

Twin girls showcase talent during American Miss National Pageant

By Ed Pierce
STAFF WRITER

No matter what happens in their lives, the bond between twin girls from Raymond remains unbreakable.

Alison and Alexa Largay, known as Ali and Lexi, are 10 years old twin sisters and turn 11 on March 26. They both competed in the American Miss National Pageant in South Portland in December and are preparing to compete again in that same pageant this August.

Lexi competed in the pageant as Miss Western Maine Preteen, while her twin sister, Ali, who is 2 minutes older than Lexi, was American Miss Royalty Preteen. They are the daughters of Julie and Mike Largay of Raymond.

They are both homeschooled and in the fifth grade. Ali's favorite school subject is Art and Lexi's is Math.

According to their mother, Julie Largay, entering the pageant was something of interest to the twins.

"Both girls do a lot of theater and were looking for a change," she said. "Ali heard about other girls doing pageants and decided she wanted to try. After Ali signed up, Lexi decided she wanted to do it too."

The girls started preparing for their first pageant about 6 months before the competition.

They worked on poise, modeling, walking, public speaking and interview skill and were coached by Morgan Wing, who was USOA Teen Maine 2023 and who will be competing in the Miss Maine Woman of Service Pageant in April.

Both Ali and Lexi showcased their abilities in the talent portion of the American Miss National Pageant and Ali also competed in the spokesmodel competition where she had to give a speech about a woman who motivated her.

Ali won both the talent competition of the pageant and the spokesmodel competition. Lexi won the pageant's Spirit Award, which is the pageant's most prestigious award and reflects the true meaning of competition, personal growth and character development.

Overall, Lexi received third runner-up in the pageant, while Ali won first runner-up and the title of American Miss Royalty Preteen.

After competing in their first pageant, the girls say they learned a few

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Twin sisters Alexa 'Lexi' Largay, left, and Alison 'Ali' Largay of Raymond each competed in the American Miss National Pageant in South Portland in December and are already preparing to compete again in that same pageant this summer. SUBMITTED PHOTO

Windham Town Council examines sustainable growth while not compromising rural feel

By Ed Pierce
STAFF WRITER

For the past decade, a significant question facing Windham residents is how does the town grow at an orderly pace and yet not lose its connection with the past and a more rural way of life that prompted people to move here?

Last fall, a Community Survey was conducted by the town for residents and when asked what were perceived to be Windham's challenges in the next five years, the responses were in order; Pace of Community Growth and Expansion 73 percent; Town Services and Taxes 71 percent; and Affordable Housing 50 percent. Reviewing these results leads to a perception among town residents of too much growth too fast, and a significant desire to grow at a sustainable rate.

In January, members of the Windham Town Council conducted a workshop to discuss town growth. Councilors said this is a multifaceted topic and they reviewed results from the 2024 Community Survey, Maine state law, a downtown traffic evaluation, housing data, and other pertinent information as well as others.

Over a five-year span from 2019 to 2024, there were two condominium



Members of the Windham Town Council say areas of concern when considering the impacts of growth upon the town for the future are how it affects infrastructure, school enrollment and an increasing amount of traffic on Route 302. PHOTO BY ED PIERCE

projects completed in Windham totaling 49 units. From 2018 to 2024, there were six duplexes constructed in Windham totaling 142 units. Between 2021 to 2023, there were three multi-unit complexes opened in Windham featuring 85 units.

Councilors say that areas of concern when discussing growth are its impacts upon infrastructure, school

enrollment and increasing traffic in town.

In a press release issued by the Town Manager Barry Tibbetts, he said that Windham is moving forward with critical infrastructure projects and planned developments designed to support economic growth while maintaining responsible community planning.

Tibbetts said that during a recent Windham Town Council meeting, officials outlined key initiatives to address sustainable

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INSIGHT

If you wanna be happy

Recently I listened to part of a podcast featuring a so-called expert discussing her series of books instructing people how to be happy. The podcast's host described how this "happiness expert" has sold more than two million books and is one of the most requested public speakers currently in America. Using what she says are scientific resources while pursuing opportunities and experiences fostering growth and learning is this author's mantra and she advocates that self-knowledge and strong relationships are the keys to unlocking happiness.

Listening to her share her rationale about how to create happiness made me think that I too could detail what makes me happy and not charge anyone a dime for my thoughts on the subject.

Without further ado, here's Ed's Happiness Rules, free of charge:

Rule #1: Surround yourself with upbeat people. I've found that I'm happiest when I reduce the amount of time I spend with negative people, whiners and complainers, anyone who is easily annoyed or know-it-all Debbie Downers. Anyone who makes me laugh is a great way to start my day and I believe that associating with upbeat, happy and positive people always rubs off on me.

Rule #2: Inject something of personal significance into every day. Hardly a day goes by when I am not listening to music or spending time with my baseball card collection. Music does indeed soothe my soul and remains a huge part of my personal happiness equation. My music makes me feel nostalgic and content and so does reviewing my baseball cards as it produces a similar feeling for me. No matter what it is that is significant to you, I recommend finding out what that is and enjoying it as often as possible.

Rule #3: Eat breakfast for dinner. At least one night a week, forget spending hours preparing a meatloaf, making mashed potatoes and tossing a salad for the family. Trust me, a hearty stack of buttermilk pancakes, scrambled eggs, hash browns, fruit, toast and juice at dinnertime always leads to a very happy evening in my household.

Rule #4: Sleep when you are tired. I do have a regular bedtime that I turn in each night, but during the college basketball season, I occasionally skip that bedtime to stay up late watching my favorite team play on the west coast. Believe it or not, by the time the games are over, I sleep soundly through the rest of the night.

Rule #5: Take a walk. I do not go to the gym each morning and I do not spend hours every day working out or exercising. However, I do enjoy taking my dog for walks and just being outside in the fresh air and trying to keep up with my canine friend does work wonders for me.

Rule #6: Focus on what you can control while watching the news. Whenever I sit down for an extended period and watch the news on television lately, it seems that I quickly become overwhelmed with the state of the world. Multiple airplane crashes, wartime massacres, starvation, looming economic problems, injustice, terrorism, natural disasters and diseases can certainly drive a person to the looney bin faster than any attempt to change the channel. After consuming a half-hour of televised daily misery and conjecture, what I do is try and think of all the positive things happening in my life and discount those uncertain world and national events that I simply have no control over. Turning off the non-stop barrage of cable news is beneficial.

Rule #7: Think only good thoughts about other people. We live in such a divisive society today that makes us distrust everyone and everything. It's not easy to be kind and compassionate and not find shortcomings in others that you see out and about every single day. I recall Michael Jordan once saying during an interview that he had missed 26 game-winning shots during his professional career and yet he didn't stop taking them, and he ended up winning six NBA championships. Jordan credits his teammates thinking good thoughts about him and having the confidence that he could accomplish what he did in basketball. During my own career in journalism, I've discovered that telling someone something positive about them can truly make a difference in how they view themselves and their work.

Rule #8: Let go of the future. We all have worries about what lies ahead for us down the road, be it old age, poor health, loneliness, a shortage of money because of the rising cost of living or losing our close and cherished friends to cancer or heart disease. I recommend forgetting all the worry and angst and simply taking things day by day. Otherwise, anxiety and depression take charge and control of your life, and that's not what life should be about, no matter where your journey takes you.

It's my contention that as I go through life, my happiness is not about being enormously wealthy or blessed with athletic talent or possessing movie-star looks. What makes me the happiest are the little things that I'm truly grateful for such as a loving wife and family, a new granddaughter born March 5, and wonderful friends. <

~ Ed Pierce

Today in HISTORY



1790 – Thomas Jefferson of Virginia is sworn in as the first U.S. Secretary of State.

1826 – The Rensselaer School in Troy, New York is incorporated becoming the first engineering college in America.

1908 – A passenger is carried in a bi-plane for the first time during a flight by Henri Farman.

1910 – The U.S. Senate grants former U.S. President Teddy Roosevelt a yearly pension of \$10,000.

1928 – U.S. President Calvin Coolidge presents the Congressional Medal of Honor to Charles Lindbergh for his first trans-Atlantic flight.

1963 – The U.S. federal prison on San Francisco Bay's Alcatraz Island, which had held some of the most dangerous prisoners, is closed.

1965 – NASA launches Ranger 9, the final mission in a series of unmanned lunar explorations.

1965 – More than 3,000 civil rights demonstrators led by the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. begin a march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama.

ON THE SPOT

What is or was your best subject in school?

- "Auto shop and electronics."
– William D. Reiner
- "Le français." – Alfred Traylor
- "Industrial arts." – Rob Bridge
- "Literature with Mr. Dudley."
– Theresa Parker Rhoades
- "English." – Valerie Livesay Luce
- "Everything except history."
– Stephanie Page
- "Literature, fine arts, and film production were some of the classes I loved when I was in school." – Deirdre Schulte
- "I always got straight A's on my report card in U.S. History and Social Studies."
– David T. Muncey
- "Home economics. I enjoyed learning how to sew and how to use an iron."
– Anne Glotchshuk
- "Gym. Just kidding. Definitely math." – Stephen Signor
- "English." – Rose Tirell Haigis
- "Lunch." – Jen Corkum
- "English for natural aptitude, but loved Geometry and Physics, so cool!"
– Hannah Bannon
- "English and Social Studies."
– Julie Mallett
- "Overall English or Social Studies, but Geometry just seemed to flow for me."
– Rob Juergens
- "English." – Cheryl L. Page
- "Art." – Brian Roger Skillings
- "Algebra, it came naturally to me, and I still use it today for my job." – Sarah Singer-Miller
- "Web design and culinary arts were my favorites."
– Mitchell B. Robinson
- "I picked up Spanish really fast and it has helped me in my career." – Chris Macklin
- "Music." – Mia Potenzio-Ransey
- "Ocean Science and AP Biology." – Jerry Greene
- "Business and Personal Finance." – Isabella Mongon



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Staff Writers: Jolene Bailey, Lorraine Glowczak, Matt Pascarella, Kendra Raymond, Masha Yurkevich, Abby Wilson, Kaysa Jalbert, Elle Curtis



Kelly Mank
Publisher
Kelly@TheWindhamEagle.com



Melissa Carter
Sales Manager/Designer
Melissa@TheWindhamEagle.com



Ed Pierce
Managing Editor
Editor@TheWindhamEagle.com

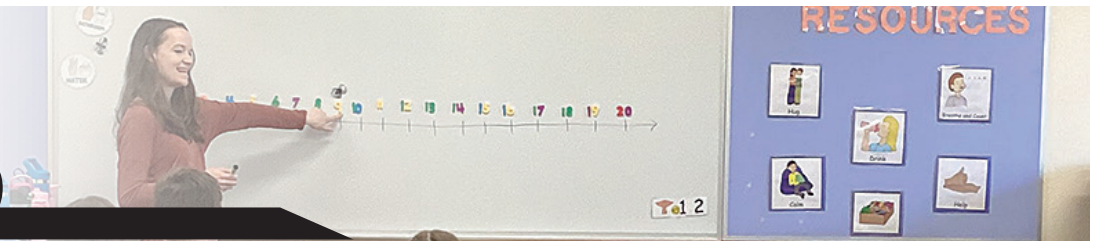


Becky Knox
Administrative
Office@TheWindhamEagle.com
Office hours: Wednesdays 8-2
Thursday 9am-Noon

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RSU 14 expands education services for preschool students

By Lorraine Glowczak

STAFF WRITER

According to the Learning Policy Institute, students who attend preschool programs are more prepared for school and are less likely to be identified as having special needs or to be held back in elementary school than children who did not attend preschool.

Studies also indicate clear positive effects on children's early literacy and mathematics skills. To support early learning opportunities for children in Windham and Raymond, RSU 14 is expanding its early childhood education services to reach more young families.

This expansion includes increasing Pre-K offerings in elementary schools in Windham and Raymond and strengthening partnerships with community organizations.

At this time the district currently serves 66 Pre-K students, providing them with essential early learning opportunities. Yet as the school district continues to grow, school officials say that its early childhood programs must also grow to provide more families with access to high-quality preschool education, helping set a strong foundation for future academic success.

"The district currently provides Pre-K services at Raymond Element-



A Pre-K student at Raymond Elementary School plays during a lesson in Caitlin Cashman's class. PHOTO BY BETH PEAVEY

tary School and Tu Casa Childcare in Raymond, as well as A Child's World Preschool Center in Windham," said Christine Frost-Bertinet, RSU 14 Assistant Superintendent. "For the 2025-2026 school year, we are hoping to expand these services to accommodate 59 more children from Raymond and Windham with a funding gap of just \$1,604 per student for the entire school year."

She said that in total, RSU 14 would need to invest about \$102,700 beyond what state funding provides, what she calls "a modest investment in our youngest learners' futures."

To support this growth, the district

will introduce new Pre-K spaces at Windham Primary School and partner with A Space to Thrive, a newly established childcare center that broke ground last month at 184 Pope Road in Windham.

By working with community partners such as A Space To Thrive, Tu Casa, and A Child's World, this school and community mixed delivery system can better provide high-quality, affordable Pre-K options for local families.

