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INSIGHT

The simplest thing not everyone has

When I was growing up, I used to receive compliments for my manners but to be honest, the credit belongs to my parents who drilled into me the basics of etiquette. My father would describe etiquette to my younger brother and me as like traffic lights for our interactions with others and he said that courtesy was simply a way to show respect for others. My mother was a stickler for proper manners and believed that displays of improper etiquette required immediate corrections.

She was “hands-on” with her corrections of bad manners and many times the lobe of my right ear was yanked as she made a point. Her understanding of good manners also made her mandate that children should not place their elbows on the table when seated for dinner.

According to my parents, exhibiting proper manners included always being mindful of other people’s feelings, beliefs, and expectations and helped to create more positive relationships with everyone in our lives. That included teachers, grocery clerks, bus drivers, aunts and uncles, the mailman and the doctor.

I thought of this last Saturday night while I was sitting alone at a table at a Rock n’ Roll dance waiting for my wife to return from the restroom. I was scrolling through my iPhone looking at Major League Baseball scores. When she arrived back at the table, she immediately informed me that looking at my phone was bad manners and anti-social.

Here are some of my parents’ basic manners tenets:

Wait to eat until everyone is seated and served. During my U.S. Air Force Basic Training experience, if I was to arrive at a vacant table for four in the dining hall, I was required to stand at attention with my hand raised indicating how many seats were left at the table. Once all the seats were filled, you could sit down and eat your meal. To this day no matter if I’m sitting in a restaurant or at home, if I’m served first, I won’t start eating until everyone’s food is at the table.

Respect the personal space of others. My father stressed that I never stand too close to people and insisted that I always ask before touching someone. That included always asking before reaching into someone else’s refrigerator or cupboards when visiting friends or neighbors. Years ago, I had a boss at the newspaper I was working at who would come up from behind me when I was sitting at my cubicle and working on my computer. He wanted to see what I was typing and would creep up so close to me to catch a glimpse of my computer screen that I could feel his hot breath on the back of my neck. It was a disregard for my personal space and the other reporters in our department to whom he did the same thing.

Being punctual means you’re never late. My mother explained to me that it shows respect for other people’s time when you are on time or early for appointments and meetings. To this very day, I try to arrive for my appointments in advance of the scheduled time not only for my own peace of mind, but also to let the person I have the appointment with know I’m there. Once I was attending a press briefing for an author who had written a popular book and the author had noticed I had arrived early and was so impressed by that, he offered me an exclusive interview after the other reporters had left.

Always tip service workers well. My father came from a family of nine kids during the Great Depression. He worked for 19 cents an hour every day after high school classes at a company that made tin cans. He understood that no matter what a person’s job or social status was, they deserved to be singled out for the exceptional service that they provide. He went out his way to thank waitresses, janitors, or garbage men with a generous tip as appreciation. My father said that leaving a tip is a polite way of saying thank you while recognizing and acknowledging the value of contributions that service workers make to our lives.

Offering to help others is a sign of courtesy. Whether it was helping an elderly woman carry a bag of groceries to her car or returning shopping carts to the proper collection area, my mother demanded that I do something useful for others when I was out in public with her. She told me when I was a paperboy that I should always bring newspapers I was delivering to a subscriber’s front steps, rather than pitching them in their driveway as I rode past their homes on my bicycle. She would often send me over to a neighbor’s house to help rake leaves for them or shovel snow from their sidewalk. Years later, I still push the shopping carts back neatly in the collection spot instead of just leaving it for someone else to push there.

The way I see it, good manners are a way of showing other people that we respect them. Sadly, it seems to be disappearing in today’s world. <

~ Ed Pierce

Today in HISTORY

APRIL 25

1831 – The New York and Harlem Railway is incorporated in NYC.

1901 – New York becomes the first state to require license plates for cars.

1945 – Delegates from about 50 countries meet in San Francisco to organize the United Nations.

1953 – Dr. James D. Watson of the U.S. and Dr. Francis H.C. Crick of England discover the double helix structure of DNA.

1954 – The prototype manufacture of the first solar battery is announced by the Bell Laboratories in NYC.

1959 – The St. Lawrence Seaway opens to shipping connecting the Great Lakes and the Atlantic Ocean.

1983 – The Pioneer 10 spacecraft crosses Pluto’s orbit, speeding on its endless voyage through the Milky Way.

1990 – The U.S. Hubble Space Telescope is placed into Earth’s orbit by astronauts about the space shuttle Discovery.

Inspirational Quote of the Week

“True courtesy...is real kindness kindly expressed.”

– Julia McNair Write

ON THE SPOT

What’s something you’re so good at that you could teach it to someone else?

“Hands on History with Middle Schoolers.” – Paula Sparks

“Punctuation.” – Francesco Paredon

“Competitive sprinting.” – Stephen Signor

“Health.” – Matthew Sherburne

“Grammar.” – Cherie Segal

“Cribbage.” – Julie Mallett

“Carving alabaster.” – Anne Alexander

“HVAC/R and business.” – Shawn Bryant

“American History for middle school!” – Rob Juergens

“Procrastination.” – William D. Reiner

“Creating homemade pizza cooked to perfection.” – Tommy Matthews

“I’ve always had a knack for sewing, needlepoint and embroidery and could probably teach it to someone else if I wanted to.” – Sarah Singer-Miller

“Mud bogging.” – Mitchell B. Robinson

“How to speak Spanish.” – Chris Macklin

“Classical music and opera.” – Mia Potenzio-Ransey

“Ocean Science and sailing.” – Jerry Greene

“Personal finance and business record keeping.” – Isabella Mongon

“Cooking breakfast at camp.” – Dean A. Smalley

“Cooking, dancing or how to shop for groceries and save money with coupons.” – Anne Glotchshuk

“Phone etiquette. Instilling manners, courtesy and respect for others in children. Safe driving.” – Deirdre Schulte

“Auto racing.” – Rick Seacroft

“Best ways to get tickets for sports events and concerts in Boston.” – David D. McCoombs

“Hair styling.” – Audrey Marmol

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Kelly Mank
Publisher
Kelly@TheWindhamEagle.com

Melissa Carter
Sales Manager/Designer
Melissa@TheWindhamEagle.com

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

Ed Pierce
Managing Editor
Editor@TheWindhamEagle.com

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THIS WEEK'S STAFF WRITERS:
Jolene Bailey, Kira Pilot, Matt Pascarella, Kendra Raymond, Masha Yurkevich, & Kaysa Jalbert

EDITORIAL POLICYThe Windham Eagle newspaper has a mission to be a positive and solutions based newspaper. As a positive and solutions-based newspaper, we are committed to providing our readers with accurate, informative, and constructive news and information that uplifts and inspires. We recognize that certain content may not align with our mission and values, and therefore reserve the right to not publish certain types of content. For complete details about submissions and our letters policy, visit thewindhameagle.com/Information.pdf



Sewer line installation underway in North Windham

By Ed Pierce
STAFF WRITER

A significant step to improving public health and sustainable economic development has started in North Windham, as a contractor has begun to install sewer lines there.

Windham Communications Director Roger Cropley said the project is a collaboration between the Town of Windham and the Portland Water District with sewer line installation work starting in the Shaw’s parking lot area of North Windham.

Cropley said the sewer line will span the Shaw’s parking lot through the Walmart lot, and over to Landing Road before crossing Route 302 to the Windham Mall. Shaw Brothers Construction also started installing another section of the sewer line April 20 along Route 115 in North Windham, he said.

“The installation will begin on the Gray side of Walgreens, progressing across Boody’s Corner and over to a section of Route 35, eventually connecting to the line being installed through the Shaw’s parking lot,” Cropley said. “That work will run through early May.”

According to Cropley, the sewer line work is scheduled to be performed at night in order to cause as little disruption for motorists as possible.

“Construction will start at 6 p.m. and go to 6 a.m. with start times varying depending on traffic volume,” he said. “Flaggers and police will be set up each night to control and redirect traffic when lane closures are in effect. The sewer work is scheduled to be completed by June.”

Voters approved installation of a sewer system in Windham during a special referendum in June 2022.

By installing a sewer system treating 50,000 gallons per day, Windham Town Manager Barry Tibbetts said that business growth in North Windham will be of significant benefit to the community, leading to economic growth and the creation of new housing, new hotels, new office and retail space and affordable options for small-scale manufacturing development.

Tibbetts said that environmental benefits will also be realized by installing sewers in North Windham including preventing 7,500 pounds per year of nitrogen and 1,000 pounds of phosphorous from entering the aquifer.

“This project will be the first of this magnitude in Maine and can be a model for other communities who lack receiving waters,” he said. “It will be the most advanced micro-filtration system in the state for handling contaminants.”

Along with the sewers, construction of a public wastewater system will result in the removal of about 100 septic systems that are currently discharging into the North Windham aquifer, Tibbetts said. A collection and pumping system over three miles in length will connect businesses and

residents to the system and will treat wastewater through the advanced micro-filtration system.

“Current businesses will be able to further grow and expand while new businesses can be situated without further degrading the aquifer and using valuable real estate for septic systems,” Tibbetts said.

The overall estimated cost of the sewer project is \$40.4 million. Partnering with the Portland Water District and RSU 14 to create the massive infrastructure project, the Windham Town Council covered the initiative through a combination of grant funding, a \$38.9 million award by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, and North Windham TIF funding supported by North Windham businesses.

Because of construction costs and materials increases since receiving voter approval in 2022, Tibbetts said that a warrant article approved by voters at the 2024 Windham Annual Town Meeting authorized the town to issue a bond of \$4 million through the state’s Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund. In doing that, the sewer project shortfall will have no impact for taxpayers.

The new system includes the creation of a new pumping station near Windham High School and RSU 14 that would service from the high school campus to a new treatment facility in North Windham and establish a wastewater treatment facility on the grounds of Manchester School and a new pumping station at Windham Middle School. <

Direct primary care, which you may see abbreviated as DPC, is a subscription-based model for delivering primary care to patients. It's been around for about a decade, but it's only started gaining traction over the last few years. Now it's quickly becoming one of the hottest trends in primary care. Julie and Bob Bailey are the newest to bring this practice to the Windham area.

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Windham Middle School special education teacher forges lasting relationships with students

By Ed Pierce
STAFF WRITER

Special education teachers are uniquely trained to support the learning needs of students with disabilities and to ensure their educational, behavioral, social, and emotional success. Windham Middle School has one of the best in Adam Deveau.

Deveau is now in his eighth year working at WMS and says he considers himself fortunate to be part of the RSU 14 team. In his job, Deveau is challenged to find specific interventions that fulfill the needs of his students, kind of like trying to solve a new puzzle every day.

“My responsibilities vary a bit from year to year. This year, my main responsibilities include providing specialized instruction and supporting students throughout the day when they are challenged or struggling,” Deveau said. “Since starting at WMS, I have taught reading, writing, math, and science on the academic side as well as social skills, social-emotional learning, and executive functioning. I also create and manage educational plans and positive behavior support plans.”

At the middle school, special education teachers work with fewer students than their general education counterparts and they also work with the same group of students over the course of several years they attend

classes there. The smaller class sizes in special education coupled with the increased time of working with the same students at WMS gives him the opportunity to forge strong relationships with his students and their families.

“The best thing about what I do in my job is that I am in a unique position to help improve the quality of life for students and help them enjoy and benefit from their time at school,” he said. “I get to help shape their overall experience at Windham Middle School and when I do my job well, I see amazingly positive outcomes in the way they feel about school in general.”

But the most challenging aspect of Deveau’s job is the fact that he can only be in one place at a time and sometimes there are many things that he would like to be doing and many people he would like to be supporting.

“People don’t always understand that special education is not just a service to address academic needs,



Adam Deveau is now in his eighth year as a special education teacher at Windham Middle School and provides specialized instruction to support students when they are challenged or struggling. SUBMITTED PHOTO

but it also can help students that struggle in many areas including behavior, daily living skills, and social skills,” he said.

Born in Dayton, Ohio, Deveau’s family moved to Maine when he was just an infant. He has spent much of his life living in Bridgton and graduated from Lake Region High School. He originally studied philosophy at the University of Southern Maine but when I graduated, he found out that “philosopher” is not exactly

a job in high demand. He enrolled at USM again and earned enough additional credits to become a special education teacher.

According to Deveau, he first applied to work at WMS when the school that he was working for moved to a new location further away.

“I have taught nearly every subject in special education. I started my career in a private day treatment program for students with emotional and behavioral health challenges,” Deveau

said. “After that I came to WMS, and have worked as a functional academic teacher, a resource room teacher, and a behavior support teacher.”

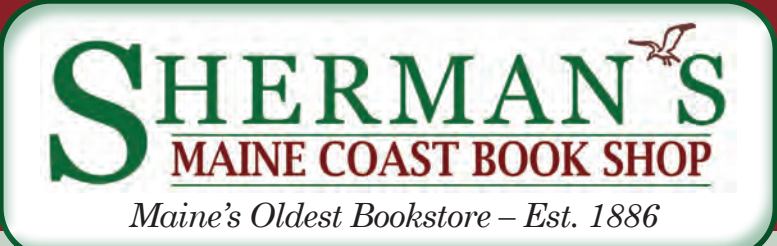
He says he’s enjoyed many memorable moments working for WMS.

“Some of my favorite memories include seeing them perform in talent shows, participate in door decorating contests, and other moments where they chose to step up to the plate to show us their unique skills and talents,” Deveau said. “The moment that stands out the most is when I worked with a group of students who came into my room almost every day to learn how to sing three or four songs. Our goal was to bring some joy and entertainment to the residents of LedgeWood Manor, a local assisted living facility. On the day they performed, my students showed courage, compassion and kindness in so many ways, and I was honored to help them.”


The most important thing that Deveau says he’s learned working for WMS is that all students want to do well.

“If we create the right conditions for student success, they will almost always meet us halfway,” he said. “They communicate their needs with not only their words but their actions, so we need to listen to them on so many different levels to be effective educators.” <

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Humorist preparing for Raymond Village Library concert

By Kaysa Jalbert
STAFF WRITER

This Saturday, there will be no “shushing” in the Raymond Village Library, only strumming, singing, and laughter. Musician and humorist Red Gallagher will be performing a public concert at the Village Library in Raymond at noon on Saturday, April 26.

Red Gallagher puts on an up-beat performance that blends music and humor. As a one-man-band he plays guitar, harmonica, piano and sings. He’s created parodies from top artists such as Steve Goodman, John Prime and the Beatles. Overall, his songs include blues, jazz, country, folk, rock and roll and many classic pop tunes.

The show also welcomes a special guest, Lorraine Gallagher, Red Gallagher’s talented wife with beautiful vocals. Together, the two form The Redbird Duo. Lorraine Gallagher is a New England woman who sings and plays guitar. Her song selections include classics from Joni Mitchell, Carol King, Eva Cassidy, and other great female artists.

Gallagher has been a full-time professional musician for 49 years. He has made three vinyl records and two solo compact disc albums and one compact disc album for The Redbird Duo. Additionally, he has toured with renowned artists such as B.B. King, B.J. Thomas, The Oak Ridge Boys, and rock band Three Dog Night.

“Highest thrills of my career were opening concerts for B.B. King,” said Gallagher, “He was very nice to me, and it’s all been downhill since then,” he joked, “and also he gave me some good advice, but I stayed in music anyway.”

When ask if he is retired, Gallagher answered, “I’m not retired by any



Musician and humorist Red Gallagher will be performing a public concert at the Raymond Village Library in Raymond at noon on Saturday, April 26. COURTESY PHOTO

means. I’m still working full time, but I have retired from the nightclub scene.”

In other words, he doesn’t party like he used to, but the party is still happening.

“I’ve done a lot of things in my career, you know, college circuit, cruise ships, big name concert openers but, at this point, I’m mainly doing community shows for seniors and social groups and festivals,” Gallagher said.

Next week, Gallagher has six concerts booked all at various retirement communities, and another six more the following week. Since straying away from the late-night music scene, Gallagher has found himself enjoying sharing his time, music and jokes with folks similar to his own age, who can share the nostalgia in his performance.

“It’s really rewarding,” says Gal-

lagher, “They love it, and I get a lot of real positive feedback from them. Also, they think I’m young,” he laughs, “but really they’re my age, in their 70s and such, so, like me they grew up with The Beatles and Bob Dylan. I know a lot of music that they enjoy and remember.”

Gallagher is now 75 years old and is originally from the Midwest and lived most of his adult life in Minneapolis-St. Paul. He uses many aspects of his life to create comical parodies. From the state of Minnesota he created Minnesota Winter which has been upgraded in the past 20 years to New England Winter. Yes, it’s a song about how cold and grumpy we all get in

winter, but we love it, we really do. The musician has always included humor in his performances. Why? “Because I like to laugh, and I like to make people laugh,” he said.

Gallagher moved to New Hampshire roughly 20 years ago and stayed for 10 years, before moving to Maine where he has resided since.

