

'Comeback Kid' aims to defend boxing title

By Ed Pierce
STAFF WRITER

It took years for Casey Streeter to overcome excruciating physical pain from nearly losing a leg in a workplace accident and a disturbing childhood to win the New England Super Welterweight boxing championship and now as he prepares to defend his title for the third time, he's resolute to remain a champion.

Streeter, 33, grew up in Raymond, and has recently been promoted to the position of Correctional Trades Instructor at the Maine Correctional Center in Windham. He was a promising young boxer training under Bobby Russo at the Portland Boxing Club in August 2017 and when he learned that he had been hired to become a correctional officer in Windham. He was at work in North Yarmouth on his last day as an arborist when a devastating accident happened that left Streeter's entire future seriously in doubt.

He was working for a tree removal company dragging logs with a log chain from a ditch. Streeter had wrapped one end of a chain around a tree trunk and was walking the other

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Boxer Casey Streeter, a Correctional Trade Instructor at the Maine Correctional Center in Windham, will defend his New England Super Welterweight title against Joe Farina of Massachusetts in March in Boston. Streeter beat Farina in November 2023 to win the title and has successfully defended it twice since then. PHOTO BY STEPHEN SHEA

MDOT launches repair work on Babb's Bridge

By Ed Pierce
STAFF WRITER

Repair work on Babb's Bridge is underway in Windham, and sooner than expected.

The historic crossing over the Presumpscot River has been closed to traffic since last summer after sustaining damage in an accident and typically carries more than 360 vehicles per day over the wooden queenspost truss structure.

At about 12:45 p.m. Aug. 23, 2024, police say a Ford F750 truck loaded with 36,000 pounds of crushed gravel attempted to cross Babbs Bridge from Gorham east into Windham on Hurricane Road. The truck's excessive weight caused planks on the wooden bridge floor to collapse and sent the truck crashing into the Presumpscot River below.

The posted weight limit for traveling across the Babbs Bridge span is 3 tons, or 6,000 pounds, and police said the truck weighed roughly six times the legal limit for crossing the bridge. The truck was owned by The Driveway Guys Company of Biddeford and was driven by Joshua Polewarzyk of Limington, 37, who was able to free himself from the truck in the water and sustained minor injuries in the crash. He was cited for excessive truck weight in crossing the bridge and was fined \$2,500.

Maine Department of Transportation engineers were tasked with evaluating the structural status of the bridge for public safety and come up with a

plan for repairs and restoration of the structure.

A previous wooden covered bridge at the site stood for more than 100 years having reportedly been built by local farmers around 1840. The bridge is said to have been originally named for a family living on property nearby and before its destruction was said to be the oldest covered bridge in Maine.

The original Babbs Bridge was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in America but was burned by unidentified arsonists in 1973. Using donated lumber milled exclusively in Gorham and with work performed by community volunteers, the bridge span was rebuilt as an exact replica of the original Babbs Bridge and reopened to the public in conjunction with America's Bicentennial celebration in 1976.

It is a single-span queenspost-style truss bridge, with a total structure length of 79 feet and a width of 13 feet, 9 inches. The bridge end portals have a posted height limit of 10 feet and the bridge is covered by a gabled roof, with its side and end walls finished in vertical board siding.

Vandals cut a hole in the bridge's



Crews have started working on repairing Babb's Bridge in Windham after a truck exceeding the established weight limit crashed through the bridge floor into the Presumpscot River last August. The repair project is expected to take about six weeks to complete before the wooden covered bridge can be reopened. PHOTO BY ED PIERCE

roof in 2014 which was subsequently repaired but damages that were caused by a snowplow truck in 2015 required the bridge to be closed again temporarily. In 2016, MDOT authorized a near-total \$160,000 makeover of Babbs Bridge based upon its original design.

Work performed at that time included the installation of cement stone blocks for the bridge abutment. Other renovations in 2016 featured stripping off the bridge's roof and replacing it with rough cut boards and plywood before topping it with cedar shingles.

Work was also completed on the bridge's sides and entrances at that time. In 2021, the Windham Town Council announced that the National Register of Historic Places had removed its designation for Babb's Bridge because it is now a replica of the original historic structure.

A note posted on social media by the Windham Town Manager's Office on Jan. 10 said the MDOT has launched repairs to Babb's Bridge about four months ahead of schedule. The department had originally said work could not start on the structure

until later this spring to obtain necessary materials and favorable weather conditions for repairs but specially milled lumber from Gorham matching the existing bridge dimensions was now ready for installation.

MDOT estimates it will take about six weeks to complete repairs on the bridge at a cost of \$110,000 before it can be reopened. <

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INSIGHT

Secrets from beyond the grave

When my mother died at the age of 95 in August 2018, I thought she had shared everything about her family with me before leaving the earthly plane of existence.

About a decade before her death, I had helped through her depression from losing 98 percent of her eyesight from macular degeneration by researching her family's history and ancestry. We had figured out that we were cousins to John McIntosh, an immigrant from Scotland who settled on a farm in 1790s Canada and is credited with discovering the McIntosh apple growing in one of his fields. It seems that another branch of the McIntosh family immigrated to Canada in the 1820s and that is from whom my mother and I are descended.

A story passed down through the generations of our family is that one of those Scottish immigrants by the name of James Rutherford McIntosh first heard about a booming economy in Rochester, New York, about 145 miles away from his home in Dundas, Ontario in 1855. It seems Rochester's textile and flour mills were a huge economic success and James R. McIntosh wanted to be a part of that. He successfully applied to immigrate to America, moved to Rochester and found steady employment there.

He eventually married an Irish immigrant to the United States, Helen Agnes Duffy, and they had six children, one of whom was my great-grandmother, Harriett McIntosh, who died at 65 in 1939 in Rochester. My mother, Harriett Baker, was named after her and that was the story I was familiar with.

But I recently learned several things about one of my great-grandmother's sisters that I was never told by my mother and for the life of me, I can't say why she never mentioned them.

For part of my ancestral research, I also have had a subscription to newspapers.com for many years. On occasion I have used it to find old clippings of newspaper stories I have written but didn't save from the 1970s and 1980s. While on Christmas break last month, I decided to see how far back their files went and looked up my great-grandmother's obituary in the Rochester newspaper from 1939. It was easily found. In that obituary it listed her husband, her children, her grandchildren and her surviving brother, James R. McIntosh Jr., and surviving sister, Anna Duffy Sill.

I wanted to know more about James R. McIntosh Jr. but noticed that he had died in 1948. Several news stories were posted though about his sister, Anna Sill, and that's where I surprisingly discovered facts I had never heard before about my relatives.

The first news story I read was from 1936 and it was an obituary for Anna's husband, Julius Sill. It said Anna and Julius did not have children, only nieces and nephews. Then I saw in a clipping from Jan. 22, 1942 that Anna D. Sill, 62 at the time, testified in a court trial in Rochester about being assaulted in her home by a man she was renting a room to. Apparently, she had converted her home into a rooming house following her husband's death and during an argument with a man renting a room there about his drinking, he struck her over the head with a hammer.

She was taken to the hospital and was treated for eight lacerations to her scalp requiring 30 stitches. The man was on trial for second degree assault and his defense was that he wasn't responsible for his actions because he was drunk stemming from being a single parent after his wife had died. The judge found him guilty and sentenced him to three years in prison for assaulting my great-great-aunt Anna Sill.

The bombshell news clipping I found was from the Dec. 8, 1954 edition of the newspaper though. In the early morning hours of Dec. 7, 1954, a neighbor going to work living near Anna Sill noticed her house was on fire. He awakened his next-door neighbors, one of whom was home on leave from the U.S. Army. They tried to enter Ann's home through the front door where she was living alone but were turned back by intense heat, flames and dense smoke. They also tried to get in through several windows and a side door but were driven back by flames.

When the fire department arrived on the scene, the home could not be saved. The Fire Battalion Chief said the house was "like a furnace."

Hours later when the fire was extinguished and firefighters were sifting through the rubble, they found Anna's corpse in the basement laundry room. The city mortician said she had been trying to reach the front door of her home crossing the living room to escape the blaze. Intense heat caused the chimney and a wall to fall down in the living room. The living room floor then collapsed into the basement and carried Anna to her death with it.

I was just a year old at the time and had never heard about any of these events growing up. In fact, I only heard Anna's name mentioned once by my mother that I can recall.

Finding these stories was like discovering secrets from beyond the grave. <
~ Ed Pierce

Today in HISTORY



JANUARY 17

1773 – British Captain James Cook's ship Resolution is the first vessel to cross the Antarctic Circle.

1871 – Andrew S. Hallidie of San Francisco, California receives a patent for the first cable car system.

1916 – The Professional Golfers Association is formed in NYC.

1920 – The first day of prohibition of alcohol takes effect in the United States as a result of the passage of the 18th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

1934 – Ferdinand Porsche submits a design for a people's car, to be called a "Volkswagen," to the new German Reich government.

1946 – The United Nations Security Council conducts its first meeting.

1959 – The African nations of Senegal and the French Sudan merge to form the Federal State of Mali.

1961 – In his farewell address, U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower warns against the rise of "the military-industrial complex."

ON THE SPOT

What's one thing you wish you had more of?

"Time with my grandparents." – Mandy Lavallee

"Patience." – Brian Roger Skillings

"Snow." – Brian Butler

"Time!" – Griphen Stone

"The ability to say thanks properly to all the doctors, nurses and medical staff who helped me to recover at the hospital and nursing facility after my stroke." – Anne Glotchshuk

"Visits with members of my congregation at church. They uplift me and always keep me spiritually connected." – Sarah Singer-Miller

"Ability to stay off social media." – William Reiner

"Money to buy tickets for concerts in Boston." – Dean A. Smalley

"Visits with my grandkids." – Chris Macklin

"World Series trophies for the Red Sox." – David McCoombs

"Weekends at my cabin near Clayton Lake." – Mia Potenzio-Ransey

"Hair." – Lane Marmol

"Time spent ice fishing with my sons." – Jerry Greene

"Homemade pizza and Netflix." – Audrey Marmol

"Cash to pay my electric bill and buy groceries." – Jude Orestes-Sanchez

"Time." – David Luce

"Summer days spent with my aging parents on Panther Pond in Raymond." – Louise V. Snider

"Episodes of Seinfeld." – Isabella Mongon

"Afternoons on Sebago Lake boating with my brother Archie. He died unexpectedly in 1980 while I was away at college, and I never got to tell him goodbye." – Oscar Kellner

"A reopened D'Angelo's Restaurant in Windham." – Lollie Gomez Nunez



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Faith Lutheran to host benefit concert for Essentials Pantry

By Kaysa Jalbert
STAFF WRITER

The Dusty Divas are returning for a Wacky Winter Concert at the Faith Lutheran Church for an evening of music, laughter and fun as an effort to raise money for the Windham Essentials Pantry of St. Ann’s Episcopal Church.

A group of well-trained and educated musicians who perform a variety of genres from classical opera, Broadway hits, unique contemporary music, Christian and jazz, The Dusty Divas have been distracted by “little things” in life like raising a family or earning a living, that made them put their singing careers on a high shelf. Now they’re dusting themselves off to help bring in donations to much needed charities through song and comedy concerts.

This fun-filled fundraiser will be held at 6 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 18 at the Faith Lutheran Church, 988 Roosevelt Trail in Windham. Tickets will be sold at the door and are priced at \$15 for adults and \$10 for children and seniors.

The Essentials Pantry provides items that aren’t covered by food stamps or found at food pantries, such as toothpaste, cleaning products, de-

odorant, shampoos, diapers, etc. The pantry is open on the last Saturday of the month from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. for people in need at St. Ann’s Episcopal Church, 40 Windham Center Road.

At the concert you can expect to hear Broadway favorites like Let It Go from “Frozen: The Broadway Musical”, Over the Rainbow from “The Wizard of Oz” and Tonight at Eight from “She Loves Me.” The group consists of four members: Emily Curry, Danielle Vayenas, David Myers-Wakeman and Eliza Ruth Watson, who were brought together by the group’s coordinator and accompanist, Betty McIntyre.

“As an accompanist, I’ve had the opportunity to work with a wide variety of soloists, ensembles and musical theater groups. As a result, I found many delightful musicians who love to sing, even though for most, it is not their main livelihood,” says McIntyre. “I started providing opportunities for them, always for a charity, but mostly for the joy of singing and using their lovely voices. So, once or twice a year, I send out an email to the group to see who’s available, and we go on from there.”

Emily Curry was an active singer at Trinity Lutheran for several years and

now sings at Faith Lutheran Church in the choir, as a worship leader and soloist. She is known for her sense of humor and creative collection of hats and costumes during her performances. Emily sings at events such as weddings and funerals on a semi-regular basis and works as a medical receptionist at Intermed for their Ambulatory Surgery Center.

Danielle Vayenas will be stepping onstage for the first time with the Dusty Divas at the Wacky Winter Concert. She has performed as a soloist throughout Maine and the greater Boston area with organizations such as Maine State Music Theater, Biddford City Theater, Portland Players, Footlights Theater in Falmouth, Choral Art Society, Maine Oratorio Choral, PORT Opera, Midcoast Symphony, Salem Philharmonic and more.

David Myers-Wakeman, tenor, performs throughout New England and has received praise for his “beautifully polished tone” and “attractive tenor sound” by former Portland Press Herald critic Allan Kozinn. In

Falmouth, he sings professionally with St. Mary Schola and performs regularly as a soloist with choral groups.

Eliza Ruth Watson earned her Bachelor of Music while studying vocal performance with world renowned countertenor, Drew Minter. She then spent nearly a decade in New York City until returning home to Maine where she frequently performs with local theaters, most recently with Myers-Wakeman and Vayenas in Falmouth Footlights premier of Words & Music.

Betty McIntyre serves Faith Lutheran Church as a pianist, choir director and music director. Additionally, she has led choruses in South Dakota and Maine on and off for over 40 years. While in Maine, McIntyre was the band director at Windham High for over 30 years and has been working with church choirs for about 25 years.

The church has held similar fundraising events in the past and it plans to continue to host them with increased attendance. Each year they welcome a new set of talented performers. <

BOXER *Cont. from page 1*

end of the chain up to the log truck's grapple device from a ditch when a co-worker lost sight of him, and the grapple suddenly closed and clamped onto his right leg. At that instant his right femur and knee shattered, causing a compound fracture with a chunk of his leg also torn away by the grapple hook.

Blood poured from the wound and the grapple's claw had just missed severing his femoral artery by a quarter inch. He stumbled into the ditch and thought of his wife Abby and his two children and wondered if he was going to die. His co-worker found him in the ditch and tried calling for help on his cell phone, but service wasn't available there, so he ran to a nearby home and used their phone to summon help.

EMTs rushed Streeter to Maine

Medical Center in Portland with his leg was so badly mangled that doctors didn't know if they could save it. Fortunately, the orthopedic trauma surgeon on duty that day was a military veteran who had saved U.S. soldiers on the battlefield in Iraq. He assured Streeter that he could save his leg, and he led a team to carefully reconstruct it using more than 20 metal pins and rods.

Following surgery, Streeter developed a severe wound infection and then had to overcome post-traumatic stress disorder from the accident. He slowly began walking again with the aid of crutches and after months of challenging physical therapy, he finally felt that he had turned a corner. He was able to work at the Maine Correctional Center while believing that he might be able to box once again.

"I was left with scars, and lots of

metal," Streeter said. "The colder months are tough, but I am able to use my leg and don't feel much of a difference in my lateral movement."

