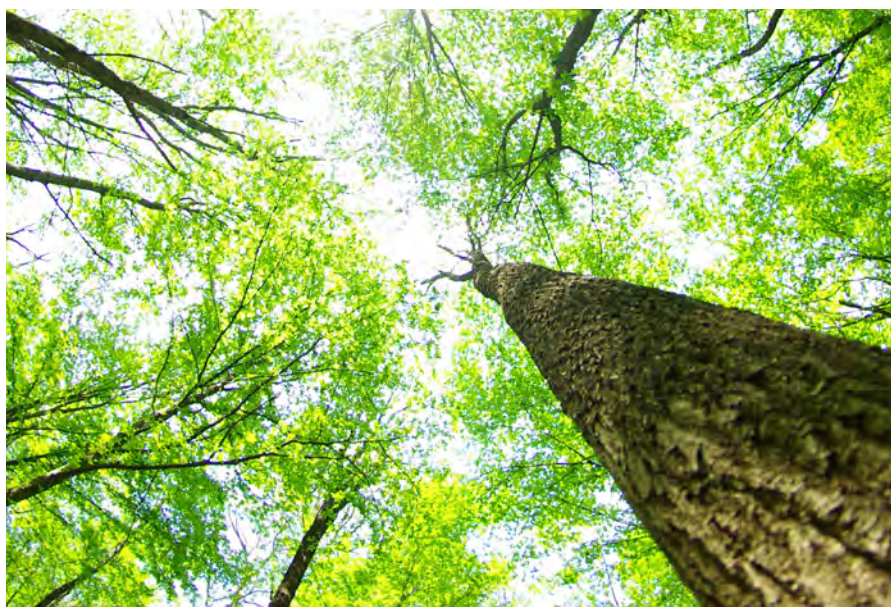
well as assist any veterans in the community in logging on to their "login.gov" website. FMI, call 207-512-6983.

A Family Undertaking

The Windham Public Library will host a showing of “A Family Undertaking” from 10 a.m. to noon on Friday, Jan. 17. The film explores the growing home funeral movement. FMI, call 207-892-1908, Ext. 5 or rmarcotte@windham-maine.us. Transportation may be available from Age Friendly Windham by calling 207-892-4649.

Bean Supper

American Legion Field-Allen Post 148 will hosts its first bean supper of 2025 at 4:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 18 at the Windham Veterans Center. All are welcome. There will also be a homemade cake and pie auction to benefit the Auxiliary Scholarship program for 2025. The menu will include a variety of beans, chili, salads, and other side dishes. Cost is \$10. Children under 12 eat for free. FMI, call 207-892-1306.



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Eagle SPORTS



WHS basketball opens 2025 with back-to-back wins

By Matt Pascarella

STAFF WRITER

After the Windham varsity girls' basketball team held off Gorham and secured a 41-40 win, the Windham varsity boys' basketball team took the court on Thursday, Jan. 2 at Windham against Gorham with intensity and remained undefeated after an impressive 78-48 win over its arch rival.

"Guys were excited to play; we looked at film from that first matchup (with Gorham) and saw a lot of things we could have done differently," said Windham varsity boys' basketball coach Chad Pulkkinen. "They executed and defense was strong. When that happens, I think we get good opportunities. I just think the energy was high – guys were ready to play them again ... we thought we could play better, and they certainly came out with that attitude. We talk to the kids everyday about proving it to ourselves. We're playing against ourselves really, the standard that we're trying to hold our kids to. We want to try to play our best basketball ... and are laser focused on each day. As cliché as that is, they are looking to win each day, to gain something for that next opportunity to play. Decision making and full court passing was a little bit weak tonight, we had some lapses on defense; we're not going to play a perfect game, but we can at least chase it, and chasing it is making great decisions, playing free. They made up for that with effort and creating mistakes for (Gorham). I'm real proud of the guys, they did it together."

Windham took the court with force and had several solid turnovers. They rebounded well and had a small



(L to R) Windham senior Conor Janvrin goes up for a layup during a boys' prep basketball game against Gorham at Windham High School on Thursday, Jan. 2. Senior Lukas Hammond scores late in the game. Senior Joseph Blige won't be stopped as he heads to the hoop. PHOTOS BY MATT PASCARELLA

lead to begin from there that lead would only grow. Windham junior AJ Moody had a three-pointer in the first quarter. Senior Conor Janvrin sunk a three-pointer in the second quarter. By the second quarter, Windham had built a 10-point lead; their defense was unrelenting. Windham sophomore Colin Janvrin hit a three-pointer and the Eagles just kept running up the scoreboard and at the half led, 39-23.