Lorraine and Red Gallagher married 19 years ago. They dated for two years, and he never knew she was musical. Once it was discovered, they started singing and playing together and have since created The Redbird Duo. The Redbird Duo will be performing at the Fryeburg fair twice this year, and also at the Steep Falls Gazebo in Standish on July 30.

His career started when as a young, 25-year-old with clearly enough confidence, he strolled into a booking agency, sang some songs and made them laugh, and the rest is history. Gallagher’s family wasn’t full of musicians and performers, in fact the only family member that played an instrument was his aunt, who played the piano. She taught him piano and became a huge supporter as he made his way onto the stage as a young boy. In high school, Gallagher taught himself guitar to play some of his favorite tunes.

Here’s a snippet of one of Red Gallagher’s parody songs called Mini Van Driver. “I used to ride a Harley, I used to have a vet, my old Mercedes was the coolest yet, but I got middle-aged and I woke up one day to discover that I’ve become a minivan driver.” <

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Windham Historical Society to host Victorian Tea Party

By Masha Yurkevich
STAFF WRITER

The Little Meeting House in North Windham will be decorated in a Victorian style setting for a special High Tea at High Noon on Saturday, May 31. This event is being held in honor of the passing of the Windham Historical Society’s Secretary Karen Lougee in January.

Haley Pal is one of three Event Coordinators for High Tea at High Noon with the other coordinators being Susan Simonson, the Society’s President and Carol Manchester, the Membership Chair.

“This is the first time we are doing a tea,” says Pal. “It was inspired by the passing of our Secretary Karen Lougee in January. Lougee loved all things British, was an avid reader and Steward of the Windham Center Library on the Society’s Village Green. Her favorite flowers were lilacs, so we decided to host an event in her memory during lilac season.”

Lougee’s love of books and his-

tory came together when she joined the Windham Historical Society after retiring from Unum. She joined the Society’s Board and served as Secretary and on the Programs Committee. Lougee enthusiastically helped and led in the restoration of the original Windham Center Library building for the Society’s Village Green, proudly completing this large and complex project in the fall of 2024.

She also worked hard to restore the library and has left this piece of Windham history as her lasting gift to the community.

“Lougee’s first exposure to Windham Historical Society was at a fundraiser held in 2017,” says Susan Simonson, President of the Windham Historical Society. “As a way to encourage more membership and exposure of the society, we held a History Tour around Windham, highlighting the historical sites and building while providing local Windham history. Lougee and her husband, Gerry, were on that tour. It was not long afterward



A special ‘High Tea at High Noon’ event will be held Saturday, May 31 at the Little Meeting House in North Windham to remember Windham Historical Society member Karen Lougee, who died in January. COURTESY PHOTO

Lougee showed interest in becoming an active member of the society. She ran and was elected Secretary the following year. It did not take long for her to blend into the fabric of the historical society, helping in any way she could. Lougee was retired from Unum’s legal department, and her administrative and professional skills were much welcomed by the organization. She was able to juggle many hats, and most importantly her love for her family.”

High Tea at High Noon will start at noon on May 31 and run about two hours long. It will open with a greeting from Simonson. Then, a buffet luncheon will be served with the meal consisting of quiche, tea sandwich-

es, hot and cold hors d’oeuvres, mini muffins, scones, and a large assortment of delicate desserts.

“During lunch, Ray Marcotte and Elle Kanner of Teafarers will do a talk about the history of tea and talk about some of the teas that guests will be sampling with their lunch,” says Pal. “Dessert will be served by Society members and be delivered to each table. Desserts range from cupcakes to mini cheesecakes, to tea breads to cream puffs, plus cookies and mini lemon tarts.”

Tickets are \$25 per person with 60 seats available. People can purchase tickets by emailing Haley Pal at haley-pal@aol.com.

“Lougee was the steward of the Windham Center Library which had not been open for several years” says Simonson. “She has put a lot of time, energy, and research into getting the library open to the public as part of the society’s Village Green. The building had a major structural issue and took a year or two to get it addressed. Once those repairs were completed, the roof was re-shingled, windows were puttied, the exterior painted. The next step is to get electricity brought

➔ see TEA Page 7

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Raymond Fire urges caution amid heightened fire danger

As Maine enters the spring fire season, the Raymond Fire & Rescue Department is urging residents to exercise heightened caution with outdoor burning and fire-related activities.

Spring conditions and rising temperatures have increased the risk of wildfires across the state.

Burning Laws & Permit Requirements

In Maine, a valid open burning permit is required for most outdoor fires, including brush piles, debris burning, and campfires and now fireworks. Permits can be obtained through the Maine Forest Service’s online system or by contacting the Raymond Fire Department. Burning is only permitted on days when the fire danger is low to moderate (Class 1 or 2) depending on the wind. Burning on high-risk days (Class 3 or above) is prohibited. Violations may result in fines or legal action. Although a permit is issued, you are still responsible if the fire gets out of hand. If unpredicted winds kick up, extinguish the fire.

Understanding Fire Danger Class Days

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- Humidity
- Wind speed
- Recent precipitation
- Fuel moisture content



Raymond Fire and Rescue is urging caution to residents regarding backyard burning for the spring season due to dry and windy conditions. A valid burning permit is required for most outdoor fires and can be obtained through the fire department. COURTESY PHOTO

These ratings are crucial for determining safe burning conditions. Residents can check the daily Fire Danger Class at Maine Forest Service’s website. When there is little to no new, green vegetation popping up, wildfire conditions change quickly with just a little bit of wind. The wind can carry flames to last year’s fallen leaves, downed branches, and twigs. Fire spreads rapidly.

“As we enter a period and season of increased wildfire risk, it’s vital for everyone to stay informed and take pro-

active measures,” said Chief Bruce Tupper, Raymond Fire & Rescue. “Together, we can protect our homes and natural resources.”

Wildfire Prevention Tips to protect your property

- Create a defensible space: Clear leaves, brush, and flammable materials at least 30 feet from structures.
- Use fire-resistant landscaping: Choose plants and materials that reduce fire risk.
- Maintain equipment: Ensure

grills, fire pits, and chimneys are clean and functioning properly.

- Never leave fires unattended: Always extinguish fires completely before leaving. There must be two adults present at the time of burning. Fire spreads faster than one person can extinguish.

- Be sure to have hand tools (rakes & shovels) and water nearby to extinguish your fire.

“We have been seeing wildland fires catching in places the last six months that typically do not have large wildland fires to battle. We want citizens and visitors to be safe with fire to help avoid a catastrophic event here in Maine,” said Raymond Fire & Rescue Public Information Officer Scott Doyle.

For more details about burning permits and fire safety in Raymond, visit Maine Forest Service or contact Raymond Fire & Rescue at 207-655-1187. <

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→ TEA Cont. from page 6

over to the building. The funds raised by the tea will help to offset the electrical costs, remaining interior painting, and other small miscellaneous projects.”

If you are looking to enjoy a high tea in an historic old building, you are highly encouraged to join this event.

“The Little Meeting House will be decked in Victorian style using china teacups and porcelain and glass plates,” says Pal. “Tablecloths will be color-coordinated, and it should make for an elegant, but fairly inexpensive way to spend a couple of hours.”

This event is also an opportunity to meet Society members and learn about some of the things that they do for the community.

“It is also a wonderful way showing those who attend that the Windham Historical Society truly does know how to ‘have fun with history’ which is our slogan,” says Pal.

Lougee’s unexpected passing had a major effect on the society board members. She was very much a part of their team, always lending a hand where needed.

“The fundraiser in her memory is a way for us to heal and let the community know how much she meant to the society,” says Simonson. “The society has been fortunate to have Becky (Plummer) Delaware step in as the new steward of the Windham Center Library. Becky is a retired schoolteacher and grew up in Windham. Her knowledge of Windham and as an avid history buff will provide the tolls needed to continue Lougee’s vision while adding her own touch to displays on Windham’s organizations of the past.” <

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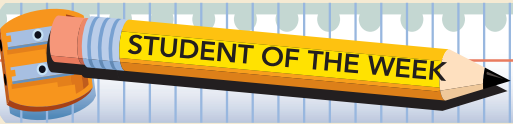
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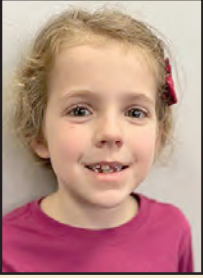
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For an application & submission details please scan here or visit:
www.windhammaine.us/769/
Town-Annual-Educational-Scholarship



MUST APPLY BY APRIL 30TH

Sebago-Long Lake Music Festival to be featured on Maine Public Classical's 'Maine Stage' program

The Sebago-Long Lake Music Festival (SLLMF) has announced that its fourth concert of the festival's 52nd season will air at 8 p.m. Wednesday, April 30 on Maine Public Classical's Maine Stage radio program.

Originally performed at the historic Deertrees Theatre in Harrison on Aug. 6, 2024, this concert captivated audiences with its exceptional program and talented performers.

The program features:

 Schubert: Fantasie for Piano Four-Hands, D.940

 Harbison: "November 19, 1828" for Piano Quartet

 Schubert: Piano Trio No. 1 in B-Flat Major, Op. 99

Renowned musicians Keiko Tokunaga (violin), Matthew Sinno (viola), Bonnie Thron (cello), Mihae Lee (piano), and Yuri Funahashi (piano) bring these masterpieces to life.

Listeners can find program notes for this concert on the SLLMF website at sebagomusicfestival.org/mpbn-replays. For those outside the listening area, the concert can be streamed online at mainepublic.org/classical-music.

The Sebago-Long Lake Music Festival is a beloved five-week summer chamber music series performed at the Deertrees Theatre. During the season, festival artists present free or by-donation community concerts across western and coastal Maine, as well as repeat performances in Maine, New Hampshire, and Connecticut.

The 2025 concerts at Deertrees Theatre will take place on at 7 p.m. Tues-



Sebago-Long Lake Music Festival artists perform during their fourth concert of the 2024 season at Deertrees Theater in Harrison. The concert will be broadcast on Maine Public Radio Classical's Maine Stage at 8 p.m. on April 30. PHOTO BY MARK SILBER

days from July 15 through Aug. 12. Tickets are available online at sebagomusicfestival.org/concert-tickets-2025, with season tickets offered for \$145 each. Season tickets can be purchased by mail: send your check to SLLMF, P.O. Box 544, Harrison, Maine, 04040.

Tickets are also sold at the box office before each concert.

SLLMF remains committed to accessibility, with free admission for individuals 21 and younger at Deertrees concerts. Additionally, open rehearsals are free and open to all on Mondays preceding the Tuesday concerts, from 10 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Deertrees Theatre. Whether you stay a few minutes or a few hours, all are welcome to witness the musicians at work. <

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Maine’s new Public Advocate addresses inaccurate billing issues with community solar companies

Maine’s Public Advocate Heather Sanborn has contacted community solar companies operating in Maine after receiving complaints from community solar customers who are enrolled in alternative delivery rates offered by CMP and Versant.

“These customers did not receive the advertised savings promised by the community solar providers,” said Sanborn. “In some instances, customers ended up paying more than they would have without a community solar subscription.”

The most common alternative rates include CMP’s electric technology rate and seasonal heat pump rate.

In a memo to community solar providers, Sanborn notified the companies immediately to:

- Review all customer records to verify the chosen delivery rates,
- Ensure that billing for solar credits is based on the accurate, customer-selected rates,
- Correct any discrepancies in past billing and issue refunds or bill credits for any overcharges.

Sanborn notified the solar companies that failure to address and rectify this issue could result in the Office of the Public Advocate taking further action, including filing a request for investigation with the Maine Public Utilities Commission.



Sanborn is also urging consumers to review their utility bills carefully.

“Consumers should be aware of the delivery rates they signed up for and, if they are contracting with a community solar company, they need to review their bills and be sure they are receiving the savings they signed up for,” she said. “If they are being billed at a higher rate, they should contact their solar company to request a refund.”

Maine consumers can also contact the Office of the Public Advocate directly at 207-624-3687 for help with understanding their bills.

“Our goal is to safeguard the interests of Maine residents and ensure fair billing practices,” said Sanborn.

She assumed her role as Maine Public Advocate earlier this year and said that more than 100,000 Maine households are paying pay some of the most expensive electricity bills currently in the United States and those bills are expected to remains steep this year. <

→ POST CANE Cont. from page 1

Gilman as the cane recipient. Gilman died last October at the age of 106.

The original Boston Post Cane for Windham is displayed at the Windham Town Hall. Morrell said a replica cane to be passed from recipient to recipient was created in 1999.

“Lloyd Murphy designed and created the showcase to display the original cane at no cost and Bruce Pulkkinen of Windham Millworks donated the wood,” Morrell said. “Ed Kimball of Classic Impressions in Portland was the artisan of engraving the replica cane, brass plates for all past recipients and history of the cane. Frank Sennett of General Machine was the artisan of the brass head and stainless tip of the replica cane, and he spiffed up the original as well. The ends were looking beat up.”

Families sign a document agreeing to return the replica cane when the time comes, Morrell said.

Grant was born on June 2, 1925 to Fred and Ethel Verrill in Windham and grew up on the family farm on Highland Cliff Road. After graduating from high school, Pearl found a job working for Blue Cross on Exchange Street in Portland.

In March 1947, she married Stanley Grant, and the couple were the parents of three children. Stanley died in 2014.

Of all the inventions that Grant has witnessed in her lifetime, she cites television as the one she thinks has had the most impact upon her life.

“I gave up driving at 96, so watching TV fills the time and gives me something to do,” she said. <

→ PLUNGE Cont. from page 1

Marcel Vachon, a member of the Chamber Board, took a few moments to recognize the media sponsors who helped make the event possible: Too Haute Saunas, Androscoggin Bank, J. Priest Insurance, as well as Paul’s Boutique who provided T-shirts for plungers. He also thanked St. Joseph’s College for hosting the event.

Lindsay Drumm, who manages corporate partnerships at the college, believes hosting such an event made sense for Saint Joseph’s.

“We really like to give back to the community however we can and sharing this beautiful spot we have on Sebago Lake,” Drumm said. “It’s for a good cause – Feed the Need – and it really aligns with the mission of the college.”

And as for the plunge itself? Not too bad, agreed the refreshed participants, wading back out to the shore after the initial shock of immersion. Flashing a bright smile, a young girl exclaimed “I want to do it again.”

The receiving food pantries are Casco Village Church Food Pantry, Casco Alliance Church Food Pantry, Gray Community Food Pantry, Crosswalk Community Outreach, Naples Community Resource Council, First Congregational Church in New Gloucester, Raymond Food Pantry, Sebago Warming Hut, Standish Food Pantry, St. Ann’s Episcopal Church Food Pantry, and Windham Food Pantry.

Donations to Feed the Need can be made directly on the Sebago Lakes Region Chamber’s website at: www.sebagolakeschamber.com/feed-the-need <

ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the Corporators of Norway Bancorp, MHC will be held at the Hilton Garden Inn, Auburn, Maine

Monday, May 5, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. for the following purposes:

- Social: 5:30-6:00 p.m.
- Business Meeting, Election of Directors and Corporators, and any other business which may properly come before the meeting: 6:00 p.m.



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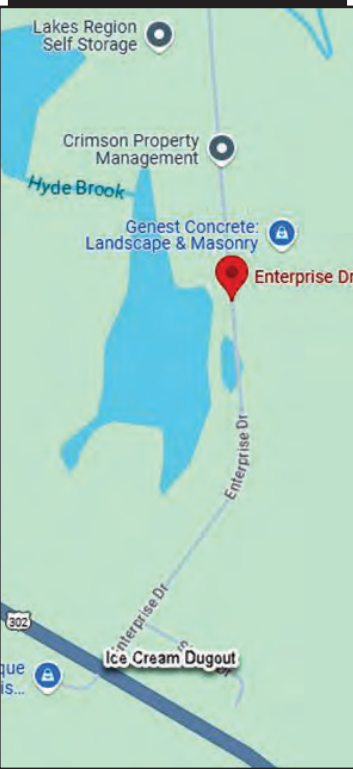
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Barbara Bagshaw: Protecting Maine's voice in Presidential Elections

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



— Rep. Barbara Bagshaw

Last session, the Legislature passed a law that limits the voices of small states like Maine in selecting a President. The National Popular Vote Interstate Compact that was approved by lawmakers by one vote, and allowed to become law without the governor's signature,

would award the state's four electoral votes to whichever candidate garners the most popular votes nationwide, irrespective of who the majority of Mainers voted for at the ballot box. The Electoral College is a constitutional provision that ensures that small states, like Maine, have a voice in selecting the President of the United States. Because of that provision, Maine has received attention from presidential candidates. The law attempts to circumvent the Constitution by surrendering Maine's voice through an interstate compact.

It means that if Mainers vote for a different candidate than the candidate winning the national popular vote, state electors would be bound to vote for the popular vote winner. The votes of large states with major cities like California and New York would dominate at the expense of smaller, rural states.