He returned to training under Russo in 2019 and adopted the nickname of "The Comeback Kid." Regaining his strength and prowess in the ring took time but Streeter was determined to fight again and on Nov. 11, 2023, he outlasted Joe Farina of Massachusetts in eight rounds at the Portland Expo to win the New England Super Welterweight title at 154 pounds.

Streeter successfully defended his championship twice in 2024, knocking out Jimmy Williams on June 15 at the Cross Insurance Arena just over 2 minutes into the first round. He then fought 8 tough rounds against Derrick Whitley on Nov. 9 at the Portland Expo in a back-and-forth thriller that ended in a draw with Streeter retaining his title.

His current record is 12-2-2 with 5 knockouts and he's back in training getting ready to make a third title defense on March 22 at the Royale in Boston against a familiar opponent, Joe Farina. His first bout against Farina in Maine went the full eight

rounds with Streeter's strong combination punches attributed as the difference in the judge's majority decision that night.

"He brings the pressure. He constantly comes forward. He's a tough guy," Streeter says of Farina. "He always comes ready, and this time he is coming for revenge. This time we will fight 10 rounds, instead of 8."

From his home near the Raymond/Gray town line, Streeter has been training seven days a week and putting in up to two to three hours of a workout routine.

"I spar, do mitt work, work on strength and conditioning, and can run multiple miles in a week," he said. "This is after I've already worked a shift at the Maine Corrections Center. I'm always consistently training, but when I'm in camp for a fight, I try to train every day."

He said that his wife of 12 years, Abby, and his two children inspired him to recover from his injuries and to box again.

"My wife and kids are my biggest supporters," Streeter said. "The kids have their own gloves. We do mitt work together and they love to come to the gym with me." <

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PAULINE MAE DYER, 87



Pauline (Polly, Shortie) Mae (Thomas) Dyer passed away January 8th 2025 in the comfort of her home with family by her side.

She was born in So. Paris on August 17th 1937, to Araminta (Lapham) & Stevens J. Thomas.

She grew up in Harrison, Maine and was brought up by her Great Grandmother (Mary Ella Chaplin). Also Beatrice Wyman & Aunt Edith.

She Married Donald R. Dyer of Bridgton in 1957, then moved to So. Windham then eventually to No. Windham where she called home until her passing.

Before she got married, she worked for Newbury's in Norway. Later in 1972 she started working for the Windham School Department at Manchester School as the "Lunch Lady" eventually becoming the Food Service Manager. She loved making connections with all the Kids & Staff. She then Retired in 2007 after 32 years, to Become a Foster Grammie in the same school for another 16 years. Retiring in 2023, because of health issues. She took great pride in Helping the Kids that were shy or having problems with their schoolwork. A hug, kind word or little joke always makes things better she said.

She was a Lady of many Talents, a Girl Scout Leader, Helping with Dare Program outings, Helped at Church Suppers & Fairs & Yard Sales. Loved singing in the Choir. Also Clogging & Line Dancing. Also took great pride in making Cards and Scrapbooks for family and friends.

Don & Polly bought a camp in Eustis, Maine on Alder Stream in 1972. Which she enjoyed very much. Riding three wheelers, picking berries to bake or just checking out the views. Also getting together with other camp families to play some Cribbage. Which got pretty heated at times.

She is survived by her Son Donald R. Dyer Jr. of Standish. Grandson Kyle R. & Lauren Dyer, Great Grandchildren Rylie & Oliver all of West Balwin. Her Daughter Lisa J. Dyer & Son in law Daniel Pratt of Windham. Sister Gail & Dick Gile of Harrison. Nieces Debbie, Denise, Donna, Tricia & Beth. Nephew Sam.

She was predeceased by Husband Donald Sr. in 2002, Brother Stevie D. Thomas, Sister Joan Dewan in 2011, Grandson Jeffery A. Dyer in 2017 & Daughter in Law Pamela Thombs in 2023.

Celebration of Life will be Saturday February 1, 2025 at North Windham

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Therapy Bunny sparks engagement for RES students

By Lorraine Glowczak

STAFF WRITER

A fluffy new classmate is hopping into the hearts and minds of Susan Brackett's fourth grade class at Raymond Elementary School. Since October, Peaches, a 15-month-old Red Flemish Giant rabbit, eagerly greets the students each morning, spending time with them during quiet classroom moments and at the end of each day. The students, in turn, welcome the bunny with even greater enthusiasm.

The fawn-colored rabbit is Brackett's personal pet, and she shared the inspiration behind this unique addition to the classroom.

"I noticed that children these days face many stressors that they have not had to worry about in the past," she said. "As a result, students are dealing with more stress, anxiety and depression than ever before, and attendance rates are dropping. These are some of the reasons why teachers are seeing a lot more disruptive behaviors in the classroom."

She said that she felt more needed to be done to engage students that were struggling the most, so she started researching some alternative ways to help support the kids.

Brackett discovered that engaging with therapy animals can enhance social skills, while alleviating stress and anxiety.

"Their presence also helps children feel more focused and confident during learning activities," she said.



(Above) Taelynn Smith reads to Peaches, the therapy bunny, during a class at Raymond Elementary School. (Right) Zoey Hughes, Bea De Sturdze, Malia Borrayo get a moment of quiet time with Peaches. PHOTOS BY LORRAINE GLOWCZAK



"For children developing their reading skills, therapy animals can ease shyness and build their self-assurance.

Students have experienced these benefits first-hand.

"When I'm sad or don't want to be at school, Peaches makes me feel better," said Sebastian Shamaoun.

Another student, Ella Moreau, said she must get up extra early because her mother is a teacher.

"When I feel tired and don't want to go to school so early, I think of

Peaches and then I get a boost of energy," she said.

For one student, she gets more than a little energy boost from the classroom rabbit.

"Peaches is a great addition to our class," she said. "I'll be super honest; I forget everything and I hate it. I feel super stressed and I cry and become a mess. And then I look at Peaches and I forget everything [about what upsets me] and get calm and get back to my work."

Beyond emotional support, Peaches motivates academic engagement.

"I noticed that kids who sometimes might be upset or angry, it will typically ruin their whole day," Brackett said. "When they sit with Peaches, it turns the day around. I've seen a huge benefit in that way. When kids are doing work around the edge of the pen, they are less distracted and can get their assignments completed. It gives them an incentive and something to look forward to."

One student admits that Peaches

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Bridges/Life Skills teacher makes a difference everyday at Windham Middle School

By Ed Pierce

STAFF WRITER

Editor's Note: This is another in an ongoing series of Windham and Raymond town employee profiles.

It's said that children with special needs, just like all other kids, require love, guidance, encouragement, positive influences, and an exceptional life teacher to help them reach their potential. Windham Middle School is fortunate to such a teacher, and her name is Margaret "Margie" Dionne.

She serves as the Bridges/Life Skills teacher at WMS and makes a difference every single day in the lives of her students. Through her work, Dionne provides a supportive learning environment for special needs students that promotes personal growth and independence and gets them ready for high school experiences.

In her job, Dionne teaches self-advocacy, social and emotional skills and helps students to improve their communication skills. The program provides opportunities for community involvement for special needs students and Dionne teaches skills they need for independence in life such as grocery shopping, cooking, self-care and necessary tasks that can be used in employment situations like shredding, laminating and mail delivery to name a few.

"Our program does a lot of our activities and outings with the Wind-

ham High School Bridges program which helps to make an easier transition from middle school," Dionne said.

She says that the best aspect of her work is watching her students grow in their independence and self-confidence.

"Since I have my students all three years of middle school, I get to see first-hand the changes that they make from that first day of sixth grade up until the last day of eighth grade," Dionne said.

Now in her 11th year of her career at Windham Middle School, she worked as an Educational Technician at the school for eight years before becoming the Bridges/Life Skills teacher three years ago.

"My family agrees that my job is difficult but rewarding and like the fact that I love my job," Dionne said.

As the Bridges/Life skills teacher at WMS, Dionne is responsible for the creation and implementation of student's Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). This means that Dionne



Margaret 'Margie' Dionne serves as the Bridges/Life Skills teacher at Windham Middle School and works with special needs students to teach self-advocacy, social and emotional skills and help students improve their communication skills. SUBMITTED PHOTO

provides her students with specially designed instructions to meet their academic and functional goals. She is responsible for coordinating with all members of a student's teams including parents, other teachers, and related service providers, such as speech, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and social work, to ensure that her students have successful school experiences and are prepared for success in life beyond middle school.

Originally from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Dionne attended college at Johnson & Wales University in Providence, Rhode Island and earned a bachelor's degree in education.

"I started my time in education when my husband and two sons and I lived in New Hampshire," she said. "I was an educational technician in the elementary school in my town for 10 years. I turned volunteering into a job, then that job into a career. When we moved to Maine, I wanted to continue with a position like I had in New

Hampshire and was lucky enough that a position was open at Windham Middle School."

According to Dionne, the biggest misconception about her work is that teaching is about academics only.

"Teachable moments can be made out of any situation," she said. "Yes, we may play games during class time, but the students are learning skills like waiting your turn, and how to communicate with each other. You can also add reading and math with board games and card games. Playing a game isn't just play."

Her most memorable moment of serving as the Bridges/Life Skills teacher at WMS so far has been her first trip to a Special Olympics event, she said.

"It was amazing to be part of such a fantastic event," Dionne said. "To see the relationships that have developed between the athletes, coaches and families throughout the state is very moving."

And she says that the most important thing she has learned from her time at WMS is that when she needs support, all she needs to do is ask.

"Administration and fellow teachers are supportive of my students, even those who don't know them," Dionne said. "An example are the send-offs with signs made by the students and the cheering us on as we leave for Special Olympic events." <

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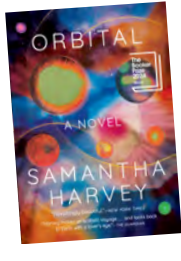
Virginia Wright delves into the surprising history of a town most think is just Sugarloaf. She looks at the early days & at how the town's unique approach helped it weather ups & downs.



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Chess Club aims to develop analytical skills among kids

By Kaysa Jalbert
STAFF WRITER

As a method to create a space for “low-stress socialization” among children, Roger Bannon of Windham, a retired Occupational Therapist, has organized a weekly Chess Club with the primary goal to teach children the strategic game, while doubling as an opportunity to meet other kids that have shared interests.

The Chess Club meets from 10 a.m. to noon Saturdays at the Windham Public Library. Bannon says that in middle school, it’s common for children that don’t participate in sports or other social after-school activities to be marginalized, making it more difficult for shy children to feel confident enough to make friends.

“They may feel like they don’t belong, and they miss out on the best things groups have to offer; being part of a group or team has proven benefits,” said Bannon, who described himself as one of those shy kids during his middle school days. “This is where chess comes in. Chess clubs in schools have the opportunity to compete, just like the football team. Chess is a game; it’s also a sport.”

Bannon says the club draws a “soft line” in saying the children who participate should be about 10 years old but is open for any child looking for a new, out-of-school activity to make friends and learn a skillful game.

According to Bannon, the biggest challenge the club has faced so far is finding a way to make the club more

coeducational. The club had its first girl participate in games last week and he says it would be great to get more girls involved in the game.

“Chess should be considered a conduit to develop friendships, and overcome shyness,” said Bannon. “Boys and girls are equal when it comes to chess.”

Participation is free but the club does not participate in tournaments because most of the players are learning to play the game for the first time, making all levels welcome.

The purpose of the club is not to compete, but to bring as many children together to form new friendships while learning a mind-boosting game, Bannon said.

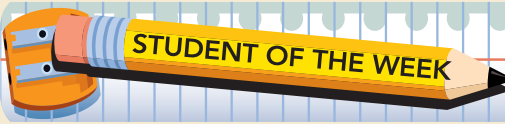
“Roger and the other guys down there are really good at helping the kids learn. You see kids who come in who have never played before and get walked through it and by the end of the session they are playing independently,” said Oisín O’Searcoid, the parent of a young chess club member. O’Searcoid, former educator at Windham Public Schools and Bonny Eagle Public Schools, began attending Windham’s Chess Club with his son and they have become regulars. O’Searcoid’s son is homeschooled, making the chess club a great opportunity for him to meet other kids.

O’Searcoid taught math for 10 years and started the chess club at Bonny Eagle that is still active today. The former educator and father has played chess since he was a kid


and became involved with the Maine Chess Association during his time at Bonny Eagle, serving on the board for two years. O’Searcoid said “there’s a vibrant chess scene in Maine” that has been overlooked by Maine public schools and the Maine Principals Association.

“Chess exercises parts of the brain that you don’t typically use, and it transitions into other aspects of using. You develop the skill of analyzing and anticipating, and logical reasoning, it’s one of those skills that aren’t existent in school subjects anymore,”

→ see CHESS Page 10




Willow Bolstridge



Grade: 4th
School: Raymond Elementary School
Teacher: Mrs. Brackett
Favorite subject(s) in school: Math
Parents’ names: Michela and Charles Bolstridge
Reason for selection: Willow is a great friend to anyone that needs one. She is incredibly attentive and focused during class. She loves school and is always eager to learn something new. Willow always volunteers to help and enjoys sharing her knowledge with the class. She is incredibly creative and enjoys doing crafts and projects. When Willow is not in school, she is doing ballet, swimming during the summer months, or playing with her brother.


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Tricia Zwirner, Agent

Pre-K Lottery Registration



2025-2026




Kindergarten Registration



Pre-K Program Eligibility Criteria

- Students must be 4 years old by October 15 and are not of kindergarten age
- Submission of a completed *Pre-K Lottery Application Form* (see rsu14.org for link)
- Lottery Application Form must be completed and submitted online by **April 1, 2025**
- In-person screening times for the week of June 16, 2025 will be scheduled with individual families in advance

A February 1, 2025 Pre-K Lottery Opens

B April 1, 2025: Pre-K Lottery Application Due

C April 11, 2025: Pre-K Admittance Notification

D Pre-K Screening by Appointment in June

Kindergarten Program Eligibility Criteria

- Students must be 5 years old by October 15
- Submission of a completed *Kindergarten Online Registration* (see rsu14.org for link) by **May 1, 2025**
- In-person screening times in May will be scheduled with individual families in advance

A February 1, 2025: Kindergarten Registration Opens

B May 1, 2025: Kindergarten Registration Due

C Kindergarten Screening by Appointment in May

Questions? Call 207-892-1800 or email: cbertinet@rsu14.org
Program forms & info available at: rsu14.org

Detour coming as Varney's Bridge replacement nears

By Masha Yurkevich

STAFF WRITER

Motorists can expect a detour on William Knight Road across the Pleasant River in Windham sometime this summer as work to replace Varney's Bridge is expected to begin.

An inspection of the bridge by the Maine Department of Transportation determined that it has weakened over time and is not safe for passage by larger vehicles such as garbage trucks, construction vehicles, and plow trucks.

Mark Arienti, Windham Town Engineer, said that the bridge was originally built around 1950 and has not seen much work since.

"The DOT does periodic inspections on bridges that are over 20 feet long," says Arienti. "During one of their inspections about five or six years ago, they found some issues with the bridge, particularly the concrete abutments, and reduced the allowable

load to three tons."

This makes it not possible for construction trucks, dump trucks, garbage trucks, and other large vehicles to cross the bridge because of the weight limitation.

"For example, when the town plows, it has to stop at the bridge, turn around, and then go the other way," Arienti said.