"I feel like we did a good job, guys came off the bench, they helped a lot," said Windham senior Joseph Blige. "Everybody contributed, I feel like we did a great job as a team today; defense in the second half was pretty great. Our energy was really high ... we just got to business."

The second half began with no slowdown in speed or loss of power for Windham. Less than three minutes

into the half, Windham's lead grew to 20 as junior AJ Moody knocked down a three-pointer, then Tyrie James followed suit.

At the start of the fourth quarter, Windham's lead was simply out of reach for Gorham. Windham senior Braycen Freese sank a three-pointer. Despite its massive lead, Windham did not let up and their defense remained intense.

High scorers in the game for Windham were senior Creighty Dickson with 17-points, Conor Janvrin with 15, James with 11, and Moody with 10.

"The team energy (led to the win)," said Conor Janvrin, who scored 15-points and four rebounds in the game. "The team is there to pick us up; the approach was go out there and win – (Gorham) is a well-coached team, they are a great team ... we did our best, went out there and played our game. Our energy was really

good, our teamwork, and executing our gameplan went really well. What needs work is we take a lot of contested shots, and rebounding." <



Junior AJ Moody dunks the ball.

ATHLETE OF THE WEEK



Paige Leveille

Age: 13 **Team:** JSMS girls' basketball
Coach: Andrew Wing
Parents' names: Kate and Jason Leveille
Reason for selection: Paige has been a standout player for JSMS from the very start of the season. As the team's starting point guard, she plays a critical role on both ends of the court. Offensively, she can shoot from beyond the arc, attack the basket, and distribute the ball with precision. Defensively, she's a force to be reckoned with regularly racking up steals and blocks. Beyond her on-court abilities, Paige stands out because of her leadership, positive attitude, and strong work ethic. She consistently communicates on the court, cheers on her teammates, and sets the tone with her hustle and effort. She is someone her teammates look up to because she leads by example. She's a player her team can rely on in any situation.

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Indoor track and field excels in USM Invitational

By Matt Pascarella

STAFF WRITER

To kick off 2025, Windham's indoor track and field team participated in the University of Southern Maine's New Year's Invitational on Saturday, Jan. 4 where they competed against schools in Class A, B, C, and D as well as schools from New Hampshire.

Two Windham athletes placed very high in the meet's Pentathlon, an event that consists of the 55-meter hurdles, the high jump, shot put, long jump, the 800-meter for the girls and the 1000-meter for the boys. Senior Tayla Pelletier finished first for the girls with a mark of 2947 and senior Carter Engelman finished second for the boys with a mark of 2902.

Boys

"My only prior experience with multi-events was a decathlon from last year, and since I enjoyed that kind of competition then I figured I should try it again," said Engelman. "Also, times when I can compete in this kind of event are rare and I'd figure I'd make the best of this chance. I was very satisfied with my performance as it was a result of the hard work I've put in this year so far. I had four (personal records) in the five events in the pentathlon as well and I'm extremely happy with how I performed."

Junior Mason Arbour finished fifth in the pentathlon with a score of 2587.

In the 55-dash, junior Karl Longstreth finished sixth with a 6.70-second time. In the 200, he finished fifth with a time of 23.65; both personal records for him.

Senior Rory Good finished seventh in the 55-hurdles with a time of 8.48; a new personal record.

According to Good, competing in the Invitational was fun and he likes getting to run against some of the fastest people in and out of the state. Some things that went well for Good were his blocks felt better than they usually do, and he did well with the nerves and really focused in on the race. He said he needs to work on his turnover between the hurdles which is what is really slowing him down.

Junior Nick Verrill had a height of 5-06.00 feet in the high jump.

"We decided to use this meet to ... see how we could perform against top performers from all over Maine and



(L to R) Windham senior Rory Good leaps over a hurdle at the University of Southern Maine in Gorham during the New Year's Invitational Meet on Saturday, Jan. 4. Senior Ava Gerrity soars through the air in the high jump. PHOTOS BY MATT PASCARELLA

some teams from New Hampshire," said Windham boys' indoor track and field coach Paula Pock. "We were really happy to see the boys step up against strong competition and really perform their best. We look forward to carrying this momentum into the next few weeks."