"This system allows us to offer a variety of program models to meet the diverse needs of our youngest learners," Frost-Bertinet said. "By partnering with local providers, we can strengthen the entire community's focus on early childhood education."

Frost-Bertinet says that this collaboration also creates opportunities for shared professional development among educators and enhances support for children's academic and social-emotional growth.

The benefits of early childhood education extend far beyond preschool. Studies show that the first five years of life are critical for brain development, with one million neural connections forming every second.

These early experiences lay the foundation for brain development, influencing how neural connections

form and function, and determining whether a child builds a strong or fragile foundation for learning, health, and behavior.

According to Frost-Bertinet, 90 percent of brain development occurs before the age of 5, making early education crucial in preparing children for success, not just in school, but also for life.

Emotional and physical well-being, social skills, and cognitive development in these formative years all serve as key indicators for future academics, the workplace, and the community.

Hannah Marshall, the Executive Director of A Space to Thrive, emphasized that the importance of reliable early childhood education during a recent interview with WGME 13 television.

"It's crucial that parents have somewhere they can rely on and trust for their children," Marshall said. "And we know that the more investment that goes into those early years, the better the outcomes, whether it's academic success or social development."

With RSU 14's expansion of early childhood education services, more families in Windham and Raymond will soon have access to the resources needed to give their children the best possible start in life. <

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

Maine Maple Weekend festivities have arrived at last

By Kendra Raymond

STAFF WRITER

With the recent warm temperatures, longer days, and some seasonal businesses seeking summer help, there is a glimmer of hope that spring may be soon to arrive. Associated with early spring is the arrival of Maine Maple Sunday, which always lands on the fourth Sunday in March all around the state.

Many local sugar houses even make an event of it by offering activities and celebrations during the entire weekend.

Sugar shacks in the Lakes Region are gearing up for the 42nd annual Maine Maple Sunday Weekend running March 22 and 23. The beloved tradition is popular with families, but anyone can partake in the early spring demonstrations and enjoy camaraderie while enjoying some yummy maple snacks.

So what can visitors to a participating sugar house do? The list is varied and vast and can include tours of the maple trees, watching boiling demonstrations, taking hayrides, and listening to musicians. Of course, who can

leave out sampling the delicious maple goods such as candy, donuts, and ice cream?

The Maine Maple Producers Association website recently announced the upcoming weekend, "Spring is a great time to get out and enjoy the great State of Maine and everything that it has to offer, including Maine Maple Syrup."

Most sugarhouses offer maple syrup samples and demonstrations about how pure Maine maple syrup is made. Many farms offer games, activities, treats, sugarbush tours, music, and so

much more.

The MMPA website posts its mission as, "The Maine Maple Producers Association is interested in education, technology and friendship as well as the promotion of maple in today's maple industry. The scope of the Maine Maple Producer's Association is to promote the maple industry within the state of Maine, nationally and internationally. At MMPA we are committed to providing our members with a variety of different ways to help produce and market pure Maine ma-

→ see MAPLE Page 6

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Maple syrup remains a perfect match for Mainers

By Ed Pierce

STAFF WRITER

The 42nd Maine Maple Weekend celebrates the tapping of maple trees for the sweetest of nature's blessings upon the state, but the product that pairs the ruggedness of the great outdoors with the flavor so many have come to love has been a staple here for generations.

Pure maple syrup is produced by concentrating and boiling the slightly sweet sap of Maine sugar maple trees and refining it into a sweet liquid adorning breakfast tables across America.

Each year as winter winds down, local sugarmakers across the state get ready to harvest the sap of their maple trees. Sap is collected in buckets or by tubing and it is then evaporated and bottled.

The maple syrup itself can be dark and rich or at other times it can be pale and golden in appearance. That just depends upon the soil where the maple trees are located and when the trees are tapped.

Until the arrival in New England of settlers from Europe, iron kettles for boiling maple sap did not exist. Native Americans living in Maine would produce maple syrup by placing red-hot stones from a fire into wooden buckets containing maple tree sap.

Using iron kettles for boiling the maple sap became routine at winter's end for early settlers. Through the years not much has changed in the process. Maple trees are usually 10 inches or more thick and a hole is drilled in the trees about waist high to collect the sap.

Today the time when sap is collected remains much the same as it has for centuries. The maple sap flows as pressure within the trees mounts when winter weather warms the ground on sunny days and then the temperatures falls close to freezing at night and that weather pattern repeats itself for days during the early spring.

When local sugarmakers believe that it's a good time to start collecting maple tree sap, holes are drilled in the trees and metal spouts are placed tightly into the collection point. Buckets are hung over the spout and covered to keep out rain and snow.

Should proper tapping techniques be used, arborists say the sap collection does not harm the tree's health and it's estimated that a healthy maple tree can provide sap for maple syrup for more than 100 years.

Once the sap has been collected, the evaporation process begins as the sap is boiled. As the sap evaporates during boiling, it also thickens.

As the temperature reaches 219 degrees, the maple syrup is ready to be drawn off and bottled. Before the product is finished though, it is filtered, its density and thickness are adjusted, and the syrup can be graded for maple flavor and its overall coloring.

For sugarmakers, about 40 gallons of maple tree sap is required to produce one gallon of maple syrup. As it is collected, the tree sap resembles clear water although it contains about 2 percent sugar content.

Maple sugaring season runs for

about four to six weeks in duration typically from late February to mid-April, when the maple trees producing sap must be processed quickly to avoid spoilage. Maine is the 10th largest producing state of maple syrup in America. The state's unique climate makes it ideal for maple syrup production.

Statewide each year, Maine sugar-

makers produce more than 575,000 gallons of maple syrup during a normal sugaring season, generating more than \$55.6 million for the Maine economy.

Maine Maple Weekend was started in 1973 as a method to recognize the contributions of the maple sugaring industry in the state and a chance to showcase maple products from Maine. <

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→ **MAPLE** *Cont. from page 4*

ple syrup.”

The MMPA represents more than 250 of the 450 producers licensed to sell maple products in Maine. Producers range from small artisan producers to bulk syrup providers that serve major grocery store chains, foodservice distributors, retailers and international markets.

Many producers have products for sale direct to consumers throughout

the year.

The state makes more than 575,000 gallons of syrup annually during a normal season, generating more than \$55.6 million for the Maine economy and supporting more than 833 full-time and part-time jobs that generate more than \$26.9 million in wages,” according to the MMPA website.

Sharon Lloy of Balsam Ridge Farm in Raymond is excited to promote maple syrup and products at the upcoming Maine Maple weekend events.

“We are getting ready for Maine Maple weekend. We will have tours where people can observe the process of maple syrup being made,” she said. “We always offer a pancake breakfast. And new this year we will have empanadas.”

Lloy said that there will be luncheons offered both Saturday and Sunday.

“You’ll be able to have hotdogs boiled in sap, baked beans, as well as all kinds of maple treats,” she said. With the recent warm temperatures, Lloy says that the sap is really pouring in this week, so they are busy.

In addition to all the maple treats, Lloy says there will be entertainment on Sunday, March 23rd and blacksmith demonstrations all day.

The area is home to several other sugar houses such as Grandpa Joe’s Sugar House in East Baldwin, Jo’s Sugar House/Hartwell Farm in Gorham, Nash Valley Farm in Windham, Hilltop Boilers in Newfield, Cooper’s Maple Products in Windham, Merrifield Farm in Gorham, Sweet William’s in Casco, and Hilltop Boilers in Newfield – to name a few.

During a radio broadcast in 2024, Maine Gov. Janet Mills explained the importance of the maple syrup industry to the State of Maine.

“Our state is the third largest producer of maple syrup in the country. Somerset County alone actually pro-



Maple sap boils in an evaporator at Balsam Ridge in Raymond. Maine Maple Weekend is Saturday and Sunday at locations all across the state. FILE PHOTO

duces more maple syrup than any other county in the United States,” she said. “That’s also where the Passamaquoddy have 40,000 acres of land in Somerset and Franklin County, where they run 14,000 taps and have a very vigorous and robust maple syrup industry.”

Mills recognizes the importance of maple syrup reminding residents that “since 2015, maple syrup has been Maine’s official state sweetener. Whether you use your Maine maple syrup on pancakes or waffles, on carrots or brussel sprouts, or on traditional maple snow candy – Maine maple syrup always makes life a little bit sweeter,” she said in her radio broadcast.

For an interactive map of participating sugar houses visit the MMPA website: <https://mainemapleproducers.com/events/maine-maple-weekend/#!directory/map>

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WHS senior wins gold medal in SkillsUSA Maine

By Masha Yurkevich

STAFF WRITER

More than 1,000 students from Maine schools gathered in Bangor for the annual SkillsUSA Maine Competition on March 13 and March 14. Among them was a Windham High School student, Nik Yurkevich, who won a gold medal.

These students have been preparing for many months, even years, to compete in this annual event, representing their school and hoping to earn a gold medal for their category.

SkillsUSA Maine's State Leadership and Skills Conference hosts more than 1,000 outstanding career and technical education students – all local contest winners – to compete in 92 trade, technical and leadership fields. The contests are run with the help of industry, trade associations and labor organizations, testing competencies that are set by industry.

SkillsUSA Championships are created and judged by industry to ensure that students are learning the real-world skills employers demand from entry-level professionals. These competitions represent some of the most highly skilled, in-demand skilled trade areas in the nation.

Yurkevich is a senior at Windham



Nik Yurkevich, a senior at WHS who also attends classes at PATHS vocational school won a gold medal in Automotive Refinishing Technology in the Skills USA Maine Competition in Bangor. COURTESY PHOTO

High School who also attends classes at Portland Arts and Technology High School (PATHS) vocational school and his win in the SkillsUSA Maine Competition was the first-ever gold medal won by a PATHS student in Automotive Refinishing Technology.

Yurkevich said that he has had a passion for automotive work ever since he was a child.

“My dad is a phenomenal mechanic, and I have been working with him in the garage for as long as I can remember,” he said. “He taught me much of what I know today and continues to be my motivation and inspiration.”

Only one student per school could complete per category in SkillsUSA Maine and Yurkevich won his spot in the statewide contest after an assessment by instructors from PATHS Automotive Refinishing Technology.

Competitors opened the event by demonstrating the ability to perform skills based on the task list outlined by the National Institute for Automotive Excellence (ASE) and the National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation (NATEF). They then had to complete four different Automotive Refinishing Technology tasks and were assessed on their skills in surface preparation, spray gun operation, paint mixing, matching and applying, solving paint applications

problems, determining finish defects with an understanding of causes and cures, masking, and use of safety precautions.

Each student in the competition also had to complete a personal interview and an ASE written exam. The overall appearance of their finished products, speed, and proper safety practices were also judged.

“I worked in a group with two other people,” Yurkevich said. “There were nine other competitors for Automotive Refinishing Technology across the state of Maine. We had three groups of two competitors and one group of three, which was the group that I was a part of.”

Each group was given an automotive fender that they had to paint, a side of a car that they had to mask off, a side of a bumper that they had to prime, block and sand, and a different color that they had to tint and match it to.

They had an hour to complete each task, with the competition spanning four hours of time. After a break,

→ see **GOLD** Page 12



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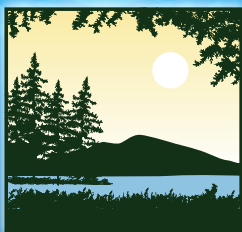
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→ TWINS *Cont. from page 1*

new things about themselves by participating.

“I learned that no matter what the competition is, you always have fun and even if you don’t win you always make good friends,” Ali said.

Lexi agreed and said this experience gives her confidence for the future.

“I learned how strong and confident I can be,” she said.

Both Ali and Lexi are active in music and professional and community theater. They are members of the Portland Symphony Orchestra Children’s Chorus and represented by New England Models Group.

Lexi has filmed several television commercials playing now and one commercial with a large pharmacy coming out soon. Ali has done modeling for several companies.

The twins each appeared in the opera “La Boheme” at the Merrill Auditorium in Portland, where Lexi sang

the children’s solo and they are about to begin their second season with the Maine State Music Theater.

“This year at Maine State Music Theater they can be seen in the main stage production of “Anastasia” in June and in the children’s production of “Willy Wonka Jr.” in August,” their mother said. “They will also be performing in the Carmina Burana at Merrill Auditorium in April.”

They are voice students of Shaunna Siver of Connecticut and have worked with her for almost four years.

During the December pageant, both girls wanted to help the babies in the NeoNatal Intensive Care Unit at the Barbara Bush Children’s Hospital in Portland and made it their platform in the competition.

Lexi’s platform is to donate toys and money for the kids at the Barbara Bush Children’s Hospital. Ali’s platform is to donate books to babies in the NICU.

“Both girls were NICU babies, and it was important for them to be able to



(L to R) Lexi Largay was third runner-up in the American Miss National Pageant in South Portland in December. Ali Largay was first runner-up in the American Miss National Pageant in December and was awarded the title of American Miss Royalty Preteen. SUBMITTED PHOTOS

give back to the Barbara Bush Hospital and the NICU,” Julie Largay said.