Right now, there are concrete abutments that support the current bridge, which is a steel structure, and Arienti said that scouring from the river has caused erosion where the concrete makes contact with the water. There has also been rusting on the steel supports which need to be replaced. The bridge has lasted quite a long time but has aged due to the erosion and corrosion of the concrete foundation and abutments and needs to be replaced.

Around three years ago, MDOT asked if the town would like to replace the bridge or do any other work that



There will be a detour for about a month on Varney's Bridge on William Knight Road in Windham this summer as bridge replacement work will be performed. Motorists are advised to use Falmouth Road or Route 302 to get around the bridge construction. PHOTO BY ED PIERCE

is necessary to help the bridge support larger loads so that heavier vehicles can use it. According to Arienti, Varney's Bridge is classified as a redundant bridge, meaning that you can take alternate routes, such as Route 302 or Falmouth Road, and not experience a significant detour to avoid the bridge.

The town has had the option to close the bridge, but Arienti says that would make it inconvenient for the people who live on the road and use the bridge daily.

"We worked out an agreement with the state where the state pays for half and the town pays for half. This agreement is called a locally administered project, an LAP," says Arienti. "The town is administering the replacements with contribution from the state with 50 percent of the cost, which is estimated at about \$1.7 million."

With the total cost for the bridge around \$1.7 million, the town will pay about \$900,000, and MDOT will cover the rest.

"What we have been working over the last year designing a new replacement bridge," Arienti said. "We hired an outside firm to do some of the technical work and we have now completed a final design of a new bridge,

which will be fairly similar to the existing bridge, but it will be a bit longer because we wanted to make the drop down to the bridge a little gentler."

The design has been approved by MDOT, which leaves Arienti with one final task ahead of the bridge replacement.

"The last thing that I am trying to hire now is for right-of-way impacts; we have some slopes around the abutments, where the bridge is supported on either side, where some of that earthwork needs to go onto the private land next to the road right of way," says Arienti. "In order to do that, we need to get a permit, easement, or purchase the small sliver of land from the landowners. There is one corner of the project where we are ironing out some of the details, and we hope that we can put the project out to bid this winter."

Work is scheduled to start on the bridge this summer, around May or June, unless there are any issues. The project is predicted to be finished later in 2025.

"There will be a detour for probably a month at some point during the summer where people will need to go through Falmouth Road or Route 302 to get around the bridge," says Arienti. <

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Mountain Division Alliance starts 2025 with new name

The Mountain Division Alliance, an advocacy organization whose mission is to work with the nine different communities along the Mountain Division Rail corridor, the Maine Department of Transportation, and other organizations and stakeholders to create a safe, welcoming, contiguous trail that connects existing paved portions of the trail to provide for active transportation and recreation opportunities from Fryeburg to Portland.



and commitment to this invaluable Maine state asset and how we will accomplish our new mission and vision” says Doug Smith of Windham, who serves as president of the organization. Smith and the Friends of the Mountain Division Trail Board of Directors say that all members of the public are invited to join them in working toward their vision to have communities along the Mountain Division Line connected by trails that are safe and welcoming for active transportation and recreation, to improve the health and well-being of residents and visitors, to create economic benefits by attracting tourists and businesses to Southern and Western Maine, and further connect to a network of trails across Maine and beyond.

In July 2023, the Maine Legislature approved legislation (LD404) authorizing the MDOT to remove the rail and plan and construct 31 miles of new trail until rail stretched from Fryeburg to Standish. This presents an opportunity for the alliance to promote the trail to a broader group of people in and outside of Maine to whom we are not as well-known.

After considerable discussion and debate, the alliance board has decided to come up with a new name reflecting its singular focus.

Friends of the Mountain Division Trail (FOTMDT) became the new name of the organization effective Jan. 9, 2025.

“It better reflects our sentiment

For more details about the FOTMDT, its advocacy efforts, and how you can support their activities, visit fotmdt.org or send an email to Doug Smith, President, Friends of The Mountain Division Trail at dougs.wdsa@gmail.com.

You can also follow them on social media at: www.facebook.com/friendsofthemountaindivisiontrail

A doggone good deed



Windham’s American Legion Field-Allen Post 148 presented a check for \$2,700 to Christy Gardner, the founder of Mission Working Dogs, during the American Legion’s Department of Maine Winter Conference held in Brewer on Saturday, Jan. 11. Mission Working Dogs raises and trains service dogs to work with disabled veterans and others in need in Maine. With the donation, Field-Allen Post was able to name a future Golden Retriever working dog puppy in the memory of a community veteran and chose ‘Carroll’ to remember Windham’s last World War II veteran, Carroll McDonald, who died in November at the age of 99. From left are Christy Gardner of Mission Working Dogs, Maine American Legion Department Commander Tricia Thurston, and Windham Post 148 2nd Vice Commander Yvonne Johnson. Also shown are two Mission Working Dogs, Doug and Ken and the new puppy, Carroll. PHOTO BY DAVID TANGUAY

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→ CHESS Cont. from page 7



Some members of the Chess Club play games during a gathering at the Windham Public Library on Jan. 4. The group welcomes all ages and all skill levels to participate. SUBMITTED PHOTO

said O'Searcoid. "Teaching kids to be able to logically reason and doing it, by gamifying it is huge and it's such a valuable skill because it applies itself to everyday life. I think Chess Club is essential to a school and community."

Both Bannon and O'Searcoid see noticeable changes in behavior for children with ADHD when playing the game of chess. Bannon says last Saturday, an 11-year-old boy with ADHD participated, and was calm and focused for the entirety of the game. Bannon calls it an example of therapeutic activity.

O'Searcoid says he started the chess program at Bonny Eagle because he was responsible for a group of special education students, and two particularly had a hard time. He said that they always had problems settling down in the classroom. But by setting them down in front of a chess board,

it completely changed their mindset and calmed them down. Both of those students ended up graduating, despite concerns for their learning levels just a few years before graduation.

Athletics and activities in Maine schools are generally run by the Maine Principals Association. The MPA recognizes interscholastic activities and committees for sports such as baseball, soccer, ice hockey and as groups like student council, drama and national honors society. Chess Club, however, is not recognized by MPA and it is up to a teacher and a few students to start a group on their own. This means finding their own ways of funding for supplies and transportation to tournaments if the school board is unwilling to help cover the costs.

While the commonly recognized sports and clubs are important and can help students when it comes to scholarships and acceptance to prestigious colleges, the advantages that chess has on the developing brain is far overlooked and can hugely benefit overall academic performance, O'Searcoid said. <

Dirigo State applications open for high school juniors

By Ed Pierce
STAFF WRITER

American Legion Field-Allen Post 148 in Windham and the American Legion Department of Maine are now taking applications from high school juniors for the 2025 Dirigo State program.

Dirigo State is an experiential learning program giving students a space to build and operate their own state government alongside peers from across Maine.

The 2025 Dirigo State activities will be hosted by Colby College in Waterville from June 15 to June 20. In previous years more than 150 Maine students participated in Dirigo State and American Legion officials would like to continue to grow the program this year. Selected boy and girl students from the 2025 Dirigo State program will be offered the opportunity to attend Boys and Girls Nation in Washington, D.C. later in the summer.

The Dirigo State program is a comprehensive youth leadership program designed after the Maine State government where all students come together to create their own town, county, and state governing bodies. It is a coeducational version of Boys State and Girls State, but that's simplifying what Dirigo State is all about.

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, the American Legion Department of Maine redesigned and strengthened both Boys and Girls State programs into a unique, first-in-the-nation model for the American Legion National Family, featuring a combined youth government leadership program. Legion officials say that combining the Boys and Girls State programs provides a better experience for all students and a more realistic simulation of Maine State government.

The merged Boys State and Girls State programs became known as

Dirigo State and is among the most respected and selective educational programs of government instruction for U.S. high school students and a participatory program in which students become part of the operation of local, county and state government.

Delegates learn the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of franchised citizens. The training is objective and centers on the structure of city, county, and state governments. Operated by students elected to various offices, activities include legislative sessions, court proceedings, law-enforcement presentations, assemblies, bands, and recreational programs.

The Dirigo State program is open to all high school juniors. Windham's Field-Allen Post 148 is looking for junior candidates from local public schools, private schools and the homeschooled community to participate. Individual expenses, except for transportation, are paid by the American Legion Field-Allen Post 148, as well as any local business, parents, the school, or another community-based organization that may like to participate and/or sponsor a student.

An informational program about the 2025 Dirigo State program will be held in April at Windham High School and past local Dirigo State participants will attend that meeting to assist in answering questions. A meeting for Dirigo State will also be held at Windham Christian School.

Interested juniors from throughout the Lakes region are eligible to participate. Any student who is interested should contact their high school guidance counselor for an application or they may be downloaded at <https://mainelegion.org/pages/programs/dirigo-state.php>. For specific details about the 2025 Dirigo State program, call 207-892-1306. <



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2025 Legislative Session update

► **By State Rep. Barbara Bagshaw**
SPECIAL TO THE WINDHAM EAGLE



– Representative
Barbara Bagshaw

The new Legislature is in session. The 132nd Legislature was officially sworn in Dec. 4 and began its work on Jan. 8. I will be serving a second term on the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee. Most of our early session days will be spent referring bills to Joint Standing Committees for public hearings and ultimately recommendations to the full legislature.

The Education and Cultural Affairs Committee has jurisdiction over the Department of Education; State Board of Education; school finance, governance and administration; school budgets; school facilities; curriculum, instruction and assessment; teachers and administrators; special education and child development services; education of deaf and hard-of-hearing students; career and

technical education; charter schools, alternative education, school choice and home schooling; school district reorganization; online learning; student health, nutrition and safety; truancy and dropouts; educational services at juvenile correctional facilities; adult education; Maine Educational Policy Research Institute; University of Maine System; Maine Community College System; Maine Maritime Academy; postsecondary education finance and governance; Maine State Library; student assistance programs at Finance Authority of Maine (FAME); and cultural affairs, including Maine Arts Commission, Maine State Museum, Maine Historical Society, Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Maine Humanities Council and Maine Public, Formerly known as Maine Public Broadcasting.

As you can see from the official committee description, the Education Committee will be very busy this session. In addition to my committee's responsibilities, I am most interested

in finding ways to lower our energy bills. Maine consumers are overpaying for energy, and it is hurting Maine citizens. We need to help make Maine affordable again for working families and prevent more employers from going out of business.

The Legislature is reviewing a proposed two-year budget from Gov. Janet Mills. Updated revenue projections are slightly better but still show a substantial deficit in 2026/2027 after years of one-party over-spending. This needs to be addressed in order to meet the Maine Constitution's balanced budget requirement. I do not support raising taxes because Maine already has one of the highest tax burdens in the country.

It is an honor to represent part of Windham in the Legislature. If there is any way that I can be of assistance, please contact me at barbara.bagshaw@legislature.maine.gov. My office phone number is 207-287-1440. You can find me on Facebook. To receive regular updates, sign up for my e-newsletter at <https://mainehouse-gop.org>

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College Roundup

★ Kaitlyn Heath of Raymond has been initiated into The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi, the nation's oldest and most selective all-discipline collegiate honor society, at the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences.

★ Karleigh Hammar, Jacob Pelletier, and Damara Stratis, all of Windham, have been named to the President's List for academic excellence at Southern New Hampshire University.

★ Jonathan Grant of Raymond has been named to the Dean's List for academic excellence at the University of Maryland Global Campus.

★ Ashley Arnold of Windham has been named to the Dean's List for academic excellence at Simmons University.

★ Faith Crockett of Windham has been named to the Dean's List for academic excellence at Berry College.

★ Ashley Bell of Raymond, Morgan Hammond of Windham, Annie Jackson of Windham and Chase McPherson of Windham have been named to the President's List for academic excellence at Husson University.

★ Chris Naylor of Windham was named to the Honors List for academic distinction at Husson University.

★ Kaila Mank of Raymond has been named to the President's List for academic excellence at Western New England University.

★ Diane E. Ingalls of Windham has been named to the Dean's List for academic excellence at Saint Michael's College.

★ Emma Sundquist of Windham has been named to the Dean's List for academic excellence at Miami University.

★ Jack Kingsley of Windham has been named to the Dean's List for academic excellence at Bates College.

★ Kyle Anderson of Raymond, and Karleigh Hammar and MacKenzie Patterson of Windham have been named to the President's List for academic excellence at Southern New Hampshire University. <



LETTERS to the editor

Submit letters by Tuesday at Noon to: editor@thewindhameagle.com
or mail to: 588 Roosevelt Trail, Windham, 04062

Editor,

Over the last 20 years, according to the last three census reports, the number of housing units being occupied by families has decreased with respect to total units in the town of Raymond from 64 percent to 60 percent. As this trend continues, it is easy to see how daily life in residential zones will be impacted by the increased use of housing as short-term rental businesses. As well as the political and economic impact that these businesses will have in shaping living conditions for permanent residents. A group has been organized to seek due process from the Town of Raymond on behalf of all its citizens.

The Raymond Short Term Rental (STR) Initiative group, a local organization of concerned citizens began as a direct response to the growing number of STRs in Raymond and the nonresponsive nature of STR owners who refused to act as responsible neighbors when confronted with con-

cerns about their business operations in residential zones.

On Nov. 5, 2024, at the presidential polling place in Raymond, the Raymond Short Term Rental Initiative received enough petition signatures to compel the town to either call a Special Town Meeting or add to the warrant for regular Town Meeting for a proposed ordinance for the regulation and licensing of short-term rental properties in town.

The Raymond Short Term Rental (STR) Initiative has been speaking with residents and town officials who have reached out with their comments and suggestions, and the group hopes the residents will come out to a Town Meeting when this proposed Ordinance is on the warrant. We invite everyone to review our proposed Ordinance before Town Meeting at our website: www.raymondstr.com

~ Nicole Keough,
Raymond

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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Meeting ID: 864 9425 1630

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Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86494251630>



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MSSPA gallops into 2025 with optimism for mission

By Marianne Moran
STAFF WRITER

The Maine State Society for the Protection of Animals (MSSPA) on River Road in Windham is an equine rescue organization that has been in existence for 152 years and enters 2025 poised to continue its mission of caring for horses and other equines in desperate need of assistance.

Situated on 125 acres, MSSPA helps equines seized by law enforcement, whether the animal control officer, or the District Agent for the Humane Society of Maine. The owners of some of these animals had warnings to improve their condition and caretaking, and when that is not complied with, they are seized through court order. As these animals are still in the title of ownership of the owner until the court case is completed, they are not the property of the MSSPA, and are quarantined from the other animals, to protect the other horses there in case of contagious conditions.

Peg Keyser, MSSPA advancement director, says quarantined animals are cared for in the front left pasture of the MSSPA building. Other than through seizure, horses also come to the MSSPA after being surrendered due to them not being able to care for the horses any longer or their spouse has passed, or they are getting along in life, and are no longer as youthful. These horses are accepted on a case-by-case-basis.

Keyser said that during an intake exam a horse is meticulously quarantined immediately, and the veterinarian then assesses the health and needs of the horse to restore the horse to a

healthy and thriving state.

“During the exam, blood is taken, shots are given, as well as care of teeth and hoof care, oftentimes routine care that had been neglected,” Keyser said.

A refeeding program is started immediately by incrementally increasing the amounts to reintroduce food, which is often a primary issue when a horse is rescued. Additionally, supplements are introduced, and a plan of care is formulated for each horse. During daily feeding times, each horse has a separate bin with specific supplements that particular horse was prescribed by the veterinarian.

