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September 26, 2025

Windham stylist earns 'International Women of Service Miss 2025' title

By Ed Pierce

STAFF WRITER

Deeply devoted to helping others in the community, Morgan Wing of Windham has been honored as the International Women of Service Miss 2025 at the organization's pageant held Sept. 2 to Sept. 7 in Orlando, Florida.

Wing, 20, has lived in Windham for 11 years and is a hairstylist at the All About U salon in Auburn. She hopes to someday own her own salon and is a 2023 graduate of Windham High School, going on to complete studies at the SpaTech Institute in Westbrook.

This is the fourth pageant title that Wing has won, and she says she was excited and humbled to hear her name called as the winner of the International Women of Service Miss 2025 Pageant.

"My personal platform is Separated not Different," she said. "Through my platform, I advocate for children who are learning how to navigate having divorced parents. As someone who has divorced parents, I know the difficulties and emotions firsthand. So, I have partnered with Kids First Center, a non-profit that holds classes not only for the parents but also the children to learn how to navigate their new normal."

According to Wing, she chose to compete in the International Women of Service Miss 2025 Pageant in particular because of its community service opportunities.

"My goal is to grow 'Separated Not Different' to reach as many people as possible," she said.

As a student at Windham High School, Wing says she first became interested in pageants because one of her aunts was competing in one. Through her aunt's encouragement, Wing took a chance and entered a pageant. She says it allowed her to step out of her comfort zone and prompted her to become more involved in her community, and to create an incredible platform of service to the community that she's truly proud of.

International and American Women of Service Pageants exist to → see **PAGEANT** Page 7



Morgan Wing of Windham, 20, has been crowned 'International Women of Service Miss 2025' during a pageant in Orlando, Florida from Sept. 2 to Sept 7. She is a 2023 graduate of Windham High School and an advocate for children who are learning how to navigate in life while having divorced parents. SUBMITTED PHOTO

Vindham rabbit keeper shares expertise at fair

 By Rachel Andrews Damon SPECIAL TO THE WINDHAM EAGLE

If you love rabbits, and what's not to love, then be sure to check out Fryeburg Fair's Rabbit Barn. It's been run by long-time rabbit expert Marie Bishop of Windham.

The Bishops started as rabbit exhibitors at the Fryeburg Fair, and back then Marie volunteered to work in the building because she wanted to oversee her rabbits' care. Today, Marie has a group of equally dedicated crew members that work hard in the building during the Fryeburg Fair and all of them love rabbits.

Rabbit Barn activity starts at 6:45 m. each day during the fair with crew and exhibitors cleaning rabbit cages, feeding and general caretaking. They've got many breeds to name just a few: Angoras, Lops, Flemish Giants, Chinchillas, Silver Fox, New Zealands, and Dwarf Hotots.

Now in her 70s, Marie moved to Maine from Peabody, Massachusetts, in 1977. As a child, her family vacationed in Maine. She attended Salem State University for teaching.

"I loved Maine, so I moved here. I ended up meeting my husband, Ted, from Sweden, Maine, in 1977 and we married in 1978." The Bishops have three children, Jarrod, Holly, and Daniel, and now have five grandchildren. They are "very active grandpar-



Long-time rabbit expert Marie Bishop of Windham leads Fryeburg Fair's Rabbit Barn, and the retired teacher has been keeping rabbits since she was in her 20s. The fair's Rabbit Barn is a showcase for rabbit breeders and people who keep rabbits for a chickens, hobby. SUBMITTED PHOTO

ents. Since her retirement from teaching, Marie has remained very busy not just with rabbits. Besides those responsibilities, she is a member of a cribbage club, a knitter, a board gamer with a group in town, and works out at the local gym.

teacher and retired in 2013 from Sebago Elementary School specializing in the intervention of students that may not qualify for special programs.

She was a career

"It was a wonderful school and a great job. I loved it," Marie said.

Growing Marie had always wanted to be a farmer and got her first rabbits in her 20s. As a young couple, the Bishops lived in Naples, had three children, but later moved to Bridgton and then Denmark where they raised and rabbits.

"We raised chickens and rabbits for food and sheep for wool. We built hutches, had a small egg business and a garden," she said. "Times were very, very tough and we needed to be self-sufficient. We didn't have much money at all. When my son, Jarrod, -> see FAIR Page 6

was about 11, he wanted to get rabbits. So, we started with another generation of rabbit raisers!"

And they've had a variety of breeds and numbers of rabbits since then.

Marie is proud of the Rabbit Barn at the Fryeburg Fair.

"Our building is a livestock showcase. It's for education," she said. "That's what we do. I love the people I work with and the exhibitors because they're all different in their areas of expertise. They all raise rabbits for different reasons."

Marie says the Rabbit Barn at Fryeburg emphasizes healthy and quality animals and feels fortunate to have highly skilled folks involved. "We have Rebecca Azer. She's an amazing farmer and raises them for meat and knows her genetics and loves to educate people. We have Chris Gurney and Chris Mageles on our staff. They both show rabbits. Chris Mageles also shows nationally. She has won top awards at the national American Rabbit Breeders Associ-

ation ("ARBA") convention. My best friend, Kenaley, Liz was my assistant, and she was fabulous, but she passed

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To Miss Silverman, wherever you are

In the fall of 1968, members of the Rush-Henrietta Class of 1971 started classes at the brand-new high school and life

We were now sophomores who were seeking ways to navigate our way around the building and adjust to more challenging courses and eyeing successful futures.

Looking over my class schedule, I was less than thrilled. I had drawn Miss Bodak for Study Hall first thing in the morning, followed by World History with Miss Johnson, Biology with Mr. Gordon, PE with Coach Sykela, and Sophomore English with Miss Silverman before lunch. Then in the afternoon I had Sophomore Chorus with Mr. Hobin and wrapped up each day with Algebra with Mr. Luce.

A few weeks in, my homework had increased substantially, and I was falling behind in both Biology and Algebra. I also found myself at odds in Sophomore English with a fellow student named Joe Mastrantonio, who never failed to take the opposite viewpoint of mine during lively class discussions of books we were reading. And even though I was terribly shy, a few pretty girls in my homeroom were catching my eye.

After each school day ended, I would ride the school bus home and then set out on my bicycle to deliver the afternoon

daily newspaper throughout my neighborhood.

If time permitted before dinner, I'd work on my homework and a good chunk of that involved reading novels for Sophomore English. Our teacher, Miss Ruth Silverman, was in her second year of teaching at our school and had recently graduated from college. She wasn't much older than we were and as the school year went on, I discovered that she listened to the same music students my age did and was very knowledgeable about current events and popular culture of

Although it was hard to read as many books as she wanted us to, I found her choices for us to be enlightening and thought-provoking. We started with "A Separate Peace" by John Knowles, which takes place 15 years after a tragic betrayal at a boys' boarding school when a former student returns to deal with his past actions and seeks forgiveness for hurting a friend. Then we read "The Red Badge of Courage" by Stephen Crane, a novel set during the Civil War about a young soldier who flees from the field of battle and overcome with shame, he longs for a wound – a "red badge of courage" to make up for his cowardice. Right before Thanksgiving we read "Flowers For Algernon" by Daniel Keyes about a mentally deficient man who undergoes an operation that turns him into a genius but also introduces him to heartache.

With each novel that our class read and subsequent discussions, Miss Silverman was broadening our intellectual horizons and turning each of us into young adults. I felt like she understood what it was like to be a teenager growing up in the 1960s overshadowed by the Vietnam War, violence and political assassinations, the Space Race and civil rights.

Over spring break, Miss Silverman had us read J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings," a fantasy novel about Middle Earth and creatures called hobbits. It wasn't a typical book I was expecting her to assign for a school class and that made it all more enjoyable for me. She also told me after class one day that I had significant potential as a writer, and she envisioned my work being read by

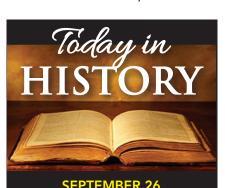
Our final project was to create a multi-media presentation and show it to the class and Miss Silverman. Coach Sykela let me use some slides he had taken of a Rush-Henrietta basketball player Bill Smith, who had gone on to play for Syracuse University. I used a slide projector and a carousel to move the slides back and forth to a musical background. I was stuck for a song to play for more than a week when I heard "Sooliamon" by Neil Diamond played on WBBF radio. I liked the beat and tempo and selected that one to accompany my slide show.

When my project was shown to our class, I was bombarded with classmate questions about what meaning that I was trying to achieve, why I picked those slides for the project, and to interpret what the song meant and how it tied into the basketball player. Miss Silverman said she was impressed, and my confidence soared when she gave me an "A" for that project.

Miss Silverman moved on after my sophomore year. I asked but was told she was teaching elsewhere. Eventually I graduated from high school and earned a college degree before embarking on a professional career as a journalist in 1975.

I have tried without luck to find Miss Silverman for decades just to express my gratitude and share with her that she inspired me to earn a living as a writer. Unable to find her using multiple resources and technology, I may never be able to say thanks to her in person, so this column will have to suffice.

To Ruth Silverman – wherever you are – thank you. It seems the older I get, the more I appreciate what you did for me. < ~ Ed Pierce



EPTEMBER 26

1772 – New Jersey passes a bill requiring a license for individuals to practice medicine.

1789 – George Washington appoints Thomas Jefferson as America's first Secretary of State and John Jay as the first chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.

1890 – The U.S. Mint stops producing \$1 and \$3 gold coins, and the 3-cent piece.

1914 – The U.S. Federal Trade Commission is established.

1960 – The first televised debate between presidential candidates Richard M. Nixon and John F. Kennedy takes place in Chicago, Illinois.

1962 – "The Beverly Hillbillies" premieres on CBS-Television.

1981 – The Boeing 767 airplane makes its maiden flight in Everett, Washington.

1984 – Britain and China sign a draft agreement on the future of Hong Kong when the Chinese take over management of the British Colony.

1995 – The warring factions of Bosnia agree on guidelines for elections and a future government.

Which college or professional sports team is your absolute favorite?

"Ohio State and Yale, because my father went there, and Dallas Cowboys because my father hated them."

Rob Juergens

"Florida State University for College and Las Vegas Raiders (aka Oakland Raiders)."