Ali’s goal is to have enough books for each baby to have one book and asks that anyone interested in helping to purchase the book “I Love You Like No Otter and Toddlers” and mail to her for donation at Ali Largay, PO Box 401, Raymond, Maine 04071.

Lexi’s donation link is <https://p2p.onecause.com/bbch-diy/alexa-largay> “Competing in a pageant was very

fun and super stressful until we finally got started for the weekend,” Ali said. “I made a lot of new friends and will be competing in the next AMP pageant in August and hoping to win the national preteen title.”

Lexi says the pageant was fun and was a huge confidence booster.

“I made a lot of friends there,” she said. “I also will be competing in the AMP pageant in August and hoping to beat my sister.” <



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RSU 14 Odyssey of the Mind teams prep for tournament

By **Jolene Bailey**

STAFF WRITER

Odyssey of the Mind (OM) is an extracurricular opportunity typically designed for students ranging in elementary and middle school that allows them to use their creativity, ingenuity and energy to contribute to something bigger and outside of the classroom environment.

Students of all abilities become problem solvers while demonstrating their skills and perseverance they bring to the table throughout the season.

Odyssey of the Mind advisor Linda Berry oversees the Kindergarten through Grade 5 students participating in the RSU 14 district. This year, the program has 60 students, gaining seven more participants at Windham Middle School than last year.

Berry said that this program typically has between 50 and 80 student participants.

“Sometimes we have students who are reluctant at the beginning of the season to participate on a team with others they don’t know yet,” Berry said. “That feeling typically fades quickly as students bond and develop relationships over a common goal. With OM, all students ‘shine’ and contribute towards something meaningful. As well, seeing the confidence that grows within a child throughout the season is rewarding.”

Odyssey of the Mind’s purpose is to educate all students how to use and develop their pure creativity to solve problems of any kind without fear or

high confusion. When competing, the team’s goal is to fit all the required pieces into a performance skit. From making props to coming up with lines, teams do it all by themselves.

During practice, students learn and work on their teamwork and being quick thinkers. The strategy of being fast helps them in the long run with verbal and hands-on spontaneous problem solving.

RSU 14 students may sign up to participate in OM early in the school year.

OM tournaments challenge teams of students with a given problem and then they create a solution to present in a tournament open to all ages, Berry said. It is a family-driven program where adult family members typically serve as coaches.

“Once we know how many adults are interested in coaching, we begin to assign students to teams,” Berry said.

“Teams are composed of five to seven students and are grouped by grade divisions, K to 2, 3 to 5, and 6 to 8. Teams begin meeting weekly after school hours in December and January and continue until the tournament in early April,” said Berry.

At the tournament, the teams will choose from five different long term problems to solve out and include technical, classics, structure, and performance questions.

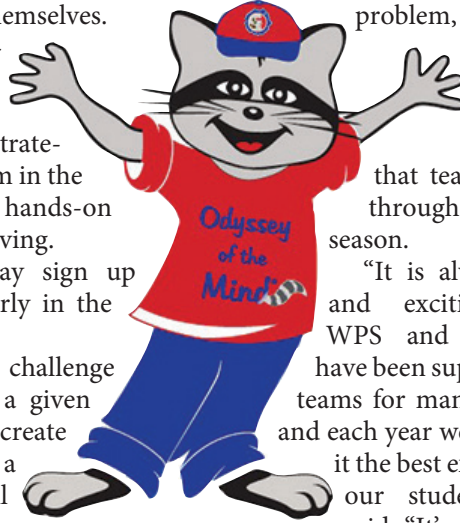
The teams then perform their solution in an eight-minute skit in front of a panel of judges. Students are also judged on a spontaneous problem, so practicing how to solve that type of issue is something that teams work on throughout the OM season.

“It is always a busy and exciting season. WPS and Manchester have been supporting OM teams for many years now and each year we try to make it the best experience for our students,” Berry said. “It’s wonderful to see the relationships that flourish and grow through the program, children or adults. Some of our coaches are former OM student participants so it’s nice to see them supporting the

next generation in this program. The relational side of OM makes me appreciate being able to do my part with the organization of it all.”

RSU 14 teams have a proven track record of success in Odyssey of the Mind competition. In 2023, a team of seven members consisting of third graders from Windham Primary School and fourth and fifth graders from Manchester School ranging in age from 8 to 11 traveled to East Lansing, Michigan on the campus of Michigan State University for the world championship. Windham finished 23rd overall of the 67 teams vying for the title and posted the highest score in the spontaneous category among any of the 10 Maine schools represented in the championships.

This year the OM tournament will be held at Edward Little High School on Saturday, April 5. It is open to anyone if interested in seeing what it’s about and watching students from across the state showcase their talent. <



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→ GROWTH *Cont. from page 1*

growth, including the North Windham sewer implementation, developer agreements, traffic impact assessments, school capacity evaluations, and the financial benefits of controlled growth.

Windham is currently only one of six communities in Southern Maine that has adopted an ordinance addressing growth while there are 22 other communities in the region that do not have any limitations or restrictions regarding growth.

Windham Town Attorney Mark Bower of Jensen Baird has reviewed with councilors the town's existing growth ordinance and explained how state regulations affect municipal growth, saying that municipal growth ordinances must be consistent with a town's Comprehensive Plan.

He said state rules mandate that Windham's growth ordinance can be recalculated every three years to review growth rate details and based upon that information, the town's growth ordinance can be updated or amended accordingly.

Last summer, the Windham Economic Development Corporation held a meeting in which it defined and outlined its objectives in a plan for sustainable growth in the town. Those steps included developing Windham's niche in the region's manufacturing clusters, pursuing opportunities in amusement and

recreation, attracting more professional and business services to North Windham, and updating and maintaining Windham's support system for economic development.

Windham's controlled approach to growth is expected to generate significant financial benefits as cited in the press release in a few key areas such as new taxable valuation from development, and impact fees, permit fees and additional excise taxes all contributing to offsetting municipal costs and growth.

Tibbetts estimated those initiatives would generate \$2.4 million toward sewer improvements, \$585,000 for Windham Parks and Recreation, \$680,000 for open space conservation, \$978,000 for public safety initiatives, including a potential new fire station, and \$750,000 in yearly excise tax revenue.

He said that without these planned developments for the sewer district, it's estimated that Windham would face higher residential tax burdens for the sewer implementation. Growth within that TIF district allows 100 percent of the new development tax revenue to be reinvested into infrastructure, avoiding residential tax increases.

There are no credit enhancements or special pay provisions given to any of the developers, Tibbetts said.

According to Tibbetts, the sewer project in North Windham is proceeding as planned and is an infra-

structure investment for sustainable growth and a major step toward improving public health and sustainable economic development.

As approved by town voters in 2022, the project was intended to attract commercial, residential, and retail development while protecting the environment. He said a critical component of this plan ensures that funding for the \$40 million sewer bond will come from the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district, avoiding any financial burden on residential taxpayers.

The Windham Town Council also has reviewed two key development agreements with NextGen and Gateway. Tibbetts says together, these projects will add 446 residential units in Windham's designated growth areas, helping meet the demand for local housing while ensuring infrastructure and municipal services can support expansion.

The majority of the new housing from NexGen and Gateway is one- and two-bedroom units and Tibbetts says that the agreements provide a framework for planned development and ensuring timely project completion while protecting the town's rural character.

Back in February 2021, Windham town councilors unanimously adopted a new Windham Open Space Master Plan to serve as a guide for the town in identifying high priority properties to protect or acquire, providing land stewardship guidance for existing open space lands, identifying opportunities to expand connectivity

between open space assets, neighborhoods, and trails and to outline programs, ordinances, and partners that could be instrumental in securing the future of the identified high priority properties.

In adopting the Open Space Master Plan, town councilors agreed that rural character is crucial to Windham's identity as a community, and it takes a proactive stance regarding preserving community character and ensuring that Windham's most cherished open spaces will remain available going forward despite strong residential growth pressures.

Tibbetts says that a comprehensive traffic study projects that development-related increases in vehicle trips will remain within manageable levels, with long-term improvements sustaining road capacity through at least 2042.

Additionally, school enrollment trends show a net decrease of 225 students over the past decade, and the RSU 14 school district has capacity for additional students. The planned residential developments in the growth areas are expected to generate only minor increases in student enrollment, well within the available school capacity, Tibbetts said.

"These projects represent smart, controlled growth that balances the needs of residents, businesses, and the environment," Tibbetts said. "By focusing on our designated growth areas and using TIF funds strategically, we're ensuring that Windham remains a vibrant, financially stable, and well-planned community." <

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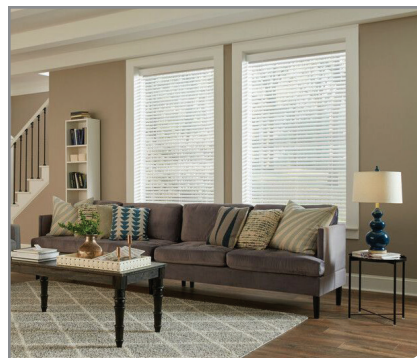
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Project Graduation 2025 conducts Flower Sale fundraiser

By Kaysa Jalbert
STAFF WRITER

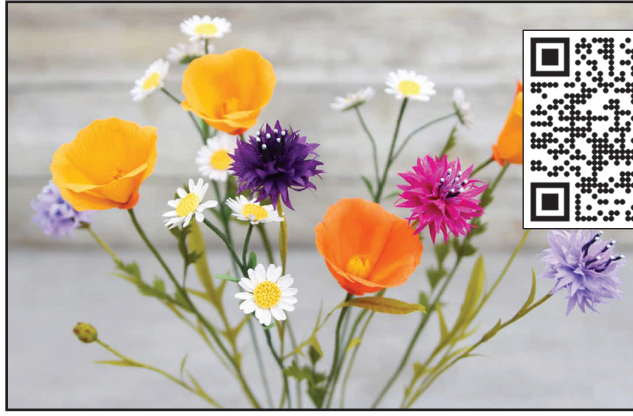
This is a reminder that Mother's Day is coming up in a few months and a good gift is flowers. That's why Windham High School's Project Graduation for the Class of 2025 has got you covered with their Mother's Day Flower Sale that is now open and runs through April 18.

The flowers are sourced from a local farm in Yarmouth called Cozy Acres, a wholesale, family-owned nursery.

Options include a 12-inch Hanging Flower Basket that comes in a variety of colors from Blue Ridge to Summer Sparkler, a Daisy Tub that comes in a 10-inch Pantera pot of three Sassy Rose Pink or Beauty Yellow daisy plants that grow in a mounded shape, and a Thunbergia on a Trellis that comes as a two-gallon pot with an orange, yellow, or white thunbergia coupled with a bamboo trellis for the vines to climb.

It is a first-come first-serve event for pick-up in terms of how colors go, so show up early if the plant must match your Mum's other décor. Flower pick-up will take place at Petals Farm and Garden in Windham from May 8 to May 10. The flower options are \$35 each and 100 percent of the proceeds goes to WHS Project Graduation.

The flower sale will be the final of many fundraising events held this year for Project Graduation Class of 2025.



Project Graduation Class of 2025 is running a sale on preorders of Mother's Day flowers. Orders are due April 18. Scan the code above to go to the order form.

With a goal to raise \$40,000 to go toward hosting a fun and safe graduation evening for roughly 260 graduating seniors, parents have been holding meetings, planning the evening, and organizing fundraising events since April 2024.

According to Robyn Campbell, President of the WHS Project Graduation Committee, they have just about reached their goal.

For those that are unfamiliar, Project Graduation is not affiliated with the high school but is a group of parents of graduating seniors who volunteer to form a non-profit and all earnings go toward hosting a fun and safe graduation evening. Over the school year, surveys are sent out to the graduating seniors to get a better idea of what they want to do, what activities they would take part in, and what type of prizes they would like to receive.

On the day of graduation, students and parents will meet at Windham High School at 6 p.m. About four buses will take the group out for an all-night long event with dancing, prizes and fun.

The graduates will receive a bag to bring a small handful of items such as their phone, sweatshirt and a water bottle. Everything else will be provided.

"The goal is to keep everyone together, have a fun time, hangout as a group for one last time, and make it a really special, safe night," says Lyndsay Stretch, the Treasurer of 2025 WHS Project Graduation.

Most fundraising events are held in the fall. The project's biggest fundraiser was the Golf Tournament held at Point Sebago that raised about \$21,000. In addition, they also sell Mum flowers each year from Cozy Acres, sell raffles at football and basketball games, work at the Snack Shack at the Gambo soccer fields, conduct a bottle drive, and have a pie sale at the Windham Craft Fair in November.

Project Graduation meetings are about once a month during the spring and summer. Their busiest season

is fall and that's when they meet bi-weekly to make sure everyone is on board with the plans, volunteers are coordinated, events are put together and the checklist has been gone over.

The parents volunteer to chair a fundraiser event. If there's no volunteers, it usually falls on a board member such as Stretch or Campbell.

"It's a lot of work for parents," says Stretch. "Like many things there's only a handful of people that help out, but many parents who can't offer time will give donations for prizes and the project and its great. It's a lot of work, but it's all worth it to make a safe night for our kids."