The compact requires enough states to join before it is triggered. It has the potential to create national chaos in our court system, especially if there is a recount in any of the states. I can only speculate why Governor Mills did not sign it. In her message she claimed that she had conflicted feelings about the law and saw merit in both sides. I personally believe that it is unconstitutional under Article 1, Sec. 10, Clause 3 because it enters into a state compact without Congressional approval. It will not withstand Supreme Court scrutiny if it is ever triggered. Ironically, the law was passed to prevent President Trump from being elected because Democrats assumed he would lose the popular vote. In 2024, Trump won the popular vote and an Electoral College landslide, winning all the battleground states. It is dangerous to change the constitu-



tion for future electoral advantage by looking back at previous elections. As your legislator I sponsored a bill to repeal the law and recently it had a public hearing. I am hopeful that there is enough bipartisan support to correct the mistake that was made and preserve Maine influence in Presidential elections. The legislature must carefully consider protecting Maine's 4 electoral votes from theft by large, urban states. It is an honor to represent part of Windham in the Legislature. If there is any way that I can be of assistance, please contact me at barbara.bagshaw@legislature.maine.gov. My office phone number is 207-287-1440. You can find me on Facebook. To receive regular updates, sign up for my e-newsletter at mainehousegop.org. The opinions in this column are those of the author. They do not necessarily reflect the opinions or views of The Windham Eagle newspaper ownership or its staff. <

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The Eagle's Choice Award Winner!

Rewilding saves money and time while also increasing biodiversity

By Abby Wilson
STAFF WRITER

As we look forward to the long days of summer, you might be thinking that your backyard needs restoration. But what if you don't have the time or funds to address it? Or perhaps you're interested in rewilding – a hands-off approach to increase biodiversity that creates habitat for native species like plants, pollinators, and birds.

Well, the good news is, you can do less work in your yard while doing more for the entire ecology of it.

"A pollinator garden is a bird garden is a biodiversity garden," says Deborah Perkins, the owner of First Light Wildlife Habitats.

Perkins has provided recommendations, plans, and designs for over 14,000 acres of habitat since 2010. She is known as "The Personal Ecologist" because she works closely with her clients to co-create biodiversity, beauty, and thriving habitats – from gardens to forestlands.

Plants and insects are the foundation of an ecosystem. Many insects, plants, and wildlife species have been in the same place at the same time for

so long that they co-evolved. Monarch butterflies cannot reproduce without their host plant milkweed because the caterpillars evolve to consume their foliage and now rely on it to complete their life cycle.

Building healthy food webs starts with native plants. Native plants feed insects and then insects feed birds and other wildlife. Insects also need leaf litter, native perennials and shrubs for food and shelter.

Unfortunately, the typical yard is turfgrass.

"It's just habitat for people" says Perkins.

Thousands of blades of one species of grass where there could be many species is a serious example of lack of biodiversity.

In fact, one of the first steps for turning your 'ego-system' into an ecosystem is to reduce your lawn.

"See what grows," says Perkins. You might just find that a highbush blueberry was waiting to show itself.

Step two is to identify and replace invasive species with native plants. Invasive species reduce biodiversity because they out-compete with the native ones. Those co-evolved native

insects will not be able to use them as food or shelter.

Burning bush foliage turns a bright pinkish red which is strikingly beautiful. Once popular horticultural shrub, it is now illegal to sell. It is invasive and outcompetes the native species. Native wildlife does not derive the appropriate nutrition needed from its berries.

Replace your burning bushes with something equally as beautiful yet much more beneficial for birds and insects. Native Red chokeberry is a great substitute with its bright fall foliage.

"It will also be part of the food web," says Perkins.

Another efficient way to grow biodiversity in your backyard is to stop using chemicals and pesticides.

While mosquitos and ticks are a nuisance to humans, the chemicals that remove them from our yards are detrimental to many other insects too.

"Getting rid of mosquitos and ticks require substances and most of those are broad spectrum," says Perkins. "They are not killing just mosquitoes and ticks, but everything else, too."

→ see **REWILDING** Page 12

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➔ **REWILDING** *Cont. from page 11*

Lastly, Perkins suggests planting a native tree. You don't have to buy a tree. You can simply let an acorn germinate in your lawn or yard.

Trees capture carbon, reducing CO2 in the atmosphere but also provide shelter for wildlife. Tree roots store water to reduce runoff and erosion. The benefits are endless.

"It does not have to be expensive," says Perkins.

Increasing biodiversity can reduce your landscaping budget. Save by cutting back on gas for the grass cutter, line for your weed whacker, or chemicals for insect treatment.

You're also saving time by allowing nature to rewild your yard. The major theme of rewilding is doing less and letting nature regenerate.

"Having a lighter touch ... leaving trees to die and fall," says Perkins.

Woodpeckers nest in standing dead trees and mammals live in fallen logs. Insects nourish themselves in the detritus allowing for balanced soil through the nitrogen cycle.

"We are part of nature. We've been removed from it for a long time, but we are part of nature," says Perkins. "Our conventional cookie-cutter lawns are based on a very old standard that goes back to Victorian times when only the rich had lawns and opens spaces. Today we can use our open spaces for good."

Of course, we might still care about public image and opinion. If you're looking to rewild your property but don't want others to think you're cutting back on expenses or be viewed as a lazy landowner, there are ways to



Turning an 'ego-system' into an ecosystem happens by reducing your lawn and expanding the space into a biodiversity garden filled with native plants and species, requiring less maintenance. PHOTO BY DEBORAH PERKINS

make rewilding look intentional.

You can place a bench or add small paths of turf grass along your wildflowers and growing areas. You can include "Do not mow" or "Pollinator habitat" signage to edges of

your property so that neighbors can acknowledge what you're doing.

Reach out to neighbors directly or contact your neighborhood association. Educate others on the beauty and benefits of rewilding. It can cost

less – for you and the environment. But it's all voluntary. You must educate yourself before beginning the process.

"The first step is connecting to nature. If you don't have an emotional relationship to something, you won't reap the full rewards, like seeing Monarch butterflies, fireflies, and flocks of birds using your landscape," says Perkins.

Perkins offers many educational opportunities as "The Personal Ecologist", from generational walks on family farms to consulting services and presentations.

You can access Perkins' blog with information on rewilding your property at: www.firstlighthabitats.com. <

See our 32 page Home & Garden Guide
IN THIS WEEK'S EDITION
of The Windham Eagle for more
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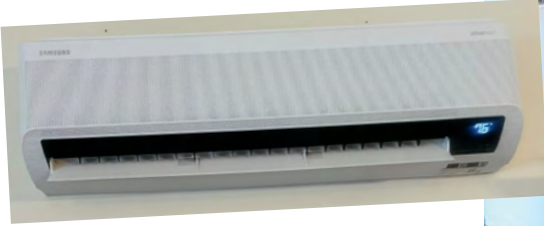


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When it comes to making a house feel like a home, don't overlook your outdoor areas. Patios, porches, decks, and docks are where some of the best memories happen – morning coffees, evening fires, and summer barbecues with family and friends. Creating a space that's both functional and relaxing doesn't have to be overwhelming. Here are a few simple tips to help you make the most of your outdoor living areas:

Consider Your Space First

Before you buy a single chair, take a look at the size and shape of your space. Measure it out and think about how you move through it. Small patios and balconies might benefit from a couple of compact chairs and a side table, while larger spaces could handle a dining set or conversation area with multiple seating options.

Think About How You'll Use It

Is this your quiet escape for early morning reading, or the go-to spot for family cookouts? Maybe it's both! Knowing how you want to use the space will help you choose the right pieces. Dining tables for hosting, rockers for relaxing, or benches for flexible seating.

Choose Durable, Low-Maintenance Materials

Outdoor furniture lives a tough life



– sun, rain, salt air, and snow can do a number on certain materials. Look for pieces made from weather-resistant, easy-care materials like HDPE (a recycled plastic known for durability). They're built to last through Maine seasons and require little upkeep.

Prioritize Comfort

Looks matter, but so does how a chair feels after you've been sitting in it for an hour. Test out seating when you can. Look for wide armrests, supportive backs, and options for adding cushions if you want extra coziness.

Stay True to Your Style

Your outdoor space should feel like a reflection of you. Whether you love coastal, cottage, classic camp, or something modern and sleek, choose colors and designs that make you feel

at home outside too.

Invest Where It Counts

Good outdoor furniture is an investment – but it doesn't have to mean overspending. Prioritize quality on your everyday pieces like chairs and tables, and mix in affordable accents like planters, pillows, and lighting for personality.

Stop By for Inspiration

If you're looking for ideas or want to try out some Adirondack chairs in person, On the Docks in Windham

carries a great selection of Built To Last furniture, known for its comfort, durability, and timeless style. Each piece in the Adirondack Collection is handcrafted in the USA using 100% recycled high-density polyethylene plastic. This sustainable material is incredibly tough, weather-resistant, and maintenance-free – built to handle harsh sun, rain, and coastal conditions with ease. Beyond the classic Adirondack chair, Built To Last offers love seats, rockers, ottomans, and more, all available in a range of colors to suit your outdoor décor. Whether you're outfitting a dock, porch, patio, or garden, there's a piece to complete your vision. <

DECK MAINTENANCE

Did you know that regular deck maintenance can double the lifespan of your deck? A well-maintained deck not only looks great but also resists damage from weather, pests, and daily wear. Wood decks, in particular, are vulnerable to moisture, which can lead to rot, warping, and mold. By cleaning your deck annually and sealing or staining it every two to three years, you help protect it from water damage and UV rays. Even composite decks, while lower-maintenance, benefit from periodic cleaning to prevent mildew and staining. Regular inspections are key—look for loose boards, protruding nails, and signs of deterioration. Prompt repairs can prevent costly fixes later. Also, keeping debris out of gaps and joints helps with ventilation and drainage, reducing the risk of structural issues. So, whether your deck is wood or composite, a little upkeep goes a long way in preserving its beauty and safety for years to come!

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HOW TO KNOW WHEN YOUR ROOF NEEDS ATTENTION

Spring in Maine is a time of renewal – budding trees, melting snow, and the welcome return of sunshine. But while you’re getting your garden beds ready and cleaning out the garage, don’t forget to look up... at your roof. After a long winter of snow, ice, and wind, spring is the ideal time to assess your roof’s condition and catch any damage early before it turns into a costly problem.

Here are the top signs your roof might need attention this spring, straight from a Maine home and garden expert.

1. Visible Shingle Damage

One of the clearest signs your roof needs help is damaged shingles. Maine winters are tough on roofing materials. Ice dams, high winds, and fluctuating temperatures can cause shingles to curl, crack, loosen, or go missing entirely. From the ground, look for uneven patches or obvious gaps. If you spot granules in your gutters or around your downspouts, your shingles may be nearing the end of their lifespan.

2. Leaks or Water Stains Inside

Water stains on ceilings or walls inside your home are never a good sign. Even small leaks can lead to mold, mildew, and structural damage. After the snow melts, check your attic for any signs of water infiltration. Pay attention to dark spots, musty smells, or visible mold growth, which are all indicators your roof isn’t keeping water out like it should.

3. Sagging or Drooping Areas

A sagging roofline can point to more serious structural issues, possibly caused by heavy snow loads from winter storms or accumulated water from clogged gutters. This is more than a cosmetic issue, it can compromise your home’s integrity. Spring is a good time to visually inspect your roofline from a distance and look for any dips or uneven spots.

4. Ice Dam Damage

Ice dams are a common problem in Maine, especially on older homes or those with poor insulation and ventilation. They form when snow melts on the upper parts of your roof but freeze-

es at the edge, trapping water behind it. The result? Seepage under shingles and into your home. If you noticed icicles or ice buildup during the winter, your roof may have sustained damage beneath the surface.

5. Moss or Algae Growth

Moss might look quaint on a stone wall, but on a roof, it’s trouble. It retains moisture and can cause shingles to deteriorate faster. Spring is the perfect time to look for patches of moss or dark streaks on your roof. If you find some, don’t ignore it. Early treatment can prevent serious damage.

What to Do Next?

If you notice any of these issues, don’t wait. Spring is a prime season for roofing inspections and repairs. Maine weather can change quickly, and summer storms aren’t far off. Hire a licensed roofing professional to conduct a full inspection. They’ll check areas you can’t see and give you a clear idea of your roof’s condition.

A little spring maintenance can go a long way in protecting your home. Your roof is your first line of defense. Give it the attention it deserves after a long Maine winter. <



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HYDROSEEDING: THE FAST-TRACK TO A LUSH LAWN

Hydroseeding is a fast, efficient method of planting grass using a slurry of seed, water, fertilizer, mulch, and a tackifier (a glue-like substance that helps everything stick to the soil). This mixture is sprayed over prepared soil using a specialized hose or tank.

It's often used for large areas or in situations where traditional seeding or laying sod might not be ideal.

Benefits of Hydroseeding

- Quick coverage: Great for large lawns, slopes, or areas with erosion issues.
- Cost-effective: More affordable than sod, especially for big spaces.
- Better seed-to-soil contact: The slurry helps seeds stay in place and retain moisture, improving germination.
- Erosion control: Especially helpful on hillsides or construction sites where loose soil needs stabilization.
- Custom blends: You can tailor the seed mix for sun, shade, or Maine's specific climate and soil conditions.

Best Time to Hydroseed in Maine

- Late spring (May–early June) or early fall (late August–mid-September) is ideal.
- You want:
 - Warm soil temps (50–65°F)
 - Reliable moisture (either from rain or irrigation)
 - Cooler air temps than midsum-



mer, which helps avoid drying out. Avoid peak summer heat and dry spells, unless you can commit to frequent watering.

When Should You Use Hydroseeding?

- Starting a lawn from scratch (new construction or total lawn renovation)
- Repairing large damaged areas (post-construction, erosion, or storm damage)
- Seeding sloped or uneven terrain
- Covering up excavation, septic system installs,

or utility work

- When you want faster results than dry seeding, but sod is too costly

Aftercare

- Keep the area consistently moist for the first few weeks.
 - Avoid walking on it while the new grass is establishing.
 - First mow usually happens around 3–4 inches tall (usually 3–4 weeks post-application, depending on conditions).
- In short: If you need to seed a large or tricky area and want quick, even results with less labor than sod and better performance than traditional seeding, hydroseeding might be your best bet. Want help determining if your property is a good candidate? A local lawn care or hydroseeding pro can assess your site. <

MULCH: WHEN AND WHERE

The best time to mulch is in the spring, typically late April to early May, once the soil has warmed up slightly but before weeds have a chance to take hold. Mulching too early can trap cold moisture in the soil and delay plant growth. A second round of mulching in the fall, around late October, can help insulate plant roots against harsh winter temperatures and reduce soil erosion. Where you mulch depends on your garden's layout and goals. Around trees and shrubs, maintain a mulch ring several inches from the trunk to retain moisture and suppress weeds. In flower and vegetable beds, apply mulch between rows and around plant bases to keep soil temperatures steady and reduce watering needs. Use organic materials like bark mulch, straw, shredded leaves, or composted wood chips to gradually enrich the soil as they break down. Avoid piling mulch too high or too close to plant stems, as this can lead to rot and pest issues. A 2–3 inch layer is generally ideal. Proper mulching not only supports healthy plants through the growing season but also helps your landscape thrive year-round.

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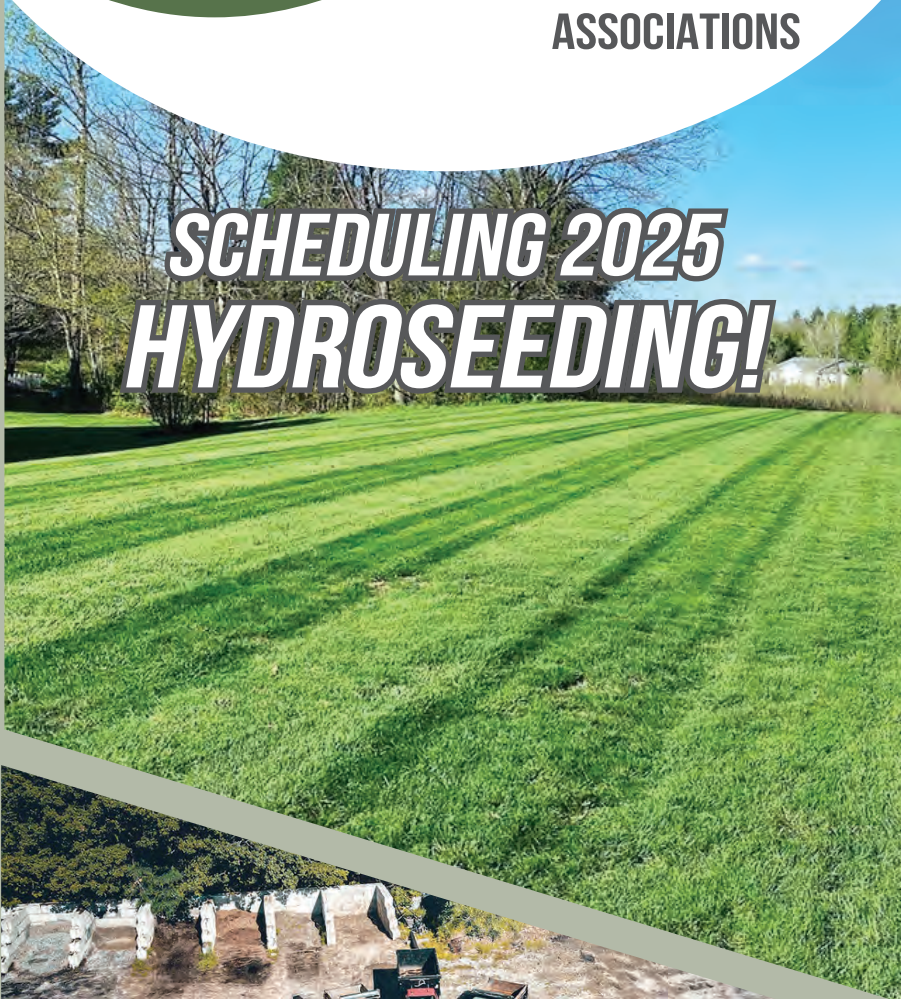


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SPRING IN MAINE: SIGNS OF PESTS IN YOUR YARD AND WHEN TO CALL A PROFESSIONAL

As the snow melts and the days grow warmer, Maine yards begin to wake up—with new growth, bird-song, and unfortunately, pests. From tiny insects to larger burrowing critters, spring is the season when many yard invaders emerge or become active. Early detection is key to protecting your lawn, garden, and even your home.