- Rose Tirrell Haigis

"The Maine Mainers Hockey team!!" – Edmund Ricker

"Baltimore Ravens and Towson Men's rugby." – Robert Burdette Burgee Jr.

"Baltimore Orioles baseball and New Mexico Lobos in college basketball."

- Ed Pierce

"New York Yankees all the way." – David D. McCoombs

> "Husson Eagles." – Dean A. Smalley

"Montreal Canadiens." - Anne Glotchshuk

"When I was growing up in Pennsylvania, my family would root for the Philadelphia Eagles football team. Now that I live in Maine though I like following Boston Bruins **hockey."** – Chris Macklin

"Chicago Bulls."

Mia Potenzio-Ransey

"New Jersey Devils." Sarah Singer-Miller

"University of Oklahoma Sooners and Oklahoma City Thunder." – Mitchell Robinson

"All Boston's professional teams. Red Sox (baseball), Celtics (basketball), Patriots (football), Bruins (hockey) and Revolution (soccer)."

Audrey Marmol

"Vermont Catamounts." Nancy Pierce

"Maine Black Bears." Lois Fuller

"I attended Tulane University in New Orleans, and I still follow them 20 years later. Go Green Wave!" - Rick Seacroft

"Manchester United soccer." - Richard Heaney

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Kelly Mank Publisher Kelly@TheWindhamEagle.com





Melissa Carter Sales Manager/Designer Melissa@TheWindhamEagle.com



Editor@TheWindhamEagle.com







Dina Mendros, Kira Pilot, Matt Pascarella, Kendra Raymond, Erin Rose, & Lorraine Glowczak



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The Windham Eagle Page 3



Children find 'Space to Thrive' at new facility

By Erin Rose

Maine Gov. Janet Mills helped open the Space to Thrive non-profit childcare organization's new facility, located on Pope Road in Windham, on Wednesday, Sept. 17.

The 6,000-square-foot facility welcomed families, community members, and local and state leaders for a music-filled event to celebrate the grand opening. Colorful chalk decorated the sidewalks, as families enjoyed music, snacks and an opportunity to explore the new building.

The building's five classrooms are welcoming spaces, with activity-specific areas dotted around each, and doors leading directly to the soonto-be completed playground. Each teacher assembled and arranged their classrooms to fit their students' needs, ensuring that children will find enrichment wherever they turn.

Before assisting in cutting the ribbon to mark the official opening, Mills sympathized with, "the balancing act that so many of us have to do in Maine and elsewhere to make life work."

"Parents across the state need con-

Bargain

Basement

dren, not only so they can go to work, but so their children can have a great place to learn and grow," she said, while touting her administration's accomplishments in helping to expand childcare access in Maine.

"As someone who raised five daughters and as someone who is now a grandmother to five, I deeply appreciate the work that childcare providers do every day, and I know it isn't easy," Mills said.

Mills' administration provided \$250,000 in federal funds to help finance the new 6,000-square-foot building, among other financial boosts to local programs that help the community support grow-

Being in Windham makes "my heart happy," said Windham resident Aubrey O'Meara, one of the center's preschool teachers. "It's amazing to see how much of the community



Maine Governor Janet Mills joins State Senator Tim Nangle, board members, staff, parents and children in cutting the ribbon officially opening the new Space to Thrive childcare center on Pope Road in Windham on Sept. 17. The the outdoors," said State 6,000-square-foot building was completed by Great Falls Senator Tim Nangle of Construction. COURTESY PHOTO

> ate our hard work." Both O'Meara and lead preschool teacher Diana Gonzalez put their 'heart and souls" into their rooms, she said, recounting how they spent hours assembling furniture and rearranging the pieces

to ensure the comfortable rooms felt like home.

"We live by that motto, 'Space to Thrive'," Gonzalez said, pointing to the spacious rooms with areas dedicated to different themes and the outdoor activities the new location provides for children's enrichment. A trail through the woods beyond the classroom door leads to a brook where kids can play in the water, and even a mud kitchen. Evidence of the children's enthusiasm for these new features was evident in the muddy boots neatly arranged under the cubbies in each classroom.

"Maine is all about Windham, who joined

Mills and other dignitaries at the opening. "It's one more added feature to this facility that gives the kids a well-rounded day."

Nangle praised the organization

→ see CHILDCARE Page 8



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Broadway star Norm Lewis to headline the last-ever beloved 'An American Family Holiday' concert

Get ready to kick off the holiday season in style as the Windham Chamber Singers proudly present An American Family Holiday.

According to Dr. Richard Nickerson, the conductor, the concerts will take place on Saturday, Dec. 6 at the Windham Performing Arts Center with two performances at 2 and 7:30 p.m. This heartwarming event is set to captivate audiences of all ages and promises to be a memorable experience for families, friends, and music enthusiasts alike.

Nickerson recently announced

that he will be retiring at the conclusion of this school year, and this performance is being billed as The Finale.

"This concert is more than a performance," said Nickerson. "AmFam is a gathering of voices, and traditions that remind us of the beauty and hope this season brings. This cherished tradition has brought holiday joy to, not only the community, but to many generations of singers as well."

Tickets will go on sale at 8 a.m. Monday, Oct. 6.

The Windham Chamber Singers are pleased to welcome back Daniel

Strange, a Windham Chamber Singers alumnus and on the faculty at the University of Miami. Also returning will be crowd favorite Ashley

This year's headliner will be Broadway legend Norm

An Emmy, Tony, and SAG Award nominee, Lewis recently starred in Spike Lee's critically acclaimed, "Da 5 Bloods," and in the groundbreaking FX series, Pose. Additionally, Lewis can be seen starring in ABC's newest series, Women of The Movement, and

In May 2014, Lewis made history as The Phantom of the Opera's first African American portrayer of the Phantom on Broadway. This will be his fourth appearance at An American Family Holiday.

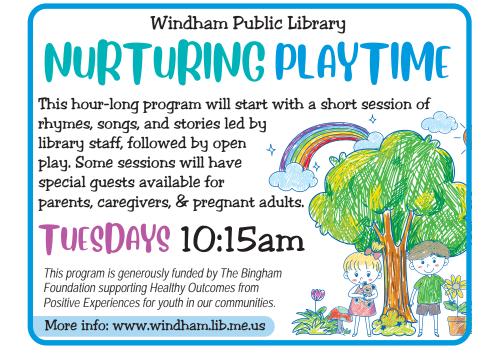
Longtime An American Family Holiday host Kim Block will return as the Master of Ceremonies.

Tickets are \$15 to \$45 for reserved

offscreen, his voice can be Emmy, Tony and Screen Actors Guild heard in the latest season nominee Norm Lewis will headline this of Apple TV's animated se- year's An American Family Holiday: The ries, Central Park. He was Finale on Saturday, Dec. 6 at the WHS also seen as "Caiaphas" in the Performing Arts Center. It will be the award-winning $\mathbf{\hat{N}BC}$ tele- last holiday concert featuring Windham vision special, "Jesus Christ Chamber Singers conductor Dr. Richard Superstar Live in Concert," Nickerson, who is retiring at the end of alongside John Legend, Sara the school year. Tickets go on sale at 8 a.m. Bareilles, and Alice Cooper. Monday, Oct. 6. PHOTO BY KEVIN MCINTYRE

> seating and can be purchased at www. windhamchambersingers.com

> Get ready to immerse yourself in the holiday magic. "An American Family Holiday" is a must-see event that will warm your heart and leave you with cherished memories. Purchase your tickets early, as this holiday extravaganza is sure to sell out quickly. <



Dolby, Blais & Segee Funeral Chapel Allan F. Ryder, 78



Allan F. Ryder passed away unexpectantly due to an accidental death on Little Sebago Lake on September 9, 2025 in the town of Windham, Maine. At the time of his passing he was 78 years old. He lived on the lake with Pat Niboli his long time partner of over 40 years.

He was born May 11, 1947 in Watertown, Wisconsin. He was predeceased by this mother Lila, his father Floyd Ryder along with two brothers Sylvan Ryder and Bruce Ryder. He is survived by his longtime partner Pat Niboli, his sister Suzanne Vincent, brother-in-law Gerald Vincent of

Slinger Wisconsin and several niece and nephews.

He was a military veteran having served 21 years in the US Navy as a Machinist Mate Senior Chief Petty officer and retired in 1986.. His last deployment was on the submarine USS Will Rogers.

He was a passionate reader of World War II history and enjoyed water activities such as sailing and motor boating. Al had a special place in his heart for dogs and was able to easily connect with our four-legged friends who were abused and help them feel love again - a true dog whisper.

He always put others before himself and was a very gentle and compassionate person. He loved socializing with his friends in particular participating in Fantasy Football which he and his best friend Bobby started as a league 20 years ago. He enjoyed his beloved Green Day Packers and got much enjoyment watching them play football. Al is and will be missed by all those who knew him, particularly all of the friends in the "Hood".

The family wishes to thank the Town of Windham's Police department, Fire department, Rescue services and Game Wardens for their thorough participation and compassionate care during this difficult time.

A Celebration of Life will be held in the near future and posted with the location, date and time on email, text and social media.

In lieu of gifts or flowers, donations can be made in his name to: Riding to the Top, 14 Lilac Drive, Windham, Maine 04062.



The Windham Eagle Page 5

'The Sevee Experiment' set to perform in Raymond

By Kendra Raymond

Who doesn't like a good cover band? Furthermore, how about an immensely entertaining evening of musical classics? You can experience all of this and more at the upcoming "The Sevee Experiment" show at 7 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 27 at the Hawthorne House, located at 40 Hawthorne Road in Raymond.

Margaret Myatt is a Board of Directors member of the Hawthorne Community Association. She thinks the concert will be a great time for all ages and promises to keep everyone on the edge of their seats.

"It should be a highly entertaining concert by a local family band in Cumberland County, Yarmouth, Portland, and the Sebago Region," she said.

Continuing a wildly successful season of jam-packed community events, the Hawthorne Community Association recently announced their latest concert performance in a brochure that is available around town.

"The Sevee Experiment – a fun concert with your favorite music," the brochure reads.

Dynamic husband and wife duo Pete and Deb Sevee are The Sevee Experiment. Deb Sevee says that they are excited about the show and are looking forward to being part of the community.