Girls

In the high jump, junior Nealie Morey finished third with a height of 4-10.00. She also finished fourth in the long jump with a distance of 16-00.00.

"I feel like I'm very much a well-rounded athlete, so I like being able to showcase it, and I always have a lot of fun doing (the Pentathlon)," said Pelletier, who also placed first in the triple jump with a 36-09.25 distance. "It was great ... I knew I had a good chance to come in first. I'm really glad I did it, it's a lot of fun and a lot of prep work you got to do, but it's always worth it."

Junior Addison Shanholtz placed ninth in the pole vault with a height of 7-00.00.

"I think yesterday went really well," said senior Ava Gerrity who finished sixth in the long jump with a 15-07.50 distance and sixth in the triple jump with a 32-09.50 distance. "It definitely set the tone for a good season ahead. I'm happy with how I performed but I can't wait for more meets to see further improvements."

Senior Marina Schwarz finished 10th in the shot put when she threw a distance of 30-03.25.

"This meet set the tone for our ladies to always show up and bring their best on the day while together they make it fun," said Windham girls' indoor track and field coach Jeff Riddle. "All while staying in the pursuit of our team and individual goals. This meet was an incredible opportunity to learn how to navigate and stay composed while competing in big meets. It helped them gain experience in how bigger championship level meets are run. This ... builds their confidence (and) is worth experienc-



Windham senior and Pentathlon winner, Tayla Pelletier, left, with Windham girls' indoor track coach Jeff Riddle.

ing to learn how to prep for the regional championships, States, or even for the New England Championships. It also shows them what is possible and that they too can compete on this large stage." <

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Portland Water District's 2025 budget rises 6.2 percent

The Portland Water District (PWD) Board of Trustees approved a \$63.8 million operating budget for 2025, a 6.2 percent increase over the previous year.

The budget also includes \$54.5 million in capital investments, which considers anticipated federal funding.

The budget reinforces PWD's commitment to protecting public health and the environment by delivering first-rate water services and prioritizes infrastructure improvements, operational excellence, and customer-focused initiatives.

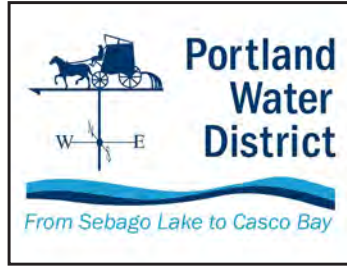
Ensuring Dependable Operations

Investments in PWD's critical infrastructure, which includes 430,000 assets, are necessary to ensure dependable and optimally performing operations. Despite rising operational costs, such as electricity and supplies, PWD is committed to containing costs while maintaining the quality and reliability customers expect. Beginning Jan. 1, 2025, water rates will increase on average, 5.9 percent, raising the typical residential customer's bill by \$1.49 a month.

"Our 2025 budget reflects our unwavering commitment to providing dependable, high-quality water services while making strategic investments in infrastructure and technology," said General Manager Chris Crovo. "By focusing on sustainability, innovation, and customer support, we continue to deliver on our mission to protect public health and the environment."

Investing in People & Technology

The budget sustains investments in technology solutions for knowledge management and multi-skill development incentives to enhance operational efficiency. It also prioritizes advancements in cybersecurity and safety measures, ensuring the resilience and protection of critical



infrastructure and operations.

Supporting Customers

PWD remains dedicated to customer needs, offering financial assistance through lifeline water rates to ensure affordability for those in need.

Key Highlights of the 2025 Budget include:

- Operating Budget: \$63.8 million, reflecting a \$3.7 million (6.2 percent) increase over 2024.

- o Revenue Projections: Total revenues of \$65.2 million, including a 5.9 percent average water rate increase effective Jan. 1, 2025, and wastewater assessments aligned with revised municipal expectations.

- o Capital Investments: \$54.5 million commitment to ongoing infrastructure improvements, featuring Water Main Renewals; Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI); and a project to install new water meters, set for completion by 2028.

- o North Windham Wastewater Treatment Facility: Construction continues with an anticipated start-up in early 2026.

For more detailed info. about the 2025 Portland Water District Budget and ongoing projects, visit PWD.org or contact them by email at customerservice@pwd.org.