Here’s how to spot the signs of spring pest activity in Maine—and when it’s time to handle it yourself versus when you should call in the pros.

1. Tunneling and Mounds: Moles and Voles

If your lawn is marked with raised trails, soft soil, or chewed bark, you might be dealing with moles or voles.

- **Moles** dig tunnels and leave mounded dirt as they hunt for grubs.

- **Voles** chew on roots, bulbs, and tree bark, leaving narrow surface runways.

DIY fixes:

- Remove food sources like grubs with lawn treatments.
- Install underground mesh around young trees or garden beds.

Call a professional if:

- Tunneling is extensive or damaging lawn equipment.
- DIY deterrents aren’t working after a couple of weeks.
- You suspect multiple burrowing animals or can’t identify the culprit.

2. Patchy Grass: Grubs and Cutworms

Brown, dead patches in your lawn could be from grubs feeding on roots beneath the surface. In garden beds, cutworms can destroy seedlings over-

night.

DIY fixes:

- Apply beneficial nematodes or spring grub control treatments.
- Use collars around young seedlings to deter cutworms.

Call a professional if:

- Lawn damage is widespread or persistent after treatment.
- You’re seeing regular animal digging (skunks, raccoons), which can indicate a heavy grub infestation.

3. Chewed Plants and Bark: Deer and Rabbits

New growth is a favorite snack for deer and rabbits, especially before native forage is plentiful.

DIY fixes:

- Use commercial repellents and motion-activated deterrents.
- Install physical barriers around vul-

nerable plants.

Call a professional if:

Damage is happening consistently despite repellents or fencing.

You need help installing effective fencing or implementing a long-term strategy.

4. Insect Activity: Wasps, Ants, and Ticks

Insects like carpenter ants, wasps, and ticks become more active as spring progresses.

DIY fixes:

- Knock down small wasp nests early.
- Remove leaf litter and woodpiles to reduce hiding spots.
- Use perimeter sprays and perform regular tick checks.

Call a professional if:

You see large or aggressive wasp nests, especially near your home.

Carpenter ants are entering your home or nesting in wooden structures.

You find multiple ticks regularly, even with preventative measures.

5. Burrows and Holes: Skunks, Groundhogs, and Chipmunks

Holes in the ground can be caused by a variety of critters, including skunks, groundhogs, and chipmunks.

DIY fixes:

- Seal small entry points under sheds and porches.
- Use scent-based repellents or motion-sensing lights.

Call a professional if:

- You suspect an animal is living under your deck, porch, or garage.
- You see repeated digging near your home’s foundation.

You’re concerned about safety (especially with skunks).

General Rule: Call a Professional When...

- You can’t identify the pest or the problem persists despite your efforts.

The issue is damaging property, like wiring, siding, or major lawn areas.

Safety is a concern, such as when dealing with wasp nests, skunks, or signs of infestation near your home’s structure.

- You want peace of mind through a full inspection or treatment plan tailored to your property.

Licensed pest control professionals can help diagnose issues more accurately and use treatments that are safe, effective, and environmentally responsible—especially important in a state like Maine where yards often blend into woodlands and wetlands.

Spring should be about enjoying your yard, not fighting to keep it from being taken over. Whether you’re seeing signs of small invaders or suspect a larger problem, early action is always best. Take some time this season to walk your property, inspect vulnerable areas, and respond to warning signs before they become full-blown infestations.

And remember—you don’t have to go it alone. Knowing when to call in a professional can save you time, money, and hassle in the long run. <



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TICK ALERT: RISING CASES AND PROTECTIVE MEASURES

Maine has experienced a significant increase in tick-borne diseases over the past two years, with 2024 marking a record high. This surge underscores the importance of proactive measures to protect yourself, your family, and your pets from tick bites and the illnesses they can transmit.

Tick-Borne Disease Trends in Maine

- Lyme Disease: In 2024, Maine reported 3,218 cases of Lyme disease, surpassing the previous record of 2,943 cases in 2023.
- Anaplasmosis: Cases increased from 777 in 2023 to 1,284 in 2024.
- Babesiosis: Reported cases rose from 194 in 2023 to 310 in 2024.
- Powassan Virus: A rare but serious illness, with seven cases reported

in 2023—the highest on record for the state.

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

Personal Protection:

- Use EPA-Approved Repellents: Apply repellents containing at least 20% DEET, picaridin, IR3535, or oil of lemon eucalyptus on exposed skin.
- Treat Clothing and Gear: Use products containing permethrin on clothing and gear; these remain effective through several washes. Maine
- Dress Appropriately: Wear long sleeves, long pants tucked into socks, and light-colored clothing to spot ticks more easily.
- Perform Regular Tick Checks: After outdoor activities, thoroughly check your body, clothing, and gear for ticks. Pay special attention to areas like under the arms, behind the knees, around the ears, and in the hair.

Property Management:

- Maintain Your Yard: Keep grass short, remove leaf litter, and clear tall grasses and brush around homes and at the edge of lawns.
- Create Tick-Safe Zones: Place a

3-foot wide barrier of wood chips or gravel between lawns and wooded areas to restrict tick migration.

- Discourage Deer: Use fencing to keep deer, which can carry ticks, away from your yard.

When to Call a Professional

If you're experiencing any of the following, it's advisable to consult a pest control professional:

- Persistent Tick Presence: Regular sightings of ticks on your property despite personal preventive measures.
- High-Risk Areas: Living in or near wooded or brushy areas known for high tick populations.
- Previous Tick-Borne Illnesses: If you or family members have previously contracted tick-borne diseases, reducing exposure risk is crucial.

Stay informed and take action to protect your health and that of your loved ones. There are several great local companies, many of which can be found in this section, that can help fend off ticks and the dangers they bring to our pets and families. <

*Sources: Maine.gov

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ENTRYWAY RENOVATION IDEAS FOR EFFICIENCY & STYLE

The entryway is more than just a passage—it’s the first impression of your home and a critical hub for everyday comings and goings, especially in a busy family household. Renovating this space for both efficiency and style can streamline your daily routines while offering a welcoming ambiance. Here are some practical and stylish renovation ideas to transform your entryway into a functional and beautiful family zone.

1. Built-In Storage Solutions

Storage is key in any family home, and the entryway should be no exception. Consider installing built-in cubbies or lockers for each family member. These can include hooks for coats and backpacks, shelving for shoes, and cubbies for sports gear or seasonal ac-



cessories. A bench with lift-up storage underneath is another smart solution, offering a place to sit while putting on shoes and a hidden spot for clutter.

2. Durable and Easy-to-Clean Flooring

Entryways endure heavy foot traffic and exposure to the elements. Opt for durable, low-maintenance flooring like ceramic tile, luxury vinyl, or sealed natural stone. These materials can withstand mud, moisture, and scuff marks while adding a polished look. Choose darker tones or patterned designs to help hide dirt between cleanings.

3. Family Command Center

Incorporating a family command center can make your entryway a hub of organization. Use a section of the wall for a calendar, message board, key hooks, and charging station. This space helps coordinate schedules, manage reminders, and keep devices powered up and ready to go.

4. Stylish Lighting and Mirrors

Lighting plays a huge role in making your entryway feel bright and welcoming.

Swap out old fixtures for modern, energy-efficient ones, or add wall sconces for a cozy touch. Including a mirror not only makes the space feel larger but also offers a last-minute glance before heading out the door. Choose mirrors with stylish frames to add a decorative element.

5. Personalized Touches

Make your entryway reflect your family’s personality. Add framed family photos, custom signs, or art made by the kids. These personalized touches create a warm, inviting atmosphere

and make your home feel truly yours.

6. Seasonal Storage Rotation

To maximize efficiency, design storage that allows for seasonal swaps. Clear bins or labeled baskets can be easily rotated throughout the year to accommodate winter gloves or summer flip-flops. A small closet or overhead shelf can store off-season items when not in use.

With a little planning and creativity, your entryway can become a streamlined, stylish space that handles the hustle of family life with ease. <

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SIGNS IT'S TIME FOR AN ELECTRICAL SYSTEM UPGRADE

Your home’s electrical system is the invisible backbone powering everything from your coffee maker to your laptop, lighting to HVAC. But like every other system in your house, it ages—and sometimes not gracefully. Ignoring electrical issues can lead to costly repairs or even fire hazards.

So how do you know when it’s time to upgrade or at least assess your home’s electrical setup? Here are some telltale signs to watch for:

1. Your Home Is More Than 30 Years Old

Older homes were often built to handle far less electrical demand than what modern life requires. If your home hasn’t had an electrical upgrade since the ‘90s—or earlier—it’s probably overdue.

Why it matters: You may still have an outdated panel (like 60-amp service or even fuse boxes), aluminum wiring, or wiring that isn’t grounded properly.

2. You Frequently Trip Breakers or Blow Fuses

Circuit breakers trip when a circuit is overloaded or shorted. Occasional trips are normal, but if it’s happening often, it’s a sign your electrical system can’t keep up.

• Open your breaker panel and look for scorch marks, a burnt smell,

or buzzing sounds — all signs something’s not right.

• Test your breakers by flipping them off and back on to ensure they’re functioning.

Red flag: If one outlet or room consistently trips the breaker, it could point to a specific wiring issue or an overloaded circuit.

3. You Use a Lot of Extension Cords or Power Strips

Relying on power strips and extension cords because you don’t have enough outlets? That’s a major clue.

Why it’s risky: Too many high-draw devices on one circuit can create fire hazards or damage appliances over time.

4. You Notice Dimming or Flickering Lights

Lights that dim when you turn on the microwave or flicker unpredictably aren’t haunted—they’re probably just underpowered.

Potential causes: Loose wiring, outdated circuits, or overloaded panels.

5. Outlets Feel Warm or Smell Burnt

Touch an outlet or plug and feel heat—or worse, smell something burning? Shut off the power immediately and call an electrician.



This is urgent. Warm or scorched outlets can signal serious wiring issues that pose immediate fire risk.

6. You Still Have Two-Prong Outlets

Two-prong outlets don’t have a ground wire, which means they offer far less protection from shocks and surges.

Modern fix: Upgrading to three-prong, grounded GFCI outlets improves safety, especially in kitchens, bathrooms, and basements.

7. Your Breaker Panel Looks Outdated or Is Full

If your breaker box looks like it came from a Cold War bunker—or it’s completely full with no room to add circuits—it’s time to consider an upgrade.

Look out for: Panels from older brands like Federal Pacific or Zinsco, which have a history of malfunctioning.

8. You’re Renovating or Adding High-Energy Appliances

Planning a kitchen remodel, adding a home office, or installing central air? You’ll likely need to upgrade your panel or run new circuits.

Future-proofing: A panel upgrade can support new appliances and smart home features without overloading existing systems.

9. Buzzing Sounds or Shocks

Buzzing outlets, switches, or lights—and definitely any small shocks when plugging something in—are signs something is wrong.

Possible cause: Loose wiring, poor connections, or faulty outlets that need immediate attention.

Electrical issues aren’t just inconvenient—they can be dangerous. The good news? Modern electrical systems are safer, more efficient, and better equipped to handle today’s tech-heavy lifestyles.

If you’re seeing any of these signs, it’s worth having a licensed electrician perform a full electrical assessment. Catching issues early can prevent fire hazards, lower your energy bills, and give you peace of mind. <

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WAYS TO ELEVATE YOUR BATHROOM REMODEL

Renovating a bathroom is one of the most impactful ways to enhance both the value of your home and your daily comfort. Whether you're upgrading a master bath or refreshing a powder room, the best designs balance modern style with practical functionality. Here are some key renovation ideas that will elevate your bathroom into a space that's as efficient as it is elegant.

1. Optimize the Layout

A smart layout can dramatically improve how a bathroom feels and functions. Evaluate your current floor plan and consider if rearranging fixtures like the toilet, sink, or shower would improve flow. In smaller bathrooms, a corner sink or a wall-mounted toilet can free up valuable space. If possible, expanding a cramped bathroom or borrowing space from an ad-

jacent closet can provide much-needed breathing room.

2. Invest in Quality Fixtures

High-quality fixtures not only look better, but they also last longer and perform better. Consider installing a rain showerhead for a spa-like experience, or a dual-sink vanity to reduce morning traffic jams. Touchless faucets, water-saving toilets, and thermostatic shower controls are also great upgrades that combine tech with convenience and eco-friendliness.

3. Choose Durable, Stylish Materials

Bathroom surfaces should be both attractive and built to withstand moisture. Porcelain or ceramic tile is a popular choice for its durability and design versatility. Large-format tiles can make a space feel more open, while textured tiles add visual



interest and slip resistance. Quartz or solid-surface countertops offer a sleek look with low maintenance, perfect for busy households.

4. Maximize Storage

Clutter can quickly ruin the look of a freshly renovated bathroom. Include built-in storage wherever possible—such as recessed medicine cabinets, floating shelves, or a vanity with deep drawers. Over-the-toilet shelving or a tall linen tower can provide additional storage without taking up much floor space.

5. Light It Up

Lighting plays a major role in both aesthetics and usability. A layered lighting approach, ambient lighting for overall brightness, task lighting around the vanity, and accent lighting for mood, ensures a balanced and functional space. LED backlit mirrors and dimmable fixtures are both stylish and practical upgrades.

6. Add Personal Touches

Finally, incorporate design elements that reflect your style. A bold vanity color, statement wall tile, or stylish hardware can elevate the entire room. Neutral palettes with pops of texture or color create a timeless feel that's easy to refresh with accessories.

By blending thoughtful design with functional choices, a bathroom renovation can transform a purely utilitarian space into a relaxing and refined retreat. Whether you're making small updates or doing a complete overhaul, prioritizing both style and function will ensure a beautiful, usable space for years to come. <

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- Integrated Wine Storage – Climate-controlled drawers or stylish wall displays. <

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HIRING A PROFESSIONAL EXCAVATION COMPANY

Excavation is one of the most critical steps in construction and landscaping projects, forming the foundation for everything that follows. Whether you're preparing for a new home build, installing a septic system, building a retaining wall, or creating a driveway, proper excavation is essential. While some may be tempted to take a DIY approach or hire an unlicensed contractor to save money, the importance of hiring a professional excavation company cannot be overstated.

Precision and Expertise: Excavation involves more than just digging holes and moving dirt. It requires a thorough understanding of soil types, slope stability, drainage systems, and the proper use of heavy machinery. Professional excavation contractors bring years of experience and training to ensure the job is done right the first time. They know how to assess site conditions, work around existing structures or underground utilities, and make adjustments for unexpected issues like rock formations or water tables.

A reputable excavation company will also be well-versed in local codes and regulations, ensuring the project is up to standard and avoiding costly legal issues or delays down the line.

Safety First: Excavation work can be dangerous. Collapsing trenches, equipment mishaps, and hidden utility lines are all serious risks. Professional excavators are trained in proper safety protocols and have the right tools and equipment to minimize hazards on the job site. They're also fully insured, which means you're protected in case of accidents or property damage. This peace of mind is one of the most important reasons to hire a licensed and insured excavation team.

Time and Cost Efficiency: While hiring professionals may seem like a bigger investment upfront, it can save significant time and money in the long run. A professional excavation company will have the tools, workforce, and expertise to complete the job efficiently and correctly. They can avoid or quickly resolve issues that might cause major delays or lead to costly repairs if handled improperly. With the right team in place, you can keep your project on schedule and within budget.

Access to the Right Equipment: Excavation requires specialized machinery such as backhoes, bulldozers, trenchers, and compactors. Professional excavation companies not only have access to this equipment, but they also know how to operate

and maintain it safely and effectively. Renting equipment and trying to operate it without experience can lead to accidents and subpar results. Letting trained experts handle it ensures both safety and quality.