Collectively, Pete and Deb Sevee bring 33 years of marriage and music to the stage. Growing up in musical families, they met while performing for different bands. Through the years, they have created several successful bands together and they also enjoy working in musical theater.

They have performed at weddings, New Year's Eve events, farmer's markets, parks and recreation family-focused shows from Somersworth Children's Festival to Waterville. Additionally, they have performed at the Yarmouth Clam Festival, as well as private parties and church events.

Deb Sevee says that the partnership has evolved over the years, morphing from a cover-rock band performing songs by artists such as Sound City, The Keep, and Band Overboard..

"The Sevee Experiment has been a duo, a trio, and a full band, hence the 'Experiment' portion of our name," she said. "The playlist includes a variety of alternative, rock, pop, folk, country, R&B, and children's music as well. Some of our favorites for this vocal, guitar, and percussion duo are the Beatles, Eagles, Jewel, Cheryl Crowe, Melissa Etheridge, Martina McBride, Linda Ronstadt, CCR, Jason Mraz and many more."

She also says that Pete's father John will be joining them at this concert in playing guitar, mandolin, and helping with vocals, making it a true family

During the 2000s, the group shifted to running sound for musical theater, offering their talents to shows

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Husband and wife musical duo Pete and Deb Sevee are The Sevee Experiment, who will perform in concert at 7 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 27 at the Hawthorne House in Raymond. COURTESY PHOTO

including Footloose, Godspell, Joseph

ciation President Mary Ann Moeri is the organizer of

rus members.

Hawthorne

Community Asso-

and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamboat, and Pippin. They have also directed more than 20 plays at Yarmouth Middle School. Deb also teaches family music, gives voice lessons and both Deb and Pete serve as professional cho-

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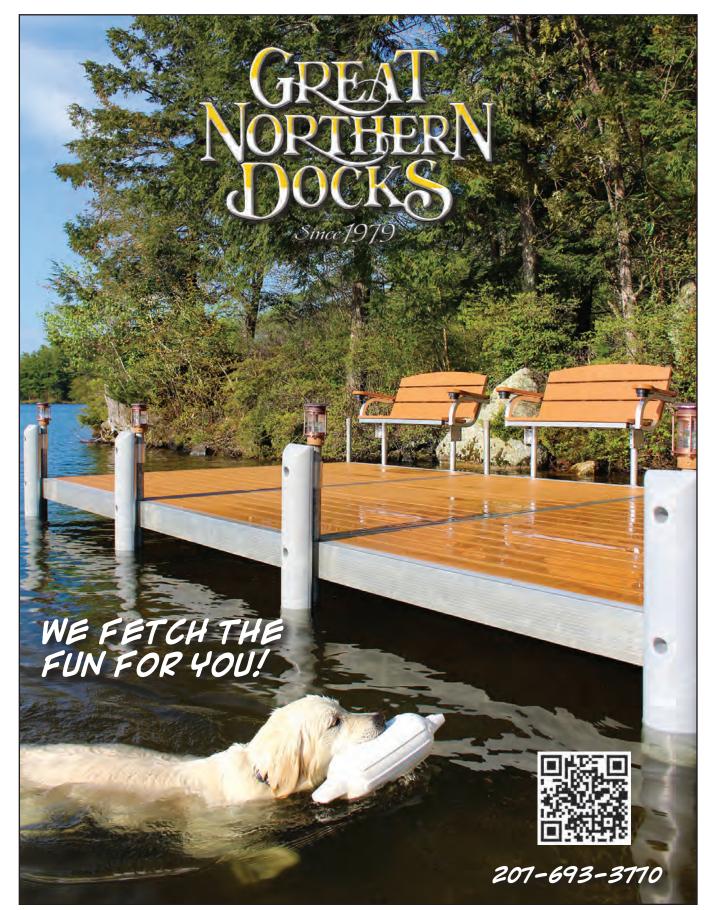
the evening's festivities. She said that the concert is the culmination of a record season of popular community events at the Hawthorne House this year.

"This will be our last music event of the year," Moeri said. "We are grateful to the Raymond Windham community for supporting the mission of Hawthorne House and we look forward to hosting many more community events in 2026," she said.

Reserved tickets for "The Sevee Experiment" show are recommended but not required. However, Moeri says that space is limited. Tickets are \$20 and can be purchased by scanning the provided QR code.

The Hawthorne House will offer adult beverages and snacks at the concert. Donations are requested to help defray the cost.

To learn more about this exciting evening, send an email to info@hawthorneassoc.com or call Moeri at 603-494-3246. For more details about The Sevee Experiment, check them out their page on Facebook.



FAIR Cont. from page 1

away in 2024 and is terribly missed. We have several other breeders who volunteer at the barn including Angela and Richard Lavoie, Reggie Smith and Erynn Wakem."

Marie says rabbits are fascinating. "Well, they're diverse. They are great pets, can be shown as a competitive hobby, for 4H projects, for show and for fibers, and meat," she said. "You can have them in a small area, as well as in a city. They're easy to take care of. We always advise people to have cages. But you can let them run in your house. They do chew, however, so the cages are important when you're away. Rabbits eat food pellets,

which you purchase, and basically hay and water. You can give them small treats if you wish – a little carrot, apple, teaspoon of old fashioned oatmeal. But people think they eat lots of vegetables. That's not great for them."

Marie says her favorites are her Dwart Hotot breed. They're white with black around their eyes. Marie won the top senior doe in the Dwarf Hotot breed at the 2018 national ARBA convention. She won Best in Show awards with her Californian breed a few years ago. Marie attends other rabbit shows with colleagues and recently attended a large show in Spencer, Massachusetts. In the past, Marie has displayed rabbits at other

fairs in Maine including Common Ground. She also raises Polish rabbits

Marie says she loves having fairgoers stop in to appreciate the different breeds and get to know the varieties, pat a few and ask questions.

"People love to show us photos of their rabbits or tell stories about the ones they had as a child. People like to pat the rabbits and many non-rabbit owners ask us how long they live. On average it's 7 to 8 years. They don't really have a long natural life. Rabbits can get sicknesses and have teeth issues so monitoring their health is very important."

She strongly suggests that people don't stick their fingers in cages at the fair as the animals might take a bite thinking it's a carrot.

"Find someone with an apron on and most of the time they can take a rabbit out for visiting and patting," she said. Marie always acknowledges the people that work in the Rabbit Barn.

"I have two assistants. Sarah Strange, who does the bulk of the work 13 hours a day!, along with her husband, Jaysen, and their children, Cassidy, Joel and Timmy and Jaysen's parents, Joel and Lisa Strange. Cassidy, age 16, and Timmy, age 12, both did rabbit presentations for the public last year. They were very well received," Marie said. "Natasha Berry is my second assistant and is exceptional and there's Chris Gurney, Chris Magellis, Rebecca Azer, Angela and Richard Lavoie. They are all very appreciated. Rebecca's girls sometimes come in to help. Reggie Smith is now 86 and has been involved at the Fryeburg Fair's rabbit barn since long ago, before I arrived. Erin Wakeham and Liz's boyfriend, Carey Hyde, well, we can't do it without these dedicated and wonderful rabbit advocates and professionals." <













SEPTEMBER 27 OCTOBER 5, 2025
9 DAYS!
fryeburgfair.org









PAGEANT Cont. from page 1

enrich the lives of women and girls of all ages through an unsurpassed pageant, sisterhood, and volunteer experience. The program offers contestants in their organization extraordinary opportunities for growth, personal achievement, community involvement, and excellence in a fun and trendy community of sisterhood. Contestants are ambassadors of many worthy causes and charities and represent our platform, Crown of Service, and strives to be a pageant that is inclusive to all and has our core values at the forefront.

Winning the International Women of Service Miss 2025 Pageant took a concerted effort from Wing.

"Pageants take months of preparation in many different ways," she said. "You have to find the perfect gown and your entire wardrobe, get out in your community and volunteer, grow your platform, practice your walking, prep for interviews and most importantly have fun with your title and sister queens."

She says that of everything she worked on over the past year leading up to the International Women of Service Miss 2025 Pageant, improving her interview skills was at the top of her list and was worth the long hours and hard work she put into it.

"Leaving the interview room, I was so proud of myself for sharing my story with the judges," Wing said

Her mother, Melissa Johnston, and stepfather Andrew Johnston live in Windham. Her father, Mike Wing, and stepmother Lindsey Wing, live in Englewood, Florida.

"My family and friends are so supportive of my pageant journey," Wing said. "I even had 14 of my family and friends in the audience and many more watching the live stream of the pageant."

Winning the title as International

Women of Service Miss 2025 will present some amazing opportunities to travel and promote the organization and her personal platform, Wing said.

"I have plans to go to New York for our Forum event," she said. "As a part of my prize package,

I get to go on a Bahamas cruise with my sister queens."

She wants the public to know that

competing in a pageant builds confidence in young women and is not only meaningful to those who choose

to compete but also for everyone in the community.

"Pageantry is about more than just dressing up and looking pretty," Wing said. "It is about being an advocate for something you are passionate about, self-confidence,

community involvement and so many other things. This organization embodies those qualities." <





Nernationa



Join Us For A Day of Old-Fashioned
Family Fun!
Saturday October 4

Saturday, October 4 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Rain date: Sunday, October 5

at

The Windham Historical Society Village Green

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10 a.m. – Doors Open
Vendor Fair & White
Elephant Sale begin,
Village Buildings
open for tours,
Food Booths open

10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Pumpkin Bowling Contest begins.
Children are invited to bowl for a prize.
10:30 a.m. – 11:30 p.m.
The Lakes Region Strummers
perform on the Gazebo
11:15 a.m. Relay Races begin

11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Antique Car Show featuring
classic cars from the past
Noon – 12:30 p.m.
Windham Middle School Eighth Grade
Orchestra performs
1 p.m.– Pie-Eating Contest

1:15 p.m.

Bobbing for Donuts Contest begins

1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Saco River Jazz Band performs

2:45 p.m.

Bowling Contest Winner announced

3 p.m. Doors close

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CHILDCARE Cont. from page 3

and its dedicated staff and envisioned new community programs that could grow from the cooperation between the town and the non-profit.