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LEGAL NOTICE

TOWN OF RAYMOND, MAINE

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

SITE WALK

Saturday, January 18, 2025 • 9:00 AM

You are hereby notified of the Raymond ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS Site Walk at the following location **Saturday, January 18, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.** regarding the information on the following application:

APPLICANT: Todd Roma
LOCATION: 141 Raymond Hill Road;
 Map 13/Lot 29 Zone RR
DESCRIPTION: Administrative Appeal of Notice of Violation dated October 29, 2024 for Land Use Violation

THE SITE WALK WILL COMMENCE AT 9:00 A.M. ON SITE

PUBLIC HEARING

Broadcast Studio - 423 Webbs Mills Road
and Via ZOOM

Tuesday, January 28, 2025 • 7:00 PM

You are hereby notified that the Raymond Appeals Board will hold a public hearing on **Tuesday, January 28, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.** to hear information on the following application:

APPLICANT: Todd Roma
LOCATION: 141 Raymond Hill Road;
 Map 13/Lot 29 Zone RR
DESCRIPTION: Administrative Appeal of Notice of Violation dated October 29, 2024 for Land Use Violation

The meeting will be streamed in real time from the local Government channel. This live stream is also hosted on YouTube (www.raymondmaine.org/content/live-video-streaming), so make sure your computer or router/firewall does not block YouTube content.

JOIN ZOOM MEETING
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86494251630?pwd=b5IV4VqICOctydC2mx5bFIEgxQCsq.1>
 Meeting ID: 864 9425 1630
 Passcode: hB9Ng1

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Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86494251630?pwd=b5IV4VqICOctydC2mx5bFIEgxQCsq.1>

TOWN OF WINDHAM, MAINE

PLANNING BOARD

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETINGS

- SITE WALK -

Saturday, Jan. 11, 2025 • 9:00am

- #24-26 Monique Drive Subdivision
 Tax Map: 11; Lot: 49D, 49D-4, 49D-5 Lisa & Jules Drives.
 After-the-fact minor subdivision plan review for 3 lots and road upgrades.

- REGULAR MEETING -

Monday, Jan. 13, 2025 • 6:30PM

Town Hall, Council Chambers, 8 School Road

- Public hearing for #24-34 Amendments to Code of the Town of Windham Chapter 120 Land Use Ordinance, Article 3 Definitions, and Article 4 District Standards relative to Hotel development in a Commercial I (C-1) zoning district to add definitions; amend Article 4 regarding the maximum front setback; and eliminate certain parcel restrictions for clean energy usage.
- Public hearing for #24-28 Franklin Drive Subdivision
 Tax Map: 18, Lot: 26-2 – Franklin Drive. Subdivision plan review of four lots for commercial and residential use.
- Public hearing for #24-26 Monique Drive Subdivision
 Tax Map: 11; Lot: 49D, 49D-4, 49D-5 Lisa & Jules Drives.
 After-the-fact minor subdivision plan review for 3 lots and road upgrades.
- #24-33 Beaulieu Drive Subdivision
 Tax Map: 5: Lots: 22B, 22B-6, 22B-6-1, 22B-10, 22B-11 – Beaulieu Drive. Reapproval of minor subdivision plan and private road upgrade.

FMI go to windhamweb.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx or contact (207) 894-5960 ex. 2. Written comment may be submitted to the Board at PlanningBoard@windhammaine.us.
 Please notify us if you need accessibility accommodations.



Facts about 1031 Like-Kind Exchanges for Commercial Real Estate

► **By Larry Eliason**
SPECIAL TO THE WINDHAM EAGLE



— Larry Eliason
Butts Commercial Brokers

A 1031 like-kind exchange is a tax planning tool for deferring tax on capital gains. You can sell an investment property and reinvest the proceeds in a new property. This essentially postpones the tax liability from the sale.

The term “like-kind” refers to the nature or character of the property. There is a wide variety of property types that you could consider to be like-kind, as long as they qualify as investment type properties.

A good example is an investor who owns a small shopping center in Windham valued at \$1 million. The investor has held this rental property for many years and has accumulated substantial appreciation. Now, the investor wants to diversify his/her portfolio, and they’re eyeing a mobile home park in North Windham for \$1.5 million as they see considerable upside potential.