Site Preparation and Cleanup: Proper excavation involves more than just digging—it includes grad-

ing, compacting soil, clearing debris, and preparing the site for construction. Professionals ensure your land is properly leveled and stabilized, providing a strong foundation for any future structures. They also take care of cleanup, leaving your site ready for the next phase of the project without unnecessary mess or delays. <

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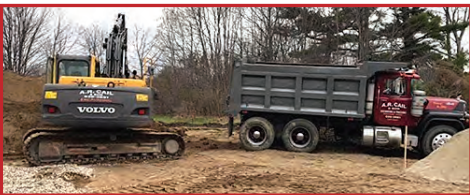
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SpringHOME & GARDEN

HOW TO FIX BALD SPOTS AND FERTILIZE FOR A LUSH GREEN LAWN IN MAINE

After a long Maine winter, it's common to find bald spots in your lawn—patches where snow, salt, or pests have taken their toll. Fortunately, spring and early summer are the perfect times to bring your grass back to life. With a few smart steps, you can restore those bare patches and encourage a thick, green lawn that holds up all season.

Step 1: Identify the Cause

Before patching bald spots, determine the root cause. Was it snow mold? Dog urine? Grubs? Each problem might need a slightly different fix. If pests are to blame, treat them first so your new grass doesn't suffer the same fate.

Step 2: Loosen the Soil

Use a rake or garden fork to break up the compacted soil in the bare spots. This helps seed take root and improves drainage. Remove any remaining dead grass or debris.

Step 3: Apply Quality Grass Seed

Choose a grass seed blend suited for Maine's climate—typically a mix of Kentucky bluegrass, perennial ryegrass, and fine fescue. These varieties perform well in cool climates and recover quickly from damage.

Spread seed evenly over the loosened soil, and gently rake it in to ensure good contact. Cover with a thin layer of compost or topsoil to protect it from birds and help retain moisture.

Step 4: Water Consistently

Keep the seeded areas moist but not soaked. Water lightly once or twice a day until seedlings are established, then gradually shift to deeper, less frequent watering.

Step 5: Fertilize Smartly

Once your grass is growing, fertilize with a slow-release, nitrogen-rich fertilizer designed for spring use. In Maine, late April through mid-May is ideal for the first application. Follow up with a second application in early summer if needed.

Avoid over-fertilizing, which can burn grass or encourage weed growth. Choose a product that includes crabgrass prevention if you've had issues in the past.

Bonus Tip: Aerate if Needed

If your lawn has a lot of traffic or drainage issues, aeration can help improve root growth and nutrient absorption.

With some targeted seeding, consistent watering, and proper fertilization, even the patchiest Maine lawn can be turned into a green, resilient yard you'll be proud of all season long. If you are not sure where to begin or simply don't have the time, you can find plenty of experienced companies in this guide that can help.

Hiring a professional ensures expert diagnosis of lawn issues, tailored treatment plans, and proper reseeding techniques. They save you time and effort while delivering lush, lasting results that boost curb appeal and lawn health. Plus, their knowledge of soil, grass types, and local climate helps prevent future problems. <

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CARING FOR HOUSEPLANTS DURING SPRING & SUMMER

As the snow melts and the days grow longer in Maine, spring and summer bring a welcome shift, not just for people but also for our indoor plants. The transition from the harsh New England winter to warmer months means it's time to give your houseplants some seasonal TLC. Here are some region-specific tips to help your houseplants flourish:

- 1. Light Shifts with the Seasons:** Maine's increasing daylight in spring and summer is a blessing, but it also means adjusting how and where you place your houseplants.
 - **Reassess Sunlight:** The sun's angle changes in spring, and the intensity increases by summer. South-facing windows may suddenly deliver too much light for delicate foliage. Watch for signs of sunburn (bleached or crispy leaves) and consider using sheer curtains to filter light.
 - **Rotate Regularly:** Rotate your plants weekly to promote even growth and prevent leaning.
- 2. Watering Wisely:** With warmer weather comes increased evaporation and transpiration, but that doesn't mean it's time to flood your pots.
 - **Check the Soil:** Always test the top inch of soil before watering. Some plants may dry out faster in the heat, while others still prefer slightly dry

- soil between waterings.
- **Humidity Boost:** Despite Maine's humid summers, air conditioning can dry indoor air. Use a pebble tray, misting, or a humidifier for tropical plants like ferns, calatheas, or orchids.
- 3. Feeding Time:** Winter dormancy is over, now is the time to feed your plants.
 - **Use Balanced Fertilizer:** A diluted liquid fertilizer every 2-4 weeks during the growing season helps support new growth.
 - **Don't Overdo It:** Over-fertilizing can do more harm than good. Always follow the instructions on the label.
- 4. Repotting & Pruning:** Spring is prime time for repotting and refreshing your plants.
 - **Repot When Rootbound:** If you see roots circling the pot or poking out the drainage holes, it's time to upgrade to a slightly larger container.
 - **Refresh the Soil:** Even if you don't repot, replace the top inch or two of old soil with fresh potting mix to boost nutrients.
 - **Trim for Shape and Health:** Remove dead or yellowing leaves and leggy stems to encourage fuller, healthier growth.
- 5. Pest Patrol:** As temperatures rise, so does pest activity.
 - **Inspect Regularly:** Look for tiny

- webs, sticky residue, or distorted leaves. Common culprits include spider mites, aphids, and fungus gnats.
- **Natural Solutions:** Neem oil, insecticidal soap, and even a good rinse in the shower can keep pests at bay.
- 6. Vacation-Proofing Your Plants**

If you're planning a weekend getaway to Acadia or a camping trip in

the North Woods, don't forget about your plants.

 - **Group Them Together:** Cluster plants in a low-light area to reduce water needs while you're away.
 - **Self-Watering Tips:** Use self-watering spikes, or place a water-filled bottle upside-down into the soil for a slow release. <

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ALWAYS PERFORM A SPRING TREE CHECK

In early spring, it can be tricky to tell whether a bare tree in your yard is dead, dying, or simply taking its sweet time to wake up after another long Maine winter. While some species leaf out early, like maples and wil-

lows, others, such as oaks and ash, can lag well into late May before showing signs of life.

So how do you know if it's time to call an arborist or just be patient? Here's how to tell if a tree needs to come down, or if it just needs a little more time and TLC.

Late Bloomer or Lifeless? Know the Difference

Just because a tree hasn't leafed out yet doesn't mean it's dead. Temperature swings and soil conditions can affect blooming times. Before rushing into removal, check for these signs of life:

- **Scratch Test:** Use your fingernail or a small knife to lightly scratch the bark of a small branch. If the layer underneath is green and moist, your tree is still alive.
- **Buds vs. Barren:** Look closely at the tips of branches. Are there small buds, even if they're not open yet? That's a good sign the tree is just a bit behind schedule.
- **Flexibility:** Gently bend a few smaller twigs. Live ones are flexible and bend without snapping. Dead ones will break cleanly and feel brittle.

Signs a Tree May Need to Come Down

If you're noticing any of the following, your tree may be hazardous and should be evaluated by a certified arborist:

- No buds at all by late spring (end of May to early June)
- Large branches that are cracked, split, or hanging
- Mushrooms or fungus growing at the base of the trunk (a sign of internal rot)
- Peeling bark, deep vertical cracks, or holes from pests
- A pronounced lean, especially if the roots look like they're lifting on one side
- Sudden leaf drop or leaf discoloration on just one side of the tree

Remember, a dead or structurally compromised tree isn't just unsightly, it's dangerous. Falling limbs or whole trees can cause property damage, power outages, or injuries during spring and summer storms.

When to Call in a Pro: Tree removal is not a DIY task. If you suspect a tree is dead or hazardous contact one of the many licensed arborist in this section to assess it. Most offer free consultations. Don't wait until hurricane or thunderstorm season, removal companies get very busy after the first big storm. If the tree is near your home, power lines, or public roads, removal may require special permits or coordination with utility companies. <

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SIMPLE TIPS TO REFRESH YOUR SPACE FOR SPRING

As winter fades and the days grow longer, spring offers the perfect opportunity to breathe new life into your home. Refreshing your space with bright colors, light fabrics, and nature-inspired decor can energize your environment and your mood. Here's how to bring the beauty of spring indoors with simple, stylish updates.

- 1. Embrace a Lighter Palette**

Start by switching out darker winter hues for softer, more vibrant tones. Think pastel blues, sunny yellows, sage greens, and blush pinks. You don't need to repaint the whole house—try incorporating these colors through accent pieces like throw pillows, vases, or artwork. Swapping out heavy drapes for sheer curtains in lighter tones can also instantly brighten a room.
- 2. Refresh Textiles**

Replace cozy winter textiles with breezier options. Linen or cotton throws, light area rugs, and fresh bedding in floral prints or soft solids can create a springtime vibe. Mix patterns for a playful look—like pairing stripes with florals or geometric designs in a



- similar color palette.
- 3. Bring in Natural Elements**

Nothing says spring like greenery. Add potted plants, fresh flowers, or even faux arrangements to breathe life into your space. Tulips, daffodils, and hyacinths are classic spring blooms, while greenery like eucalyptus or ferns adds a modern, minimal touch. Place arrangements in different areas—on your dining table, windowsills, or entryway console—for maximum impact.

- 4. Update Your Wall Art**

Refreshing your artwork is an easy and affordable way to transform your space. Look for prints that reflect the season—botanicals, landscapes, or bright abstract pieces. You can also rotate family photos or DIY some spring-themed wall art for a personal touch.
- 5. Swap Out Accessories**

Small decor changes can make a big difference. Replace heavy candles and dark vases with glass or ceramic pieces in light colors. Add a new doormat with a cheerful message, or hang a spring-themed wreath on your

door. Even updating your coffee table decor with a tray of seasonal items—like books, a small plant, and a scented candle—can add fresh energy.

6. Declutter and Rearrange

Spring is a natural time for a deep clean and decluttering. Clear out what you no longer use and give your rooms

a fresh layout. Rearranging furniture can make your space feel new without spending a dime.

With a few intentional changes, your home can reflect the renewal and joy of spring. Add color, invite in nature, and let the season inspire a lighter, brighter living space. <

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GARDEN TIPS FOR GROWING YOUR OWN PRODUCE

Growing your own produce in Maine is a rewarding way to enjoy fresh, healthy food right from your backyard. With its unique climate and short growing season, gardening in Maine requires a little planning—

but the results are well worth the effort.

hours of direct sunlight. Choose a sunny spot and consider using row covers or cold frames early in the season to help warm the soil and protect young plants from chilly nights.

Start with the Right Timing

Maine’s growing season typically runs from late May through September, depending on your location. Begin by checking your local USDA hardiness zone and frost dates. Start seeds indoors in late winter for crops like tomatoes, peppers, and eggplant, and transplant them outside after the danger of frost has passed.

Choose Hardy, Cold-Tolerant Plants

Select vegetables that grow well in cooler climates. Root crops like carrots, beets, and potatoes thrive in Maine’s soil and weather. Leafy greens such as kale, spinach, and lettuce also perform well, especially in early spring and fall.

Use Raised Beds and Mulch

Maine soils can be rocky and acidic. Raised garden beds filled with high-quality soil improve drainage and soil conditions. Add mulch around your plants to retain moisture, reduce weeds, and regulate soil temperature.

Maximize Sun and Warmth

Most vegetables need at least six

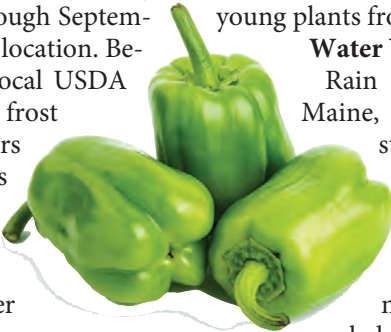
Water Wisely

Rain is common in Maine, but droughts can still happen. Water deeply and less frequently to encourage strong root growth. Early morning watering helps prevent fungal diseases.

Extend Your Season

Take advantage of Maine’s cool fall weather by planting a second crop of fast-growing vegetables like radishes, spinach, and lettuce in late summer. Cold frames or hoop houses can also extend your growing season well into the fall.

Top 20 most popular veggies grown in Maine are: Potatoes, Carrots, Beets, Radishes, Turnips, Onions, Garlic, Lettuce, Spinach, Kale, Swiss Chard, Cabbage, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Peas (Snap & Shelling), Green Beans (Bush & Pole), Zucchini, Summer Squash, Tomatoes (short-season or cold-tolerant varieties) and many varieties of Peppers. <



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SpringHOME & GARDEN

HOW TO ATTRACT HUMMINGBIRDS TO YOUR YARD

Spring and summer in Maine bring vibrant life back to our yards—and few visitors are more enchanting than hummingbirds. With their shimmering feathers and high-speed wings, these tiny pollinators are not only a joy to watch, but they also play a key role in the garden by helping pollinate flowers.

Here’s how you can attract hummingbirds to your Maine yard and a few fun facts that make them even more fascinating.

How to Attract Hummingbirds in Maine

1. Plant Nectar-Rich Flowers

Native flowers are ideal because they’re adapted to local conditions and bloom when hummingbirds are most active (May through September).

Great flower choices include:

- Bee balm (Monarda)
- Columbine
- Trumpet honeysuckle
- Cardinal flower
- Coral bells

• Lupine

Hummingbirds are drawn to bright colors—especially reds, oranges, and purples. Group flowers together in clusters for a bigger visual impact and easier access for the birds.

2. Put Up a Feeder

A classic sugar-water feeder is an excellent supplement, especially early in the season.

Use a simple recipe: 1 part white sugar to 4 parts water. No dye needed! Boil the mixture to dissolve the sugar, cool it, and refill feeders every 2–3 days (daily during hot weather).

Clean feeders thoroughly each time to prevent mold or bacteria.

3. Create a Hummingbird-Friendly Habitat

Provide shelter with trees, shrubs, or even tall native grasses.

Add a misting fountain or shallow water source for bathing and cooling off.

Avoid pesticides—these harm both hummingbirds and the insects they sometimes feed on for protein.

Fun Hummingbird Facts You Might Not Know

- They’re true long-distance flyers: Maine’s ruby-throated hummingbirds migrate over 2,000 miles—including a nonstop flight across the Gulf of Mexico.
- They remember you: Hummingbirds can recognize individual people and will return to the same feeders year after year if they’re treated well!
- They have excellent memories: Hummingbirds remember which flowers they’ve visited and when they’ll refill with nectar.
- They can hover and fly backwards: Thanks to unique shoulder

joints, they’re the only birds that can fly in all directions—even upside down!

- They’re tiny but mighty: A ruby-throated hummingbird weighs about the same as a nickel but can beat its wings over 50 times per second.

With just a few thoughtful plantings and a bit of care, your Maine yard can become a haven for hummingbirds all season long. Whether you’re sipping coffee on the porch or tending to your flowers, spotting one of these iridescent guests is always a special treat. Happy planting—and happy hummingbird watching! <



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OUTDOOR POWER EQUIPMENT CHECKS PARAMOUNT

When spring is on its way, homeowners are often eager to get outside and spruce up their yards. It's important when doing so to keep safety in mind.

"Before you use a mower, trimmer, blower, chain saw, pruner or other piece of outdoor power equipment this season, it's important to refresh yourself on handling and safety procedures," said Kris Kiser, president and CEO of the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI), an international trade association representing outdoor power equipment, small en-

gine and utility vehicle manufacturers and suppliers. "We're all eager to get outside and enjoy the living landscape after a long winter but take the time to do basic maintenance now to ensure your equipment operates safely for the season and is ready to get the job done."

These six tips can help:

1. Read your owner's manual. Follow all guidelines for your outdoor power equipment and familiarize yourself with the controls. If you have lost your manual, look it up online (and save a copy on your computer for

easy reference in the future).

2. Inspect equipment. Check for loose belts and missing or damaged parts. Replace any parts needed or take your equipment to a qualified service representative for servicing.

3. Drain old fuel. Never leave fuel sitting in the gas tank of your equipment for more than 30 days. Untreated gasoline (without a fuel stabilizer) left in the system will deteriorate, which may cause starting or running problems and, in some cases, significant damage to the fuel system.

4. Protect your power by using only E10 or less fuel in outdoor power equipment. Some gas stations may offer 15 percent ethanol (E15) gas or higher-ethanol fuel blends but any fuel containing more than 10 percent ethanol can damage and is illegal to use in small engine equipment not designed for it.

5. Store fuel safely. Label your fuel can with the date of purchase and ethanol content of the fuel. Never put "old" gas in your outdoor power equipment. If you don't know the date of purchase, dispose of the fuel in the can safely and buy fresh fuel. Always store fuel out of the reach of children



or pets and in approved containers.

6. Clean equipment. Remove any dirt, oil or grass stuck to it. Clean equipment will run more efficiently and last longer.