Stretch says her oldest son is graduating this year, making this her first year working on Project Graduation. She also has a daughter in eighth grade, and her youngest son is in sixth grade.

Campbell says her oldest son graduated in the Class of 2022 and her youngest will be graduating this year. Stretch said that Campbell's experience from working on Project Graduation in 2022 has made her the perfect leader for this year's planning.

The mission of Project Graduation is to keep kids safe on the night of graduation.

There is a binder that gets passed down from each class onto the next. The next committee meeting that will be held on the first weekend of April will meet with the class of 2026 parents to start planning their own Project Graduation for the next year. <

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Mills nominates fisheries scientist to lead state Department of Marine Resources

Maine Gov. Janet Mills has nominated Carl Wilson, a highly regarded fisheries scientist at the Maine Department of Marine Resources for the past 26 years, to serve as the department's next commissioner.

Wilson will be nominated to replace outgoing Commissioner Patrick Keliher, who is retiring March 14. Mills will appoint Wilson to serve as Acting Commissioner until a permanent commissioner is confirmed by the Senate.

Joining DMR in 1999 as the agency's lead lobster biologist, Wilson has served since 2015 as Director of DMR's Bureau of Marine Science. That bureau is tasked with overseeing DMR's overall fisheries research and monitoring efforts and has a staff of 90.

"I'm proud to nominate Carl to this vital leadership role for our state," Mills said. "His vast knowledge and experience in the science, policy, and economics of Maine's marine resource industries, combined with the strong relationships and mutual respect he has developed with Mainers who make a living on the water over his 26 years at DMR, will serve him well as the department's next leader."

Wilson said he is honored by the nomination. "It's a privilege to work on behalf of Maine's critically important marine resource industries. There are many challenges ahead and I will remain committed to the collaboration necessary to confront them," he said. "That approach has been a strong foundation of the department's work under

Commissioner Keliher."

Keliher said he believes Wilson is an excellent choice to lead DMR.

"Over his years of exemplary service to the department, Carl's deep understanding of, and connection to, Maine's commercial fisheries has helped the Science Bureau adapt its programs to the impacts of a changing climate, incorporate industry's desire for participation in the science, and address the important need for better data to help manage and protect our dynamic marine environment," Keliher said.

Patrice McCarron, Executive Director of the Maine Lobstermen's Association, said that the association has tremendous respect for Wilson. "Carl is a rare leader in government who truly respects fishermen as professionals and values their deep expertise," McCarron said. "The MLA looks forward to continuing our strong collaboration with Carl to ensure Maine's lobster industry remains both profitable and sustainable for our fishermen and coastal communities."

During Wilson's tenure as Director of the Bureau of Marine Science, he was instrumental in establishing DMR's Division of Marine Mammal Research. The Division is responsible for monitoring north Atlantic right whales to make sure federal regulators have the data they need to develop targeted regulations that minimize the impact on fishermen.

Under Wilson's leadership, the Science Bureau also reorganized in 2021 and 2022 to create two additional Divi-

sions, the Division of Biological Monitoring and Assessment and the Division of Ecology and the Environment. The new Divisions have improved the department's ability to collect data on commercially and recreationally important species and to better understand the Gulf of Maine ecosystem.

In addition, he led the renovation of the Maine State Aquarium and modernization of the Departments' flow through sea water laboratory to ensure the safe care and handling of animals held for display in the Aquarium and for research by DMR staff.

Wilson has also served as a Co-Chair of the Maine Climate Council's Coastal and Marine Working Group. The Working Group is tasked with recommending short- and long-term strategies and actions for adaptation and resiliency to climate change in Maine's coastal communities and marine industries.

As the lead lobster biologist for DMR from 1999 to 2015, Wilson directed all lobster research and monitoring programs, initiated several new collaborative monitoring programs and research projects, supervised science staff, chaired the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Council lobster technical committee, and oversaw the operation and maintenance of department research vessels and mapping systems.

Wilson's nomination will be subject to a hearing before the Legislature's Marine Resources Committee and confirmation by the Maine State Senate. <

 GOLD Cont. from page 7

competitors attended a ceremony with the top students in the 92 categories being awarded a bronze, silver, or gold medal.

"I put a great deal of work into this in hopes of getting gold," said Yurkevich. "A lot of practice went into preparation for this competition. I have been at this vocational school for the last two years and have spent countless hours learning different techniques on how to ace my game."

When his name was called to receive a gold medal, Yurkevich said that he was pleasantly shocked. He said that it felt very nice to get recognized for his hard work.

"PATHS has never gotten a gold medal in Automotive Refinishing Technology before," says Yurkevich. "I was glad that I had this opportunity and was able to take it."

Being a gold medalist for Maine Automotive Refinishing Technology, Yurkevich now has an opportunity to attend SkillsUSA National Leadership & Skills Conference, which will be held in Atlanta, Georgia in June, where he will be competing against gold medalists in Automotive Refinishing Technology from across the entire United States.

For his efforts in Bangor, Yurkevich received a trophy, some Snap-On tools, and a \$5,000 scholarship to one of five selected technical institutes.

He said that he plans to go into Automotive Refinishing Technology in the future for a career.

"I enjoy it very much. I love working with my hands," he said. "It is also a very needed trade in industry." <

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100+ Women Who Care Southern Maine reach milestone

Deb Bergeron, the founder of 100+ Women Who Care Southern Maine, has announced that the nonprofit group has reached a milestone of 515 members after its February meeting at the Portland Elks Lodge.

“This growing group of women has collectively donated over \$685,000 since its inception in 2014,” Bergeron said. “At each quarterly meeting, we select a nonprofit to receive a donation made up of equal contributions from all members. Together, we create real, lasting change in our communities, beyond what any of us could accomplish alone.”

She said that the charities supported by 100+ Women Who Care Southern Maine present stories that highlight the life-changing impact they’re making, reminding group members of the difference that they can create when they come together.

Carol Colton of The Independent Seniors Network, a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting seniors who wish to age in their homes, presented on behalf of that organization and was selected as the 100+ Women Who Care Southern Maine’s February recipient for help.

The mission of The Independent Seniors Network is to provide services to enable seniors to maintain active, social, safe, and independent lives through a network of volunteers and community resources. These services



The next meeting of 100+ Women Who Care Southern Maine will be held at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, May 5, at The Elks Lodge on Congress Street in Portland. SUBMITTED PHOTO

are offered in the greater Portland area and surrounding towns, funded by minimal membership fees, donations, and grants.

As a result of the donation from 100+ Women Who Care Southern Maine, The Independent Seniors Network has now received about \$24,000 from the group. The two runner-up nonprofits, In Her Presence and Grace-Street Ministry, will each receive \$2,000.

The chosen nonprofit from the November 2024 meeting, Camp No Limits, shared how the \$24,000 that it received has positively impacted their program.

For the past 10 years, Maine nonprofits supporting a wide range of causes have benefited from donations by 100+ Women Who Care Southern

Maine, including those focused on veterans, seniors, children with disabilities, pregnant women, fishermen, terminally ill young adults, victims of domestic abuse, animal welfare, teens, immigrant families, incarcerated youth, animal rescues, and more.

Bergeron said that women are welcome to attend meetings as guests to see if the group is a good fit for them.

Each member commits to donating \$50 each quarter to the nonprofit chosen at each meeting, although attendance is not required.

At each meeting, three nonprofits, randomly nominated by members, present five-minute pitches, followed by five minutes of Q&A. After that, the 100+ Women Who Care Southern

Maine group votes to select the nonprofit that will receive the donations.

Donations go directly to the nonprofit via credit card or check.

100+ Women Who Care Southern Maine is an organization founded in October 2014 by Deb Bergeron with the help and inspiration of other established chapters.

Bergeron is a certified personal and professional coach, and is the founder of Ocean of Possibilities, a life coaching organization seeking to help people to gain greater fulfillment, balance, and effectiveness in their personal lives and business and to be their own coach. She is passionate about giving back to the community in which she grew up and raised her family, and volunteers for numerous organizations in the greater Portland area including Make-A-Wish of Maine and the executive council of ICFNE/Maine chapter of coaches.

The next meeting of 100+ Women Who Care Southern Maine will be held on Monday, May 5, at The Elks Lodge on Congress Street in Portland, with networking for the group starting at 5:45 p.m. and the meeting beginning at 6:30 p.m.

For further details about the 100+ Women Who Care Southern Maine group visit at www.100womenswhocaresouthernmaine.com. <

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Beyond the pancakes: Creative ways to use Maine Maple Syrup

Here are some creative ways to use pure Maine maple syrup:

- Maple Glazed Roasted Vegetables – Drizzle over carrots, Brussels sprouts, or sweet potatoes before roasting for a caramelized finish.
 - Maple BBQ Sauce – Mix with ketchup, vinegar, and spices for a rich, smoky-sweet BBQ sauce.
 - Maple Whipped Cream or Butter – Whip into heavy cream or softened butter for a naturally sweet topping for toast, coffee, or desserts.
- Maple Cocktails & Coffee – Use as a natural sweetener in bourbon

cocktails, espresso drinks, or homemade chai.

- Maple Roasted Nuts – Toss almonds, pecans, or walnuts with maple syrup and bake for a crunchy, candied snack.
- Maple Salad Dressing – Blend with Dijon mustard, apple cider vinegar, and olive oil for a delicious vinaigrette.
- Maple Ice Cream or Yogurt Topping – Drizzle over vanilla ice cream or Greek yogurt for a simple, sweet treat.
- Maple Milkshake – Blend into

a vanilla or caramel milkshake for a Maine-inspired twist.

- Maple-Glazed Bacon – Brush on bacon before baking for a crispy, caramelized twist.
- Maple Soy Glaze – Combine with soy sauce and garlic for a savory-sweet glaze for salmon or tofu.
- Maple Popcorn – Drizzle over freshly popped popcorn with a touch of sea salt for a gourmet snack.
- Maple Peanut Butter – Stir into peanut or almond butter for a touch of sweetness.
- Maple Infused Coffee or Tea –

Stir into coffee, chai, or matcha as a natural sweetener.

- Maple Overnight Oats – Mix into oats, milk, and fruit for a make-ahead breakfast.
- Maple Oatmeal Cookies – Replace white sugar with maple syrup in oatmeal cookies for a richer taste.
- Maple Baked Apples – Core apples, fill with oats, cinnamon, and maple syrup, then bake until tender.
- Maple Balsamic Glaze – Mix with balsamic vinegar for a delicious drizzle over roasted meats, salads, or even fresh strawberries. <

Wearing of the green

Windham American Legion Post 106 members Leon Davies and Yvonne Johnson were the chefs who created the meal for guests attending the annual St. Patrick Day Dinner held at the Windham Veterans on Saturday, March 15. The event drew its largest crowd ever and participants also celebrated the American Legion's 106th anniversary with a cake donated by Hannaford Supermarket in North Windham. More than \$1,200 was raised for Legion programs for the coming year. PHOTO BY DAVID TANGUAY



STUDENT OF THE WEEK Remington Cooper



Grade: 1st **School:** Windham Christian Academy
Teacher: Mrs. Edmiston
Favorite Subject: Science
Parents' Names: Ronald and Rachel Cooper
Reason for Selection: Remington is a very kind and considerate person. He really loves his family and always has sweet stories to share about spending time with his Mimi and Papa! Whenever he sees his brother Rhett at recess, he is so excited to see him. He also has a baby sister and made the whole class laugh when he realized that he accidentally received a baby bottle of milk in his lunch box! Oops! He is very diligent to listen in class, and careful in his work. Remi's favorite subject is science because he likes to do experiments! His favorite experiment was making a cloud in a jar. I'm thankful to have Remington in my class!

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Wildlife awakens with the dawn of spring: Animals and birds you'll likely see emerge in Southern Maine now

As winter gives way to spring in southern Maine, the region's wildlife begins to stir with renewed activity. By late March, the days are noticeably longer, temperatures gradually rise, and the landscape starts to thaw. This transition brings a shift in animal behavior, with some species emerging from winter dens, others returning from migration, and many preparing for the breeding season.



Sightings of the American Robin is a sure sign of spring in Maine.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

MAMMALS ON THE MOVE

• White-Tailed Deer

While white-tailed deer remain visible throughout the winter in southern Maine, they tend to cluster in sheltered areas known as "deer yards" for protection from deep snow and harsh weather. By late March, as food sources become more abundant, they start moving out of these wintering spots and dispersing across fields and forest edges.

At this time of year, most does are pregnant, carrying the fawns they will give birth to in late May or early June. As their due dates approach, they seek out quiet, hidden areas with good cover to prepare for the arrival of their young. Bucks, meanwhile, are focused on regaining weight lost over the winter and beginning the slow regrowth of their antlers, which were shed earlier in the season.

• Red Foxes and Coyotes

Foxes and coyotes are especially active in early spring. Red foxes, often seen darting across fields or even suburban backyards, may already have young kits safely tucked away in dens. Coyotes, which roam widely throughout southern Maine, become more vocal in the evenings as they establish territories and search for food.