“After 28 days, and once the horse is current and up on their shots, they are slowly integrated into the quarantined, resident herd,” Keyser said. “Once surrendered, or upon title of ownership has been finalized through the courts, with 99 out of 100 percent finalized, a retraining process begins for the preparation of the adoption process.”

In the entryway to the MSSPA building, there are before-and-after photos of each equine and their names. The whole picture of care, detailed, dedicated nurturing each animal receives at MSSPA is a testament to their good work and the horse’s rescue for life., Keyser said.

Whether it is adopted or not, the horses will live out their lives on this property being cared for by one or



The Maine State Society for the Protection of Animals in Windham has been in existence for 152 years and cares for horses and other equines in desperate need of assistance. PHOTO BY MOLLY MCMAHON

more of the 180 volunteers that are currently giving of their time to MSSPA.

Those horses who successfully are paired with owners for adoption are also looked out for life, with yearly inspections and forms to be completed. Once rescued, the MSSPA never lets the horse fall through the cracks, Keyser said. They want that horse to be cared for, comfortable, and to be loved for the rest of their lives.

Keyser said the first step to adoption for a MSSPA horse is the actual adoption application. What happens next is the process of being a good match.

She said that you would want a more advanced rider with a more advanced horse, and a beginner rider with a more beginner horse.

Some horses are not meant for riding at all, so these horses would be matched to be companions to the adopter’s horse. Perhaps their other horse dies and their remaining horse needs company. Keyser called these “pasture pets.”

After the matching process is complete, a meet-and-greet is conducted with the potential adopters and the horse that has been picked as a good potential match. Then a MSSPA staff member goes to the owner’s property in order to inspect the conditions that the horse will be kept in to ensure a safe environment, with proper fencing and shelter.

Just as in the beginning when the MSSPA was formed in 1872 to protect horses who pulled the streetcars and fire engines, the MSSPA continues to protect and devote its resources to the preservation and protection of horses.

Visitors will find it to be a true pleasure to see the horses happy in their stalls eating their dinners, seeing the volunteers working hard, and to hear about the future MSSPA barn and plans for the future.

You can visit on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Saturdays by reserving a one hour time so that you can have a tour at the MSSPA facility at 279 River Road in Windham. To arrange a time to visit, call 207-892-3040.

To donate to help MSSPA continue to care for seized or neglected equines, send a check to MSSPA, P.O. Box 10, Windham, ME 04063.

For further information about MSSPA, visit www.msspa.org



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Maine Hire-A-Vet Campaign exceeds veterans hiring goal

Maine Gov. Janet Mills has announced that the 2024 Maine Hire-A-Vet Campaign has resulted in the hiring of 191 veterans and military family members by Maine employers, exceeding and nearly doubling the campaign's goal of 100 hires in 100 days.

The 2024 campaign resulted in placements in good-paying jobs located in all sixteen counties, including 40 women veterans, at an average hourly wage of \$28.31. Employers hiring the most veterans included Bath Iron Works, Northern Light Health, and the State of Maine.

The annual 100-day campaign is a partnership between the Maine Department of Labor and its CareerCenters, Destination Occupation, and Maine Bureau of Veterans Services. The campaign has connected more than 1,900 employers with more than

2,100 veteran-hires since its inception in 2015.

"Congratulations to the Maine Hire-A-Vet team for another successful campaign, which resulted in the connection of nearly 200 veterans with Maine employers. This year the campaign traveled to locations across the state, and their dedication benefited both those looking to hire and those looking for the next step in their careers," said Laura Fortman, Commissioner of the Maine Department of Labor. "While we are already looking forward to next year's campaign, employers and job seekers do not need to wait - our CareerCenters provide services for veterans, their families, and employers all year round."

The 2024 campaign held in-person hiring events at the Augusta Civic Center, University of Maine at Presque

Isle, Poland Spring, and York County Community College. In total, the four events featured 222 participating employers, 63 participating resource providers, and over 230 job seekers, including veterans and non-veterans.

Mills also congratulated five Maine employers for earning national recognition by the U.S. Department of Labor for their efforts to recruit, employ, and retain veterans in the workforce.

In November, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) announced that it has awarded the HIRE Vets Medallion - <https://www.hirevets.gov/> to Loring Job Corps Center in Limestone, Career Systems Development Corporation-Penobscot Job Corps Center in Bangor, the City of Westbrook, Concorde Jet Center in Brunswick, and Deer Brook Consulting in New Gloucester. The prestigious award is bestowed annually to employers who exemplify a commitment to employing military veterans.

"Congratulations to these extraordinary Maine employers on earning the prestigious HIRE Vets Medal, the only federal award given to employers in recognition of their work to employ veterans," Mills said. "I encourage all Maine businesses to follow the lead of these employers and harness the transferable skills, dedication, and commitment to excellence that veterans bring to the workplace."

Deer Brook Consulting President Ande Smith said they are very honored to be recognized for the second year running with the Gold Medallion.

"As a service-disabled veteran owned small business, we understand

what veterans bring to the table for us and our customers, going the extra mile to ensure that these great Americans are afforded the opportunity to continue their contributions as part of our company is an easy choice," Smith said.

Roger Felix, Business Engagement Coordinator for the Loring Job Corps Center said they are very humbled and honored to be recognized for the prestigious Gold Medallion.

"As a residential training and educational center for the future American workforce, we understand what veterans add to our success to the organization, as well as to each of our students," Felix said. "Being a veteran focused organization is an essential hallmark, as we continue to benefit from each veteran and their contributions in making the team, that others strive to become."

The HIRE Vets Medallion is the only federal-level veterans' employment award that recognizes a company or organization's commitment to veteran hiring, retention, and professional development. The program was created by the federal Honoring Investments in Recruiting and Employing Military Veterans (HIRE Vets) Act of 2017.

More info about the HIRE Vets Medallion Program and a map of award winners nationwide can be found at www.hirevets.gov.

Employers looking to hire veterans, and veterans looking for the next step in their career, should reach out to their local Maine Department of Labor CareerCenter - www.mainecareercenter.com/employment/veterans.shtml. <

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Unforgettable

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

I was unable to read the newspaper one morning last week. But that allowed my mind to go elsewhere, which precipitated an unexpected trip down Memory Lane, with several side excursions along the way.

Some highlights:

I'll never forget hitting four home runs in a pickup softball game on the University of Connecticut campus. Three of them actually cleared a reasonably distant fence, too!

I'll never forget making the last out of the final game of the first half of the Easton Little League season when I was 12 years old. My team, the Hawks, was rallying, but with the tying runs on base the pitcher for the Bears, who happened to be my cousin, got me to pop out to the first baseman, which meant that

their team (and not ours) were first half champions.

I'll never forget seeing all three of my children born. The thrill was indescribable, as was (and is) my gratitude for being born male.

I'll never forget the 25-cent wager that I made during my freshman year with Jeff Wohl, who sat next to me in homeroom for four years. The bet was that whoever was absent from school first had to pay the other a quarter. Neither of us cared much about academics, but because we were both healthy and cheap, no one ended up having to pay.

I'll never forget the baseball quilt Grandma Spaine made for me when I was 10 years old. In fact, I still have it, thanks to my sister finding it in our mom's attic decades after I had left home and then sending it to an elite

textile hospital for repairs.

I'll never forget playing pickup basketball on Gary's driveway, at Fig's house, and at Noel's barn.

I'll never forget riding back from Pennsylvania to Connecticut in the middle of the winter, wrapped in two army-issue sleeping bags, while seat-belted in the (open-air) back of my cousin's Subaru Brat. It was awfully cold, but it was also 100 percent less expensive than a bus ticket.

I'll never forget the numbers 6602 and 2714. \$66 and two cents was what I got paid (after taxes) for a 40-hour week of manual labor at my hometown's apple orchard. I made \$27.14 for working a 16-hour weekend.

I'll never forget my first major league baseball game. I had never seen greener grass! It was the ninth-place Astros vs. the 10th-place Mets, so the crowd was

probably sparse, but my father accurately informed my brother, my cousins, and me that there were more people in Shea Stadium that night than there were residing in our entire small hometown.

I'll never forget coming face-to-face with a huge deer that came thrashing through the remote field where, early one Saturday morning, I had been left by my boss with instructions to fill each of the 20 large burlap bags he had given me with five dozen ears of corn. Thankfully, after staring down at me for a few seconds, the buck chose to scamper off in another direction.

It's astounding how vivid these memories still are after so many years have passed. But what's more mysterious: why can't I remember back five minutes, when I left the glasses I need to read the newspaper someplace that for the life of me I can't recall? <

BRIEFS

Bean Supper

American Legion Field-Allen Post 148 in Windham will hosts its first bean supper of 2025 at 4:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 18 at the Windham Veterans Center, 35 Veterans Memorial Drive, Windham. 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 side dishes. The cost is \$10 at the door. Children under 12 eat for free. FMI, call 207-892-1306.

Winter Walk

The Presumpscot Regional Land Trust is partnering with Wild Seed

Project to offer a Winter Walk through Black Brook Preserve in Windham from 3 to 4 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 23. Join Nell Houde, Wild Seed Project's education lead, in exploring the preserve for the winter season. Participants will learn how to identify and form relationships with many of the native plants. The walk will move at a leisurely pace, covering a little over one mile. To register, visit prlt.org

Suicide Support Group

The Alternatives to Suicide Support Group meets at 2 p.m. every second and fourth Tuesday month at the Lake Region Recovery Center, 2 Elm St., Bridgton. FMI, call 207-803-8707.

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Health, Wellness & BEAUTY

HELPFUL TIPS FOR HEALTHY GRIEVING IN THE NEW YEAR

The start of a new year can be an exciting time. New year's resolutions, planning an event, taking a trip and many other things to look forward to, but for those going into a new year grieving a loss, it is another year separating us from our loved one. For many, 2024 was a year of the "firsts." The first birthday missed, the first parent-teacher meeting, the first day of school, the first Christmas. How do we plan for the future and make space in our lives for new aspirations while honoring and mourning our losses at the same time?

Here are some tips to help you get through what seems like a never ending cycle of lows:

- Try not to grieve alone - grief is processed when witnessed by others.
- Spend time in nature - take time to slow down the senses.
- Take time to rest - the body knows what to do even when you are asleep.
- Journal - take a moment at the beginning and end of each day to reflect and vent.
- Find meaning from the loss - find a meaningful way to be of service to others.
- Take new routes to work - your mind will start making new neuro-pathways helping you to adapt to new information.

- Research a new hobby, skill, or craft - find ways to join a community of like-minded people.

- Practice meditation and breathing exercises - many apps like Calm and Insight Timer make it easy to create a daily habit.

- Don't sweat the small stuff - let the dishes pile up, let the toys stay on the floor. Give yourself some grace and your kids too by being gentle but firm when needed.

- Find meaningful ways to integrate your loved one into the present

by talking about them, cooking their favorite dishes, memory making and legacy crafts.

Whatever you decide to do, please know that YOU get to decide when and how you grieve. "The worst loss is always YOUR loss," says David Kessler, grief expert. Do all or none of these suggestions and move at your own pace. I realize that especially early on in grief, just getting out of bed can be a daunting task. Above all, please know that you are not alone.

Let us begin the year celebrating all

of the grit that we somehow mustered to meet each moment of 2024, even if it felt as though we were cracked into a million pieces. We will be putting these pieces back together but they will never be in the same exact pattern as they once were. Reach out, seek support, and thrive despite even in your grief in 2025.

This article brought to you by Kimberly Leighton, MS, CCLS, RYT, Certified Child Life Specialist, Certified Grief Yoga Teacher, and owner of Play Warriors, Inc. <

BENEFITS OF PERSONALIZED STRENGTH TRAINING

Strength training is a cornerstone of physical fitness, offering numerous benefits for individuals of all ages and fitness levels. However, when combined with personalized service, the advantages of this type of training are significantly amplified, leading to more effective results, increased safety, and long-term success.

One of the primary benefits of strength training is improved muscle strength and endurance. These improvements are essential for daily activities, from lifting groceries to maintaining proper posture. Personalized training programs cater specifically to your goals, whether you're look-

ing to build muscle, improve athletic performance, or simply enhance functional fitness. With the guidance of a knowledgeable trainer, your workout routine is tailored to meet your unique needs, ensuring that every exercise is purposeful.

Another key advantage is the reduced risk of injury. Improper form and technique are common causes of injuries during strength training. A personalized service addresses this by offering one-on-one or small group coaching to ensure that each movement is performed correctly and safely. Trainers can also adapt exercises to accommodate existing injuries or physical limitations, creating a safe environment for progress.

Strength training also boosts metabolic health, aiding in weight management and improving body composition. Personalized plans often incorporate progressive overload—gradually increasing the intensity of exercises—which optimizes calorie burn and muscle growth. Trainers also monitor your progress, adjusting as needed to keep you on track and prevent plateaus.

Mental health benefits are another crucial aspect of strength training. Regular workouts help reduce stress, anxiety, and depression by releasing endorphins, the body's natural mood elevators. A personalized approach enhances this experience by providing motivation and accountability. Your trainer becomes a partner in your fitness journey, celebrating milestones and offering encouragement during challenging periods.

Moreover, personalized strength training can be highly efficient. With a customized plan, there's no wasted time on exercises that don't align with your goals. This efficiency is especially valuable for those with busy schedules, as it ensures you make the most of your workout sessions.

Individualized strength training elevates your fitness journey by maximizing results, enhancing safety, and fostering a deeper connection to your health and well-being. Whether you're a beginner or an experienced athlete, investing in tailored guidance can transform the way you approach fitness, helping you achieve sustainable, life-changing results. <

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Thomas V. Gordon, O.D. is pleased to announce that Alan D. Beaulieu, O.D. has joined the practice and will be seeing patients at Sebago Primary Eye Care located at 195 Roosevelt Trail, Casco and 5 Lumberyard Drive, Bridgton.

"We are very excited to welcome Dr. Beaulieu to the practice," said Dr. Gordon. "He provides a great blend of top-notch clinical education and knowledge with a strong passion for providing community-based care. I also expect that he will be an active member of the community and that will be evident over the course of the months and years to come".

Dr. Beaulieu received his Doctorate of Optometry from the New England College of Optometry located in Boston, Massachusetts in May 1989. He has worked in private practice in Massachusetts for a number of years and is a past president of the Massachusetts Society of Optometrists. Bridgton initially was a seasonal community for Dr. Beaulieu, but after experiencing the year round activities, he is pleased to make the lakes region his home. He and his wife Donna have two grown sons.

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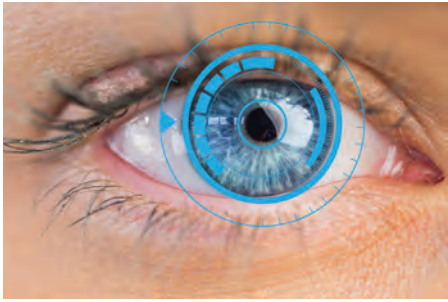
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THE IMPORTANCE OF ANNUAL EYE EXAMS FOR EVERYONE

Eye health is often overlooked, yet it plays a critical role in overall well-being and quality of life. For those who wear glasses or contact lenses, annual eye exams are essential, not only to ensure clear vision but also to monitor the health of the eyes. Even individuals without vision correction needs can benefit greatly from routine eye care.