If you're unsure how to maintain or repair outdoor equipment, taking it to a professional small engine shop is a smart move. Experts can quickly diagnose issues, perform proper maintenance, and prevent costly breakdowns. They'll ensure your mower, portable generator, or trimmer runs safely, efficiently, and lasts longer, giving you peace of mind.

"Now is also a good time to assess your outdoor power equipment needs," adds Kiser. "Whether you're needing battery-, gasoline-, propane-, diesel- or hybrid-powered equipment, there is a product to fit your unique needs that can handle any job." (NAPSI) <

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5 FUN OUTDOOR PROJECTS FOR KIDS WITH SIDEWALK CHALK

As soon as Maine sidewalks are free of snow and ice, kids can't wait to get outside and make their mark. Sidewalk chalk is the ultimate spring-time art supply: inexpensive, easy to use, and only as limited as your child's imagination.

Looking for ways to turn an afternoon of doodling into an adventure?

Here are five creative, screen-free chalk projects to try with your kids this season—no art degree required.

1. Giant Outdoor Board Games

Transform your driveway or patio into a life-sized board game!

- Draw a huge checkerboard, tic-tac-toe grid, or even a winding "Candy Land" path.

- Use rocks, pinecones, or toy cars as playing pieces.
 - Kids can invent their own rules—creativity counts as extra points!
- 2. Self-Portrait Silhouettes**
- Lay down a beach towel or yoga mat, have your child strike a silly pose, and trace their outline in chalk.
- Let them fill in their "chalk selves" with wild hair, superhero costumes, or favorite outfits.
 - Take pictures to send to grandparents—they'll love seeing the masterpieces.
- 3. Obstacle Course Challenge**
- Create a colorful sidewalk obstacle course with arrows, shapes, and silly instructions:
- "Hop on one foot to the yellow star!"
 - "Spin three times at the squiggly line!"
 - "Bear crawl from the heart to the X!"
- Not only does this burn off energy, but it helps with balance and coordination, too.
- 4. Nature Rubbings**
- Take a piece of paper and place it over tree bark, a leaf, or the porch steps.
- Rub the side of a chalk stick gently across the paper.
 - Watch the hidden patterns ap-



pear!

- Use different colors and surfaces for a full "nature art" gallery.

5. Spring Story Murals

Work together to create an entire chalk story across your driveway.

- Start with a scene (a Maine lighthouse, your family, a parade of animals).
- Add speech bubbles, names, or silly captions.
- Each person can draw a new "chapter" or character.

When you're done, take a "walking tour" and tell the story out loud!

Bonus: Rain in the forecast? Let the kids know their masterpieces are "limited editions"—and watch their excitement grow when it's time to create something brand new after the next shower.

So grab a box of chalk, head outside, and let your sidewalk become the canvas for springtime memories. <

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REDUCING HOME ALLERGENS HELPS IMPROVE HEALTH

As the warmer seasons unfold, a host of allergens and irritants become more prevalent, potentially disrupting your daily life and health, especially if you have asthma and allergies.

According to the Allergy and Asthma Foundation of America (AAFA), millions of people are affected by allergies, and understanding how to control your environment can significantly improve your quality of life during this beautiful but challenging season.

Here are effective strategies and types of products that can help reduce allergens and irritants in your home:

Air Purifiers: Invest in a good air purifier. Devices with HEPA filters are especially effective at trapping allergens such as pollen, pet dander, and dust mites. To maximize their effectiveness, put air purifiers in commonly used areas such as bedrooms and living rooms.

Humidity Control: Maintain indoor humidity levels between 30 percent and 50 percent. Humidifiers can add moisture to dry air, while dehumidifiers can help control mold growth and dust mites by reducing excess moisture. Both tools are essential in creating a balanced indoor environment.

Regular Cleaning: Weekly cleaning can significantly reduce the presence of allergens. Use a vacuum cleaner with a HEPA filter to capture the fine particles that traditional vacuums may recirculate into the air. Remem-



ber to wear a dust mask while cleaning to avoid inhaling allergens.

Bedding and Upholstery: Encase mattresses and pillows in dust mite-proof covers. Wash bedding weekly in hot water to kill dust mites and remove allergens. Additionally, consider washing or replacing curtains and deep cleaning upholstery where allergens can linger.

Replace HVAC Filters: Regularly replace the filters in your heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems. Opt for filters with a high MERV (Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value) rating that can capture smaller particles, thus improving indoor air quality. Check with your manufacturer to ensure you're using the right MERV rating for your system. Using a filter with too high a rating for your system can cause more harm than good, taxing your system and shortening its lifespan.

Enhance Ventilation: Improve your home's ventilation by opening windows when the pollen count is low or using exhaust fans in the kitchen and bathrooms to reduce moisture and cooking fumes, which can exacerbate asthma symptoms.

Air Duct Cleaning: Consider having your air ducts cleaned by a certified professional. Over time, dust, mold, and other allergens can accumulate in your duct system, affecting the overall air quality and efficiency of your HVAC system. Cleaning your air ducts can help ensure that these irritants are removed, providing cleaner,

fresher airflow throughout your home.

Pollen-Free Zone: Keep windows and doors closed during high pollen days. Use air conditioning in your home and car to keep pollen out. Remove your shoes at the door and shower after being outdoors to wash pollen off your skin and hair.

Control Pet Dander: If you have pets, groom them regularly to reduce the dander they shed. Also, establish pet-free zones, especially in bedrooms, to minimize allergy exposure while sleeping.

Consider Indoor Plants: Some

plants can help improve indoor air quality. However, it's important to choose wisely, as some plants can also be sources of mold or pollen. Spider plants and ferns are good options for improving air without increasing allergens.

By integrating these strategies you can significantly reduce the impact of allergens and irritants during the allergy and asthma season. Living with allergies and asthma can be challenging, but with these tips, you might be able to enjoy the season without all the sneezing. (NAPSI) <

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SPRING CLEANING: MORE THAN JUST A FRESH START

When the snow finally melts and the birds return to Maine skies, it can only mean one thing: spring has arrived, and so has the urge to clean. But spring cleaning isn't just about wiping down baseboards and orga-

nizing closets, it's also about main-
taining a healthier, safer, and more
enjoyable home environment.

Here's how to approach spring cleaning with both purpose and practicality, whether you're in a coastal cottage or a wooded farmhouse.

- **Start with the Air You Breathe**
 - Change HVAC or furnace filters.
 - Dust vents and baseboards.
 - Clean ceiling fans before turning them on for the season.
 - Consider an air purifier if you have allergies or pets.

Pro tip: use a damp cloth instead of a feather duster — it traps dust rather than spreading it around.

- **Let the Light In — Literally**
 - Wash windows inside and out using a vinegar-water solution or a commercial streak-free cleaner.
 - Check screens for holes or tears and replace them before bug season.
 - Wipe down windowsills and tracks, which often collect mold or mildew during colder months.

- **Declutter One Room at a Time**

Trying to tackle the whole house at once is overwhelming. Instead, go room by room and use the four-box method: keep, donate, toss, relocate.

Focus on high-traffic zones like entryways, kitchens, and bathrooms where clutter tends to pile up over

winter.

- **Don't Forget the Hidden Dirt**
 - Vacuum behind appliances and under beds.
 - Clean inside the dishwasher, washer, and garbage disposal.
 - Disinfect doorknobs, remotes, light switches, and cabinet handles.

These small tasks can make a big difference in cutting down germs and allergens.

- **Tidy Up the Outdoors**
 - Rake leaves and clear debris from flower beds.
 - Sweep porches, patios, and walkways.
 - Check gutters for leftover ice damage or blockages.
 - Organize sheds and garages while the weather is still cool.
 - If you're thinking about power washing, spring is a great time — just wait until temperatures consistently stay above freezing.

Spring cleaning isn't just a tradition, it's a chance to reset, refresh, and reclaim your space after a long Maine winter. Whether you spend a full weekend deep cleaning, take it one drawer at a time, or hire a professional to help, your home (and your peace of mind) will thank you.

Here's to clean windows, open windows, and a fresh new season. <

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CHOOSING THE RIGHT PERENNIALS FOR MAINE GARDENS

Gardening in Maine offers a unique opportunity to embrace the state's natural beauty and changing seasons. With its cold winters and relatively short growing season, Maine's climate demands hardy, low-maintenance plants that can thrive in USDA hardiness zones 3 to 5. Perennials, plants that come back year after year, are an excellent choice for gardeners seeking long-lasting color, structure, and purpose in their landscapes. Choosing the right perennials can enhance your garden not only for aesthetic appeal but also to attract beneficial insects, create privacy, and support a healthy ecosystem.

Color All Season Long

One of the most popular reasons to plant perennials is to enjoy vibrant color throughout the growing season. When selecting perennials for color, consider bloom times to ensure continuous interest from spring through fall.

- Spring: Early bloomers like Bleeding Heart (*Dicentra spectabilis*) and Pasque Flower (*Pulsatilla vulgaris*) are great for kicking off the season.
- Summer: For bold mid-season color, try Black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*), Coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*), and Bee Balm (*Monarda didyma*). These not only add cheerful color but also handle Maine's summer temperatures well.
- Fall: Extend the color with Sedum 'Autumn Joy' or New England Aster (*Symphyotrichum novae-angliae*), both of which bloom well into

October. Choosing a mix of bloom times and colors ensures your garden never looks dull, even as the seasons change.

Attracting Pollinators and Beneficial Insects

Creating a pollinator-friendly garden is both rewarding and environmentally important. Many Maine-native perennials support bees, butterflies, and other beneficial insects.

- Milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*) is essential for Monarch butterflies.
- Joe-Pye Weed (*Eutrochium purpureum*) attracts a wide variety of pollinators and adds height and texture.
- Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) and Purple Coneflower are also excellent for attracting bees and butterflies while providing long-lasting blooms.

Planting in clusters and using native varieties increases visibility and accessibility for pollinators. Avoid chemical pesticides, as they can harm the very insects you're trying to support.

Perennials for Privacy and Structure

Perennials can also be used strategically to define spaces, add privacy, or provide visual interest in the landscape. While shrubs and trees are common for these purposes, some tall and bushy perennials are up to the task.



- Tall Ornamental Grasses like Switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*) and Feather Reed Grass (*Calamagrostis acutiflora*) offer vertical interest and movement in the wind.
- Delphinium, Joe-Pye Weed, and Hollyhocks can create a living screen when planted in groups.
- For shady areas, Hostas provide a lush, layered look that works well along borders and fences.

These plants can soften hard edges, break up open spaces, and provide a sense of enclosure while still being beautiful and easy to maintain.

Low-Maintenance and Hardy Choices

Given Maine's cold winters, it's crucial to choose perennials that can

withstand frost and rebound strongly in spring. Look for hardy plants labeled for Zones 3-5.

- Daylilies (*Hemerocallis*), Peonies, and Lupines are all well-suited to Maine's climate.
- Astilbe is perfect for moist, shady spots.
- Ground covers like Creeping Phlox and Ajuga can handle cold winters and help control weeds.

Once established, most perennials require minimal care—just some occasional dividing, dead-heading, and mulching to keep them healthy and tidy.

Perennials are a smart, sustainable choice for Maine gardeners looking to create a landscape that is as functional as it is beautiful. Whether you want to fill your yard with seasonal color, support pollinators, establish privacy, or simply enjoy a garden that comes back year after year, there's a wide range of perennial options perfectly suited for Maine's climate. With thoughtful planning and a little local know-how, your garden can flourish year after year, providing beauty, purpose, and resilience in every season. <



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SpringHOME & GARDEN

BRIGHTEN YOUR OUTDOORS WITH FLAGS & DECORATIVE BANNERS

When it comes to sprucing up your yard or outdoor space, few things make as big an impact with as little effort as decorative flags and banners. These vibrant accents are a fun, easy, and affordable way to add personality, color, and seasonal flair to your outdoor areas.

Flags and banners come in countless styles, sizes, and themes, making it simple to find designs that suit your taste or match your home's aesthetic.

Whether you're celebrating a holiday, showing off your hobbies, supporting a favorite sports team, or simply welcoming guests with a cheerful "Hello," there's a flag or banner for just about every occasion and sentiment.

One of the best things about using decorative flags is their versatility. Garden flags can be staked into flower beds or planters, while larger house flags can be mounted on porches, fences, or posts. Some even hang from balconies

or mailbox posts, instantly transforming even the most basic outdoor spot into something festive and eye-catching. Many banners are double-sided and weather-resistant, making them a reliable choice for year-round display.

Seasonal decorating becomes effortless with a collection of flags you can rotate throughout the year. Think bright florals in spring, patriotic themes in summer, pumpkins and leaves in fall, and snowflakes or holiday motifs in winter. This simple change can keep your space feeling fresh and timely without the need for major overhauls or costly landscaping.

Decorative banners also add move-

ment and visual interest, fluttering in the breeze and catching the eye of passersby. They can help create a welcoming atmosphere for gatherings, special events, or everyday curb appeal.

In short, flags and banners are a creative and low-maintenance way to dress up your yard. With just a few strategically placed pieces, you can express your style, celebrate the seasons, and bring life to your outdoor space—all without breaking the bank. So next time your yard needs a little something extra, consider raising a flag or unfurling a banner. The results might surprise you!

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SpringHOME & GARDEN

A GUIDE TO CHOOSING THE RIGHT PAVING STONES

Spring is the perfect time to refresh your outdoor spaces, and paving stones are a versatile way to create beautiful, durable surfaces. Whether you're installing a new patio, walkway, or driveway, choosing the right pavers can make all the difference in the longevity and look of your project. Here's what to consider as you plan your next upgrade:

1. Define the Purpose of Your Project: Think about how the area will be used. Most pavers are well suited for patios and garden paths, but driveways require more strength and thickness to withstand vehicle traffic. Make sure to select a paver that matches the functional needs of your space.

2. Consider a Permeable Installation

If your yard has drainage issues, or if you're interested in sustainable landscaping, permeable pavers are an excellent solution. These systems allow rainwater to flow through the joints and into the ground below, helping reduce runoff and recharge groundwater. Permeable paver installations are ideal for lakefront patios, protecting water quality and reducing erosion along the shoreline.

3. Choose the Right Paver Size for the Space

- Large-format pavers create a

clean, contemporary look and are ideal for patios and open areas. They can also make smaller spaces feel more expansive by reducing the number of joint lines.

- Smaller pavers work well in narrow walkways, intricate layouts, or curved garden paths. Their manageable size makes them easier to handle, especially for DIY installations.

- Mixed sizes create a dynamic, custom appearance and lend visual interest to large areas.

4. Think About Surface Texture

- Smooth pavers offer a sleek, modern surface that pairs well with minimalist designs. They're also practical for outdoor dining areas, where stability is key.

- Textured pavers mimic natural materials like flagstone or cobblestone and add warmth and character. They're great for creating a rustic or traditional feel.

5. Explore Patterns and Layout Options

How you arrange your pavers has a big impact on the final design:

- Interlocking patterns like herringbone offer exceptional interlock and structural strength, making them ideal for driveways.

- Linear patterns create clean, streamlined lines with a minimalist

feel.

- Random "ashlar" patterns blend multiple sizes for a natural, organic look that adds depth to larger spaces.

- Decorative patterns like basketweave lend traditional charm and are well suited for patios and garden paths.

- Borders and accents can define edges, highlight focal points, or frame specific areas.

6. Mix It Up with Color and Contrast

Don't be afraid to experiment with multiple colors and patterns. Try using different paver styles to define zones within your landscape while still maintaining a cohesive look. Even a simple circle kit or accent border can transform a standard patio into a standout feature.

7. See Samples in Person

Pavers can look very different in real life than they do online or in print. Visiting a local hardscape supplier gives you the chance to see and feel the materials in person—and many suppliers offer outdoor display areas so you can visualize how materials will look in your own yard.

8. Choose Materials Built for Your Climate

In regions like Maine, with freeze-thaw cycles and tough winters, choos-

ing pavers manufactured specifically to withstand these conditions can ensure your investment holds up over time. Look for locally manufactured pavers, which are often tailored to regional climate needs, and a strong warranty.

9. Look for Sustainable Options

If you're trying to make more environmentally responsible choices, keep an eye out for pavers made with low-carbon concrete mixes. These newer formulations reduce the embodied carbon of your hardscape project while maintaining long-term strength and performance.

By balancing aesthetics, functionality, and sustainability, you can design an outdoor space that's not only beautiful but built to last. Take your time exploring your options, talk to professionals who understand the nuances of paver selection and installation, and don't be afraid to ask questions, especially when it comes to product origin, warranties, or environmental impact.

Your outdoor upgrade starts with a solid foundation—and the right paving stone can make all the difference.

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CHIMNEY CLEANING: WHAT TO LOOK FOR THIS SPRING

As the snow melts and the wood stove goes quiet for the season, it's easy to forget about your chimney. But spring is actually the perfect time for a chimney check-up. After months of heavy use and exposure to harsh winter weather, your chimney may need cleaning, repairs, or preventative maintenance.

Here's what to look for this spring to make sure your chimney is safe, clean, and ready for next season.