• Black Bears

Though more commonly associated with the forests of western and northern Maine, black bears are present in the southern part of the state as well. By late March, they begin emerging from their dens, often with cubs born during the winter months. They are primarily looking for early food sources like leftover nuts, berries, and plant shoots. As bears come out of hibernation, wildlife officials

remind residents to secure trash bins and bird feeders to avoid attracting hungry bears to residential areas.

• Beavers and River Otters

As the ice recedes in Maine's ponds, lakes, and rivers, beavers become more active, repairing their lodges and dams. Their presence is easy to spot thanks to fresh gnawed trees and piles of branches near the water's edge. River otters, playful and agile swimmers, are also more visible, darting through streams and hunting for fish in newly thawed waters.

RETURNING MIGRANT BIRDS

• American Robins and Eastern Bluebirds

One of the earliest and most noticeable signs of spring in southern Maine is the return of the American Robin. Their cheerful calls and hopping presence on lawns signal the arrival of warmer days. Eastern bluebirds, another welcome sight, begin scouting for nesting spots in mead-

ows and open woodlands, bringing bright flashes of blue and orange to the landscape.

• Ospreys and Bald Eagles

Along the coast and near large rivers like the Saco and Kennebec, ospreys begin returning from their winter migrations. These skilled fish hunters can often be seen hovering over the water before diving in to catch a meal. Bald eagles, which remain in Maine year-round, become especially active as they prepare their nests and hunt along shorelines and estuaries.

• Red-Winged Blackbirds and Songbirds

Marshes and wetlands in southern Maine come alive with the sounds of red-winged blackbirds, their striking red-and-yellow wing patches making them easy to spot. Songbirds such as sparrows, chickadees, and finches begin appearing more frequently, filling the early spring air with their calls. <

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Several lease sizes available: 10,500 sq.ft., 6,600 sq.ft., 4,700 sq.ft., 1,900 sq.ft. & 1,500 sq.ft. Located at Windham Business Park.

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Windham Residents

TAX PAYMENT REMINDER!

All persons liable to pay Property Taxes in the Town of Windham are notified that the **second installment of taxes will be due Tuesday, April 1, 2025.**

Failure to pay the tax on or before April 1, 2025 will render the tax delinquent, and interest will be charged at the rate of 8.5% per annum from the due date. FMI 207-892-2511

PAYMENT OPTIONS ARE:

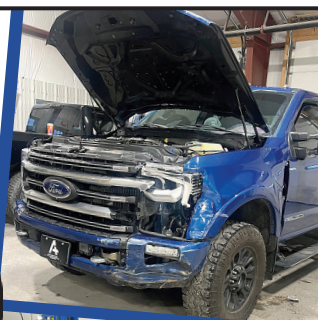
- 1.) Mail to Tax Collector, 8 School Rd, Windham, ME 04062 (post marks will be accepted)
- 2.) Make a payment in Town Office: M/W 7-5, Tues 7-6, Th 7-4
- 3.) Use the drop box at the Town Office, available 24/7
- 4.) Online at windhammaine.us under Tax Collection Dept.*

*Fees will apply

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Run for Office in Raymond!

Nomination papers are available at the Town Office during regular business hours (Tues 8am-6pm, Wed-Frid 8am-4pm)

To appear on the June 10, 2025 Election ballot, candidates must collect 25+ signatures from registered Raymond voters.

POSITIONS TO BE FILLED, ALL THREE-YEAR TERMS:

- (2) Select Board members
- (3) Budget-Finance Committee members
- (1) RSU #14 Board of Directors member

For more information on the Nomination Process please visit:
www.raymondmaine.org/content/nomination-papers-municipal-election

COMPLETED PAPERS ARE DUE TO THE CLERK ON FRIDAY, APRIL 11TH BY 4PM.



Nathaniel Hawthorne's Boyhood Home Launches



Image courtesy of the Hawthorne Community Association

Nathaniel Hawthorne's Boyhood Home at 40 Hawthorne Road in Raymond, now serves as a beloved community and cultural center for Sebago Lake area residents. It is in great need of a renovated kitchen to best serve attendees at its upcoming concerts, art shows, lectures, watch-parties, and festivals throughout 2025 and beyond.

To raise the \$12,000 needed for the full-scale kitchen renovation, The Hawthorne Community Association has launched an innovative "Buy a Brick, Build a Kitchen" fundraising campaign.

A donation of \$300 per brick will enable the donor to have engraved on his or her brick such things as "In Loving Memory of [a Loved One,]," favorite pithy quotes, or other matters close to the donor's heart.

Each brick then will be placed in a small patio near Nathaniel Hawthorne's Boyhood Home, around a larger stone with the saying "Time flies over us / But leaves its shadow behind," attributed to Nathaniel Hawthorne.

For more details, including how to submit your brick's "legacy words" for engraving & pay the donation fee, please visit www.hawthorneassoc.com. After printing & filling out the request form, donors may scan it & email it to info@hawthorneassoc.com or snail-mail it to: Hawthorne Community Association / P.O. Box 185 / South Casco, ME 04077. Donors may also send a check to that address or submit their donation online.

For more information, please email info@hawthorneassoc.com

TOWN OF RAYMOND Scholarship OPPORTUNITIES

ARE YOU A HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR PLANNING ON ATTENDING COLLEGE IN THE FALL?

The Town of Raymond has several scholarship opportunities for college bound students who are residents of the town!

For more information, please visit:
www.raymondmaine.org/town-office/town-clerk/town-scholarships

Applications due no later than April 30, 2025



We've MOVED to Raymond Village Community Church at 27 Main Street!

NEW PROGRAM ALERT! Introducing Our New Futsal Program!

GET READY FOR FAST FOOTWORK, QUICK DECISION-MAKING, AND NONSTOP ACTION!
 Futsal is a small-sided indoor soccer game played on a hard court with a smaller, low-bounce ball—perfect for improving ball control, agility, & teamwork in a fun, fast-paced environment.

YOUTH PROGRAM DETAILS:

Who: 1st - 8th Grade (Broken into different time slots, see below)
Where: Jordan Small Middle School
When: Tuesdays & Every Other Thursday
 April 8th - May 15th (No program during school vacation week)
Format: Skill development, drills, and every other Thursday is all gameplay!

SCHEDULE:

1st & 2nd Grade: 5:00 - 5:45 PM
 3rd & 4th Grade: 5:45 - 6:30 PM
 5th - 8th Grade: 6:30 - 7:30 PM

FUTSAL FOR ADULTS - PROGRAM DETAILS:

Who: Ages 20+
Where: Jordan Small Middle School
When: Tuesdays, April 8 - May 15 (Following the school schedule)
Time: 7:30 - 9:00 PM

Grab your sneakers, bring your A-game, and get ready for some high-energy, small-sided soccer!



To register for any programs/ events or to see a list of all open registrations, please visit:
Raymond.recdesk.com



Gray-New Gloucester-Raymond
SPRING 2025

Little League Registration is Open!

- T-BALL (\$80) CO-ED FOR PLAYERS AGES 4-6.**
Games & practices last about 1 hour running from approx. April 29 - June 10.
- COACH PITCH A (\$80) CO-ED FOR PLAYERS AGES 5-6**
Games & practices last about 1 hour running from approx. April 29 - June 10.
- PLAYER PITCH AA (\$140)**
SOFTBALL & BASEBALL DIVISIONS FOR PLAYERS AGES 7-8.
Games & practices last about 1.5-2 hours running from approx. April 24 - June 14.
- MINORS AAA (\$140)**
SOFTBALL & BASEBALL DIVISIONS FOR PLAYERS AGES 9-10.
Games & practices last about 1.5-2 hours running from approx. April 24 - June 14.
- MAJORS (\$140)**
SOFTBALL & BASEBALL DIVISIONS FOR PLAYERS AGES 11-12.
Games & practices last about 1.5-2.5 hours running from approx. April 24 - June 14.
- JUNIORS & SENIORS (\$150)**
SOFTBALL & BASEBALL DIVISIONS FOR PLAYERS 13-16.
Games & practices usually start in June after the school season ends.

*Our league offers Scholarship Assistance for players in need.

Visit www.gngrll.org for more information, to register or to become a sponsor!

ROADRUNNER

D – MARCH 2025 NEWSLETTER

UPCOMING TOWN MEETINGS

Meetings are held at the Broadcast Studio or via Zoom

April 1, 6:30pm – Budget Finance Committee - Budget Warrant Article Recommendations

April 3, 6:00pm – Select Board Meeting – Including Final Warrant Approval

April 8, 6pm – Select Board Meeting 1st Public Hearing to discuss Annual Town Meeting Warrant

April 9, 7pm - Planning Board Meeting

April 29, 7pm – Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting (Cancelled if no appeal comes in)

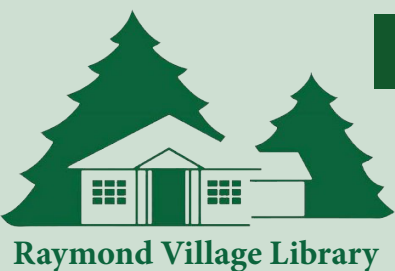
May 3, 6pm – Select Board Meeting & 2nd Public Hearing to discuss Annual Town Meeting Warrant

May 14, 6:30 – RSU #14 Budget Vote at WHS (Raymond school budget included)

May 14, 7pm – Planning Board Meeting

Zoom Links and agendas can be found at www.raymondmaine.org/raymond-event-calendar and clicking on the meeting name. All meetings are recorded. You can watch them live on YouTube by going to www.raymondmaine.org/content/live-video-streaming or they are typically uploaded to our website within 48 hours at www.raymondmaine.org/video-archives and selecting the Category and Meeting you wish to watch.

*Date/Time change or meeting cancellation can occur. Check the website for most recent info.



NEWS & EVENTS

3 MEADOW ROAD, RAYMOND
 Questions regarding library events
 please call 207-655-4283
raymondvillagelibrary.org
 Follow us on Facebook

The Library is Open to the Public

Tuesdays, Wednesdays & Thursdays from 9:00am-6:00pm
 Fridays & Saturdays from 9:00am-2:00pm

Book Club

March 26th 5-6pm – The Seed Keeper by Diane Wilson

A haunting novel spanning several generations. The Seed Keeper follows a Dakota family’s struggle to preserve their way of life, and the sacrifices to protect what matters most.

FREE Painting Class

Tuesday, April 8th, 2-4pm (Registration required)

Join us for a free watercolor painting class with Kayley!

Historical Fiction Book Club!

Thursday, March 13th at 1pm – with Susan Scott

Join Susan for Book Club this month reading a historical fiction book, Horse by Geraldine Brooks. “Horse isn’t just an animal story—it’s a moving narrative about race and art.” —TIME

Weekly Programming:

Bridge Club – Tuesdays 9am-noon

Evening Book Group – Last Tuesday of the month

Preschool Storytime – Wednesdays at 10:30am

Baby Storytime – Thursdays at 10:30am

Anytime Drop-in Table Activities:

A variety of art, crafts, Legos, & block stations are available in the children’s room throughout the week.



GATHER TO GROW

Join us for an open playtime after story time that fosters great connections for you & your infant. This is aimed for children 0-3 & their caregivers

10:30am
Every 2nd & 4th Thursday

This program is generously funded by The Bingham Foundation supporting healthy outcomes from positive experiences for youth in our communities.

PROPERTY TAX PAYMENTS ARE DUE BY 4/30/245!



TAX PAYMENTS FOR THE SECOND HALF of Fiscal Year 2024/2025 taxes are due by April 30th, 2025.

*Interest charges at 8.5% annum will be applied after the April 30th deadline on balances due. Please contact the Tax Collector with any questions at 207-655-4742 x 122



PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS



Did you know the State of Maine provides property tax relief through different programs to qualified individuals? Below is a list of property tax exemptions that may qualify you for a discount off your total assessed tax value.

For more information or for an exemption application, please visit: www.raymondmaine.org/content/property-tax-exemptions

Applications due NO LATER THAN April 1st, 2025

HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION

This program provides a measure of property tax relief for certain individuals that have owned homestead property in Maine for at least 12 months and make the property they occupy on April 1 their permanent residence.

VETERAN’S EXEMPTION

A veteran who served during a recognized war period and is 62 years or older; or, is receiving 100% disability as a Veteran; or became 100% disabled while serving, is eligible for a tax exemption. Veteran must be listed as a co-owner on the deed.

BLIND EXEMPTION

An individual who is determined to be legally blind may receive a tax exemption. Individual must be listed as a co-owner on the deed.

*Exemption amounts will vary year to year based on the towns certified ratio.



Raymond Property Revaluation

This project includes the inspection and market valuation of all property within the town as of April 1, 2026.

KRT Appraisal has been contracted by the Town of Raymond to complete a full town-wide revaluation. This project is required to more fairly distribute Raymond’s property tax obligations and because the town’s current assessment methodology is 20 years old and falling out of compliance with state standards.

UPDATE:

The Assessing Office is currently, NOT scheduling appointments for site visits. In these early phases, KRT will be going door to door with street lists. If the property owner is unavailable a note will be left with instructions on the next follow-up attempts.