The investor decides to utilize the 1031 like-kind exchange. They sell the small shopping center and use the proceeds to acquire the mobile home park. The 1031 like-kind exchange can help defer paying capital gains tax on the sale of the shopping center.

This transaction should qualify as a like-kind exchange because it involves

similar types of real estate assets. The net market value increases from one property to the next. The 1031 like-kind exchange allows the investor to seamlessly transfer their real estate investment while deferring tax liabilities.

If you are considering a sale with the intent to use the 1031 like-kind exchange, identify the property you want to sell. This must be a qualified investment property and not your primary residence. Again, personal residences don’t qualify for a 1031 like-kind exchange. The subject properties must be held for investment or used in a trade or business.

Before you sell your property, hire a Qualified Intermediary. This step is instrumental because the IRS doesn’t allow the seller “you” to touch the money between the sale and the purchase of the new property.

Once your property is sold, the proceeds minus any closing costs and debt pay-off go to the Qualified Intermediary. Again, the sale proceeds cannot go to you. If you were to receive the proceeds directly, this would be the basis for a disqualification and result in a tax event that you wanted to avoid in the first place.

You have 45 days from the date of sale to identify up to three potential replacement properties. To fully avoid paying any tax, the net market value and equity of the property acquired must be the same as, or greater than, the property sold. This is regardless of their total value or as many properties

as you want, as long as their combined value doesn’t exceed 200 percent of the sold property’s value. You must document this in writing and deliver it to your Qualified Intermediary.

From the date of sale of your initial property, you have 180 days to complete the purchase of any property or properties identified in the previous step. The Qualified Intermediary then transfers the funds from the initial sale to the seller of the replacement property.

When you file your taxes for the year the 1031 like-kind exchange took place, include Form 8824 in your tax return, notifying the IRS of the exchange and informing them what property you sold and what property you purchased as part of the exchange.

The IRS rules for 1031 exchanges are very strict, so be sure to follow them closely. If done correctly, a 1031 like-kind exchange can be a powerful tool for deferring tax and building wealth through additional real estate investment.

The tax return and name appearing on the title of the property being sold must be the same as the tax return and title holder that buys the new property. Today, many properties are bought and sold using LLC’s or Trusts so keep this in mind and be consistent.

No additional value received in an exchange can be allowed that isn’t like-kind property, such as cash, property improvements or debt relief.

When you sell a property as part of a 1031 like-kind exchange, all of the equity you receive from the sold property must be reinvested into the replacement property.

When you sell and buy property as part of a 1031 like-kind exchange, both the sale and purchase need to be arm’s length transactions. Family related transfers can certainly come under a lot of scrutiny by the IRS so consult with your advisors.

A Reverse 1031 like-kind exchange is another option that allows you to purchase your replacement property

→ see REAL ESTATE Page 20

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PUZZLES & GAMES

NEAT AND TIDY WORD SEARCH

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 Y M M S B B D G P A Q N U A T L L K F G
 P P A E E I G V E R T I C A L S P A C E
 Z Y D I T L C I Q G N I Y D I T S E N T
 Q T R E N S B T D G N I C N E U Q E S O
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 C E O R G U E S T S Z E A B B I D S S E
 B G P M O N R N A C Y C G F P B U R B R
 R R R U M C I G A B E C O A E I E K M K
 T O U E R O R Z I N N L B T R U K O M D
 I U A L R P N A I N C C L G F A E N A A
 M P C A Q E O A S N G E G O E T G Z N C
 F I T B K R T S R T A V B O C V R Q A V
 A N I E I T P T E E I G C F T O S I G Q
 Z G V L V Y E R U R A N R Q I M L I E D
 E D I S G K R Z P L C L A O O U A I M N
 K C T E C K P Y V E C R L T N R I K E F
 E T Y S O R T I N G T E E S I I D L N V
 F I L I N G L O D I T N O B S O E O T C
 S R E N I A T N O C L P O U T L N A Y I

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

- | | | | |
|--------------|------------|-----------------|----------------|
| ACTIVITY | CONTAINERS | MAINTENANCE | PURGING |
| CLOSETS | DONATION | MANAGEMENT | REPURPOSE |
| CLUTTER | FILING | ORGANIZING | SEQUENCING |
| COLLECTIBLES | GARAGE | PACKRAT | SORTING |
| COMMON | GROUPING | PERFECTIONIST | SYSTEM |
| AREA | LABELS | PROCRASTINATION | TIDYING |
| | | | VERTICAL SPACE |