Beyond updating prescriptions, eye exams are crucial for detecting early signs of eye diseases such as glaucoma, cataracts, and macular degeneration. Many of these

conditions develop gradually and may not present noticeable symptoms until significant damage has occurred. Early detection through a comprehensive eye exam can lead to more effective treatment and better outcomes.

Special considerations for contact lens wearers: Contact lens users, in particular, require regular eye exams to ensure that their eyes remain healthy and well-suited for lens wear. Contacts can cause or exacerbate conditions like dry eye or corneal irritation, and an optometrist can address these issues promptly. Additionally, improper use or care of contact lens-

es can increase the risk of infections, making routine check-ups essential for maintaining ocular health.

Benefits for everyone: Even those with perfect vision should prioritize annual eye exams. These check-ups can reveal systemic health issues, such as diabetes, high blood pressure, and autoimmune diseases, which often present early signs in the eyes. Children and young adults also benefit, as regular exams can identify undiag-

nosed vision problems that may affect learning and development.

Investing in eye health: Your eyes are a window to your overall health and well-being. By scheduling yearly eye exams, you're taking proactive steps to protect your vision and prevent potential problems down the line. Whether you wear glasses, contacts, or have perfect vision, regular eye care is an investment in your health and your future. <

ACUPUNCTURE: A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO HEALING

Acupuncture, a cornerstone of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), is a holistic approach to health that seeks to address the root causes of ailments rather than merely alleviating symptoms. This ancient practice involves the insertion of fine, sterile needles into specific points on the body, known as acupoints, to restore the natural flow of energy, or "Qi" (pronounced "chee"), along pathways called meridians. When Qi is balanced and flows freely, the body can heal itself more effectively.

Unlike many modern treatments that focus solely on symptom management, acupuncture views the body as an interconnected system. Practitioners evaluate underlying imbalances—whether they stem from physical, emotional, or environmental factors—and tailor treatments accordingly. By stimulating acupoints, acupuncture activates the nervous system, promotes blood circulation, and regulates hormones, creating a foundation for long-term wellness.

Acupuncture is most commonly used to treat chronic pain, including conditions like back pain, migraines, and arthritis. It's also highly effective for stress, anxiety, and insomnia, as well as digestive disorders, hormonal imbalances, and respiratory issues such as allergies or asthma. Many people turn to acupuncture for support with fertility, immune health, and even smoking cessation.

By addressing the root cause of ailments, acupuncture empowers the body to heal naturally, offering a pathway to lasting health. <

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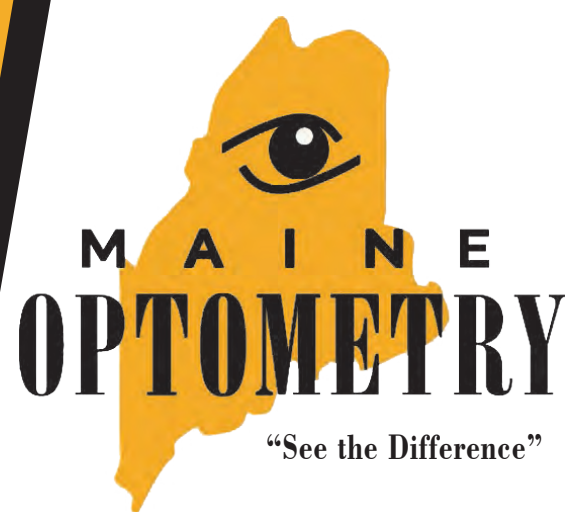


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Health, Wellness & BEAUTY

ADDRESSING GAPS IN HEALTHCARE

The modern healthcare system, while equipped with advanced technology and life-saving treatments, often falls short when it comes to providing individualized care and holistic solutions. Many patients feel like a number in a system focused on symptom management rather than addressing the root causes of health issues. This lack of personalized attention can lead to frustration, prolonged suffering, and a sense of disconnection from the healing process.

Gonstead chiropractic care and acupuncture offer a refreshing alternative, focusing on treating the whole patient rather than isolated symptoms. These modalities emphasize balance, alignment, and the body's natural ability to heal itself, providing solutions that address the root causes of discomfort and dysfunction.

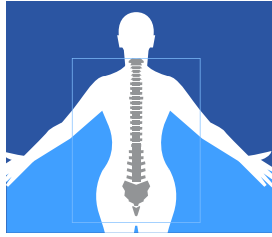
About Gonstead Chiropractic Care: The Gonstead system is a specialized chiropractic approach that prioritizes precision and patient-specific treatment. Unlike traditional chiropractic methods, Gonstead practitioners perform a thorough evaluation, including spinal X-rays, motion analysis, and palpation, to pinpoint misalignments in the spine. These misalignments, or

subluxations, can interfere with nerve function, causing pain, reduced mobility, and systemic health issues.

By restoring proper alignment through targeted adjustments, Gonstead care not only alleviates pain but also promotes overall well-being. Patients often report improvements in posture, digestion, sleep, and even mental clarity, as the nervous system functions more effectively. This precise, hands-on approach ensures that each adjustment is tailored to the individual's unique needs, fostering long-term health benefits.

Together, acupuncture and Gonstead chiropractic care form a powerful duo for holistic healing. While chiropractic care focuses on physical alignment, acupuncture addresses the energetic and emotional aspects of health, creating a comprehensive approach to wellness.

For patients seeking solutions that go beyond symptom management, these therapies provide individualized care, focusing on the root causes of issues and restoring balance to the body and mind. In a healthcare system that often overlooks the individual, these stand out as effective, patient-centered alternatives. <



HAVE YOU HEARD OF AYURVEDA?

Ayurveda is the oldest healing science in the world, translating to "The Science of Life." The principles of many of the natural healing systems now familiar in the West have their roots in this noble science. Its unique practice is not only to prevent illness or disease, but also to identify and address any root causes. Originating in India more than 5,000 years ago, it is often called the "Mother of All Healing."

Ayurveda promotes health by balancing life through right thinking, diet, lifestyle, and herbs. It helps create balance in the body, mind, and consciousness. Everyone has a unique constitution, hence why individualized lifestyle changes are vital for balance.

Marma Point Therapy is an ancient Ayurvedic healing treatment that involves the stimulation of vital energy points in the body. Targeting these points restores the flow of prana (life force energy), releasing blockages and facilitating healing. Each point corresponds to specific areas of the body, aiding in pain relief and promoting harmony. Without harmony in the body, Ama (toxins) can accumulate creating blockages that can lead to illness and disease.

Marma points are an important aspect of Ayurveda's healing power.

The human being is a complex make-up of various systems, organs, and emotions connected through specific energy points, also known as acupressure points. Picture secret buttons or tiny energy hubs scattered throughout your body that hold serious power when it comes to your health and immunity. These are Marma Points. By stimulating them, we open energetic and physical blockages caused by inadequate circulation, stress and diet.

With 107 Marma points throughout the body, it is ideal to experience this treatment for 90-120 minutes. While utilizing warm organic herbal and essential oils that are blended for the specific season we are currently experiencing, this treatment will improve your body-mind connection, leaving you feeling centered and grounded.

Marma benefits: balanced energy, pain relief, circulation, emotional support, strong immunity, improved sleep, organ health, spiritual growth & lymphatic drainage. Marma points near lymphatic vessels and nodes can efficiently removing toxins, waste products, and pathogens, promoting overall immunity for the body.

This article was brought to you by Mainly Massage & Holistic Solutions in Windham. <

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Health, Wellness & BEAUTY

FACIALS: THE ULTIMATE WINTER SKIN SAVIOR

Cold winter months can take a toll on your skin, leaving it dry, dull, and prone to irritation. The combination of cold winds, low humidity, and indoor heating strips the skin of its natural moisture, making proper care crucial. Facials not only keep your skin hydrated and nourished but can also address common concerns like fine lines, wrinkles, and hyperpigmentation, making them an essential part of your winter skincare routine.

Winter weather often leads to dehydration, which can emphasize fine lines, wrinkles, and rough patches. Hydrating facials combat these effects by deeply moisturizing the skin. Treatments often incorporate masks, serums, and oils rich in nutrients like hyaluronic acid, vitamin E, and antioxidants to restore lost moisture, repair the skin barrier, and plump the skin. This hydration can soften the appearance of fine lines while improving overall elasticity.

Exfoliation is another key component of facials, particularly during winter when dead skin cells accumu-

late, causing a dull complexion. Gentle exfoliation methods like enzyme peels or microdermabrasion remove dead cells and stimulate cell turnover. This not only enhances radiance but also helps fade hyperpigmentation and dark spots over time.

Specialized facials tailored to anti-aging concerns can deliver additional benefits, such as boosting collagen production. Collagen-boosting treatments often include ingredients like peptides, retinol, or vitamin C, which improve skin firmness and reduce the appearance of wrinkles. These facials also promote elasticity, giving the skin a smoother, more youthful appearance.

Facials designed to target hyperpigmentation often incorporate brightening agents like kojic acid, licorice extract, or niacinamide, helping to even



out skin tone and reduce discoloration. Many treatments also soothe winter redness with calming ingredients like chamomile, green tea, or oatmeal. Beyond the immediate benefits, facials are a moment of relaxation and self-care, reducing stress, which can also impact skin health. Regular sessions, ideally once a month,

can help maintain hydration, radiance, and a youthful glow throughout the season.

Contact your favorite local aesthetician or find many great options in this section, to find the right treatment for your skin goals. By choosing facials tailored to your specific concerns, you can combat winter dryness, improve skin tone, and address signs of aging all at once. Combined with a consistent at-home routine using quality products, facials ensure your skin stays vibrant, smooth, and rejuvenated all winter long. <

THE RISING TREND OF FILLERS FOR FACE, NECK, AND LIPS

The use of dermal fillers has become a widespread trend in the world of aesthetics, offering non-surgical solutions for enhancing facial features and rejuvenating the skin. Once primarily associated with plumping lips, fillers are now used extensively to address aging signs on the face and neck, providing a youthful, refreshed appearance without the need for invasive procedures.

Facial fillers, made of substances like hyaluronic acid, collagen, or calcium hydroxylapatite, are injected to restore lost volume, smooth wrinkles, and contour areas such as the cheeks, jawline, and under-eye hollows. Lip fillers, still one of the most popular applications, help create fuller, more defined lips, often with a natural-looking enhancement.

A newer trend is the use of fillers to improve the appearance of the neck. As the neck is prone to showing signs of aging, such as sagging skin and horizontal lines, strategic filler placement can smooth these imperfections and improve skin elasticity.

While the appeal of fillers lies in their versatility, immediate results, and minimal recovery time, the importance of a skilled practitioner cannot be overstated. Proper placement of fillers requires a deep understanding of facial anatomy, symmetry, and proportion. An experienced injector can avoid complications, tailor treatments to individual needs, and achieve natural-looking results that enhance rather than overpower a person's features.

As social media and celebrity culture continue to influence beauty standards, fillers remain a go-to option for those seeking subtle, effective enhancements. However, choosing a qualified professional is critical to ensure safe, beautiful outcomes that stand the test of time. <





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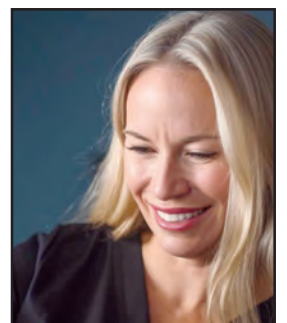


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Health, Wellness & BEAUTY

NAVIGATING MEDICARE: MAKING THE RIGHT CHOICES

Turning 65 is a significant milestone, and understanding your Medicare options is crucial.

Medicare offers a range of plans, each with unique benefits and costs. Choosing the wrong plan can lead to unexpected medical bills, limited coverage, and gaps in care.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

• Your Health Conditions:

– Chronic Illnesses: If you have conditions like diabetes, heart disease, or arthritis, prioritize plans with comprehensive coverage for medications, doctor visits, and specialist care.

– Mental Health Needs: Look for plans that cover mental health services, including therapy and medications.

– Regular Medications: Review your prescription list and compare plan formularies (lists of covered drugs). Ensure your medications are covered at affordable co-pays.

• Your Lifestyle and Needs:

– Doctor Preferences: Choose plans that include your preferred doctors and hospitals in their network.

– Travel Plans: Consider plans with good out-of-network coverage if you travel frequently.

– Budget: Compare premiums, deductibles, and out-of-pocket costs to find a plan that fits your budget.

• Available Plans:

– Original Medicare (Parts A & B): Offers basic hospital and medical insurance but may have high out-of-pocket costs.

– Medicare Advantage (Part C): Offered by private insurers, these plans combine Parts A, B, and often Part D (prescription drug coverage). They may have lower out-of-pocket costs but have narrower networks.

– Medicare Supplement (Medigap): Helps cover costs not paid by Original Medicare.

• Tips for Making the Right

Choice:

– Attend a 'Prepare for Medicare Information Session' to learn about your options and get your questions answered.

– Schedule a no-cost consultation: with agents who will provide unbiased advice and help you navigate the complexities of Medicare.

– Utilize a local, family-owned agency to ensure you will be a valued client and that there will always be a broker available to speak with you directly and assist with any problems or

questions you may have.

Remember: Choosing the right Medicare plan is an ongoing process. Your needs and health may change over time. Review your coverage annually during the Annual Enrollment Period (October 15 - December 7) to ensure you have the best plan for your current situation.

This article was brought to you by Hilary Mansfield, Woodman Mansfield Company. Their independent agents represent all the well-known plans in Maine. <

UNDERSTANDING THE RISKS AND SIGNS OF STROKE

A stroke occurs when blood flow to the brain is interrupted, either by a blocked artery (ischemic stroke) or a ruptured blood vessel (hemorrhagic stroke). It is a leading cause of disability and death worldwide, making awareness of its risks and signs critical for early intervention.

The primary risk factors for stroke include high blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol, smoking, and obesity. Other contributors, such as excessive alcohol consumption, lack of physical activity, and a poor diet, also increase risk. Age, family history, and certain medical conditions like atrial fibrillation can further elevate the likelihood of a stroke. Recognizing and managing

these risks is essential for prevention.

The key to minimizing damage during a stroke is rapid recognition and treatment. The acronym F.A.S.T. can help identify stroke symptoms:

F: Face drooping on one side

A: Arm weakness or numbness, particularly on one side

S: Speech difficulty, such as slurred or incoherent words

T: Time to call emergency services immediately

Other signs may include sudden vision loss, dizziness, confusion, or a severe headache with no known cause.

Acting quickly can save lives and reduce long-term effects. By addressing risk factors and recognizing the signs,

we can significantly improve outcomes for those affected by stroke.

After a stroke, rehabilitation is crucial for recovery. Physical, occupational, and speech therapy help individuals regain lost abilities and adapt to new challenges. Physical therapy focuses on improving mobility and strength, while occupational therapy aids in daily activities, such as dressing or cooking. Speech therapy assists with communication and swallowing difficulties.

Early intervention and consistent therapy are key to maximizing recovery and improving quality of life, allowing individuals to regain independence and restore functionality. <

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Health, Wellness & BEAUTY

TOP 5 HOLISTIC HEALTH TIPS FOR WELLNESS ENTHUSIASTS

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manage stress levels and promote relaxation.

- **Holistic Treatments:** Explore holistic treatments such as massage therapy, acupuncture, or polarity therapy to support your overall

well-being. These treatments can help balance your body's energy flow and promote healing.