FMI on the revaluation project or questions contact the Town Assessor at (207) 655-4742 or visit: KRT Appraisal www.krtappraisal.com/dist/raymond.html and www.raymondmaine.org/town-office/assessing



KRT Appraisal

Area resident helps raise \$10K for fire victims' food bank

Supermodels Unlimited Magazine celebrated its 25th anniversary in January in Hartford, Connecticut alongside artists, models, designers, photographers, and celebrities from across the United States.

The event honored SU's dedication to empowering aspiring models and talent worldwide.

Among the distinguished guests was Misty Coolidge of New Gloucester, who was named *SU's Woman of the Year 2024* in recognition of her extraordinary efforts to combat hunger – locally, nationally, and globally.

"My hope was to bring the donation back to Mainers in need, but with all the horrific fires raging across Los Angeles, *Supermodels Unlimited Magazine* and I felt that donating to those families just makes much more of an impact right now – as they need it more than we do," said Coolidge.

As *Mrs. USA Worldwide 2021*, Coolidge set a personal mission to crush hunger across America. Over the past three years, she has volunteered at 32 of the 50 Feeding America food banks across the country while also traveling to 17 countries, working with FEBA and the Global Food Banking Network.

During her reign as *Mrs. Worldwide*, she authored her first children's book, *We All Stir the Pot to End Hunger*, and she visited Manchester School in Windham to lead a presentation about hunger to students and read her book to children there.

Rather than collecting royalties

from her book, Coolidge committed 100 percent of the proceeds to Feeding America, furthering her impact upon the fight against food insecurity.

At her wedding venue, Coolidge Family Farm in Maine, Misty hosts two major charity events each year: *Flowers that Feed*, a floral runway show, and the *Running of the Brides 5K for Hunger*.

Proceeds from both events support her local Good Shepherd Food Bank, part of the Feeding America network. These initiatives are just a glimpse of Misty's dedication to combating food insecurity in her community and beyond.

Coolidge was born in Waterville, grew up in Norridgewock and went to Skowhegan Area High School. After graduation, she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Pre-Law and was planning to attend law school after college but became a paralegal instead, working as an intellectual property paralegal at Preti Flaherty for seven years and then as a real estate paralegal for Dead River Company for 15 years.

In 2022, the Good Shepherd Food Bank created an Ambassadorship program and made Coolidge their very first Ambassador to speak to communities across Maine about food insecurity and hunger.

"I was so honored and touched that such a huge organization would recognize my efforts and hard work," she said. "My life for the past five years since moving to New Gloucester has

been spreading the good word and mission of the Good Shepherd Food Bank. After all, we share the same goal."

Even before she was involved in pageantry, Coolidge's passion for fighting hunger has been evident for more than two decades in every community that she's lived in, from Bangor to Portland, and through her volunteer efforts on behalf of the Good Shepherd Food Bank.

Her mission is personal, having grown up in a household in Maine with a single mom who worked three jobs to put food on the table and relied upon food stamps and the WIC program to survive. She told students that food insecurity is greater now than when she grew up.

"So many families are feeling the results of losing jobs, the cost of gas and groceries, and struggling to pay their utility bills. The numbers I've seen across the country in my travels are astounding and heart breaking," Coolidge said. "Having little ones at home myself, I cannot imagine not being able to give them the food they need. There are people visiting food banks now that have never needed to use their services before. People need to know that help is available and it's OK to get help."

It was only fitting, then, that the \$10,000 raised from the *Supermodel Unlimited Magazine Anniversary*



Misty Coolidge of New Gloucester was named *Supermodel Unlimited Magazine's Woman of the Year for 2024* in recognition of her extraordinary efforts to combat hunger locally, nationally, and globally. SUBMITTED PHOTO

Gala was donated to the Los Angeles Regional Food Bank, also part of Feeding America. This generous contribution will have a profound impact on families who have lost everything.

Supermodels Unlimited Magazine is a premier publication and the only magazine in the women's market dedicated to the modeling and beauty industry. The magazine just celebrated 25 years in the industry and is now focused on spotlighting the industry's most beautiful powerhouses, trailblazers, and philanthropists; along with those who have broken boundaries and made a positive impact in beauty, fashion and entertainment. <



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New program provides college admission assistance

The Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) is introducing a new college planning resource called CIEE College Access designed in partnership with top colleges and universities and offered exclusively for students who participate in CIEE High School Study Abroad programs.

This initiative helps high school students leverage their international experience and receive expert support to gain admission to college and prepare for their future.

CIEE College Access allows students to engage directly with college admissions officers; attend expert-led workshops; receive guidance on financial aid and scholarships; gain

strategies to strengthen their application; and join a supportive community of peers who are also applying to college.

"Studying abroad with CIEE develops key skills like independence, adaptability and global awareness, which we know are qualities that top colleges and universities seek," said Patrick Moran, Vice President of College Enrollment at CIEE. "CIEE College Access ensures our high school students can effectively highlight these experiences in their applications and connect with college admissions professionals who recognize the value of a global education."

While the college planning pro-



cess can be expensive for many families, CIEE College Access is included as an alumni benefit for all CIEE High School Study Abroad participants.

"CIEE works with more than 600 high schools and 400 college partners annually," said Moran. "We're thrilled to work with college advisors and admissions offices to help high school students leverage their study abroad experiences for college success at no extra cost to their families."

CIEE College Access will launch with George Washington University and Arizona State University participating.

For more details about CIEE's College Access program, visit ciee.org/collegeaccess or contact hsabroad@ciee.org.

About CIEE

CIEE builds bridges between different people, different countries, and different cultures. For 75 years, it has helped young people participate in high-quality international exchange and study abroad programs that bring the world together.

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A memorable gift

American Legion Post Field-Al- len Post 106 Adjutant David Tanguay, right, presents a \$500 check from legion members to Kevin Ronan of the Sebago Lake Anglers Association during a meeting in Naples on March 11. The donation is intended to help with administrative costs and insurance support for the 8th Annual Veterans Fishing On Sebago event at the Sebago Lake State Park Boat Ramp on May 15. The event is an opportunity for veterans to enjoy fishing on Sebago Lake with the boat, the bait, and fishing equipment provided for free. SUBMITTED PHOTO



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BRIEFS

Sign Language Class

If you are interested in learning sign language, the Windham Public Library, 217 Windham Center Road, is offering an American Sign language Class from 6 to 7 p.m. Monday, March 24. This class will cover the basics of ASL communication and will gradually move up to higher-level concepts at the pace of the group. FMI, call Ray at 207-892-1908, ext. 5 or email: rmarcotte@windhammaine.us.

Cancer support

The Windham Cancer Support Group will have its regular monthly meeting at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 25 at the Windham Public Library, 217 Windham Center Road. All those

affected by cancer are welcome to attend for support. FMI, send an email to coppjanet@yahoo.com

Bridge Club

The Raymond Bridge Club meets every Tuesday from 9 a.m. to noon at the Raymond Village Library, 3 Meadow Road in Raymond for games of bridge. Do you want to learn how to play? One of our members would be happy to teach you. The club is open to all. FMI, call 207-655-4283.

Aging Matters scholarship

SeniorCare.com continues to bring more awareness to the key issues we face as an aging population.

For the 10th consecutive year, it will award an annual college scholarship to an individual that best demonstrates to us why "Aging Matters" to them. A \$1,500 scholarship will be given annually to a selected college student that currently cares for an aging loved one, works within the senior community, or intends to pursue a career that will have an impact upon the elder population. Any existing student or incoming freshman in good academic standing at a 2-year or 4-year accredited college can apply for this scholarship. The recipient will demonstrate a unique and admirable understanding and desire to show us that "Aging Matters" to them. All applicants can get more informa-

tion and apply online at this address: www.seniorcare.com/scholarship

Joseph A. DiPietro scholarship

The deadline to apply for the Joseph A. DiPietro Scholarship is March 31. The scholarship serves students in communities served by the Portland Water District who are pursuing a career applicable to the water/wastewater industry, such as water/wastewater treatment technology, HVAC, electrical, automation technology, instrumentation, plumbing, pipefitting, fire science, environmental studies, applied sciences, engineering, and public administration. It was established in 2003 in memory of respected businessman and longtime Portland Water District Trustee Joe DiPietro. To apply or FMI visit www.pwd.org

Loan Closet

The Windham Loan Closet provides area residents with wheelchairs and other equipment for medical and physical needs by loan at no charge. The Loan Closet is located on Windham Center Road next to the Windham Public Library and is staffed by volunteers and open by appt. only. To schedule an appt. call 207-894-5999 and leave a detailed message.

Suicide Support

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

Attorney General announces settlement to bring \$35 insulin to Mainers through 2029

Maine Attorney General Aaron M. Frey has announced a settlement agreement with Sanofi-Aventis U.S. LLC after scrutiny over the company's pricing of insulin products.

Under the terms of the settlement, Mainers who are uninsured or who have commercial health insurance will be eligible to purchase monthly supplies of Sanofi insulin products through 2029 for \$35 cash.

The insulin products covered include Admelog, Lantus, Toujeo, Apidra and any similar products that the Sanofi company markets and distributes in the U.S.

"Insulin is life-sustaining medication and far too many Mainers struggle to afford it," Frey said. "My office

will continue to closely monitor drug pricing and take action to protect consumers to ensure access to these essential medications."

In addition to the \$35 monthly prescription rate, Sanofi has agreed to implement an enrollment message program to assist pharmacists and patients in determining eligibility for its low-cost insulin.

That system will alert pharmacists about the patient's eligibility for this low-cost alternative at pharmacy counters throughout Maine when patients are filling their prescriptions.

Insulin therapy often is an important part of diabetes treatment. It helps keep blood sugar under control and prevents diabetes complications.

It also works like the hormone insulin that the body usually makes.

The three main drug manufacturers that supply insulin in the U.S., Eli Lilly, Novo Nordisk, and Sanofi, announced in March 2023 that they would cut U.S. prices and cap out-of-pocket costs of insulin products. That followed a time from 2012 to 2016 in which the sales price for insulin nearly doubled in America.

To explore possible savings on Sanofi insulin products through this new \$35 cash program, residents should ask their pharmacist when filling their prescription. <

TOWN OF WINDHAM, MAINE PLANNING BOARD NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

**- SITE WALK -
Monday, March 24, 2025 • 5:00PM**

- 24-29 Camping World Expansion
Tax Map: 15, Lot: 1A – Roosevelt Trail
Site plan review for construction of a 20,500 square foot RV sales and service addition and associated site improvements.

**- REGULAR MEETING -
Monday, March 24, 2025 • 6:30PM
Town Hall, Council Chambers, 8 School Road**

- Public Hearing at 6:30 PM for 24-29 Camping World Expansion Tax Map: 15, Lot: 1A – Roosevelt Trail
Site plan review for construction of a 20,500 square foot RV sales and service addition and associated site improvements.
- Public hearing for #25-07 Amendments to the Code of the Town of Windham, Chapter 120 Land Use Ordinance, Article 3, 4, 8, 9 regarding stormwater consistencies with Maine DEP for municipal delegated review authority.
- 24-25 Andrews School Redevelopment
Tax Map: 37, Lot: 24 – High Street
Subdivision and site plan review for 17 market rate apartments in two buildings.

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

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Eagle SPORTS



WHS graduate Talon successful on both sides of the court

By Matt Pascarella

STAFF WRITER

Windham High School 2020 graduate Hannah Talon has been tenacious on the basketball court since she was little.

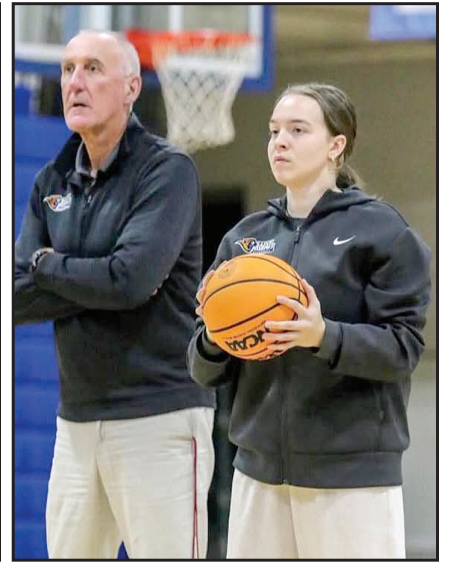
While earning her degree in exercise science at Saint Joseph's College she's been on both sides of the court. When she was injured before her senior year of college, she became a student-assistant coach.

A month before graduation she was asked to officially become an assistant coach of the women's basketball program, and she has made a big difference.

She is currently attending Merrimack College online pursuing her master's in clinical mental health counseling. She will continue to coach at Saint Joseph's College as she works toward her master's degree. Talon says she would like to build a career in sports psychology, supporting the mental health of athletes on and off the court.

"Hannah was a very strong player for us," said head Saint Joseph's College women's basketball coach Mike McDevitt. "She was a very versatile player; she was a match up nightmare for our opponents. She used her time on the sidelines watching and learning like a coach. Not everyone can make the transition from player to coach and coach players they played with. She has been able to do that without any problem at all. I know when Hannah speaks with a player during a game, they really value her input."