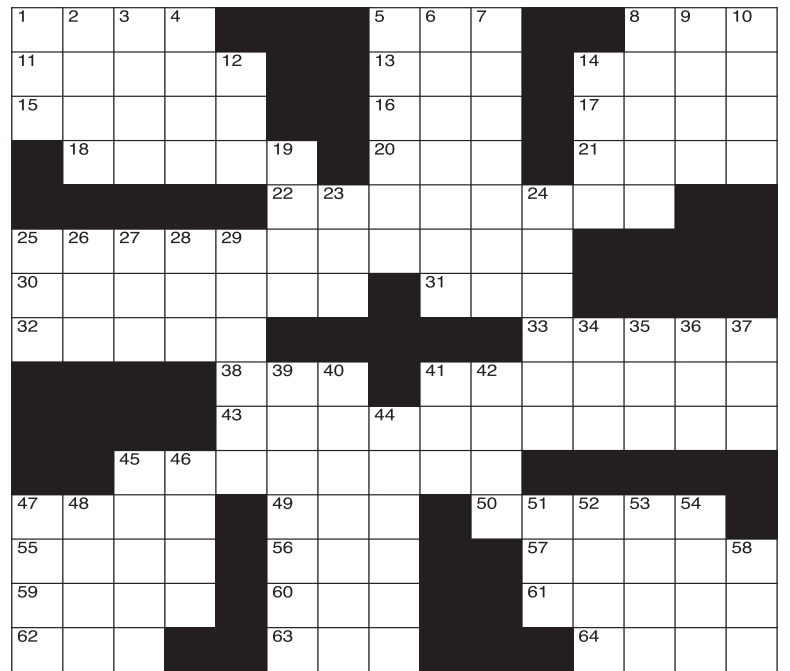
CRYPTO FUN

Solve the code to discover words related to organization.
 Each number corresponds to a letter.
 (Hint: 1 = T)

- A. 5 10 3 1 7 16**
Clue: Divided into categories
- B. 5 18 5 1 7 9**
Clue: Way of doing things
- C. 1 22 16 18**
Clue: Neat
- D. 23 20 4 1 1 7 3**
Clue: Scattered items

Answers: A. sorted B. system C. tidy D. clutter

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



CLUES ACROSS

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Greek mythological figure | 32. Fights |
| 5. Small amount | 33. Comedienne Tyler |
| 8. Play a role | 38. Standing operating procedure |
| 11. River in Georgia and Alabama | 41. Locks |
| 13. Water in the solid state | 43. Old |
| 14. Ancient Greek sophist | 45. Song sung to one's lover |
| 15. Having a strong sharp smell or taste | 47. Whale ship captain |
| 16. Fleece | 49. Moved quickly on foot |
| 17. Writer/actress Dunham | 50. Volcanic craters |
| 18. Behave in a way that belittles | 55. Large musical instrument |
| 20. Comedienne Gasteyer | 56. Liquefied natural gas |
| 21. Zoroastrian concept of holy fire | 57. Ethiopian town |
| 22. Conceits | 59. Not closed |
| 25. Slowed down | 60. A team's best pitcher |
| 30. Nourishment | 61. Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation |
| 31. Midway between east and southeast | 62. Disfigure |
| | 63. Prefix denoting "in a" |
| | 64. Sleep |