"The employees here, I saw in person, are dedicated to these kids, and love them like their own," he said. "This is the best kind of arrangement because it's a public/private partnership. RSU 14 doesn't need to build new facilities and doesn't need to hire more employees, and the community gets quality and reliable childcare."

He even considered volunteer opportunities for members of the

community, envisioning seniors as interns to help support the staff. "It's a great opportunity for community participation," Nangle said.

Ensuring the organization meets the needs of parents in Windham and Raymond is an essential component for the center's leadership.

"Our program is growing and we are learning, adapting and shifting to meet new challenges and community needs," said Hannah Marshall, the organization's Executive Director, praising its "perseverance" over the past 25 years since the founding in 1999

"We pledge to hold the experience

of the children at the front and center of our work each and every day," she promised. "I hope you can feel the optimism and excitement that our whole team has been exuding this week."

Founding member and longtime President of the Space To Thrive Board of Directors Donna Cobb joined in on that joy.

"It's exciting to see the end and the beginning, all at once," she said, noting how the long process of building a new center began in 2018, before being derailed due to COVID. The original location was near Home Depot and would not have afforded the children the significant outdoor space of the Pope Road property. Cobb added that while COVID had disrupted their plans, the wooded lot ended up being ideal.

"There's not enough outdoor space," she said, noting her wish to

purchase more of the wooded property to expand their ability to provide outdoor activities for the children.

While the event may have been the grand opening, Cobb is looking forward to a day where they can open the doors for the families of the staff to "let them get to know the place without everyone around," highlighting how important all families are to the organization.

"Our families listened to us go through all this stuff," she said, recounting many nights spent planning around her kitchen table and their families' sacrifices over the long years planning for this facility.

Space to Thrive, also known as Windham/Raymond School Age Child Care, currently serves 150 families in Windham and Raymond, providing affordable childcare through early childhood education and school aged childcare. <

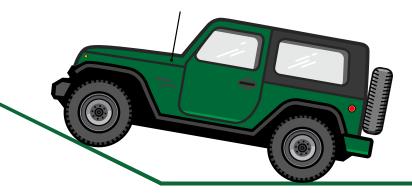




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The Windham Eagle Page 9

Raymond Fire and Rescue asking residents to participate in Wildland Interface Planning Session

By Ed Pierce

STAFF WRITER

A resilient town has the capabilities required across the whole community to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from the threats and hazards that pose the greatest risk and that's precisely what am upcoming gathering in Raymond will address.

At 6 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 7, Raymond Fire and Rescue will host a Wildland Interface Planning Session at the Raymond Fire and Rescue Central Station, 1443 Roosevelt Trail in Raymond.

According to Raymond Fire and Rescue Chief Bruce Tupper, this important session is open to the public and all Raymond residents are encouraged to attend.

He says that while the initial focus will be on Raymond Cape, the Raymond Fire and Rescue Department values the input of citizens from every neighborhood and could lead to it becoming a pilot program in Maine for other communities.

Tupper's department faces unique challenges addressing hazards on Raymond Cape because it has only one road in and out and it covers a six-mile stretch. This makes planning for wildfire and emergency events critical to ensure safe access for emergency vehicles, orderly evacuation routes, and preparedness strategies that require collaboration between Raymond Cape residents and emergency agencies.

The Raymond Cape peninsula juts out into Sebago Lake and is home to many beautiful lakefront homes and a few children's summer camps. Near the end of Raymond Cape Road is the terminal for the Frye Island Ferry, a nine-car ferry that runs from April to October out to Frye Island

on Sebago Lake.

The "wildland-urban interface" refers to areas where homes, businesses, and community structures are built close to forests, fields, and natural landscapes.

Tupper said that these areas are more vulnerable to wildfire, and planning sessions such as this upcoming one helps reduce risk, protect property, and keep residents safe.

"By working together, Raymond can build an atmosphere of resilience and community strength," Tupper said. "Preparedness is a community effort. Between 85 and 90 percent of all wildland fires are caused by people. Raymond Cape presents special

challenges, and we want our residents directly involved in the planning process. Together, with the Town, Emergency Management Agencies, and the Forest Service, we can build resilience and keep Raymond safe."

Raymond Fire and Rescue Public Information Officer Scott Doyle said that this informational session will bring together Raymond town leaders, Raymond Fire/Rescue personnel, along with representatives of the Cumberland County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) and the Maine Forest Service.

"Alongside these partners, citizen participation is vital," Doyle said.

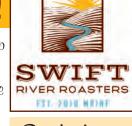
→ see **PLANNING** Page 10





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"Residents know their neighborhoods best and can provide valuable insights to guide planning efforts."

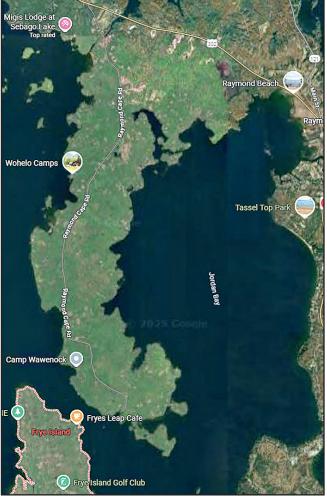
Maine is the most forested state in the nation and averages 650 wildfires each year that typically burn about 550 acres statewide. Those numbers are expected to rise significantly this year though. Through mid-September, the Maine Forest Service reports that there have been more than 700 fires across the state in 2025 with more than 550 total acres burned since January.

The wildfire season in Maine extends between late March and late November but has kept fire crews busy this year thanks to severe

drought conditions and campfires, burn piles, powerlines and vehicles, which can ignite tall trees and abundant brush situated close to homes and camps. The wildfire surge has led the Maine Forest Service (MFS) to suspend all debris burning and halt the issuance of new burn permits statewide.

State officials say that it is crucial to have an emergency plan in place and to clear brush from properties to reduce the risk of catastrophic fires.

For more details about the Wildland Interface Planning Session, visit raymondmaine.org or call Raymond Fire and Rescue at 207-655-1187 or follow MaineSEC.com <



updates on the de- Raymond Cape is a peninsula that juts out into partment's official Sebago Lake and only has one road in and out in Facebook page. Also case of an emergency. Raymond Fire and Rescue call Brad at 207- will host a Wildland Interface Planning Session at 775-0800 or send 6 p.m. Oct. 7 for the public to assist the town an email to Brad@ in planning for emergency situations there and around Raymond. COURTESY PHOTO

Caroline **Cunningham**



Grade: 11th School: Windham High School Favorite subject(s) in school: Math Parents' names: Jennifer and Trent Cunningham Reason for selection: Caroline is a student that seeks academic challenges. As a Junior, at WHS she is taking AP Chemistry, AP Statistics, and AP History. She is a class officer, student tutor, and member of Spanish Honor Society. She assists at many school events and helps to build a community of learners. She plays field hockey and lacrosse at the varsity level for WHS.

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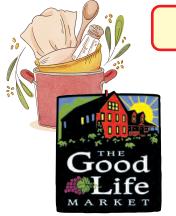
- ~ Ability to play piano and/or organ;
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The Windham Eagle Page 11

AgeWise Maine a trusted resource and info source

For 53 years, Maine's Agencies on Aging have provided resources, information, programs, services and social connection for older adults, adults with disabilities, and their caregivers. As Maine's population ages and policies shift, it has never been more critical for older adults to access the services, information, and programs that the Agencies on Aging offer to support their health, independence, and quality of life.

As recent federal legislation H.R. 1 begins to reshape how Mainers statewide access health coverage and longterm care, Maine's Agencies on Aging remain steadfast in its mission to offer resources, support, and connection for older adults as they navigate these changes.

Signed into law on July 4, 2025, H.R. 1 introduces several updates to public benefit programs that will affect older Mainers. These include adjustments to the age threshold for work requirements under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and modifies eligibility criteria for Medicaid (MaineCare), including new documentation requirements, work-related conditions, and shorter retroactive coverage windows.

According to Maine.gov, the state is anticipating more than 31,000 disenrollments in the first year of the new law because of these administrative hurdles, many of whom will be older adults.

"These changes are more than numbers, and they affect real people,"

said Megan Walton, Board Chair of AgeWise Maine. "One recent caller shared her worry about balancing her own health challenges while caring for her spouse. What she needed most was reassurance that she wasn't alone and that there were programs in place to help her manage. That is what we are here for."

This experience echoes broader concerns across the state. Sharon Foerster, Board Chair of the Maine Council on Aging testified this Spring on behalf of LD 814 The Older Mainers Act that, "Tens of thousands of older Mainers are only one health problem, one unexpected expense, or one home system failure away from

Building on decades of service, the Maine Association of Area Agencies on Aging has launched a new name and website, AgeWise Maine, to make it easier for older residents to access resources and support. The site provides timely information about available services and connects individuals with their local Agency on Aging for personalized guidance.

"We chose AgeWise Maine as our new name to reflect the resilience, wisdom, and dignity of older adults in our state," said Walton. "In a time when accessing the right support can feel overwhelming, we want to ensure that the Agencies on Aging remain the trusted source that family caregivers and older Mainers turn to for connection, resources, and support."

AgeWise Maine encourages older

adults, adults with disabilities, family caregivers, and community partners to visit www.AgeWiseMaine.org and to connect with their local Agency on Aging to explore available resources and assistance. <

Working for a worthy cause



Raymond firefighter and emergency medical technician Dustin Carroll, left, accepts donation checks for the Raymond Fire Department from Drew Taylor, the owner Raymond Car Wash and Kingsley Pines Camp following the 2nd annual carwash fundraiser at the Raymond Car Wash to help support the fire department last month. Members of the fire department washed customers' vehicles for free for four hours, taking donations from customers and raising \$3,240 while both Raymond Car Wash and Kingsley Pines Camp matched the donations with checks totaling over \$2,200. Thank you to all that came out and supported them. Taylor says that they are already planning their 3rd annual carwash fundraiser for August 2026 and hope to reach the goal of \$5,000 at the event. SUBMITTED PHOTO





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SALUTE TO SERVICE PROFILES OF THOSE WHO SERVE OUR COMMUNITIES

Critical thinking key to career for FF/EMT Bacon

By Ed Pierce

Firefighters embody the spirit of courage, sacrifice, and teamwork every day. Their resilience and unwavering dedication inspire us all and has led Nate Bacon to a career in fire suppression and emergency medical services for the town of Windham.