- **Quality Sleep:** Prioritize getting enough quality sleep each night as it is essential for overall health. Create a bedtime routine, avoid screens before bed, and make your sleep environment comfortable to improve the quality of your sleep. By incorporating these holistic health tips into your daily routine, you can support your overall well-being and cultivate a healthier lifestyle. Remember, wellness is an ongoing journey, so be patient and kind to yourself as you make positive changes for your health.

This article was brought to you by Align Massage Therapy and Holistic Health in Windham. <

- **Mindful Eating:** Take the time to savor and appreciate your food. Practice mindful eating by paying attention to the flavors, textures, and sensations of each bite. This can help you make healthier food choices and improve digestion.

- **Movement and Exercise:** Find a form of exercise that you enjoy and make it a regular part of your routine. Whether it's yoga, Pilates, or going for a walk in nature, staying active is essential for physical and mental well-being.

- **Stress Management:** Chronic stress can have a negative impact on your health. Take time for self-care activities such as meditation, deep breathing exercises, or journaling to

CUSTOM ORTHOTICS: TAILORED SUPPORT FOR PAIN RELIEF

Custom orthotics are specially designed shoe inserts that are crafted to fit the unique contours of an individual's feet. Unlike over-the-counter insoles, custom orthotics are made based on precise measurements and a detailed assessment of your



relief. For individuals with conditions like shin splints or knee pain, orthotics can help align the feet and reduce strain on the lower body.

Custom orthotics offer a range of benefits. They can alleviate pain associated with various

conditions, including bunions, arthritis, and heel spurs. They also help improve foot function, making activities like walking, running, or standing for long periods more comfortable. Additionally, custom orthotics can enhance posture and reduce the risk of injury by promoting better alignment and distributing weight more evenly across the feet.

The process of obtaining custom orthotics typically begins with a visit to a healthcare professional. They will perform a thorough evaluation, which may include foot scans, weight distribution analysis, and assessments of your walking patterns. This helps to identify any underlying issues, such as flat feet, high arches, or abnormal foot mechanics, that might be contributing to discomfort or pain.

Once the assessment is complete, the custom orthotics are designed to address your specific needs. For example, if you suffer from plantar fasciitis, the orthotics may feature added cushioning and arch support to reduce pressure on the heel and provide

relief. For individuals with conditions like shin splints or knee pain, orthotics can help align the feet and reduce strain on the lower body. Custom orthotics offer a range of benefits. They can alleviate pain associated with various

conditions, including bunions, arthritis, and heel spurs. They also help improve foot function, making activities like walking, running, or standing for long periods more comfortable. Additionally, custom orthotics can enhance posture and reduce the risk of injury by promoting better alignment and distributing weight more evenly across the feet. While custom orthotics can be a bit more expensive than off-the-shelf inserts, many people find them to be a worthwhile investment due to their effectiveness in treating foot-related pain and improving overall mobility. Whether you're an athlete, someone with chronic foot pain, or simply looking for better support, custom orthotics can provide tailored relief and support to help you lead a more active and comfortable life. <

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Health, Wellness & BEAUTY

SLICING THROUGH THE STIGMA: CREATING A CULTURE OF WELL-BEING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH NAMI MAINE

Today, mental health and wellness are recognized as essential workplace priorities. Employers increasingly understand that fostering mental health leads to a happier, more productive, and engaged workforce. SouthPaw Packing Company Inc, (DBA Windham Butcher Shop & Southpaw Meat Market), and NAMI Maine are leading the way in this vital movement, working together to create healthier, more supportive work environments.

Why Mental Health Matters at Work

Mental health is a cornerstone of overall well-being, yet it is often overlooked in professional settings. Ignoring mental health can lead to reduced productivity, higher absenteeism, and increased turnover. NAMI Maine's specialized programs equip businesses to address these challenges, promoting mental health as a critical component of workplace success.

Unique Challenges in Meat Processing

While mental health is crucial across all industries, meat processing presents distinct challenges. Workers in this field face high stress, physically demanding tasks, and repetitive routines, all of which can take a toll on their mental health. By partnering

with businesses, NAMI Maine identifies specific risks and introduces tailored strategies to bolster employee well-being.

Breaking the Stigma

Stigma remains a significant barrier to workplace mental health. Many employees hesitate to seek help due to fear of judgment or misunderstanding. This initiative addresses stigma head-on by fostering open conversations about mental health. When employees feel safe and supported, they're more likely to access the resources they need.

The Pillars of Wellness

The "Slicing Through the Stigma" framework is grounded in two key Pillars of Wellness that guide businesses in cultivating a supportive environment:

1. Improve Employee Health and Well-Being – Promote healthy habits, provide mental health resources, and encourage work-life balance.
2. Boost Attendance, Performance, and Retention – Valued employees perform better, show up consistently, and remain loyal to the organization.

These strategies help reduce common workplace challenges such as:

- Employee complaints
- Workers' compensation claims

- Excessive sick days
- Costly errors

Transforming Workplace Culture

By partnering with NAMI Maine, businesses can drive meaningful cultural transformation, benefiting employees and employers alike. Healthy, engaged workers foster a more successful and resilient workplace.

The message is clear: **Healthy workers build better businesses.** Prioritizing mental health creates envi-

ronments where everyone thrives.

For training and additional information, please visit NAMIMaine.org or call our HelpLine at 800-464-5767, #1.

This article brought to you by Niki Sargent, owner of Southpaw Meat Market, Southpaw Packing Company, and proud partner of NAMI Maine. To learn more about their mission and discover resources available to you, visit www.southpawpacking.com/health-wellness.

DO SLEEP NEEDS CHANGE AS WE AGE?

Adults know much about their health changes as they grow older, but health experts note that sleep requirements generally remain the same throughout adulthood. According to the National Institute on Aging, older adults need roughly the same amount of sleep as all adults. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes that the recommended amount of sleep for adults is at least seven hours each day, and various organizations recommend adults get between seven and nine hours of sleep per night. Those recommendations can promote optimal health into one's golden years, but that advice is not being heeded by a significant portion of the adult population. The CDC Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) tracked the sleeping habits of men and women between 2013 and 2022 and ultimately found that 37.5 percent of men and 36 percent of women were not getting enough sleep during that time period. The percentage of individuals not getting enough sleep was particularly high among adults between the ages of 39 and 64, among whom nearly four in 10 were falling short of the recommended daily amount of sleep.

MENTAL HEALTH AFFECTS US ALL!



Southpaw Packing Company is working hard to raise mental health awareness by "Slicing Through The Stigma"!

We see the barriers and we want to break the gates wide open. Our goal is to promote & support an atmosphere that encourages health & wellness, as well as enhance awareness of available services and resources.

DON'T BE AFRAID TO REACH OUT... RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE TO HELP

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Health, Wellness & BEAUTY

EXPLAINING FIREFLY LIGHT THERAPY AND ITS BENEFITS

Firefly Light Therapy harnesses the power of specific wavelengths of light, including blue, red, infrared, and green light, to support various health symptoms through non-invasive light therapy. Known as photobiomodulation, this light therapy provides healing benefits for physical, neurological, and even psychological conditions.

This innovative light therapy stimulates the growth of new neurons and triggers anti-cell death, anti-inflammatory, and antioxidant reactions. Research has confirmed its therapeutic benefits, which include:

- Pain & Chronic Pain Relief: Firefly Light Therapy can alleviate aches and discomfort while soothing sore muscles and joints.
- Pathogen Ablation: This light therapy can help reduce harmful microorganisms in the body, supporting immunity, overall health and wellness.
- Stress Reduction: The calming frequencies can help reduce stress and tension, aiding in anxiety relief and improving sleep quality.
- Skin Rejuvenation: This light therapy boosts collagen production, enhances skin texture, and addresses various skin issues, including acne, eczema, and psoriasis.
- Enhanced Immunity: Firefly Light

Therapy activates the body's natural defense mechanisms, making it especially beneficial for recovery after illness, including post-COVID.

This technology has positively impacted the lives of tens of thousands of clients. Firefly Light Therapy interacts with cells, tissues, and energy centers within the body by delivering precise frequencies that stimulate cellular repair, reduce inflammation, and enhance circulation.

Light therapy sessions can be customized to meet individual needs, whether someone is recovering from an injury, managing chronic pain, or seeking relaxation. Firefly Light Therapy has been associated with improvements in a large variety of conditions from Auto-Immune Disorders, Alzheimer's Disease, Back Pain, Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, Diabetes Complications, Gut Issues/Parasites, Lyme Disease, IBS, Severe Menstrual Cramps, Neuropathies, Osteoarthritis, Plantar Fasciitis, Traumatic Brain Injury and Stroke, Wound Healing, and more.

Disclaimer: Firefly Light Therapy is considered a wellness tool and is not intended to diagnose or replace medical treatment.

This article was brought to you by CoActive Wellnes in Windham. <

EXPLORING DETOX MODALITIES

Not all detoxification methods are created equal, and understanding the distinctions between them is crucial for achieving the most effective cleansing process.

Detoxification goes beyond simply removing harmful substances from the body—it can involve multiple layers of healing, including emotional, physical, and digestive components. The key to a successful detox lies in choosing the right modality that best aligns with your personal needs, goals, and the areas of your health that require the most attention.

Energetic/Emotional Detox focuses on releasing trapped emotions and energy blockages to restore mental clarity and emotional balance. Unresolved feelings like fear or anger can manifest as physical discomfort, so this detox involves techniques such

as meditation, energy healing, and mindfulness to help restore peace and mental clarity.

Systemic Detox, on the other hand, targets the entire body by addressing toxins accumulated in organs, tissues, and cells. It promotes rejuvenation by supporting the body's natural detoxification processes through fasting, herbal cleanses, and hydration, improving overall vitality and immune function.

Digestive Detox concentrates on the gut, cleansing it to optimize digestion and nutrient absorption. A sluggish digestive system can lead to bloating and poor nutrient absorption, so this detox uses probiotics, fiber-rich diets, and herbal teas to restore gut health and improve energy and skin.

This article was brought to you by Vitality Room in Windham. <

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Health, Wellness & BEAUTY

LOCAL FARM-RAISED FOODS: A BETTER CHOICE FOR HEALTH

When it comes to feeding our families, the choices we make about where and what to buy can significantly impact our health, the environment, and even our local economies. Grocery store meats and produce may be convenient, but there is a growing awareness of the benefits of shopping at local markets that offer farm-raised meats, vegetables, and other goods with traceable origins. The difference between these two options is worth exploring for anyone seeking a healthier lifestyle.

Grocery stores often source their

meat and produce from large-scale industrial farms, where the focus is on maximizing production and minimizing costs. While these methods keep prices low, they often compromise quality and nutritional value. Industrially raised animals may be treated with antibiotics, hormones, or fed unnatural diets to speed up growth and increase yield. Similarly, fruits and vegetables are frequently grown using synthetic pesticides and harvested before peak ripeness to withstand long-distance shipping. These practices not only affect the flavor and nu-

tritional content of the food but also raise concerns about long-term health impacts.

In contrast, shopping at local farmers' markets or directly from small-scale farms provides a healthier alternative. Farm-raised meats are typically produced using more humane and sustainable practices. Animals are often pasture-raised and fed natural diets, resulting in higher-quality meat with more robust flavor and better nutritional profiles. Grass-fed beef, for example, is richer in omega-3 fatty acids and antioxidants compared to grain-fed beef.

Locally grown produce is usually harvested at peak ripeness, ensuring maximum freshness and nutritional density. Because it doesn't need to travel long distances, it retains its natural flavors and reduces the carbon footprint associated with transportation. Furthermore, purchasing direct-

ly from local farmers allows you to ask questions about farming methods, ensuring the food aligns with your values and dietary preferences.

Beyond health, supporting local markets contributes to community well-being. Dollars spent locally often circulate within the community, fostering economic growth and helping small farmers thrive. Additionally, many local markets promote biodiversity by offering heirloom varieties of fruits and vegetables that are rarely found in grocery stores.

While shopping at grocery stores may be convenient, making the effort to buy from local markets can have a transformative impact on your health and lifestyle. By choosing farm-raised meats and fresh, locally grown produce, you not only nourish your body with wholesome food but also support sustainable farming practices and a healthier planet. <

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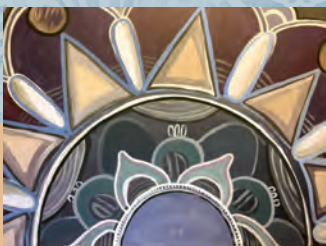
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BENEFITS OF YOGA

Yoga is a holistic practice that enhances physical health, mental balance, and overall well-being. Rooted in ancient traditions, yoga integrates movement, breath control, and mindfulness, making it a powerful tool for achieving harmony in both body and mind.

Physically, yoga improves flexibility, strength, and posture. Through a variety of poses, it stretches and tones muscles, enhancing mobility and reducing the risk of injuries. It also supports cardiovascular health, improves circulation, and can alleviate chronic pain, such as back or joint discomfort.

On a mental and emotional level, yoga is known for its stress-relieving benefits. Controlled breathing and meditation practices calm the nervous system, reducing cortisol levels and promoting relaxation. Regular practice can improve focus, enhance emotional resilience, and help manage anxiety or depression.

Yoga also fosters balance—both literal and figurative. Physically, it improves coordination and stability, which are vital for daily activities. Spiritually, yoga encourages mindfulness and self-awareness, helping individuals cultivate inner peace and clarity.

Yoga is a transformative practice that supports well-being at every level. Its versatility makes it accessible to all, offering benefits that ripple through every aspect of life.

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Health, Wellness & BEAUTY

NON-TOXIC CLEANING SOLUTIONS: A HEALTHIER WAY TO KEEP YOUR HOME CLEAN

Maintaining a clean home is essential for your health and well-being, but many conventional cleaning products contain harsh chemicals that can negatively impact indoor air quality and pose risks to your health. Switching to non-toxic cleaning products or creating your own DIY solutions is an excellent way to achieve a spotless home without exposing yourself, your family, or the environment to harmful substances.

The problem with many store-bought cleaning products is that they are laden with chemicals like ammonia, bleach, and synthetic fragrances. While effective at removing dirt and grime, these ingredients can trigger respiratory issues, skin irritation, and even long-term health problems with prolonged exposure. Additionally, the harsh residues left behind can be harmful to children and pets, who are more susceptible to chemical exposure.

Non-toxic cleaning products, often made with natural ingredients, are just as effective as their chemical-laden counterparts but are much safer. They reduce the risk of allergic reactions and respiratory irritation while also being eco-friendly. Many of these products are biodegradable and free from harmful toxins, making them better for the

planet.

DIY Cleaning Solutions

Creating your own cleaning products is simple, cost-effective, and ensures complete control over what goes into them. Here are a few DIY options:

- **All-Purpose Cleaner:** Mix equal parts white vinegar and water, and add a few drops of your favorite essential oil for fragrance.
- **Glass Cleaner:** Combine 1 part vinegar, 2 parts water, and a teaspoon of cornstarch for streak-free results.
- **Scrubbing Paste:** Mix baking soda with water to create a paste that effectively tackles tough stains.

DIY Stain Remover for Fabrics

• 1 part dish soap, 2 parts hydrogen peroxide, and 2 parts baking soda. Mix the ingredients to form a paste. Apply it to stains on fabrics, let it sit for 15-30 minutes, then launder as usual. This works well for sweat stains, grease, and food spills.

DIY Upholstery Cleaner

• 1/2 cup white vinegar, 1 cup warm water, 2 tablespoons baking soda. Mix in a spray bottle. Lightly spray onto fabric surfaces like couches or chairs, then scrub gently with a soft-bristled brush or cloth. Let it air dry.