In third grade, Talon began play-



(L to R) Windham graduate and Saint Joseph's College basketball star Hannah Talon goes up for a basket during a game against Colby-Sawyer at Saint Joseph's College in December 2022. Hannah Talon at Saint Joseph's College in December 2023 is all smiles when she was honored as Greater North Atlantic Conference Basketball Tournament Most Valuable Player. PHOTOS BY ALLISON TALON Assistant Saint Joseph's College women's basketball coach Hannah Talon, right, looks on with head women's basketball coach Mike McDevitt at the Mike McDevitt Court in the Alford Center at Saint Joseph's College on Nov. 1, 2024 as the team practices. PHOTO BY LAUREL CLACE PHOTOGRAPHY

ing basketball. In the seventh grade, she became passionate about playing the sport.

By eighth grade, she knew she wanted to play college basketball. This realization fueled countless hours of training in the gym. Although she tore her anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) twice while in high school, her determination to play at the next level never wavered.

"Playing for the women's basketball team under Coach McDevitt was an incredibly special experience that shaped me both on and off the court," said Talon. "My time at Windham with Coach Brody Artes laid the foundation

for my collegiate career, instilling in me the values of hard work, resilience, and leadership. The lessons I learned extended far beyond basketball, preparing me for the challenges of college athletics and life beyond the game."

In 2023, the Saint Joseph's College women's basketball team won the Greater Northeastern Athletic Conference Championship. Talon finished that game by scoring 27 points and was named as the Conference Tournament's Most Valuable Player; she says this was one of her most unforgettable moments as a player on the team.

Before her senior year of college, Talon tore her ACL again and made the tough decision to medically retire. She transitioned into a student-assistant coach role in 2024 where she was able to observe the game, and it was an eye-opening experience that gave her a new perspective.

According to Talon, she gained a deeper appreciation for the immense effort that coaches put in behind-the-scenes.

"My journey wouldn't have been possible without my parents unwavering encouragement, pushing me forward even on the toughest days of recovery," said Talon. "I also owe a great deal to my physical therapist,

Ryan Brown, and my sports psychologist, Jan Veinot. Their expertise and guidance were instrumental in both my physical and mental comeback to basketball."

During her time on the sidelines, Talon learned that one of the most valuable lessons is patience. She adapts her approach while maintaining a steady and supportive presence. Growth doesn't happen overnight, and it takes time, repetition and encouragement to help athletes reach their full potential.

"I think her ability to take her experiences as a player and implement that into coaching is key," said teammate and Saint Joseph's College graduate student Angelica Hurley. "Hannah stepped up in the moments that we needed it most and brought important energy all around. Hannah is a great coach, and I am grateful that I got the opportunity to be coached by her in my last year."

Talon says that success is the ability to achieve goals while learning and growing from your mistakes along the way. She said life has a way of opening doors you never expected; success looks different for everyone but setting goals, staying disciplined and being consistent are key to making the most of any opportunity. <

ATHLETE OF THE WEEK



Katelyn Cotter

Age: 18

Team: Windham High School Alpine Skiing

Coach: Christine Fredette

Parents' names: Mandi Cotter-Woodward and Patrick Cotter

Reason for selection: Katelyn Cotter is pure positive energy, always looking out for her teammates, cheering for everyone, and bringing her best to practice and competitions. She worked hard and succeeded in creating a strong cohesive team. Her leadership of the girls' team is a big part of the reason the team won the Class A Sportsmanship Award this year. Katelyn is generous with her time, energy, and Twizzlers. She volunteers with the Windham Middle School team and teaches skiing on the weekends at Pleasant Mountain. Katelyn also maintains a high Grade Point Average qualifying for the Southern Maine Activities Association All-Academic Award. She is an outstanding team captain, student, and community member.

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Players work on fundamentals during softball clinic

By Matt Pascarella
STAFF WRITER

Every year, the varsity softball team runs youth clinics for kids in Windham and surrounding areas as an opportunity for younger players to get to know coaches and learn from the older varsity players.

The clinic lasts six weeks and is open to ages 6 to 12. Their second-to-last clinic of the year was conducted at Windham High School on Sunday, March 16. It was a great opportunity for younger players to learn more about the mechanics of the game while also having fun and getting to know the WHS coaches and varsity players.

“It’s important for me as a high school coach to empower my athletes and I think putting them in situations where they can lead and teach youth athletes gives them more confidence when they step onto the high school field,” said Windham varsity softball coach Darcey Gardiner. “I get to know the kids and probably more importantly they get to know me and the high school athletes. My goal is to see those girls all come to tryouts their freshman year of high school. It’s important for me as a varsity coach to interact with kids all the way down to coach-pitch, that’s what we had here today. The more girls that we can keep interested in softball then the better our program and culture is as a whole.”

By participating in these softball clinics, when these younger players get to high school, they know exactly what is expected of them and are already familiar with the drills and what they want to get out of each drill they do. The growth that coaches see from the start of the clinic to its finish is tremendous.

Windham catcher Eva Doughty, a fifth grader, said she can’t wait to get better and play this year. At the clinic, Doughty got a chance to catch for a varsity player and she said it was hard but she tried her best and had a lot of fun.

“I have done this clinic years be-



Windham varsity softball coach Darcey Gardiner, bottom fourth from right, teammates and youth participants gather during the WHS softball clinic at on Sunday, March 9. PHOTO BY LAINEY WORTHINGTON

fore and I always thought it helped start the season,” said Windham eighth-grader Niyah Cummings, who helped out during the clinic this year. “It helps me build relationships with the high schoolers as well as the younger kids. The varsity high school players are having fun and showing what it’s like to be a ‘big kid’ in the sport they love.”

The clinic is split into three sections: baserunning, fielding and hitting.

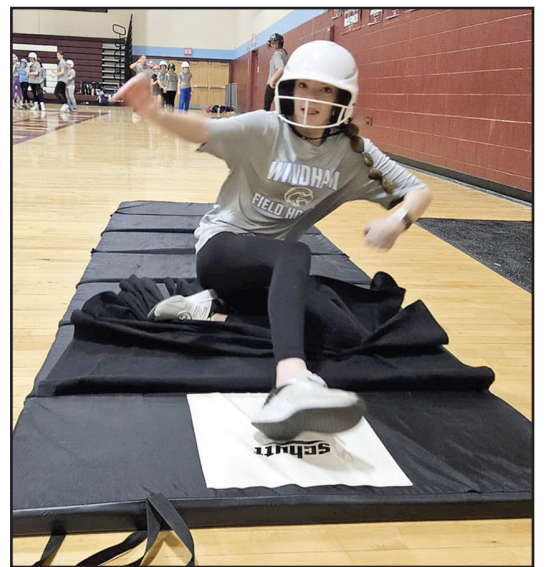
Coach Gardiner and the varsity players make it exciting for the younger players with a high level of enthusiasm.

“I love softball, and I love sports in general,” said Windham fifth-grader Colby Sargent. “I’ve just been playing since I was very little. I like how the high schoolers come in because they are very inspiring; we have the potential to be on the varsity team, so they’re basically just teaching us how to be good like them.”

Another positive aspect of the clinic



(L to R) Windham varsity senior Kennedy Kimball instructs a group about the skills of the game. PHOTO BY MATT PASCARELLA
Windham seventh grader Aubrey Bell practices. PHOTO BY LAINEY WORTHINGTON



is for the older and younger players to meet and lessen any intimidation that might be there for the younger players. The varsity players also might gain a new fan or two.

Varsity players and Gardiner want younger players to come watch them play. The varsity team also wants to continue to be role models for the community.

“I think it’s a good way for us to see some of the young talent coming up,” said Windham senior varsity player Kennedy Kimball about the

clinic. “It’s good for us to see them and for them to meet older girls and to see and get some experience from us as well as have Coach Gardiner be able to look at what’s to come and keep girls in the program. It’s nice to be able to talk to them and know that you’re not just one of the people on the team, and that you actually help them.”

There’s one more clinic left; it will be at 1:30 p.m. Sunday, March 23 in the Windham High School gymnasium. The cost to participate is \$15. <

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Ahead to the future or back to the past?

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



- Andy Young, Columnist

When someone asked me not long ago if I would rather visit with my great-great grandparents or meet my great-great grandchildren, my initial reaction was, "What an utterly random question!"

Both are intriguing possibilities though, even if neither seems likely to occur anytime soon. Barring changes in the space-time continuum, there's no chance I'll ever meet my grandparents' grandparents. As for seeing my grandchildren's grandchildren, since I'm currently both grandchild-less and eligible for Medicare, it's hard to imagine I'll live long enough to see three additional generations of Youngs.

That established, there are reasons to desire both of these theoretical scenarios. For me oral history is far more fascinating and relevant than opening a textbook to read someone's biased version of past events.

Hearing recollections from people who genuinely experienced history is the closest thing to actually being there. And while any eyewitness account of the past can bring history to life, hearing one from actual ancestors would make those particular memories even more vivid.

There would be some challenges involved with meeting my ancestral great-greats, since some of them probably spoke English with difficult-to-understand accents, and others didn't speak it at all. But where



there's a will there's a way, and I'll bet if I were to somehow find myself face-to-face with a great-great grandmother or great-great grandfather, we'd be able to figure out some effective way to communicate.

However, checking in with my great-great grandchildren would be tempting, too. There are multiple upsides to meeting one's four-generations-ahead descendants.

Given the current state of humanity, the future is even more unknowable than the past. It'd be thrilling to meet my great-great grandkids, although the prospect of lasting long enough to do so seems unlikely. Still, while it's easy to imagine what the future might look like, wouldn't it be great to find out for certain how accurate our conception of it actually is?

After thoughtfully considering this conundrum, and in the process squandering many hours that could have been better utilized for trifles like working, eating, and sleeping, I've come to what I consider the only logical conclusion.

First of all, for either of these scenarios to occur, time travel would be required. Assuming mankind obtains this ability sometime in the next two decades or so, I'm going to buy myself a time machine, which I will use to travel back to meet with my great-great-grandparents. That journey won't just be through time, though. It'll also be geographical, since I know for a fact that I've got progenitors from both Ireland and Hungary, and perhaps from parts of North America as well.

Once time travel has been normalized there'll be plenty of vehicles to choose from, and with that in mind I'm going to opt for a really big one. That's because what I plan to do after briefly experiencing what life in their world was like is to transport all 16 of my great-greats back to the present, where I can update them on what life is like here in the first quarter of the 21st century.

I've got nothing against any of my forebears, but I suspect that after getting a taste of what life in the middle of the 1800s entailed, I'll be ready to return to a world with electricity and indoor plumbing, to name just two amenities I'd prefer not to go without for long.

Another reason that going back in time makes more sense than journeying ahead: suppose I travel forward four generations, only to arrive and subsequently find out that I don't have any great-great grandkids?

Or, even worse, that nobody does. <

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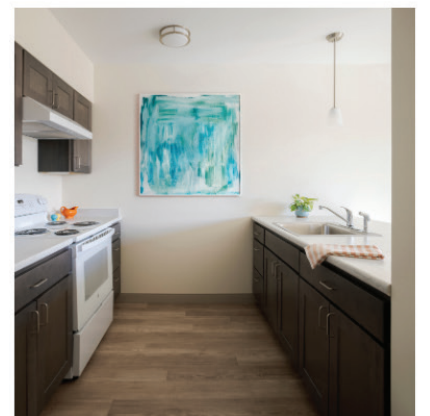
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Eagle REAL ESTATE & Home

Remodelers vs. General Contractors: Who is best fit for your project?

► **By Warren O'Shea**
SPECIAL TO THE WINDHAM EAGLE



— Warren O'Shea
Owner, O'Shea Builders

The primary difference between a remodeler and a general contractor lies in the scope of their projects. It is important to know the differences between the two professions when it comes to planning your project.

**A remodeling contractor specializes in transforming pre-existing areas of the home rather than creating new ones. Due to the specialized nature of the profession, a remodeling contractor can tailor projects to specific tastes and needs. They understand interior design and layout and are focused on attention to detail and finishing. They tend to possess artisan-like craftsmanship and produce high-quality and skilled solutions with a keen eye for style, performance, and visual appeal because no one wants an ugly remodel.

A subset of remodelers, known as design-build remodelers, go beyond the traditional scope of their role by offering design services. This comprehensive approach brings design and construction under one roof and has the unique advantage of streamlining communication, potentially lowering overall project costs, and making it clear who is accountable for the success of the project. In contrast, a general contractor typically works with pre-existing plans and focuses more on project management than design.

** In many ways, remodeling can

be more difficult than new construction. Remodeling requires navigating pre-existing conditions, which can be complex and unpredictable, especially in older homes where nothing may be plumb, level or square. The process involves adapting to the limitations and idiosyncrasies of the existing structure and working within the limits of existing floor plans often leading to creative problem-solving, meticulous planning, and adaptive design.

**Unlike new construction projects, where plans can be executed with fewer constraints, remodelers must carefully assess and work within the confines of what already exists, balancing the desire for modern updates with the realities of the existing home.