Bacon works for Windham Fire-Rescue as a Firefighter and Advanced Emergency Medical Technician and has worked here for four years, his first year as a live-in student and the past three years on full-time duty keeping the community safe.

His duties as a firefighter include responding to emergencies when they arise including fires, medical emergencies, hazardous material incidents and an array of other rescue situations. He extinguishes fires using hoses, pumps, and other firefighting equipment and is responsible for keeping fire apparatus and equipment clean, organized, and in sound working order. To accomplish this, Bacon spends continuous classroom and field training in a wide range of fire prevention and emergency situations.

As an EMT, Bacon evaluates a patient's condition and injuries at fire and accident scenes and medical emergencies while administering assistance, monitoring a patient's vital signs and offering basic and advanced life support for patients until they are transported to the hospital.

"The best part about my job is that people appreciate you for what we do

and having the public's immediate trust for what could be the worst day of their life, which is an honor," Bacon said. "One of the most challenging aspects of this job is your managing a sleep schedule at home and time management like having to work weekends and holidays."

Originally from Mansfield, Connecticut, Bacon attended Southern Maine Community College where he studied fire science as a live-in student with Windham Fire-Rescue.

"I dropped out of college after finishing my first year to go work full-time with the Biddeford Fire Department where I would later leave to come work full-time for Windham Fire-Rescue," he said.

When Bacon is not responding to emergencies, he pitches in to perform the general maintenance necessary to keep the Windham fire stations in excellent condition by sweeping and cleaning station floors and rooms, making beds, washing walls, floors, and windows and anything else such as inspecting fire hydrants, painting, servicing equipment, polishing, testing and repairing firefighting apparatus and breathing apparatus. He also is responsible for entering data into a computer to document incidents and helps prepare various department records and reports.

After working in the field for a few years now, he says the public may have some misconceptions about the firefighting profession.

"A big misconception in my opin-



Firefighter and Advanced Emergency Medical Technician Nate Bacon has been a member of the Windham Fire-Rescue Department for four years, first as a live-in student and the past three years on full-time duty. SUBMITTED PHOTO

ion about the fire service is that the leading causes of death to firefighters in the U.S. is sudden cardiac events, like heart attacks, and job-related cancer," Bacon said. "Not the dangerous tasks that we are assigned with."

Being around the Windham Fire-Rescue Department crew as a student, Bacon knew he wanted to work in Windham.

"I like and knew the people that work here and saw myself being successful here," he said. "I also saw the future the department had to grow, and it sure did since I've been here."

His family is proud of his career choice.

"My parents love to see me being successful," Bacon said. "I definitely think they worry sometimes, but I think it makes them happy to see me doing something that makes me happy in their eyes is an honorable career."

This past summer, he fought wildfires in Alaska for two weeks with the Maine Forest Service but says a situation here in Windham really stands out for him.

"My most memorable moment working for Windham would be my first interior fire that I fought with Deputy Chief Steve Hall and FF Paramedic Katy Dippolito," Bacon said.

Versatility is an important trait to be a successful firefighter and EMT, Bacon says.

"The vast majority of the department is crossed trained to be able to provide fire suppression and emergency medical services," he said. "Most of the time the same guys you see riding in the fire trucks are the same guys you see in the ambulances."

Of all the firefighting skills that Bacon has picked up in his career to this point, problem-solving is at the top of his list.

"The most important thing I've learned how to do while working here is being able to slow down and think critically in a stressful environment," he said. <

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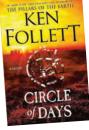
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Chimney cleaning should be on every fall checklist

As the air turns crisp and Maine families prepare to light the first fires of the season, one household chore should never be overlooked: cleaning and inspecting the chimney. It may not be the most glamorous task, but it's one of the most important for both safety and comfort.

A wood-burning fireplace or stove

creates more than cozy warmth. Each fire produces soot and creosote, a sticky residue that builds up on the inside of the chimney. Over time, that buildup becomes highly flammable. If left unchecked, it can ignite and cause a dangerous chimney fire. Even gas or oil systems can leave behind debris and blockages that restrict

airflow, increasing the risk of carbon monoxide entering the home.

Annual inspections by a certified professional help catch these hazards before they become serious. A chimney sweep can remove soot, creosote, bird nests, or other obstructions while also checking the masonry, lining, and cap for wear. Small cracks or loose bricks may seem minor but can allow heat and sparks to escape into walls or attics.

Beyond safety, a clean chimney also improves efficiency. Proper air-

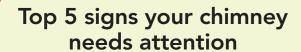
flow allows fires to burn hotter and cleaner, producing more warmth from less wood. That means reduced smoke, less pollution, and a more enjoyable experience around the hearth.

The fall season is the ideal time to schedule service, before the cold sets in and chimney professionals book up with emergency calls. For homeowners who rely on their fireplaces or stoves as a sec-

ondary heat source, staying ahead of the season is especially critical.

Regular maintenance not only prevents disasters but also extends the life of the chimney system. Like any other part of the home, a little attention now saves costly repairs later.

As Mainers stockpile firewood and look forward to nights by the fire, taking the time to ensure a clean, safe chimney is an investment in peace of mind. After all, nothing warms the heart of a home faster than a fire that burns bright—and safely. <



- Strong Odors A musty, smoky, or tar-like smell coming from the fireplace can signal creosote buildup.
- Smoke in the Room If smoke drifts back inside instead of going up the chimney, airflow may be blocked.
- Visible Creosote or Soot Thick, dark residue on the flue walls means it's time for a cleaning.
- Cracks or Loose Bricks Damage to the chimney structure can let heat and sparks escape into walls or attics.
- Animal Activity Birds, squirrels, or nests in the chimney create dangerous blockages.







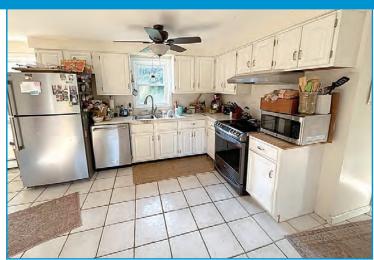
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Smarter living: How home systems are changing daily life

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efficiency, and peace of mind to homeowners across Maine and beyond. What makes a home "smart?"

At the heart of every smart home is integration. Devices connect through Wi-Fi or Bluetooth and are controlled by apps, voice assistants, or central hubs. The most common features include smart thermostats, lighting, door locks, security cameras, and appliances. Each device is designed to automate tasks or make them easier to manage, often with customizable settings.

Efficiency at your fingertips

Smart thermostats learn a household's routine and adjust heating or cooling automatically. In Maine, where winters are long and cold, these devices can significantly cut down on fuel or electricity costs while keeping homes comfortable. Lighting systems work the same way, dimming or shutting off when rooms are not in use, and many appliances now come with energy-monitoring features that help track consumption.

Security and safety

Home security has become one of the biggest advantages of smart technology. Doorbell cameras let you see who's at your door from anywhere, while motion sensors and smart locks provide added control. Smoke detectors and water leak sensors can send alerts directly to your phone, giving

you precious time to act before a small issue becomes a costly problem.

Everyday convenience

Convenience is the selling

point that wins most homeowners over. Voice commands can turn on lights, start the coffee pot, or adjust the thermostat without leaving the couch. For families, schedules can be set so doors lock automatically at night or lights turn on before anyone arrives home. Many systems also allow for remote access, so you can check in on

your house even while traveling. A growing investment

While upfront costs can add up, smart home systems often pay for themselves in energy savings, reduced insurance premiums, and improved resale value. Buyers increasingly see smart features as desirable, which means upgrading today could benefit you later if you decide to sell.

Smart home technology isn't just about gadgets-it's about creating a living space that's more efficient, secure, and tailored to your lifestyle. For homeowners, it's one investment that truly lives up to its name. <

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The Windham Eagle Page 5A

Fall 2025 HOME & GARDEN Guide

Flexible spaces and warm designs lead 2025 remodels

From the rocky coastlines of Maine to the wooded hills, more homeowners in New England are turning their remodeling projects into something that feels less like "new house" and more like "home," steeped in character, comfort, and a respect for heritage.

In many Maine cottages and older farmhouses, there's a growing movement toward preserving original charm-wide pine floors, exposed beams, clapboard siding—while bringing in modern efficiencies. Rather than knocking down every old wall, many are restoring what's there: refinishing antique floors, repairing weather-worn trim, replacing rather than removing the historic elements that give New England homes their soul.

Color palettes are reflecting the landscape. Deep forest greens, muted blues, soft creams, and earthy tones that echo lichen, lake water, or autumn foliage are replacing stark whites and cool grays. Kitchens are especially the place where this natural inspiration shows: two-tone cabinetry combining warm woods with painted uppers, statement backsplashes using reclaimed stone or locally sourced tile, and islands that serve as much for homework or baking as for chopping

One major shift is toward multi-use rooms. Homes that once had strictly defined spaces — dining room vs. study vs. kitchen — are being reimagined. Dining rooms are increasingly doubling as workspaces in off-season, and living rooms are designed so a

Did you know?

Outdoor living spaces are an excellent investment for homeowners who want to make the most of their property's exterior, providing a place to relax, entertain, and enjoy the outdoors. That investment often continues to pay dividends when it comes time to sell the home.

According to Remodeling magazine's Cost vs. Value report, several outdoor living upgrades deliver a strong return on investment (ROI) for sellers. For example, a wood deck can recoup up to 82 percent of its original cost at resale, meaning a project averaging the national price of \$17,000 could bring in roughly \$14,000 when the home is sold.

Outdoor kitchens can provide an even higher payoff, with ROI ranging between 55 percent and 200 percent depending on the home's location, materials used, and the overall design of the space.

These enhancements not only make a home more enjoyable during ownership but also add tangible value, making them attractive features for potential buyers who envision themselves entertaining, dining, and spending time in an upgraded outdoor environment. Investing in quality construction and thoughtful design can maximize both enjoyment and resale value. <



guest can sleep over without feeling out of place. Even mudrooms and entryways are getting the spa treatment (at least visually): if you're trudging in after a Nor'easter, you'd want a rack, bench, and warm lighting—not a pile of soggy boots in the dark.