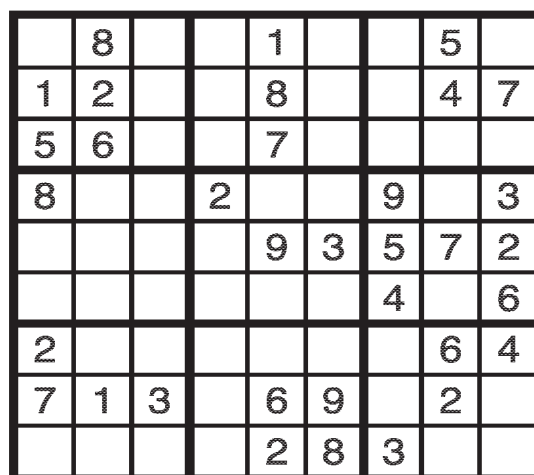
CLUES DOWN

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. S. American plant | 29. Owner |
| 2. Soul and calypso song | 34. I (German) |
| 3. Fruit of the service tree | 35. Chinese conception of poetry |
| 4. Continent | 36. The world of the dead |
| 5. Albania's capital | 37. Sign language |
| 6. Poisonous plant | 39. Coincide |
| 7. Argues | 40. Religious observance |
| 8. Assists | 41. Confined condition (abbr.) |
| 9. Town in Galilee | 42. Polite interruption sound |
| 10. Russian leader | 44. Texas ballplayer |
| 12. Promotional materials | 45. Type of sword |
| 14. Wings | 46. Abba __, Israeli politician |
| 19. Not odd | 47. Basic unit of a chemical element |
| 23. Expression of creativity | 48. Native American people in California |
| 24. Conceptualize | 51. Swiss river |
| 25. A digital tape recording of sound | 52. Hebrew calendar month |
| 26. Peyton's little brother | 53. Easily swindled person |
| 27. Cost, insurance and freight (abbr.) | 54. One point south of southwest |
| 28. Difference in potential | 58. Small island (British) |

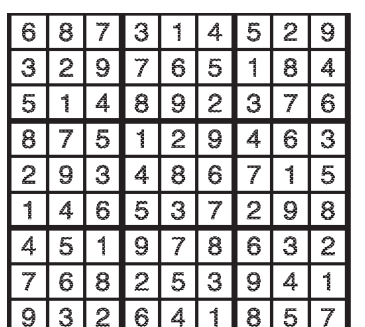
HOW TO SOLVE:

Each row must contain the numbers 1 to 9; each column must contain the numbers 1 to 9; and each set of 3 by 3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 to 9.

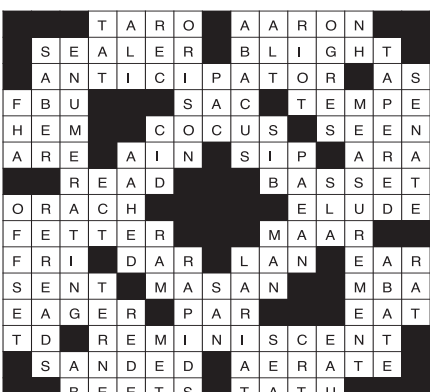
SUDOKU



LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS



LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS





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BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

Have you experienced the transformative power of the Harmonic Egg® yet? If not, now is the perfect time! Join Vitality Room at 104 Tandberg Trail in Windham for their **1-Year Anniversary Open House** on **Saturday, January 18, from 9 AM to 5 PM**. They're celebrating a year of healing, wellness, and transformation, and you're invited!

Here's what's happening at the Open House:

- **Free 10-minute Harmonic Egg® demo sessions:** A sneak peek into this life-changing experience.
- **Win a FREE full Harmonic Egg® session:** Enter their raffle for a chance to experience its full benefits.
- **Gift bags for the first 30 attendees**
- **Anniversary discounts:** Exclusive deals to celebrate with you.

What is the Harmonic Egg®?

The Harmonic Egg® is a unique, sacred-geometrical wooden pod that combines sound, light, and energy therapy to promote healing and relaxation. Drawing from the groundbreaking work of **Nikola Tesla, Albert Einstein, and Edgar Cayce**, the Egg integrates the power of frequency medicine, light therapy, and sound vibrations in one extraordinary experience.

This advanced healing modality blends ancient traditions and modern science, incorporating the golden ratio, 3-6-9 mathematics, and holistic principles to help reset the body and mind. Imagine merging the benefits of deprivation tanks, chromotherapy, sound



Vitality Room

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therapy, and sacred geometry into one safe, rejuvenating session suitable for all ages.

Real Transformations with the Harmonic Egg®

Since opening in January 2024, Vitality Room has witnessed awe-inspiring results from clients who've used the Harmonic Egg®:

- **Depression vanished** after a single session.
- **Parkinson's symptoms reversed** following 8 weekly sessions.
- **Chronic migraines** relieved after 4-6 sessions.
- **Tinnitus resolved** in 6-8 sessions.
- **Sexual trauma released** in just 4-6 sessions.
- **Insomnia eased** after one session.
- **Deep grief diminished** with 3-6 sessions.
- **Viral symptoms cleared** after one session.
- **Addictions reduced** with just 2 sessions.