**Discovering hidden problems like outdated wiring or plumbing.

**Seamlessly blending new additions with the existing home, both structurally and aesthetically.

**Adhering to building codes, which may have changed since the original construction.

**Maintaining the integrity and character of the original home while updating.

A general contractor, as the name suggests, has a broad skillset and can take on a wide range of building projects. However, many GCs specialize in a particular type of project, like new home construction, commercial



build outs, or even something as specific as building apartment buildings. While many GCs are adept at managing large-scale construction projects and extensive renovations, their approach likely differs from specialized remodelers who focus on detailed home improvements.

One analogy from the world of medicine would be to compare the broad knowledge of a general practitioner to the specialized knowledge of a neurosurgeon. Both have a broad base of medical knowledge, but the

surgeon has spent extra time learning a very particular set of skills.

Of course, when it comes to actual skill levels for contracting and remodeling, there aren't as many barriers to entry as there are in medicine. That's why, when comparing the various skill levels of any professional working on your home, you should check references, study reviews, and interview at least three companies.

As far as having a remodeling project commence in your home, you need to be prepared for some disruption to your daily routine. It's not fun. Noise, dust, or your kitchen being out of commission during construction are commonplace. The hallmark of a skilled remodeler lies in their adeptness at minimizing disruptions to the homeowner's daily life, their strategies to control dust, noise, and ensuring the safety and comfort of the residents during the renovation process. Inquire about how the contractor works to minimize inconveniences

→ see REAL ESTATE Page 28

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

- | | | | |
|-------------|------------|-------------|---------------|
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| BACTERIA | HEPATITIS | PAIN | THRUSH |
| COMMON COLD | HOOKWORMS | PARASITE | TOXOPLASMOSIS |
| COVID | ILLNESS | PERTUSSIS | TRANSMISSIBLE |
| DISEASE | INFECTIOUS | SALMONELLA | TUBERCULOSIS |
| E-COLI | INFLUENZA | STOMACH BUG | VIRUS |

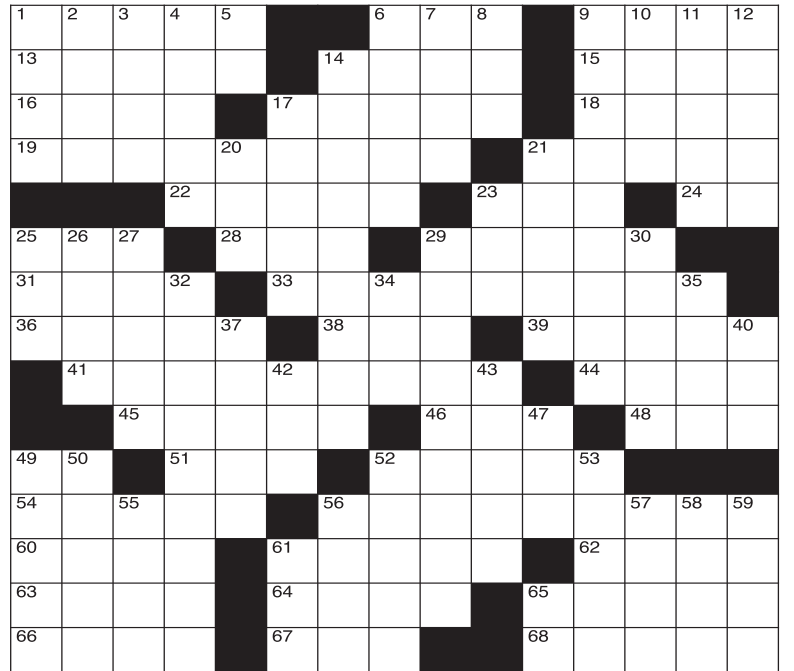
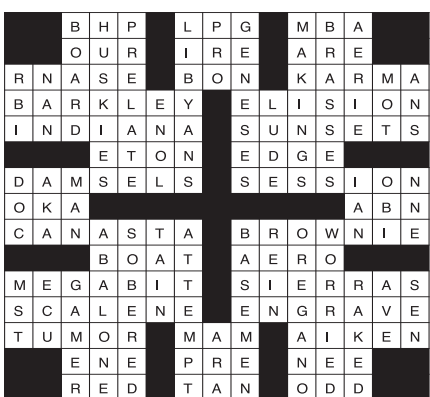
CRYPTO FUN

Solve the code to discover words related to finance.
 Each number corresponds to a letter.
 (Hint: 26 = I)

- A. 16 1 22 11 26 9**
Clue: Buying something on deferment
- B. 11 22 2 26 9**
Clue: Deduction
- C. 8 25 18 26 19 17 8**
Clue: Nest egg
- D. 26 19 18 22 8 9 20 22 19 9**
Clue: Share or stock

Answers: A. credit B. debit C. savings D. investment

LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS



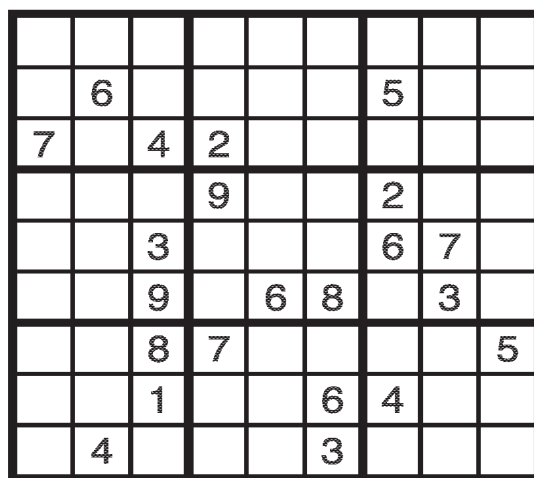
CLUES ACROSS

- Two-person German submarine
- 60-minute intervals (abbr.)
- Database management system
- Vertical position
- American jazz singer Irene
- Ancient Greek City
- Former Senate Majority Leader Harry
- Japanese seaport
- Self-immolation by fire ritual
- Assigns tasks
- Beloved type of cigar
- Discounts
- Cambodian communist leader Pot
- Important football position
- Kilometers per hour
- Lentil
- Extremely angry
- Yellow-flowered European plant
- American state
- Some are made by rabbits
- Express with a head movement
- Cured
- Youth organization
- 18-year astronomical period
- Automobile
- Focus a shot
- The NFL's big game (abbr.)
- Mouth
- Infections
- Curved pieces of a horse collar
- Shameless
- Assist in escaping
- Capuchin monkey genus
- Cold wind
- Retired Brazilian NBAer
- Tropical Old World tree
- Bulgarian city
- Speak indistinctly
- Soviet Socialist Republic
- Between-meal sustenance

CLUES DOWN

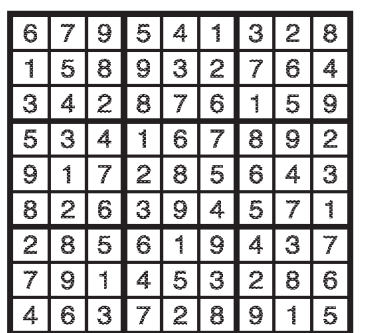
- Not soft
- Sharp-pointed dueling sword
- Line a roof
- Greek god of the underworld
- Software
- Large-headed elongated fishes
- Shag rugs
- Type of whale
- Lacking a plan
- Spill the beans
- Some is "heavy"
- One who has been canonized
- Indicate times
- Greeting
- Broadway actor Josh
- Seashore
- Indicates before
- Electrical power unit
- Destitute
- Drags forcibly
- Impropriety
- Word forms
- Equal to 10 meters
- Neither
- Computer language
- Practice of aging film or TV characters (abbr.)
- A woolen cap of Scottish origin
- A promise
- Challenges
- Official
- People living in Myanmar
- Notable tower
- Type of sword
- Vaccine developer
- Listing
- Summertime insects
- Concluding passage
- Guitarist Clapton
- Damp and musty
- Central nervous system
- Against

SUDOKU



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.

LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS





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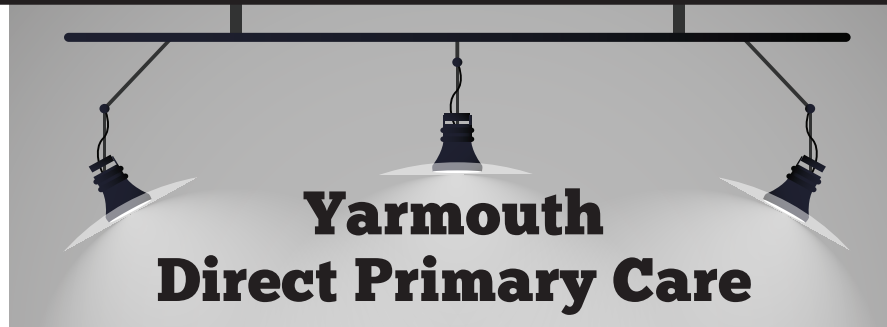
The days of waiting for weeks for a medical appointment or days spent trying to speak with a doctor are over for patients at Yarmouth Direct Primary Care. And for many of them, it's certainly a life-changing experience.

Dr. John Daggett founded Yarmouth Direct Primary Care in January and the practice's flexibility allows him to reach patients where they need to be seen, including home visits, on-site evaluations, online or in the office.

"Despite being headquartered in Yarmouth, I have connected with many patients from the Lakes Region who work in greater Portland, and I hope to expand my presence in the Windham area with patients and small businesses," Daggett said.

Direct Primary Care is a healthcare model where patients pay their primary care physician a monthly or annual fee in exchange for unlimited access to primary care services. It includes preventive care, routine checkups, chronic disease management, common primary care procedures such as joint injections, skin biopsies, and access to laboratory tests as an alternative to traditional health insurance and does not require patients to have insurance coverage.

As such, it eliminates the need for physicians to bill insurance companies, which can reduce overhead and costs allowing Daggett to focus on providing individualized attention to his patients.



"I am so excited to be practicing primary care in a direct care model. As someone who has practiced primary care for some time, I commit to listening to my patients and thinking broadly about what may be going on with them and their health," he said. "I like to think outside the box and be creative in how best my patients can access my care, and that doesn't always mean I will be sitting in the clinic all day. I want to get on the road, to the job site, on the phone or to pursue other channels to reach my patients where they are at, and I coordinate their care."

Daggett says that Direct Primary Care is an exciting model that places the patient first.

"As a physician, I feel strongly that the public should be able to access my services without significant barriers. As an internal medicine physician, I trained nearly 9,000 hours during my residency followed by eight years thus far as a general internist in active practice," he said. "My experience in adult medicine includes time spent training

in all the various subspecialty fields and maintaining relationships with many subspecialists in the state."

Daggett manages chronic conditions and assesses new conditions as they come up for my patients.

"This model gives me the time to advocate for my patients and have clear, direct communication with them," he said. "It allows me focus on patient concerns."

According to Daggett, Yarmouth Direct Primary Care doesn't charge enrollment fees and doesn't require a minimum commitment, so it reduces the barriers for patients to experience the value of having a doctor on call for their healthcare needs.

"Regarding the level of one-on-one care, personalized attention, and unlimited access to a physician who knows you well, I think this is where the value is really felt by my patients within weeks of joining," he said.

The traditional concierge medicine model offered extended time and one-on-one attention, but at a substantial price with retainer fees reaching into

the \$4,000 to \$5,000 price range.

"Direct care brings that price down in my case to \$125 per month to be a member of the clinic," Daggett said. "I never bill insurance over and above that fee, so even if someone has a horrible month and has to see me six times for an ongoing illness, that would all be included in the membership fee."

As a husband, father, brother and son, Daggett has been a patient and has had loved ones become ill and need the help of a primary care physician.

"This can be some of the most stressful times one may experience, so you want to have confidence in your physician and know they will be available for you when you need them," he said. "I am down to earth in my approach, enjoying the cordial conversations with patients about their care and lives. When I answer the phone in the office, I can't tell you how many patients have commented that it was the first time they ever spoke with a physician on the phone. I have the time to make those personal connections and reach out to follow up with all of my patients directly. It is what physicians want, and it is what patients want, so I am thrilled to have the space to practice this way."

To learn more about Yarmouth Direct Primary Care, call 207-560-0415 or visit www.yarmouthdpc.com. Find them on Facebook and Instagram under Yarmouth DPC. <

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➔ REAL ESTATE *Cont. from page 25*

like creating a temporary kitchen or starting a little bit later in the day.

Even if the remodeler does everything right, nothing sours homeowner happiness like having a troop of tradespeople in your house at 7am while you're in your bathrobe drinking bitter, instant coffee. A precarious stack of empty pizza boxes will probably take up residence in a corner by the door and at the end of the fourth week you may have sampled every imaginable pizza topping known to man. A general contractor who is more accustomed to new construction may not have processes in place to keep your home livable during the building phase.

Choosing a specialized remodeler

over a general contractor might help minimize these disruptions, and it should be one of the primary ways you evaluate who you might hire for the job.

This article was brought to you by Warren O'Shea, the owner of O'Shea Builders LLC, Maine's most award-winning remodeling contractor. He has 35-plus years of residential remodeling experience. He is a certified home inspector and has been featured on HGTV, Food Network, and Maine Cabin Masters. He is a recipient of the Portland Police Department's "Citizen Award," and is a staunch consumer advocate. Warren has, and continues to, co-author articles for nationally distributed trade magazines. Visit their website at www.buildwithoshea.com to learn more. <

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