Bathrooms are being turned into retreats. Freestanding tubs with views

(or at least windows), walkin showers with glass enclosures, radiant heated floors, and features such as steam showers or rainfall heads are showing up, even in smaller homes. In ski country or lakeside properties, it's not uncommon to see bathrooms designed to be cozy havens after a cold day — warmed tile, natural stone, soft lighting, maybe

even a sconce or two to read by.

Outdoor spaces are no longer seasonal afterthoughts. Decks, screened porches, fire pits, and outdoor kitchens are built with an eye toward all seasons. New Englanders are weather-savvy: sturdy materials, roofs or coverings that can withstand snow, and designs that allow flow from indoors to out, whether for summer nights or brisk fall afternoons.

Technology and sustainability are quietly working their way in. Efficient windows and doors, LED lighting, smart thermostats, and insulation are rising in priority - not always flashy, but tremendously important when winter comes early and heating bills

In short, the remodeling trend in Maine in 2025 favors what feels like a warm handshake rather than a showroom glare. Homes that tell stories, that brace for snow and storms, that offer comfort and adaptability, and which nod to New England's history while accommodating modern living — that's what's going up. Because in this part of the country, if your home can't handle a Maine Nor'easter and look lovely doing it, what's the point? <

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Due diligence is key when hiring contractors

When homeowners in Maine start dreaming about fresh siding, a new deck, or a kitchen upgrade, the first

step isn't choosing paint colors or cabinet styles. It's making sure the person you hire is qualified to do the work. In

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the Pine Tree State, doing your homework on contractors can save time, money, and plenty of headaches.

Unlike some states, Maine doesn't have a single, blanket license that covers every type of contractor. Electricians and plumbers are required to be licensed by the state, and that licensing ensures they've completed training and testing. For general contractors, builders, or remodelers, however, there is no universal state license. That makes it even more important for homeowners to dig into credentials and track records before signing a contract.

Start by asking for references. A reputable Maine contractor should have a list of past clients who can vouch for their work. Take the extra step of calling those references or even visiting a completed project if possible. In closeknit Maine communities, word of mouth carries weight—so don't be shy about asking around.

Insurance is another must. Contractors should carry both general liability and workers' compensation coverage. Without it, a simple mishap, say a roofer slipping on an icy plank, could leave the homeowner legally and financially responsible. Always ask for proof of insurance and don't settle for verbal as-

Written contracts are equally im-

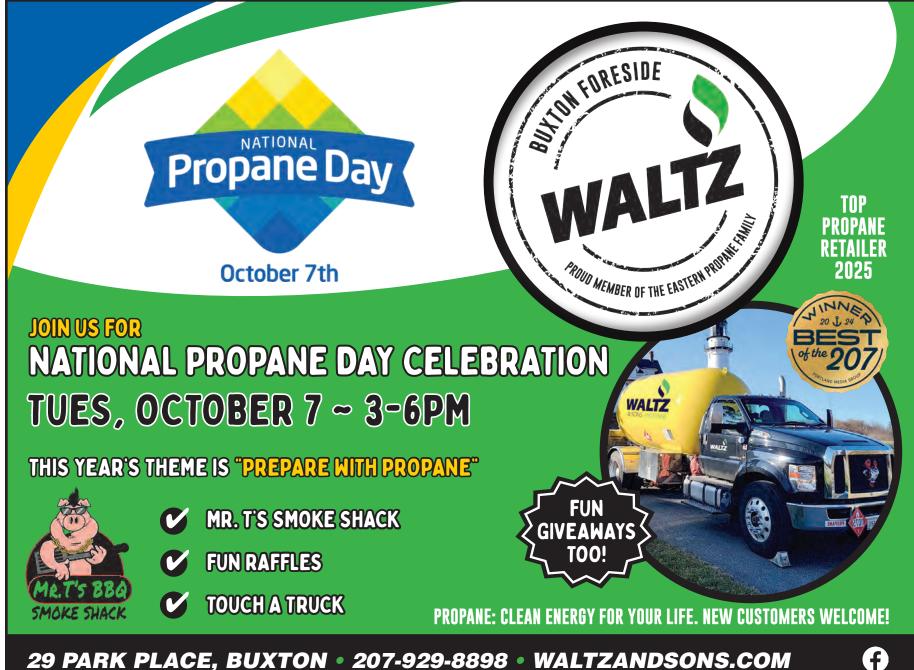
portant. Every agreement should spell out the scope of work, timeline, cost, and payment schedule. Vague promises or handshake deals may sound friendly in the moment, but they often lead to disputes. In Maine, where projects often bump up against seasonal weather deadlines, clarity on scheduling is especially critical.

Homeowners should also seek multiple estimates. Prices can vary widely, but comparing bids helps ensure you're not overpaying or setting yourself up for cut corners. If one estimate comes in far lower than the others, ask why. Cheaper doesn't always mean better, and sometimes it means unfinished.

It's also wise to check with the Maine Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division, which tracks complaints against contractors. A quick phone call or online search can reveal if a builder has left a trail of unhappy customers.

Above all, trust your instincts. Remodeling projects put you in close contact with a contractor for weeks or months. If communication feels strained early on, it won't magically improve once the project begins.

Maine homeowners pride themselves on sturdy houses that can weather long winters and coastal storms. Choosing the right contractor is part of that tradition. <



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Expanding and updating spaces is a smart investment

For many homeowners in New England, a house is more than a structure—it's a place to live comfortably, entertain family and friends, and make memories for years to come. As lifestyles change and families grow, home additions and restyling existing spaces are becoming popular ways to enhance both comfort and property value.

Adding new rooms or expanding existing ones provides immediate benefits. A sunroom, for instance, can turn unused outdoor space into a bright, inviting retreat, while an extra bedroom or home office can accommodate growing families or the increasing need for remote work. Kitchens

and bathrooms, often called the heart of the home, are prime candidates for both expansions and upgrades. Updating cabinetry, countertops, or fixtures not only improves functionality but also appeals to potential buyers if the home goes on the market.

Restyling existing spaces is another way to get more out of your home without building from scratch. Converting an attic into a cozy lounge, turning a basement into a media room, or opening walls to create a more spacious living area can dramatically improve flow and livability. Thoughtful design—incorporating natural light, modern finishes, and functional storage—makes



the home more comfortable while increasing its perceived value.

From a financial standpoint, home additions and restyling often provide a strong return on investment. While costs vary depending on size, materials, and complexity, enhancing livable square footage is one of the most effective ways to increase resale value. Buyers are often willing to pay more for homes that offer versatile spaces, modern layouts, and upgraded features that allow them to move in without immediate renovations.

Beyond the numbers, these projects improve daily life. A well-planned addition or remodel can reduce clutter, create spaces for relaxation, and accommodate changing family dynamics. In Maine, where winters are long, comfortable, functional spaces inside the home are especially valuable. Homeowners who invest in quality construction and thoughtful design reap benefits both in enjoyment and in marketability.

For those considering upgrades, it's important to plan carefully. Hiring licensed professionals, researching materials, and thinking long-term ensures the project meets both lifestyle and financial goals. Whether expanding outward or reimagining what's already there, homeowners who invest in their space often find the payoff goes far beyond the cost—a more comfortable, functional, and valuable home that suits the way they live. <



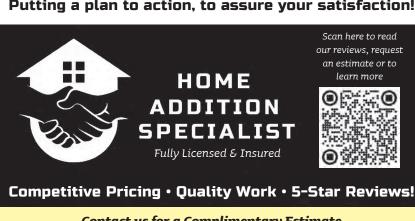
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Safe water starts with regular testing for homeowners

Maine homeowners with private wells are solely responsible for ensuring their water is safe. Unlike public systems, private wells are not regulated, making regular testing essential.

About half of Maine residents depend on private wells. Health experts recommend annual testing for bacteria, nitrates, and nitrites-contaminants that can appear suddenly and pose health risks. Every three to five years, a more comprehensive test should check for arsenic, uranium, radon, and other naturally occurring minerals common in Maine's bedrock.

Water quality isn't permanent. Seasonal shifts, flooding, nearby construction, or underground changes

can alter results. Even if a well tested clean in the past, conditions may have changed.

Iron is another frequent issue. High levels stain sinks, tubs, and laundry with reddish-brown streaks and can give water a metallic taste. While not usually a health risk, iron can damage plumbing, reduce appliance lifespan, and make water unpleasant.

The bigger challenge is that harmful contaminants such as arsenic or uranium have no color, odor, or taste. Only testing provides certainty.

For Maine families, well testing is simple, affordable, and one of the best ways to protect both health and home. Safe water is peace of mind. <

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Curbside composting service remains popular in Windham

By Dina Mendros, Staff Writer

For the environmentally conscious, recycling is an important step in waste removal. For those who wish to take an extra step, composting is a way to do so. In Windham, those who want to compost but don't want to deal with process of setting up a home system can, for a small fee and then contracting for curb-side composting.

Tyler Frank started Garbage to Garden in 2012 because of his own desire to compost while living in an apartment in Portland. In the first week he signed up 17 neighbors. Today, the company has over 40,000 customers.

"Garbage to Garden offers residential curbside collection in 11 Maine communities, including Windham, plus five in Massachusetts, including city-funded contracts with the cities of Boston and Medford," company spokeswoman Cally Altholtz said.

Hundreds of people have signed up for the service in Windham since the program started there in 2023, she said.

Using the service is easy, Altholtz said. "Residents place their bucket of food scraps at the curb each week, and we swap it for a clean one. For convenience, pickup happens on trash day. During select seasons, residents can also request finished compost for weekly delivery - closing the loop right in their own backyard."

In addition to residential service, Garbage to Garden also operates commercial routes.

Residential service in Maine is typically \$19/month for weekly collection, which also includes access to free, garden-ready compost during select seasons. Commercial pricing varies depending on size and needs. Residents are also able to earn free service through the company's volunteer program. After completing a minimum of two volunteer hours per

month, either directly with Garbage to Garden or a community partner, customers get their next month of service free.

Residential customer Martha Baldwin is happy to be a Garbage to Garden customer. She had already begun using the company's service before moving to Windham.

"I decided to use Garbage to Garden because it seemed like the right thing to do for the environment," she said. "It was easy to dump my food waste in a green bucket and put it on the side of the road to have someone pick it up."

She says she was worried when she moved to Windham.