Carpet Cleaner Solution

• 2 tablespoons salt, 1/2 cup white

vinegar, 2 cups warm water. Mix and apply to stained areas of the carpet using a sponge or cloth. For tougher stains, add 2 tablespoons of baking soda. Blot dry with a clean towel.

Laundry Booster

• 1/2 cup baking soda and 1/2 cup white vinegar. Add the baking soda directly into the drum with your laundry and pour the vinegar into the rinse cycle. This helps whiten whites, neutralize odors, and boost detergent performance.

**Note: Always test these solutions on a small non noticeable spot on fabrics or carpets to ensure no discoloring.*

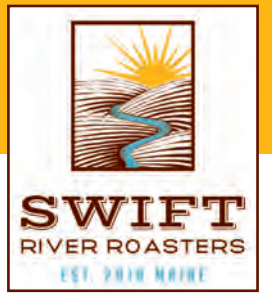
By switching to non-toxic cleaning products or using DIY solutions, you can create a healthier, safer living environment for your family. Not only will you protect yourself from unnecessary chemical exposure, but you'll also contribute to a more sustainable planet. Small changes in your cleaning routine can make a big difference in your home and beyond. <

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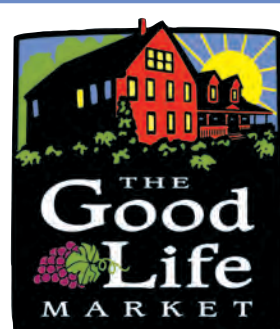
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Health, Wellness & BEAUTY

THE IMPORTANCE OF REGULAR SKIN CHECKS

Your skin is your body's largest organ and its first line of defense against the outside world. Keeping it healthy is vital, and one of the most effective ways to do so is by performing regular skin checks. These self-exams, combined with professional evaluations, can help detect skin cancer and other skin conditions early, potentially saving your life.

Skin cancer is the most common cancer worldwide, with millions of cases diagnosed annually. Among these, melanoma is the most dangerous, but even non-melanoma skin cancers, like basal cell and squamous cell carcinoma, can cause significant damage if left untreated. Early detection is crucial because it greatly increases the chances of successful treatment.

In addition to skin cancer, regular skin checks can help identify other conditions like eczema, psoriasis, or fungal infections, allowing for early intervention before they worsen. Routine examinations also increase your awareness of changes in your skin, empowering you to take a proactive role in your health.

It's recommended to perform a self-exam once a month. This frequency allows you to familiarize yourself

with your skin's appearance and detect any changes early. Perform your self-exam in a well-lit room with a full-length mirror and a hand mirror for hard-to-see areas. Don't forget to check less obvious spots like the scalp, soles of the feet, and between your toes.

Look for new moles, growths, or patches, as well as changes in the size, shape, or color of existing spots. The ABCDE rule is a helpful guideline for spotting concerning moles:

- A: Asymmetry
- B: Border irregularity
- C: Color variation
- D: Diameter larger than 6mm
- E: Evolving in size, shape, or color

In addition to self-checks, it's important to schedule an annual full-body skin exam with a dermatologist. Those with higher risk factors—such as fair skin, a history of sunburns, a family history of skin cancer, or frequent tanning bed use—may need more frequent visits.

Regular skin checks are a simple yet powerful tool for maintaining skin health. By catching potential issues early, you can protect yourself from serious conditions and ensure your skin remains healthy for years to come. <

WHY AIR AND WATER TESTING IN HOMES IS VITAL FOR HEALTH

In Maine, where rural living and natural beauty thrive, residents often rely on private wells for their water supply. While well water can be clean and fresh, it can also be contaminated with harmful substances, making water testing crucial for maintaining health and safety. Among the most significant concerns in Maine are high levels of radon and other contaminants that may be present in well water, which can pose serious health risks if not properly managed.

Water testing in Maine is particularly important due to the state's geological composition. Maine's rock formations can naturally contain high levels of radon, a radioactive gas that is released into the air and water from underground sources. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States, and when it contaminates water sources, it can be inhaled or ingested, posing serious health risks over time. As radon can easily dissolve in water, it's important to test both the air and water in homes, especially in areas with known radon activity.

Radon testing should be performed by professionals who can accurately measure radon levels in water and air. If elevated radon levels are detected in

well water, a radon mitigation system can be installed to reduce the concentration and minimize health risks. These systems work by venting radon gas from the water before it enters the home, providing peace of mind to homeowners and their families.

In addition to radon, well water in Maine can be susceptible to other contaminants, including bacteria, nitrates, heavy metals like lead and arsenic, and pesticides from nearby agricultural activities. These substances can have various harmful effects on health, from gastrointestinal issues and developmental problems to long-term chronic conditions. Regular water testing helps ensure that water is safe to drink, cook with, and bathe in, reducing the risk of exposure to these dangerous substances.

Water testing should be a routine part of home maintenance, particularly for those using private wells. Maine's public health agencies recommend testing well water at least once a year for common contaminants, as well as any time there are changes in taste, smell, or appearance of the water. Early detection of contaminants can lead to prompt remediation and prevent more serious future health problems. <

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controlled energy to the skin, stimulating collagen production and promoting skin healing.

Unlike traditional CO2 laser treatments, which often require significant recovery time due to their deeper skin penetration, CoolPeel's unique technology allows for a more superficial treatment. The result is a more comfortable experience with minimal downtime. This treatment works by delivering short pulses of laser energy that create tiny micro-injuries in the skin, encouraging the body's natural healing response and collagen production. The heat generated by the laser stimulates skin renewal, helping to address a variety of skin concerns such as fine lines, wrinkles, sun damage, hyperpigmentation, and uneven texture.

One of the standout features of CoolPeel is its precision. The technol-



ogy is able to target specific layers of the skin without damaging surrounding tissues, making it a safe and effective option for patients seeking results without the risk of scarring or complications. Additionally, CoolPeel treatments are highly customizable, allowing providers to adjust the intensity based on the patient's skin type and individual concerns. This makes it suitable for a wide range of skin types and conditions.

The treatment itself is relatively quick, typically lasting between 20

to 30 minutes depending on the area being treated. Patients may experience some mild redness and swelling immediately following the procedure, but these side effects generally subside within a few hours. In most cases, patients can resume their normal activities the next day. For optimal results, a series of CoolPeel treatments may be recommended, spaced several weeks apart, although some individuals notice improvements after just one session.

CoolPeel is a great option for those looking for a refreshed, youthful appearance without the long recovery times of traditional laser treatments. It can be used on various areas of the face, including the forehead, cheeks, and around the eyes, making it an excellent choice for anyone looking to address multiple skin concerns in one treatment. Whether you're dealing with signs of aging or just want to restore your skin's youthful glow, CoolPeel offers an efficient, effective solution. <

DID YOU KNOW?

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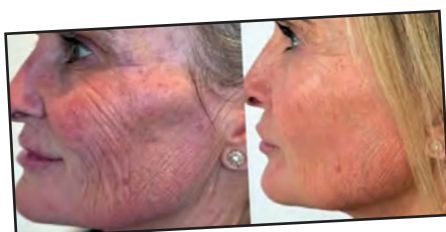
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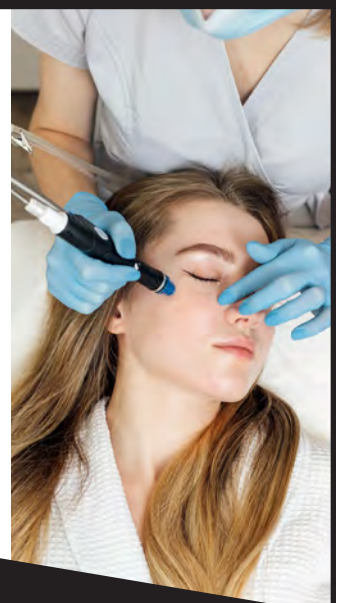
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Eagle SPORTS

Trail Blazers hockey starts strong, but Lewiston prevails

By Matt Pascarella

STAFF WRITER

While the result wasn't what they wanted, the Windham/Bonny Eagle/Westbrook Trail Blazers played a much stronger, more physical ice hockey game against Lewiston on Monday, Jan. 13 at the University of Southern Maine in Gorham than when they played them last year in the postseason. Although the Trail Blazers have improved a great deal, the Blue Devils won, 5-2.

"I think it's a learning game," said Windham senior Cole Heansler. "We came out strong but calmed down and let them take the lead. We need to keep the same intensity as if we are always down by three goals. We came out super-fast today and battled in the start. I think there were some good set-up plays, our power play worked pretty well; we weren't able to generate but were able to move it around pretty well. I think the passing was good, but we need to work on some small errors, some shots on net and stuff."

Windham came out strong; they knew what this team was capable of and in the first period were right there with Lewiston. Halfway through the first period, Trail Blazers senior Philip Traina passed to senior Sam Foley who scored.

Lewiston narrowly scored and tied the game 1-1 after one period.

In the second period, after the Trail Blazers killed a five-on-three penalty, which kept Lewiston at bay for almost two full minutes. The Trail Blazers had multiple shots at goal, but noth-



Trail Blazers senior Cole Heansler of Windham quickly moves toward the goal at the University of Southern Maine in Gorham.

PHOTOS BY MATT PASCARELLA

ing got by.

Traina fired a shot that nicked the goal post; the Trail Blazers worked hard to tie up this game. Lewiston led 2-1 after two periods. The Trail Blazers outshot Lewiston 2 to 1 in the second period.

"We started off good, played hard, but once we get into a rhythm, we start letting off and the other team gets back into it," said Windham's Foley. "At the start of the second period - once we killed off the penalties, we really didn't pick it back up and (Lewiston) started to control the game. I feel like the breakouts were solid; at least the winger's perspective, they were getting the pucks out, and then just line rushes, moving us forward. We played more physical; they walked over us (last year in the playoffs) because we let them, but we were laying the body on them today. Got more shots on goal."

In the third period, Lewiston

scored. The Trail Blazers continued to work at it but Lewiston scored twice more. Foley scored for the Trail Blazers, but it wasn't enough to get past Lewiston.

"This game we were right in until we had a bad turnover underneath our goal line on a power play and (Lewiston) got a short-handed goal - that can't happen," said Windham varsity Trail Blazers coach Bobby Fothergill. "That took the wind out of our sails to start the second period. I think in the third period we ... weren't having 'puck luck,' but what I tell the guys - you don't get 'puck luck', you've got to make it, if it isn't going for you, you've got to dig deeper; and if it isn't going then, you've got to dig deeper than that. It's an opportunity to learn and grow; turnovers kind of killed us, that's what did us in - turning the puck over in bad spots, we've

got to clean that up. As soon as (Lewiston) got that third goal, it kind of deflated the team. (We're) working hard ... we just ran out of gas; we've got to skate better and be more conditioned. (We) fought hard, one of our players got punched in the head three times and didn't swing back. That's what we've been working on with these guys, if you get in a scrum, don't retaliate ... for that player to keep his cool, it shows that they're growing; they're understanding you've got to stay out of the box. We had some offensive zone presence at times that was pretty good, and I thought we did a pretty good job defensively, we were blocking shots, sticks in lanes, doing all that good stuff. We got to skate a full 45 minutes, and we didn't do that here You can get better from losing games. You learn and try to limit the mistakes." <



(Top to bottom) Trail Blazers senior Massimo Massaro of Bonny Eagle holds possession of the puck. Senior Philip Traina of Windham gets ready to pass to a teammate. Senior captain Sam Foley of Windham keeps the puck away from his opponent.

ATHLETE OF THE WEEK



Marina Schwarz

Age: 17 Team: WHS varsity indoor track and field

Coach: Jeff Riddle

Parents' names: Tina and William Schwarz

Reason for selection: As a team captain, Marina has evolved her track and field "game" and is progressing within her training schedule weekly; the proof is manifesting with weekly event personal records. Marina is a dedicated thrower and leader for Windham's varsity Lady Eagles' track and field team. Marina is positively experiencing the results of the time and work put in and is experiencing how the consistent time in the weight room, agility-strength and technique training, and otherwise is contributing to the school's throw teams and to her progressions. Marina is committed and is working hard to get all her micromovements in rhythm to let it fly. In December 2023, Marina recorded a shot put of 28-02.75-plus feet and has improved significantly a year later to now hitting 30-plus feet using the newly learned Glide method to throw. She communicates well with all of her teammates, leads practices when the coaches are not able to, and unifies participants into building team spirit, belief, and confidence.

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Windham alpine ski team starts season off strong

By Matt Pascarella

STAFF WRITER

Windham High School's alpine ski team competed in a season-opening meet against Cheverus, Falmouth, Gorham, Kennebunk, Marshwood and Scarborough on Friday, Jan. 10 at Pleasant Mountain in Bridgton with Windham's boys' team finishing fourth with a score of 85 and the girls' team finishing fifth with a score of 93.

"We need to work on making sure everybody's equipment is in the right condition," said Windham alpine ski coach Christine Fredette. "We had some equipment malfunctions that created problems for some of the racers. All in all, it was great: we had a couple racers who weren't sure they were going to race, and they ended up racing - pushing through those struggles as a team and cheering each other on, but the most important thing is they are all having fun. I saw some of the drills that we had been working on earlier in the week coming through in their skiing, I saw the kids giving each other encouragement and keeping each other focused and helping to lower each other's anxiety. I think this sets a good tone, we know where we're at, we competed well and we're going to continue to compete well."

Boys

Windham junior Finn Jorgensen finished first for the team and 18th overall with a combined two-run time of 2:06.34 minutes. Behind him was senior Caleb Lavallee with a time of 2:07.28; he finished second for Windham and 19th overall.

Senior Preston Stretch finished 21st overall and third for Windham with a time of 2:07.78.

"We had good team performances, if we just finish our races and don't fall, I know that we can do better," said team captain Stretch. "Conditions for this time of the season are actually amazing because they've been making so much snow. The first run, very good, the course was easy, course was very straight, good first course to start. After the second run, it did get a little chopped up and a bit icier. This meet definitely sets a tone that we need to try our best, try harder, not necessarily that we didn't do good, but we know that we can do



(L to R) Windham sophomore Maya Dries comes to a stop after a run on the slalom course during a prep alpine skiing slalom meet against Cheverus, Falmouth, Gorham, Kennebunk, Marshwood and Scarborough at Pleasant Mountain in Bridgton. Senior Katelyn Cotter cruises to the finish line. PHOTOS BY MATT PASCARELLA

better. We need to work on our ability to finish these courses and not get disqualified; we need to work on finishing and not falling."

Junior and exchange student Eduardo Elorriaga finished with a time of 4:35.34.

Girls

Sophomore Maya Dries finished 12th overall and first for Windham with a 2:04.01 time.

Junior Ella Washburn finished second for Windham and 22nd overall with a time of 2:27.82. Junior Anna Lane finished third for Windham and 29th overall with a 2:32.37 time.

"I think I did good," said Windham senior captain Katelyn Cotter, who finished fifth for Windham with a time of 2:53.33. "Definitely was a slow start to the season, but ... it's good to get back on the snow and actually hit a gate. I think it sets a very good tone, we're all super supportive of each other, a lot of team building, especially up top. Especially with the conditions that held up tonight, it's going to be a good season for all of us. Our teams did really good at holding their edge, especially in those spots that get icy, our team does really well in making sure they're getting in, actually making sure they're sticking to their line and getting nice and close to the gates.