1. Creosote Buildup

If you burned wood throughout the winter, creosote buildup is almost guaranteed. This sticky, flammable residue lines the inside of your chimney and is the leading cause of chimney fires. A quick flashlight check inside the flue can show you if there's a thick, black coating (it can look shiny, flaky, or tar-like). If you see even a quarter-inch of buildup, it's time to schedule a cleaning.

Tip: Don't try to clean it yourself unless you have the right tools and experience. A certified chimney sweep has specialized brushes and vacuums to safely remove creosote.

2. Cracks or Damage in the Masonry

Maine winters are brutal on bricks and mortar. Freeze-thaw cycles can cause cracking or crumbling in the

chimney structure, especially near the crown or the top few rows. In spring, walk around your home and check for:

- Missing or cracked bricks
- Loose or crumbling mortar joints
- White, chalky stains (a sign of water damage called efflorescence)

Left unchecked, moisture damage can lead to serious structural problems — and expensive repairs down the line.

3. Chimney Cap and Crown Issues

The chimney cap (a protective cover) keeps out rain, animals, and debris. The crown (the concrete slab at the top) prevents water from seeping into the chimney structure. Both are essential to chimney health. In spring, look for:

- A missing or tilted chimney cap
- Rust or deterioration on a metal cap
- Cracks in the crown or signs of pooling water

A damaged or missing cap also invites nesting birds and small critters. No one wants a surprise raccoon in their flue come fall!

4. Signs of Moisture Inside

Check the area around your fireplace or stove for signs of water intrusion — peeling wallpaper, damp smells, or staining. Moisture entering through the chimney could be a result

of flashing failure (where the chimney meets the roof) or damaged bricks/mortar. Spring is a great time to fix this before Maine's summer thunderstorms roll in.

5. Rust or Damage in Your Fireplace or Stove

Rust on your damper, firebox, or stove pipe? That's a sign water is getting where it shouldn't. It could mean your cap isn't doing its job or your flue has cracks. Addressing these issues now can prevent further corrosion or

damage to your heating system.

Chimney maintenance isn't just about keeping things clean — it's about keeping your home and family safe. Spring inspections catch problems early, save money, and ensure your chimney is ready for cozy fires next fall.

If it's been over a year since your last chimney sweep, or you're seeing signs of damage, call a certified chimney professional. A spring cleaning now means peace of mind later. <

DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that used coffee grounds can be a powerful addition to your garden? Rich in nitrogen, coffee grounds can help improve soil structure, attract beneficial earthworms, and even deter common pests like slugs and snails. When added to compost, they contribute valuable organic matter that supports healthy plant growth.

Sprinkle them lightly around acid-loving plants like tomatoes, blueberries, and roses—or mix them into your compost pile to balance green (nitrogen-rich) and brown (carbon-rich) materials. Just be careful not to overdo it—too many coffee grounds in one spot can compact and create a barrier to water.

So, the next time you brew a pot of coffee, don't toss those grounds—your garden will thank you!

Spring is the Best Time for a Chimney Inspection and Clean!



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RENT OR BUY? HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF EQUIPMENT RENTAL FOR HOME AND YARD PROJECTS

Tackling home and yard projects can be incredibly satisfying—and sometimes overwhelming. Whether you're building a new deck, landscaping your yard, or cleaning up after a storm, the right tools make all the difference. But before you rush out to buy that pricey piece of equipment, consider whether renting might be the smarter option.

Why Equipment Rental Makes Sense

For many homeowners, equipment rental offers convenience, cost savings, and flexibility. Rental companies provide access to a wide range of professional-grade tools and machinery—from pressure washers and chainsaws to skid steers and mini-excavators—without the upfront cost of ownership.

Renting is ideal for tasks that are seasonal, one-time, or occasional. For instance, most people don't aerate their lawn every month or need a stump grinder regularly. In those cases, renting ensures you have access to the right equipment when you need it, without the burden of storage, maintenance, or repairs.

Common Projects That Are Perfect for Renting Equipment:

- Yard cleanup: Leaf blowers, chainsaws, and chippers for fall or



storm debris.

- Lawn care: Aerators, dethatchers, and overseeders for spring and fall prep.
- Landscaping: Sod cutters, tillers, or trenchers for garden beds and irrigation lines.
- Home improvement: Floor sanders, pressure washers, or cement mixers for remodeling projects.
- Heavy-duty work: Skid steers, mini-excavators, and dump trailers for digging, grading, or hauling.

Benefits of Renting:

- Cost-effective: You avoid the high upfront cost and ongoing expenses like maintenance, fuel, parts, and storage.
- Access to professional equipment: Rental gear is often newer and well-maintained.
- Try before you buy: Renting gives you a chance to test out equipment before committing to a purchase.

When Buying Makes More Sense

While renting is great for short-term needs, buying equipment can be a better long-term investment if you use it regularly. If you mow your lawn weekly, it makes sense to own a mower. The same goes for snowblowers in a snowy climate, or power washers if you use them several times a year.

Here are a few questions to ask yourself before buying:

- Will I use this more than three to four times a year?
- Do I have a place to store and maintain the equipment properly?
- Am I comfortable doing basic repairs or servicing, or will I need to pay someone to do it?
- Is there a resale value if I decide to upgrade or stop using it?

Great Tools to Own:

- Lawn mowers and trimmers
- Snowblowers
- Basic power tools (drills, saws, etc.)
- Leaf blowers
- Small tillers (for gardening)

Combining Rent and Own Strategies

Many homeowners find that a hybrid approach works best. You might own frequently used tools and rent specialty equipment as needed. For ex-

ample, you might own a lawnmower and trimmer, but rent a stump grinder or log splitter once a year. This strategy helps manage costs while still giving you access to the right tools for the job.

Tips for Renting Equipment:

- Plan ahead: Reserve equipment early, especially during peak seasons like spring and fall.
- Know your timeline: Understand how long you'll need the tool and ask about half-day or weekend rates.
- Inspect before use: Make sure everything is in working order before you leave the rental shop.
- Ask for guidance: Rental shops have experts who can explain how to safely and effectively use the equipment.

Using an equipment rental service can help you complete home and yard projects more efficiently and affordably. Whether you're digging a trench, clearing land, or power-washing your siding, the decision to rent or buy depends on how often you'll use the tool and whether you're ready for the responsibilities that come with ownership.

The key is to match the tool to the task and your lifestyle. Rent when it makes sense, buy when it's worth it—and enjoy the satisfaction of getting the job done right. <

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HOW TO START YOUR OWN HERB GARDEN FOR ALL USES

There’s something magical about walking outside, snipping a sprig of rosemary or mint, and using it in your kitchen or for a quick herbal tea. Whether you’re soothing a sore throat, seasoning a roast chicken, or calming your nerves with chamomile, an herb garden can be both healing and delicious.

In Maine, with our short but productive growing season, herbs thrive in containers, raised beds, or garden plots. Many herbs offer dual benefits: culinary flavor and medicinal value. With a bit of planning, your garden can become a powerful, all-natural apothecary and pantry.

Here’s how to get started — with plant suggestions, growing tips, and inspiration for using what you grow.

Choose the Right Herbs

For a garden that works double duty in the kitchen and medicine cabinet, start with these easy-to-grow, multi-tasking herbs:

- Basil
 - Kitchen: Perfect for pasta, salads, and pesto.
 - Medicinal: Anti-inflammatory; may help with digestion and anxiety.
 - Tip: Needs warmth and sun, plant after the last frost.
- Mint
 - Kitchen: Refreshing in drinks, desserts, and sauces.

– Medicinal: Helps with nausea, headaches, and indigestion.

Tip: Contain it, mint spreads aggressively.

• Rosemary

- Kitchen: Great for meats, potatoes, and bread.

– Medicinal: Improves circulation and memory, soothes muscle pain.

– Tip: Loves sun and well-drained soil; bring it inside in winter.

• Chamomile

- Kitchen: Used for calming tea.
- Medicinal: Aids sleep and digestion.

– Tip: Harvest the daisy-like flowers; best grown in full sun.

• Thyme

- Kitchen: Delicious in soups, stews, and roasted vegetables.

– Medicinal: Antimicrobial and antiseptic, great for colds.

– Tip: Very hardy; thrives even in rocky soil.

• Lemon Balm

- Kitchen: Lovely in tea, fruit salads, or herbal syrups.

– Medicinal: Reduces stress, improves sleep.

– Tip: Another spreader — grow in a pot or trim often.



Choose Where to Plant

You don’t need a huge yard. Herbs are flexible:

– Raised Beds: Ideal for Maine’s rocky soil. Add compost for richness.

– Containers: Perfect for patios or small spaces. Choose pots with drainage holes.

– Garden Beds: Great for long-term herbs like thyme or sage. Group herbs by their watering and sunlight needs for better results.

Most herbs prefer full sun (6+ hours a day) and well-drained soil. Avoid overwatering – soggy roots are the quickest way to kill your plants.

Harvest and Use

Regular harvesting encourages new growth and more flavorful leaves.

– Harvest in the morning when es-

sential oils are strongest.

– Pinch basil just above a pair of leaves to encourage bushiness.

– Snip rosemary and thyme stems, but never strip a plant bare.

– Cut mint and lemon balm before they flower for best flavor.

You can dry extras by hanging bunches upside down in a cool, dry space, or use a dehydrator. Store in airtight containers away from light.

Everyday Uses

Herbs can do more than spice up dinner. Here are a few ways to use what you grow:

– Tea: Steep fresh chamomile, lemon balm, or mint for calming blends.

– Cooking: Add rosemary, thyme, and sage to soups, stews, and roasts.

– Skincare: Infuse herbs like calendula or lavender (if you add them!) into oils for balms.

– Aromatherapy: Sniff fresh basil or rosemary to uplift your mood.

An herb garden is one of the most rewarding and low-maintenance additions to your home. Whether you’re a beginner gardener or seasoned grower, these plants offer natural remedies and incredible flavor—right from your backyard.

Start with a few herbs you love and build from there. You’ll be amazed how much joy, peace, and purpose a few leafy greens can bring. <

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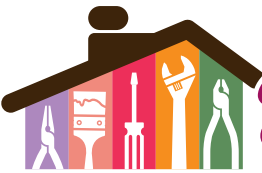
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“IF YOUR HOUSE WERE A MAINER...”

We all know someone like this: wears Bean boots year-round, keeps a snow shovel in the truck even in July, and says “ayuh” with pride. But what if your house were a Mainer?

No matter your home’s personality, spring is the time to help it shine again. So, just for fun, here’s our totally unofficial, oddly accurate “If Your House Were a Mainer” Spring Prep Guide.

• **If Your House Were a Mainer... It’d Insist on Doing Things the Hard Way (but Right).**

What to do: Check your roof, chimney, and gutters - even if you “did that last fall.” Winter in Maine is unpredictable, and small issues can turn big fast.

Translation: Patch the roof before it leaks. Not after.

• **If Your House Were a Mainer... It’d Never Invite Anyone In Without Sweeping the Mudroom.**

What to do: Power wash the porch, beat the welcome mat, and make sure the door doesn’t stick.

Bonus: Add a new plant by the entryway. It’s basically the house version of putting on clean flannel.

• **If Your House Were a Mainer... It’d Say “That’ll Do” About That Tree That’s Leaning.**

What to do: Don’t wait. Check for dead or damaged trees before spring storms roll through. Call a pro if needed.

Note: If it’s leaning toward the neighbor’s camp, really don’t wait.

• **If Your House Were a Mainer... It’d Know the Ants Are Coming Before You Do.**

What to do: Seal up the cracks, check the basement, and clean those corners.

Bonus tip: Cinnamon and vinegar can help deter ants naturally - and make your kitchen smell like spring.

• **If Your House Were a Mainer... It’d Still Be Using That One Outlet From 1984.**

What to do: Give your electrical system a once-over. Replace old extension cords, test outlets, and make sure you’re surge-protected before the first thunderstorm.

Safety first: Just because it’s “always worked fine” doesn’t mean it’s safe.

• **If Your House Were a Mainer... It’d Say, “Don’t Rush Me, I’ll Bloom When I’m Ready.”**

What to do: Be patient with late-blooming trees and shrubs. Not everything wakes up at the same time - and that’s okay.

How to tell if it’s alive: Scratch the bark. Green = good.

• **If Your House Were a Mainer... It’d Say, “Pull Up a Chair, We’re Not Fancy, But We’re Comfy.”**

What to do: Clean off the deck furniture, put out the citronella, and prep

for porch season. Bonus points for fresh seat cushions and a string of lights.

Your house doesn’t need to be per-

fect, it just needs a little love. Happy spring, folks, and remember: black fly season builds character. <

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The car accident (with subliminal advertising)

By Andy Young
STAFF WRITER



Andy Young, Columnist

Monday has never been my favorite day of the week, so I shouldn't have been surprised that a snowplow tore off most of my car's rear bumper on one of them this past February. I hadn't planned on that happening, but there's a reason that motor vehicle mishaps are referred to as "accidents."

At the moment of impact, I wasn't feeling particularly fortunate, but in retrospect I believe that Feb. 3 was an extremely lucky day.

Why? Let me count the ways. While the inauspicious start to the week sidelined my car temporarily, I myself was unhurt in the Monday morning misadventure. I was also fortunate from a fiscal standpoint, since like a good neighbor, the snowplow driver's insurance company was there.

A motor vehicle accident can be a major inconvenience, but caring, decent, honest human beings who take pride in doing their jobs right can go a long way toward lessening the pain, and that's exactly what happened in my case.

The plow operator who hit my car was first and foremost concerned about my condition following the collision, for which he took full responsibility. With a thousand other things going on in his life, in the aftermath of the accident he worked overtime to ensure I was treated right.

Next up were the professionals at the auto body repair place, who were understanding, thorough, and eager to put my car, like Humpty Dumpty, back together again. They kept me informed every step of the way and did so in a manner that was always cheerful and never Moody.

Finally, the Enterprising young woman at the car rental agency set me up with reliable and economical transportation for the three-plus weeks that my vehicle was undergoing surgery. She also made me an offer that required a quick decision.

I am not by nature a risk taker, but when I was given the option to purchase some extra insurance for my temporary ride, I did some quick math and decided to forgo the opportunity to pay \$28 per day for the added coverage.

While I had my rental, a Toyota Prius with Maryland license plates, I used the most distant parking lot spots, drove the least-traveled roads available, and totally avoided parallel parking. Naturally the number of drivers who darted out of side streets without warning, stopped suddenly in front of me for no apparent reason, or changed lanes on the highway in my vicinity without signaling, began increasing at an exponential rate.

However, against all odds, after



27 days I brought the car back to the agency in the same condition it was in when I borrowed it. The sigh of relief I let out when I returned it was probably audible in both New Hampshire and New Brunswick. I had taken an uncharacteristic gamble on myself ... and won!

But why do I consider an accident that sidelined my car for nearly a month lucky? Well, for starters, I'm just as healthy physically as I was be-

fore the incident. I also learned I can still, when necessary, handle inconvenience and adversity. And best of all I met Travis the snowplow driver, Ashley the car rental agent, and Ken the autobody specialist, three exceptionally kind, hard-working, innately decent people whose paths I most likely would never have crossed had it not been for that crash early on a snowy morning.

More than eight months remain in 2025, so it's possible there are still some days ahead when I'll get even luckier than I did on Feb. 3. But if I'm truly fortunate, I won't get that lucky again anytime soon. <





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WHS softball trounces Oxford Hills in preseason scrimmage

By Matt Pascarella
STAFF WRITER

A week before the start of the regular season, Windham’s varsity softball team played a home scrimmage against Oxford Hills on Friday, April 18 and once the team’s offense got going, they could not be caught and Windham walked away with an 11-1 win.

“I think the team did well,” said Windham sophomore Evelyn Anderson. “We had some trouble offensively in the beginning, but from there we picked it up and the important thing was we kept our energy up. We did well defensively. Just getting out there, being with the team, healthy environment really. Even when we get down on ourselves there’s always someone there to pick us up, no matter what. I think little things defensively need work; like how we’re fielding the ball, offensively just keeping our heads in, but I think as a team we did very well.”

This was a learning scrimmage and an opportunity for both teams to practice how they’d react offensively, so after a scoreless first inning runners were placed on base.

Oxford Hills scored in the top of the third inning to take a 1-0 lead.

But Windham senior Kylie Harvie reached base on an error in the third inning with junior Nola Bryant advancing to second base. Senior Chole Edwards singled to center field scoring Bryant and the scrimmage was tied 1-1.

In the fourth inning WHS senior Kennedy Kimball singled to center-field, but advanced to third base and drove in two runs.



(L to R) Windham senior Chloe Edwards makes a tag at second base at Windham during a preseason scrimmage against Oxford Hills on Friday, April 18. Junior Jezebel Pinto hits her first home run as a varsity player. PHOTOS BY MATT PASCARELLA

From that point on, run after run crossed the plate for Windham. In the fifth inning, junior Addison Caiazzo singled on a bunt and brought in Bryant.