"Would this be the end of my relationship with Garbage to Garden. But no, there they were," she said. "And again. I left my green bucket at the end of my driveway. Love the convenience. When I see someone scrape the plates into the trash I get the shivers. I would recommend (the) service to all."

Billy Hager, owner of Waxwing Bakery in Windham, also decided to compost for environmental reasons.

"It was the least we can do to reduce our impact on waste and growing land-fills," he said. "We know how essential good compost is for growing quality produce, whether that's from a vegetable garden or from a local farm. We've been composting at the bakery since we opened in late 2024. I think every kitchen I've worked in for the last 20 years has composted in one way or another. It's a simple process to add to any home or commercial kitchen facility."

Like Baldwin, Hager said he recommends composting with Garbage to Garden.

"Our experience with Garbage to Garden has been fantastic," Hager said. "They provide an affordable and quality service and have a great customer relations team to work with. We appreciate that our food trim and waste are able to be used for a positive impact on the local food community."

Using Garbage to Garden rather than composting on one's own offers advantages, Altholtz said. "One of the perks of composting with us instead of at home is scale – we can accept dairy, meat, bones, and other tricky items. Together with our customers, we keep tons of food waste out of landfills and turn it into something that benefits the whole community."

Since the company's start 13 years ago, there has been a 'huge growth in demand," Altholtz said. "People are becoming more conscious about waste, climate, and sustainability, and composting is one of the easiest, most impactful steps they can take. Based on this demand, we increasingly see towns and cities exploring ways to expand and support these services."

Composting solves a myriad of problems, Altholtz said. "For residents, it keeps food waste out of the trash (and helps reduce rats and pests). For communities, it lowers landfill and disposal costs while supporting local sustainability goals. And on a bigger scale, it helps create a more circular economy - turning yesterday's scraps into tomorrow's soil."

"With more than 40,000 customers," Altholtz said, "we've diverted hundreds of millions of pounds of food scraps from landfills, saving communities money while putting nutrients back into the soil." <





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Fall 2025 HOME & GARDEN Guide

Why proper tree maintenance matters before winter

As autumn winds pick up and the first frost settles on the ground, Maine homeowners often shift their focus to raking leaves, stacking wood, and sealing up windows. One task that sometimes gets overlooked, however, is tree

maintenance. Those tall maples, oaks, and pines that provide summer shade can quickly become hazards once snow, ice, and winter storms ar-

Regular tree care isn't just about aesthetics—it's about safety. Overhanging branches, weakened limbs, or trees too close to houses or power lines can cause costly damage

when heavy snow and ice weigh them down. A limb that seems harmless in October could crash down in January, taking out a roof, car, or utility line in the process. Even smaller branches can cause injuries or damage landscaping if they break unexpectedly.

Pruning and inspection in the fall are essential. Professionals can spot dead, diseased, or structurally unsound branches the average homeowner might miss. They can thin out canopies to reduce wind resistance, shape trees for healthier growth, and remove hazards before winter weather takes its toll. Timely pruning also encourages stronger growth in the spring and prevents the spread of disease.

> DIY tree trimming may be tempting, but it's one of the most dangerous home maintenance tasks. Climbing ladders with chainsaws or working near live wires isn't just risky it can be life-threatening. Professionals specialized training, safety gear, and the proper equipment to do the job correctly. They also

know how to make cuts that allow the tree to heal properly, reducing disease risk and preventing future breakage.

Liability is another concern. If a tree on your property falls and damages a neighbor's home, you could be held responsible. Preventive maintenance protects both your property and your wallet by avoiding costly insurance claims or disputes.

Tree health is also a major reason to call the experts. Maine's trees are vul-

nerable to pests, fungal infections, and other diseases, some of which spread quickly. Certified arborists can detect early signs of trouble and recommend treatments that preserve trees for decades. Healthy trees not only add beauty and shade but also enhance property value and curb appeal.

As winter approaches, don't let tree

care fall to the bottom of the list. A thorough inspection and preventative pruning now can save thousands in repair costs later. By hiring a professional, you protect both your property and your personal safety. After all, winter in Maine is harsh enough—no one needs a fallen tree adding to the workload or threatening their home. <





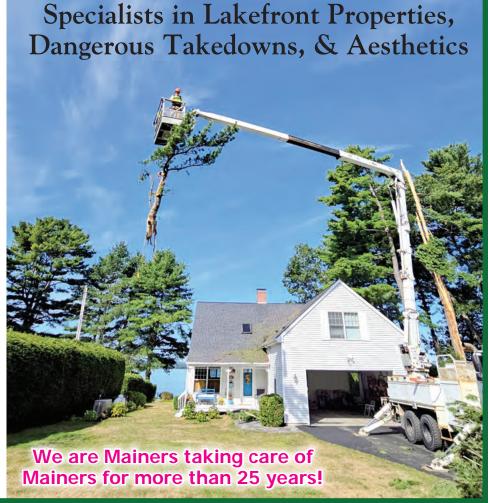




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Fall planting: Do's and don'ts for beautiful gardens

Seasoned gardeners know that fall is actually one of the best times to prepare for next year's blooms and greenery.

Planting before the ground freezes sets the stage for lush gardens come next season, but there are some important do's and don'ts to keep in mind.

Do: Take Advantage of Cooler Temperatures – Fall planting works because the soil stays warm long after the air cools down. This allows root systems to establish themselves without the stress of summer heat. Trees, shrubs, and perennials planted in September or October get a head start underground, even while their tops appear dormant. When spring arrives, they're ready to burst with energy.

Don't: Wait Too Long – Timing is everything. Aim to plant at least six weeks before the ground typically freezes which is usually by mid to late October. Planting too close to winter risks leaving roots shallow and vulnerable. If you miss the window, it's often better to hold off until spring.

Do: Focus on Bulbs and Perennials – Fall is prime time for planting spring-flowering bulbs like tulips, daffodils, and crocuses. Tuck them into well-drained soil with the pointed side up, and remember to plant them deeper than you think—about three times the bulb's height. Perennials such as peonies, daylilies, and hostas also settle in nicely when planted in autumn.

Don't: Forget About Mulch – Maine winters can be harsh, with freeze-thaw cycles that push young roots out of the soil. A thick blanket of

mulch—wood chips, shredded leaves, or straw—insulates plants and keeps moisture steady. Just don't pile mulch directly against stems or trunks, as it can trap rot-causing moisture.

Do: Plant Trees and Shrubs – Fall is excellent for adding structure to your yard with trees and shrubs. Cooler air reduces stress while warm soil encourages strong roots. Choose native species which are well-suited to Maine's conditions and support local wildlife.

Don't: Over-Fertilize – While a little compost or organic matter is welcome, skip heavy doses of fertilizer. Fall is about root growth, not leafy tops. Too much nitrogen will encourage new growth that won't have time to harden off before winter, leaving plants vulnerable to frost damage.

Do: Divide and Conquer – Perennials that have grown crowded over the years—like irises, hostas, or black-eyed Susans—benefit from being divided in the fall. Dig them up, separate the clumps, and replant them with more breathing room.

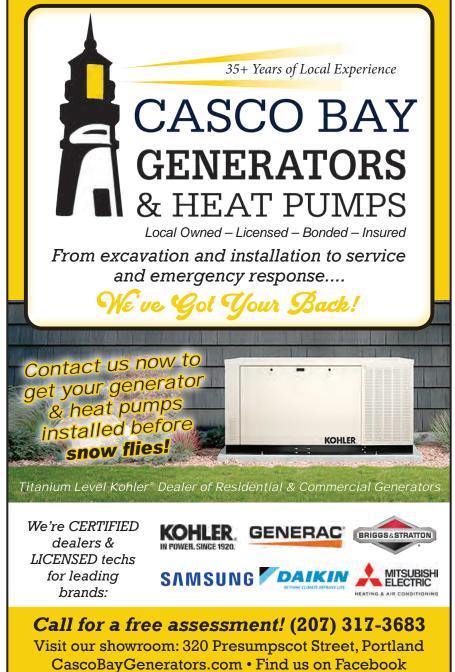
Don't: Ignore Cleanup – Clear out diseased or spent plants to prevent pests from overwintering.

Do: Water Well – Water thoroughly after planting, and continue until the ground freezes. FA deep soak ensures roots won't dry out before winter. <



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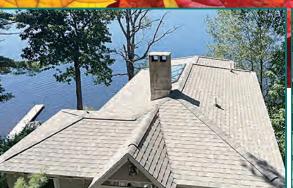
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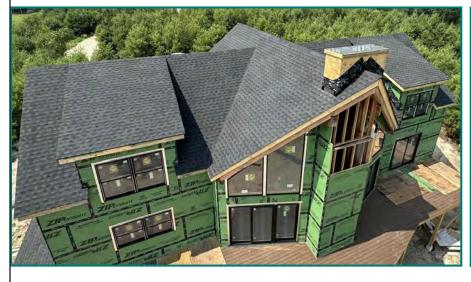




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We were so impressed, we decided to put in a Heat Pump hot water heater. Again, no money upfront. The savings after the finance payment and the power bill amounted to about \$97/mo (\$1164/yr). That was A TOTAL SAVINGS OF ABOUT \$2500 A YEAR FOR THE HEAT PUMPS TO HEAT AND COOL AS WELL AS THE HOT WATER HEATER. It was like getting paid \$2500 a year to install these. (P.S. - I verified the figures from the Efficiency Maine website)

I am recommending to everyone I know to contact DIRFY Generators and Heat Pumps so that they can increase their spending money. This company is awesome. No wonder they are number one in New England!" $\sim R \& L W$.



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Tapping into home equity can power big home upgrades with long-term benefits

Fall in Maine is more than pump-kin patches and leaf peeping—it's also the season when many homeowners turn their attention to big-ticket projects around the house. From replacing a roof before the snow flies to upgrading outdated plumbing or electrical systems, autumn is the perfect time to tackle improvements that boost both comfort and value. For many, the smartest way to pay for these upgrades is by tapping into their home equity.

Home equity is simply the difference between what you owe on your mortgage and what your home is worth. Over the past several years, many Mainers have built significant equity thanks to rising property values. That equity can be unlocked through tools like a home equity loan or a line of credit, giving homeowners access to funds at interest rates often lower than personal loans or credit cards.