Cotter said the teams just need more practice and time on snow to improve for the season. <



(L to R) Junior Finn Jorgensen navigates between the gates. Senior Preston Stretch crouches as he speeds into the end of the course.

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Help beat the winter blues with home decorating

► **By Theresa Bouchard**
SPECIAL TO THE WINDHAM EAGLE



— Theresa Bouchard
TS Staging & Design

The cold and dark days of winter are here, and many people find themselves feeling a bit down or lacking energy. The phenomenon known as the “winter blues” is a real issue, affecting individuals emotionally, mentally, and even physically. Shorter daylight hours, colder weather, and isolation can lead to feelings of sadness, fatigue, and a general sense of being less motivated.

While there are many ways to address these challenges, one effective and surprisingly accessible way to improve mood during the winter months is through decorating your home. Research has shown that our environment plays a significant role in shaping our emotions, and creating a warm, welcoming, and aesthetically pleasing space can be a powerful tool for combating the winter blues. Here’s why decorating your home can make a big difference in how you feel, and some practical tips for making your home a winter sanctuary.

Your home is your sanctuary, and its appearance can directly affect your mental and emotional state. The science of environmental psychology suggests that we are strongly influenced by the spaces we inhabit. When you spend most of your time in a

dreary or cluttered space, it can contribute to feelings of stress, discomfort, and even sadness. On the other hand, decorating with intention can elevate your mood, create a sense of calm, and promote well-being.

During winter, the lack of sunlight and outdoor time can leave you feeling disconnected. But incorporating bright, warm colors and inviting textures into your home can mimic the sun’s positive effects, helping you feel more energized and content. Colors like yellow, orange, and red are known to promote happiness, while calming blues and greens can create a peaceful atmosphere. The key is to design your environment in a way that supports the mood you want to cultivate, whether that’s comfort, joy, or peace.

Here are some tips to help you combat the winter blues:

• **Maximize light**

During winter, natural light is limited, so use mirrors and light-colored decor to reflect and amplify available light. Supplement with warm artificial lighting like daylight bulbs or string lights for a cozy atmosphere.

• **Add warm textures**

Incorporate soft, plush items like blankets, pillows, and rugs to make your home feel warm and inviting. Layering textiles adds both comfort and visual interest.

• **Use uplifting colors**

Bright colors like mustard, burnt orange, or soft pink can add warmth and cheer to your space. Earthy tones

like green and brown also help bring nature indoors.

• **Create a cozy atmosphere**

Incorporate candles, soft lighting, and cozy blankets into your space. A relaxed, peaceful environment can help you unwind and enjoy winter more.

• **Bring nature indoor**

Indoor plants, pinecones, or branches can add life to your home. Connecting with nature indoors reduces stress and lifts your spirits.

• **Infuse pleasant scents**

Scent plays a big role in mood. Light candles or use essential oils like lavender for calm or citrus for energy. Scents like cinnamon and clove can also create a cozy, wintery atmosphere.

Winter doesn’t have to mean a season of sadness or immobility. By focusing on home decor and creating a space that reflects warmth, comfort, and positivity, you can turn your home into a refuge that helps combat the winter blues. Whether it’s adding a splash of color, surrounding yourself in soft textures, or bringing in the beauty of nature, the act of decorating with intention can profoundly influence how you feel during the colder months. With a little creativity and thoughtful design, your home can become an uplifting retreat where the

winter blues have little chance of taking hold.

If you’re unsure where to begin with the tips provided, contact TS Staging and Design to help transform your home into a comfy, cozy, and uplifting space that will chase away the winter blues! Their expert team can guide you in creating a warm, inviting environment that reflects your personal style and boosts your mood all season long.

This article was brought to you by Theresa Bouchard is the owner and designer of TS Staging and Design. If you would like more information regarding staging services, call 207-400-9393 or send an email to: tsstaginganddesign@gmail.com or check us out on Facebook, Instagram or our website at www.tsstaginganddesign.com. We are an award-winning professional home staging company. <

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THE WINDHAM EAGLE'S

Cooking Corner

By Angela Paris

SPECIAL TO THE WINDHAM EAGLE • JUGGLINGACTMAMA.COM

Garlic Butter Steak Bites

Tender steak bites seared in a cast iron skillet and simmered in a garlic butter sauce to perfection! Serve with baked potatoes, zucchini noodles, or rice for a delicious meal.

INGREDIENTS

- | | |
|--|---|
| STEAK BITES | ¼ cup olive oil |
| 1 pound strip steak | 3 cloves garlic minced |
| 3 tablespoons Cowboy Butter (see recipe below) | 1 tablespoon onion powder |
| 1 tablespoon olive oil | COWBOY BUTTER |
| 1 teaspoon fresh thyme | 1 cup salted butter (2 sticks) |
| Salt and Pepper to taste | ¼ cup finely minced fresh parsley |
| MARINADE | A pinch of red pepper flakes |
| ¼ cup Worcestershire Sauce | A pinch of coarsely ground black pepper |
| ¼ cup soy sauce | 1 clove garlic finely minced |
| | Juice and zest of ½ lemon |

INSTRUCTIONS

In a large bowl, combine the ingredients for the marinade: ¼ cup Worcestershire Sauce, ¼ cup soy sauce, ¼ cup olive oil, 3 cloves garlic, 1 tablespoon onion powder. Cut steak into bite-size pieces and add to the marinade. Mix the steak pieces in the marinade until well-coated. Set aside for 20 minutes. Heat olive oil in large or cast iron skillet. Drain the marinade off of steak bites. Add steak to skillet and cook in a single layer for 3-4 minutes, stirring occasionally until steak is golden brown. Add 3 tablespoons Cowboy Butter and fresh thyme to steak, cook for 1-2 minutes, stir to coat the steak in the butter sauce. Remove from pan to serving plate or bowl.

Cowboy Butter: Allow the butter to come to room temperature. Into the bowl of a mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, add the butter. Beat until creamy, then add in the parsley, red pepper flakes, black pepper, minced garlic, lemon juice and zest. Mix until well combined. Refrigerate.

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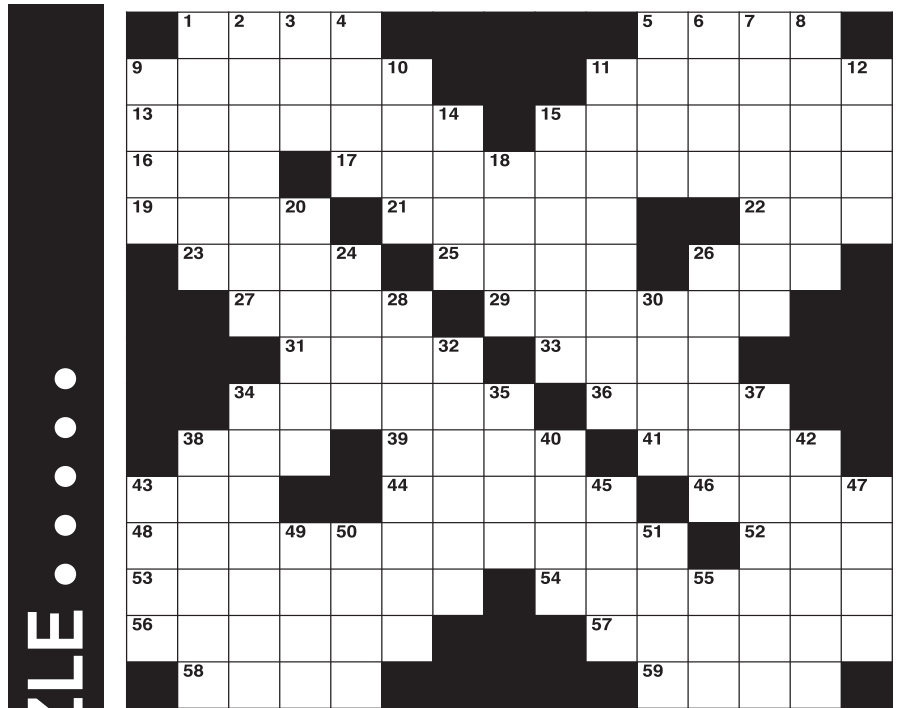
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CROSSWORD PUZZLE

CLUES ACROSS

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Six (Spanish) | 33. Witnesses |
| 5. Invests in little enterprises | 34. Looked for |
| 9. Large dung beetle | 36. Arranges |
| 11. Gored | 38. Political action committee |
| 13. Partially paralyzed | 39. Middle eastern nation (alt. sp.) |
| 15. Still a little wet | 41. Hair-like structure |
| 16. Legal field media company | 43. Parts producer |
| 17. Not working | 44. Greek city |
| 19. 500 sheets of paper | 46. Subway dwellers |
| 21. Church structure | 48. Norm from "Cheers" |
| 22. Sheep disease | 52. Clean a floor |
| 23. Small drink of whiskey | 53. Vied for |
| 25. Weaving tradition | 54. Canned fish |
| 26. Pestilence | 56. Inspire with love |
| 27. Body part | 57. Sent down moisture |
| 29. Nabs | 58. Wrest |
| 31. Places to stay | 59. Partner to carrots |

CLUES DOWN

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Mounted | 24. A restaurant's list of offerings |
| 2. Assign | 26. Annoy constantly |
| 3. Wrath | 28. Orchestrate |
| 4. Self-immolation by fire ritual | 30. Z Z Z |
| 5. Parts of an organism | 32. Astute |
| 6. Person from England | 34. Highly decorated tea urn |
| 7. Tropical plants of the pea family | 35. Teach to behave |
| 8. Body part | 37. Endurance |
| 9. Practice boxing | 38. Urinating |
| 10. Containers | 40. Barbie friend dolls |
| 11. Contrary beliefs | 42. Repents |
| 12. Bleached | 43. Man-eating giant |
| 14. Pre-Islamic Egyptian | 45. Jewish calendar month |
| 15. A group of similar things ordered one after another | 47. Accelerated |
| 18. Innermost spinal cord membranes | 49. Husband of Sita in Hindu |
| 20. Cassava | 50. Lump of semiliquid substance |
| | 51. Lying in wait |
| | 55. Cease to exist |

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.

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LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS

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BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

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Located at 4 Whites Bridge Road #100 in Windham, Seed Sound Herbal Apothecary is a full herbal apothecary providing access to organic and wildcrafted herbs that can be purchased individually or in carefully formulated blends.

"We formulate blends in teas and tinctures that work well for many ailments or overall wellbeing and preventative care," said owner Lauren Beatrice. "We also work closely with our customers to offer customized herbal blends that cater to their individual needs."

Beatrice says the best aspect of her work at Seed Sound Herbal Apothecary comes from helping others find their healing path through time-tested natural remedies.

"We are unique in not only offering herbal plant medicine and knowledge, but we also offer medical cannabis to patients," Beatrice said. "We work with MOFGA-certified hemp farmers to create a CBD line of herbal products that combine these useful plants in powerful formulations."

Adhering to the highest possible standards to create quality organic products, Seed Sound Herbal Apothecary also focuses on keeping prices af-



fordable and competitive.

"You do not need a medical card to come into our apothecary, we have a separate office for those services, that is discreet and comfortable," Beatrice said. "We make almost all our products in-house using only organic and local ingredients. We strive on being a sustainability-focused business by utilizing only recyclable and compostable packaging."

The shop offers discounts for veterans, elderly, and those who bring in their own packaging for herbs or teas. It also maintains cards on file that it stamps for repeat customers of their in-house CBD products who earn a free product after filling their card.

Shelves are stocked with a range of herbal products, from house-made extracts to soothing teas, nourishing salves, and refreshing sprays. Its team of experts takes great pride in creating unique blends using more than 200 different organic or wildcrafted dried herbs and spices.

"We are here to help people on their own healing journey by offering our knowledge and herbal products,"

Beatrice said. "Because we see these plants as allies, we use the most sustainable packaging we can find – glass containers, sugar cane compostable labels, compostable bags, hemp tubes, and recycled ocean plastics."

Staff members are not only full of knowledge, but full of compassion and understanding, spending quality time and energy with customers to make sure they are getting the right plant medicine.

"We make custom blends that suit individual needs, and adjust formulas where needed," Beatrice said. "Our customers are loyal and have been coming to us for 6-and-a-half years. We are honored that they spread their love of our store with their loved ones, and we have built such a beautiful customer base completely organically. Our customers love that they can trust our products to always be safe, organic and effective."

Beatrice has been a medical cannabis caregiver in Maine since 2010 and attended herbal school at Greenwood Herbals in Limerick, Maine to earn her Clinical Herbalist title. Graduating

from that program in 2017, she opened Seed Sound Herbal apothecary in 2018 to share her knowledge of both herbal medicine and medical cannabis.

"I built this business from the ground up with zero loans and only money I saved and slowly kept putting back into it," she said. "I am the sole owner, a single mom of two strong young women. I have fought hard for medical cannabis to be here alongside all the other plant allies we share with our community. I have the best employees – Rosie, Trisha and John – who have been with us for years. They keep Seed Sound going while I have more time to focus on the business aspect behind the scenes and spend more time with my family."

Online reviews for Seed Sound Herbal Apothecary are incredible.

"What I was going through was not easy to talk about but I felt 0 judgment. Not only did the tincture fix what I was going through but left me feeling healthy. Thank you 1,000 times!" ~ Angel S.

"Quality products, great atmosphere, welcoming staff. The 6 Mushroom Blend is one of my favorite products, and the variety and quality is unmatched in the area." ~ Chessie C.

For further details about Seed Sound Herbal Apothecary, call 207-572-1234. Find them on Instagram at seedsoundherbalapothecary, or on Facebook under Seed Sound Herbals. All the herbal products as well as CBD and gifts offered are available online at seedsoundherbals.com. <

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5 MUSHROOM ELECTUARY same as 6 mushroom blend tincture, but blended in local honey – tastes like fudge & supports allergies



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→ PEACHES *Cont. from page 5*

helps him to focus.

"It makes working on homework fun," Shamaoun said. "It's a privilege to get to sit with the rabbit while we work and if we don't work, we have to go back to our desk."

There are other ways Peaches makes a positive impact on the students and the classroom environment by being incorporated through week-

ly activities such as the "Wednesdays Lunch in the Classroom." On those days, the students get the opportunity to share small parcels of food.

"We discovered that fruits and vegetables are her favorite snacks," student Malia Borrayo said. "We hide little bits of food under little cups, and she sniffs to find out if there is food under there and if she likes it, she flips the cup over and eats it."

Peaches also provides good humor

and levity.

"We have a lot of favorite moments when Peaches makes us laugh," Borrayo said. "One day, she grabbed her blanket with her mouth and pulled it into her cage. That made us laugh, but she was telling us that she needed some alone time."

The rabbit has become such an integral part of the classroom that her absence leaves a noticeable void.

"When she stayed home sick the

other day, the classroom felt empty," said student Willow Bolstridge. "It was lonely without her."

Loved by both students and parents and approved by the school board, Peaches isn't going anywhere soon.

"As long as there are no bunny allergies, Peaches will always be my co-teacher and my students' furry friend who sparks the love of learning," Brackett said. <

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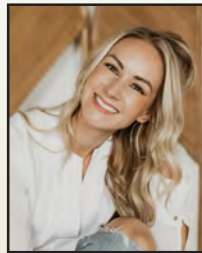
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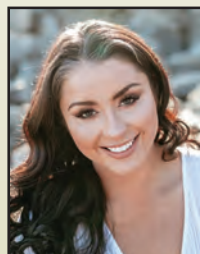
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