The Harmonic Egg® isn't the healer; it's the facilitator. By resetting the auto-

nomous nervous system and stimulating energy flow, it helps the body enter a "rest and digest" state, enabling your natural self-healing mechanisms to work more effectively.

Why did Vitality Room open?

Vitality Room founder Michelle Buck discovered the Harmonic Egg® in October 2023. Battling corporate stress, anxiety, and depression, Michelle experienced a profound shift after just a 10-minute demo session. "Three hours later, I felt an energetic wave rush through my body," she recalls. "In that moment, my anxiety and depression disappeared, replaced by joy and compassion. It was life changing." This pivotal experience inspired Michelle to bring the Harmonic Egg® to Windham, providing others with the opportunity to heal and thrive.

Beyond the Egg: Explore More Wellness Offerings

Vitality Room is growing into a hub of innovative wellness services designed to enhance your overall health. Here's what else you can explore:

• **AO Infinity Foot Detox:** A waterless detox service using frequency pulses to activate your immune system and stimulate detoxification. Upgrade with light wave therapy and personalized affirmation audio for emotional balancing and mental enhancement.

• **Ayurveda Gut Detox & Repair Kit:** An 8-16-week program to reset and repair your gut health, complete with education and tools for lasting change.

• **Inner-Voice Analysis:** Identify imbalanced tones in your voice and their emotional connections, followed by quantum frequency scans for targeted healing.

• **Comprehensive Frequency Scans:** A deep analysis of over 20,000 frequency responses in your body, pinpointing areas for improvement.

• **Frequency Imprinting:** Charge your personal items—like jewelry or crystals—with customized healing frequencies from a database of 650+ options.

• **AO Infinity Rain (Coming Soon!):** Immerse yourself in a cascade of negative ions, a revitalizing experience 45x more powerful than standing near a churning ocean.

The Harmonic Egg® has touched countless lives, and we can't wait for you to experience its potential.

Visit us at Vitality Room in Windham on Saturday, January 18, from 9 AM to 5 PM, and take the first step toward transformation. For more information visit www.vitality-room.com. <

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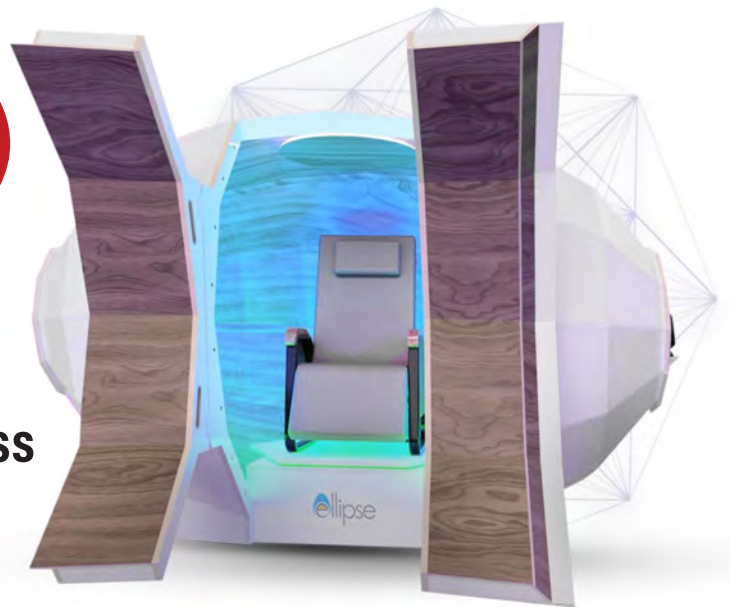
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➔ REAL ESTATE Cont. from page 17

before selling the property you intend to replace. This has many of the same rules and requirements as a normal exchange.

As always, consult with your professional team such as your Lawyer, Accountant, Banker, Qualified Intermediary and Commercial Broker early in the process so that you may take full advantage of this very useful tax plan-

ning and real estate investment tool.

This article was brought to you by Larry Eliason, a Commercial Broker with Butts Commercial Brokers, 1265 Roosevelt Trail, Raymond. He can be reached at 207-415-2112 or by email at LarryEliasonBCB@gmail.com. Visit www.ButtsCommercialBrokers.com <

If you would like to be a contributing writer for our real estate column, please email: editor@thewindhameagle.com

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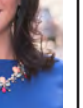
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