In the bottom of the sixth inning, junior Jezebel Pinto sent the ball to center field, and it dropped behind the fence for her first varsity home run.

“I was just trying to get a base hit,” said Pinto. “It was the best feeling ever, all my hard work paid off. I think we all did pretty good; we were amazing on the basepath, adjusting to the pitcher and staying back on that ball, we adjusted really well on that and just as a team. There was a lot of good defense in the infield; no balls really got past anyone. Pitchers did great. I think we’re going to be going for it this season.”

After Pinto’s home run, junior Lacie Higgins doubled, and freshman Yani Kostopoulos singled bringing in Higgins.

“We’ve got to put those baserun-

ners on just to see how our defense reacts with the little pressure there could be, it’s good for them to experience it in April than in June,” said Windham varsity softball coach Darcey Gardiner. “I’m really, really happy with the defense; our communication was there, our backup on bases was there. One thing I would like to see us do a little bit better is adjusting to batters with different pitchers.

“Everyone went up there and put together good at-bats, before this scrimmage I had a really good idea (of who I was putting in the batting order), after this scrimmage it’s nice to see how difficult everyone made it for me. When everyone does their job, it makes my job harder – which is a good thing. If we can put the ball in play, we’ve got speed and smart base-running to pick us up there.”

Gardiner said this scrimmage says a lot of good things and Windham’s at-bats during practices are just like game at-bats.

Windham opens the 2025 season at home at 11 a.m. Friday, April 25 against Bonny Eagle. <

(Right, top to bottom) Junior Addison Caiazzo gets to the ball in time to make the catch. Sophomore Evelyn Anderson runs to first base.



ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

Brady Legere

Age: 14 **Team:** Windham Middle School baseball
Coach: Charlie Reiniger
Parents’ names: Josh and Heather Legere
Reason for selection: Brady stood out on Day One for his athleticism, work ethic, and desire to do well in every drill that his team has done so far. He showed he is a leader, and because of that, he was named one of the team’s two captains for this season. Brady can play anywhere in the field, but his primary positions are second base and pitcher. His arm strength, combined with his accuracy, is something that makes him a standout guy defensively. He also has a great swing, but a huge thing for Brady is just how aware he is on the basepaths when he gets on. Brady is one of the many great kids on the WMS baseball team and has the right attitude and always puts “we before me.” He is a kid to watch if you follow the Windham High School program in the future, and coaches have no doubt that his work ethic and skill will catapult him into great achievements in the future.

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Windham High grad Heanssler shines on, off field at UNCW

By Matt Pascarella
STAFF WRITER

Windham High School 2023 graduate Hannah Heanssler was a three-sport athlete for all four years of her high school career, playing field hockey, swimming and softball. She is currently a sophomore playing field hockey at the University of North Carolina Wilmington where she's majoring in exercise science/physical therapy with plans to get her doctorate in physical therapy and work in an outpatient clinic with athletes and the public.

UNCW does not have a collegiate field hockey team, but Heanssler plays club field hockey, associated with UNCW. Her team is part of the National Field Hockey League. They've qualified for Nationals twice and recently won their regional championship. They went undefeated (4-0) then placed fourth going into elimination at Virginia Beach, Virginia on Sunday, April 13. They lost to James Madison University in shootouts. Heanssler scored seven goals during the tournament.

"Getting to play teams from all around the country at such a high level is a dream come true," said Heanssler. "Playing for UNCW has been everything I hoped to get out of playing field hockey at a higher level, and I am having so much fun. Playing for Windham helped me develop many skills in the sport that I use in my col-

lege games." Windham varsity coach Cory DiDonato was Heanssler's sixth-grade teacher and encouraged her to try field hockey. Heanssler was hesitant but took a leap of faith and fell in love with the sport immediately. She says she's forever grateful for DiDonato's guidance and motivation.

"She has been one of my biggest role models and mentors in my athletic career and I am so grateful to have played for her," said Heanssler. "Coach D taught me leadership, confidence, and how to truly push myself to become the best I can. Playing for Windham improved my game in so many ways. It taught me how to be a leader both on and off the field."

Heanssler has made an impression on her team and will be the president of UNCW club field hockey starting in the fall. Playing field hockey always puts a smile on her face; everything about the game brings joy to her life, which has played a big part in why she's stuck with it.

"Hannah has been a huge asset to our team ever since she got to UNCW," said UNCW club field hockey coach Ashley Leverrett. "It's really been her ability to lift up her teammates that has made a lasting impact on our culture. Her voice carries strong whether it's during a game or practice, and she's always looking for ways to help her teammates grow. Hannah played a huge part in both



University of North Carolina Wilmington sophomore Hannah Heanssler, a Windham High graduate, moves the ball closer to the goal during a college field hockey game on Oct. 30, 2024. An exercise science/pre-physical therapy major, Heanssler will earn a doctorate degree in physical therapy after earning her bachelor's degree. She's been playing for UNCW's club field hockey team and will be the club's president next year. PHOTO BY OLIVIA SMOOT



Hannah Heanssler competes during the Field Hockey Nationals in Virginia Beach, Virginia on Nov. 21, 2023. She has been named Offensive All-Star Player of the Year twice by the National Field Hockey League. PHOTO BY DAN TREVINO

our trip to nationals and our recent regional win. She has a dominant presence on our forward line and a natural competitiveness that fuels the energy of the collective team."

Aside from excelling on the field, Heanssler has maintained a 4.0 GPA and made the dean's list each semester. She will also be graduating a semester early. Additionally, Heanssler has led her team in scoring for both her freshman and sophomore seasons and

was named Offensive Player of the Year as well as an All-Star twice by the National Field Hockey League.

Heanssler, said success is more than winning. Success is achieving the goals and standards she sets for herself. It's being a great person on and off the field and making a positive impact in field hockey.

"I have had so much fun being able to play with Hannah the last two years," said teammate and UNCW senior Taryn Saunders. "Hannah knows the game really well and has great suggestions of how we can improve during our games. Knowing that she was on the field with me and that I could rely on her was super helpful for my performance and confidence during the high caliber of play. Hannah was a huge asset in our recent regional tournament win." <

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BRIEFS

Church Supper

The First Congregational Church of Gray will present a Saturday Night Church Supper at 5 p.m. Saturday, April 26 at the church's Parish House, 5 Brown St. in Gray. The supper is handicapped-accessible. Meals are \$10 each. Pay at the door. The menu includes a variety of casseroles, salads, baked pea beans and red kidney beans, red hot dogs, breads, desserts and beverages. FMI, call 207-657-4338.

Saturday Supper

The Casco Village Church, United Church of Christ, will host its "Tradi-

tional" Saturday Supper from 4:30 to 6 p.m. on Saturday, April 26. This dinner will feature casseroles, hot dogs, baked beans, salads, and homemade desserts all for only \$12 for adults, and \$5 for children who are ages 8 and under. The church is at 941 Meadow Road in Casco. FMI, call 207-627-4282.

Cancer Support

The Windham Cancer Support Group will be meeting at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 29 at the Windham Public Library. All people who are dealing with cancer are welcome. FMI send an email to coppjanet@yahoo.com

Water Quality Monitoring

Every spring is the start of data collection season for the Presumpscot Regional Land Trust examining water quality throughout the region, and volunteers are always needed. Water quality monitoring volunteers must attend a training which is led by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection and then collect water samples and data every other Saturday morning from mid-May through mid-September. To sign up, go to www.prlt.org/water-stewards-sign-up FMI, send an email to toby@prlt.org

private and home-schooled students who are about to further their education in either an accredited technical program or in a 2- or 4-year college program. To request an application, email: WindhamLionsMe@gmail.com The deadline to apply is May 3.

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 appointment only. To schedule an appt. with a volunteer call 207-894-5999 and leave a detailed message.

Meals on Wheels

The Meals on Wheels program provides up to five meals for homebound participants each week. Volunteers and agency staff deliver meals four days a week. No deliveries are made on Wednesdays. Meals generally arrive between 10:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. and are delivered either frozen or pre-heated based upon request. There is a suggested donation of \$3.50 per meal. This service is provided by the Southern Maine Agency on Aging. Call 1-800-400-6325 for more information.

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.

Sewing Donations

Donations are currently being sought for the St. Anthony Festival hosted by Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church in June. Kids and adult aprons, children's pillowcases, napkins, placemats, hanging towels, dishcloths, coasters, hair headbands and scrunchies, tote bags, and pet bandanas are sought. FMI, contact Carol at 207-650-1304.

Lions Scholarship

The Windham Lions Club is a local service organization dedicated to improving the health and well-being of the community and supporting those in need through humanitarian work and service. It seeks to make our community a better place in which to live, in particular by supporting those with visual and or hearing impairments and diabetes, as well as food insecurity. The Lions are awarding a scholarship(s) of \$1,000 to high school seniors who are Windham residents, including public,

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

Monday, April 28, 2025 • 6:00PM
Town Hall, Council Chambers, 8 School Road

- Public hearing for #25-10 The Code of the Town of Windham, Chapter 120 Land Use Ordinance. Amendments to Article 3 Definitions and Article 5 Performance Standards – Controlled Access Streets.
- #25-11 4 Roosevelt Trail Redevelopment
Tax Map: 7, Lot: 1 & 3E – Roosevelt Trail. Major site plan review for a multi-unit contractor services development.

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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Board of Selectmen

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Tuesday, May 13, 2025 • 6:00PM
@ Broadcast Studio (423 Webbs Mills Rd, Raymond) & Via ZOOM

The Town of Raymond Select Board will hold a Public Hearing during their regular meeting on Tuesday, May 13, 2025, at 6:00pm on the articles to be included in the Town Warrant for the Town Meeting Election on June 10, 2025.

An additional meeting is being planned also, details will be posted on the Town's website at: www.raymondmaine.org when finalized.



Eagle

REAL ESTATE

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Should you buy or sell first? A homeowner’s dilemma

► **By The Libby Starnes Team**
SPECIAL TO THE WINDHAM EAGLE



– Pamela Starnes/Tiffany Libby,
The Libby Starnes Team

When you’re ready to make a move, one big question can trip up even the most seasoned homeowner: should you buy your new home first or sell your current one? Both options have their pros and cons, and the right choice depends on your unique situation. Here’s a breakdown of the factors to consider to help you make the best decision for your circumstances.

Buying First: Pros and Cons

If you find your dream home before your current house sells, the temptation to buy first can be strong. After all, who wants to risk missing out? But there are a few things to keep in mind before diving in.

Pros:

- **You’ll Have a Place to Go:** Buying first means you won’t have to worry about finding temporary housing between selling and buying. You can move straight into your new home without the hassle of storage units or short-term rentals.
- **You Can Take Your Time to Move:** When you already own your new home, there’s no rush to pack up and move out immediately. You can transition on your schedule, which makes the process less stressful.

Cons:

- **Financial Stress:** Owning two homes at once means you’ll be carrying two mortgages (unless you buy outright), which can get expensive quickly. You might also have to dip into savings or secure a bridge loan to

make it work.

- **Pressure to Sell Quickly:** When you’re paying for two homes, you might feel pressured to sell your current one quickly, even if that means accepting a lower offer than you’d like.

Selling First: Pros and Cons

On the flip side, selling your home first offers some financial security, but it also comes with its own set of challenges.

Pros:

- **No Double Mortgage:** When you sell first, you won’t have to worry about carrying two mortgages or taking out extra loans. You’ll know exactly how much money you have to work with for your next home, which can simplify the buying process.
- **Stronger Buying Power:** With the proceeds from your sale in hand, you’ll be in a better position to make competitive offers, especially in a hot market. Sellers tend to prefer buyers who aren’t relying on selling their home to close the deal.

Cons:

- **Temporary Housing Headache:** If you sell your home before you’ve found a new one, you’ll need to figure out where to live in the meantime. This could mean renting a place, staying with family, or putting your belongings in storage – all of which can be a hassle.
- **Feeling Rushed to Buy:** Once your home is sold, you might feel pressure to find a new place quickly, which could lead to buying a home that isn’t quite right just to avoid being stuck without a place to live.

So, What Should You Do?

There’s no one-size-fits-all answer, but here are a few key factors to help you decide which option is better for you:

1. Current Market Conditions Is it a buyer’s market or a seller’s market? In a seller’s market (where there’s more demand for homes), selling first can give you a bit of an edge, as your home is likely to sell quickly. In a buyer’s market (where there are more homes than buyers), it might take longer to sell, so buying first could make more sense.

2. Your Financial Situation Do you have the resources to cover two mortgages for a while, or is selling first the safer financial move? If money is tight, selling first might be the better option to avoid financial strain. If you have enough flexibility to manage owning two homes for a bit, buying first could give you more control over the timeline.

3. Risk Tolerance How comfortable are you with uncertainty? If the thought of carrying two mortgages or potentially rushing to buy stresses you out, selling first might be the safer bet. On the other hand, if you can handle some financial overlap or waiting to sell buying first gives you more time to find your ideal home.

Bridge Loans and Contingency Offers


If neither option sounds ideal, there are a couple of alternatives worth ex-

ploring:

- **Bridge Loans:** A short-term loan that covers the gap between buying your new home and selling your old one. This can help you buy first without feeling rushed to sell immediately.
- **Contingency Offers:** You can make an offer on a new home contingent on selling your current one. This arrangement can protect you from owning two homes at once, but not all sellers will accept contingency offers – especially in competitive markets.

Deciding whether to buy or sell first depends on your personal situation and the current market. Weigh the pros and cons, consider your financial flexibility, and think about how much risk you’re comfortable taking on. With a clear understanding of your options, you can make a decision that fits your needs and leads to a smooth move into your next home.

This article was brought to you by Pamela Starnes and Tiffany Libby of the Libby Starnes Team with Signature Homes Real Estate Group. Need personalized advice for your move? The Libby Starnes Team is here to help! Reach out to us for expert guidance and support every step of the way. Call them at 207-838-8051 or 207-712-2424 or visit: www.libbystarnesteamhomes.com. <



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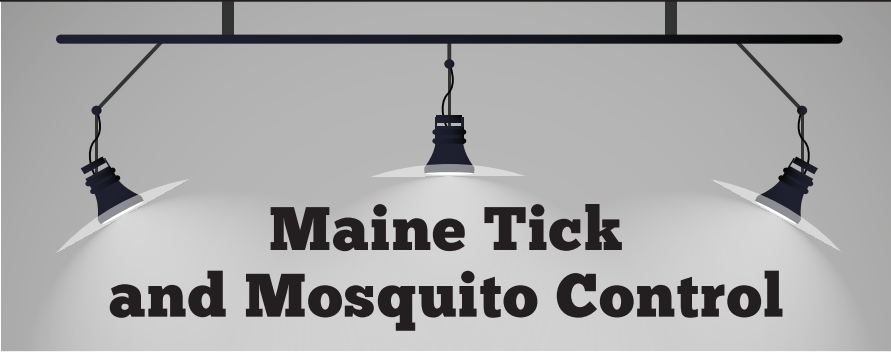
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“Our team, local office staff and Maine-licensed pest control technicians take great care in protecting you from the dangers of tick and mosquito bites and the diseases associated with them,” said Don Bishop of Maine Tick and Mosquito Control. “We create protective yard barriers, provide lawn treatments and have extensive tick protection programs for residents of towns and cities of Maine.”

Bishop said that Maine Tick and Mosquito Control incorporates a simple pest management system into every tick treatment, mosquito barrier treatments and rodent control.

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According to Bishop, who has



more than 24 years of experience in pest control, those steps include identification, evaluation and treatment.

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all year long. Investing in a mosquito control program is more important than ever to protect your family from the dangers these parasites carry. It’s well known that there is 88 percent to 93 percent success rate when treating yards and we strive for even better. We’ve got your backyard covered.”

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“We offer dependable, affordable residential pest control services that include tick, mosquito and rodent eradication and control,” Bishop said. “The services we provide can be a one-time service, special event or an on-going treatment plan that works for you and your budget. We also provide commercial plans for pest extermination and work directly with property managers and real estate agents. Group plans are also available.”

He said that all treatment products used by Maine Tick and Mosquito

Control are EPA approved, and the company doesn’t use contracts, so customers may cancel at any time.

Company reviews are nothing less than exceptional.

“So happy with Maine Tick and Mosquito. They took care of our issue in a timely manner and Susan was great to work with, very friendly and took good care of us! Couldn’t be more pleased with them, so easy to work with, I will certainly recommend them and call again if I need their services.” ~ Stephanie Quattrucci

“The staff at Maine Tick and Mosquito are wonderful to work with. They are extremely responsive, reliable, and professional. Their treatments eliminated ticks and drastically reduced the mosquito population around my home. It was money well spent. I’ve already signed up for next year!” ~ Candy Ingalls.

“Highly recommend Maine Tick & Mosquito!! We have been a customer of theirs for 2 years now and will continue to use their service. Thanks to them, it is much more enjoyable to entertain around our pool and outdoor area. Plus, their customer service is top notch. Call them, get on their list for next season ... your only regret will be that you didn’t do it sooner. A++ company and service.” ~ Tracey Herring

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