One of the biggest advantages is timing. Fall projects—like a new roof, chimney repair, or heating system upgrade—are best completed before winter weather settles in. Financing them through home equity ensures you don't have to wait until spring and risk another season of leaks, drafts, or system failures.

Home equity financing can also provide flexibility. A lump sum loan

may work for a single project such as roof replacement, while a line of credit allows you to borrow as needed for a series of upgrades—plumbing one month, electrical improvements the next. Either way, the ability to spread costs over time makes large projects far more manageable.

Another benefit is that many improvements add long-term value. A new roof not only protects the home but also increases curb appeal. Updated water and electrical systems improve efficiency and safety, making the home more attractive to future buyers. By financing improvements through home equity, you're reinvesting in your biggest asset.

Of course, responsible borrowing is key. Experts recommend only tapping into equity for projects that truly maintain or enhance the home, not for short-lived expenses. And because your home secures the loan, it's important to work with a trusted lender and have a clear repayment plan.

As winter approaches, Maine homeowners are wise to think beyond rakes and snow shovels. Addressing big improvements now can prevent costly emergencies later—and leveraging home equity may be the most cost-effective way to make it happen. A stronger, safer, and more efficient home is an investment that pays off in every season. <



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Fall 2025 HOME & GARDEN Guide

Annual furnace service is a small step that pays off big

As Maine's temperatures drop and homes prepare for long winter months, many homeowners turn their attention to firewood, snow shovels, and weatherproofing windows. One critical task that should never be overlooked, however, is furnace maintenance. Ensuring your heating system is inspected and serviced annually is essential for comfort, safety, and cost savings throughout the winter.

A well-maintained furnace runs

more efficiently, which can save homeowners money on heating bills. Dust, dirt, and worn parts can cause the system to work harder than necessary, consuming more energy to maintain the desired temperature. A professional tune-

up includes cleaning and inspecting components, checking airflow, and ensuring proper fuel combustion, all of which help the furnace operate at peak efficiency.

Safety is another key reason for yearly service. Furnaces that are neglected may develop cracks, leaks, or blockages that can allow dangerous gases like carbon monoxide to enter the home. Carbon monoxide is colorless and odorless, making it nearly impossible

to detect without a properly functioning detector and a well-serviced heating system. Annual inspections help identify potential hazards before they become life-threatening.

Homeowners should also be aware of warning signs that their furnace may need attention. Uneven heating, where some rooms feel too hot or too cold, can indicate airflow or duct problems. Unusual noises like banging, rattling, or squealing may signal worn or loose

> parts. A sudden spike in energy bills often points to inefficiency, while frequent cycling—where the furnace turns on and off too often-can indicate thermostat or internal issues. Additionally, a yellow or flickering pilot light, rather than a steady

blue flame, may signal a carbon monoxide risk and requires immediate professional attention.

Regular maintenance also reduces the likelihood of unexpected breakdowns during the coldest months. Early detection of worn parts or mechanical issues allows for repairs before they escalate into costly emergencies. Proper upkeep extends the life of the furnace, protecting the homeowner's investment while ensuring reliable

warmth.

Homeowners can schedule service in the fall to prepare for winter, when HVAC professionals are readily available. During the appointment, a certified technician will perform a full inspection, clean critical components, and advise on any necessary repairs or upgrades.

In short, annual furnace maintenance is about more than comfort. It improves energy efficiency, safeguards health, prevents costly breakdowns, and extends the life of the system. For Maine homeowners facing long, cold winters, keeping the furnace in top condition is a small effort that pays off in peace of mind all season long. <



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Vegetables to plant this fall for next season's harvest

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time to set the stage for a successful spring and summer harvest. Certain vegetables actually benefit from going into the ground before the frost, giving them a head start that pays off when the snow melts.

Garlic is the star of

Garlic is the star of the fall garden. Planted in October, cloves settle in before the freeze and

spend the winter tucked under mulch. By spring, green shoots emerge, and by early summer you're pulling up big, flavorful bulbs. It's a crop that rewards a little fall effort with reliable results.

Preparing for Asparagus

Asparagus takes patience, but it's worth the wait. Fall is the time to prepare the soil and beds for planting. With a little groundwork now—clearing weeds, amending soil, and choosing a sunny spot—you'll be ready to plant crowns in early spring. Once established, asparagus can produce for decades, making it one of the most rewarding long-term investments a gardener can make.

Onions, Shallots, and More

Onions and shallots also do well when planted in fall if you pick special cold-hardy varieties and provide winter protection. Like garlic, they use the cooler months to establish roots and burst to life early in the season. It's best to plant this by end of Septmber so

they have time to establish a bit of roots before the ground freezes.

Cold-hardy options

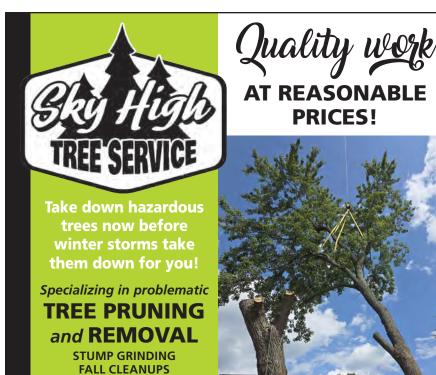
Other crops, like carrots, beets, radishes, and kale, can be sown in late summer or early fall. Many will overwinter with

the help of mulch or protective coverings. Come spring, these resilient vegetables are among the first to green up, offering fresh growth when little else is ready.

Tips for success

Maine's climate demands a careful approach. Timing is crucial—planting six to eight weeks before the first hard freeze gives roots time to establish. Mulching heavily protects against frost heaving and temperature swings. Choosing well-drained soil and hardy varieties helps ensure plants survive the winter.

Fall planting is about thinking one season ahead. While neighbors are raking leaves, you could be quietly setting your garden up for an early, abundant harvest. With garlic in the ground, asparagus beds prepared, and root crops snug under mulch, spring will bring a head start on beauty and bounty that makes the effort more than worthwhile. <



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The Windham Eagle Page 19A

Fall 2025 HOME & GARDEN Guide

Spotting mold in your home: when to worry and what to do

Maine's damp climate and long winters create the perfect environment for mold to thrive inside homes. While a little mildew in the shower is common, hidden mold infestations can cause health concerns and damage to your house if left unchecked. Knowing the signs and taking action quickly can save both your property and your peace of mind.

Signs and Symptoms of Mold

Mold doesn't always announce itself with giant black spots on the wall. Sometimes the first clue is a musty odor, especially in basements, bathrooms, or attics. Discolored patches on walls, ceilings, or floors (whether green, black, or white) are another giveaway. Peeling paint, bubbling wallpaper, or warped drywall can also point to hidden moisture and possible

looked. Residents may notice increased allergy-like issues such as sneezing, itchy eyes, congestion, or persistent coughs that improve when they leave the house. For people with asthma or compromised immune systems, mold exposure can worsen breathing difficulties. If multiple family members experience unexplained symptoms indoors, mold may be the culprit.



What to Do If You Suspect Mold

The first step is to address moisture. Mold cannot grow without water, so check for leaks around roofs, windows, plumbing, or foundations. Dehumidifiers can help in damp basements, and proper ventilation is esidentify the source of moisture to stop the problem from returning.

When in Doubt, Get Help

Mold may be common, but it should never be ignored. Beyond health risks, mold can weaken wood, drywall, and insulation, creating expensive repairs if left untreated. Hiring a professional ensures proper removal and provides peace of mind that your home is safe.

As Maine heads into another damp fall and winter, now is the time to stay vigilant. A little attention today can prevent a much bigger mess tomorrow—and keep your home the healthy, cozy refuge it's meant to be. <







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Feng Shui your home to bring balance, flow, and harmony

Feng Shui, the ancient Chinese practice of arranging living spaces to promote balance, energy flow, and harmony, has gained popularity in homes across the country—and Maine homeowners are no exception. While it might sound mystical, the principles are practical, helping to create environments that feel open, welcoming, and conducive to comfort and well-being.

At its core, Feng Shui focuses on the flow of "chi," or energy, throughout a space. Clutter, blocked pathways, and poorly arranged furniture can disrupt this flow, making rooms feel cramped or chaotic. A simple starting point is decluttering: clearing out unnecessary items opens up space and allows energy to circulate freely. Storage solutions, hidden bins, and regular organization can make a big difference.

Furniture placement also plays a key role. In living rooms, sofas and chairs should face the main entry, creating a welcoming environment while avoiding back-to-door seating, which can make occupants feel uneasy. In bedrooms, the bed should ideally be positioned so you can see the door without being directly in line with it. This creates a sense of security and calm, which is essential for restful sleep.

Lighting and natural elements are

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another critical aspect. Maximizing natural light improves mood and energy, while strategically placed lamps can brighten darker corners. Incorporating plants, water features, or natural materials such as wood and stone adds vitality to a space and helps balance the five traditional Feng Shui elements: wood, fire, earth, metal, and water. Mirrors, when used thoughtfully, can expand a room visually and redirect

energy, but they should never face the bed directly.

Colors also impact energy. Soft blues and greens promote calm, reds add warmth and vitality, and neutral tones provide grounding. Choosing colors that suit the function of each room can enhance both comfort and productivity.

Add intentional decor and personal touches. Objects that bring joy, such as meaningful artwork, photographs, or items collected from nature, enhance positive energy in the home. Placing these thoughtfully can uplift

mood and make spaces feel nurturing and personalized.

Finally, entrances matter. The doorway is considered the "mouth of chi," where energy enters the home. Keeping it clean, well-lit, and unobstructed encourages positive energy to flow inward. A simple welcome mat or decorative item can signal hospitality and intention.

Feng Shui is not about perfection, it's about creating spaces that feel intentional, balanced, and nurturing. By decluttering, arranging furniture thoughtfully, incorporating natural elements, and paying attention to light and color, homeowners can cultivate a home environment that supports well-being, relaxation, and positive energy.

Whether you're looking to boost productivity, encourage relaxation, or simply make your home more harmonious, practicing Feng Shui offers practical tips that benefit every room and everyone who lives there. <



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Fall 2025 HOME & GARDEN Guide

Installing a standby generator is a smart move for Mainers

Every Mainer knows the feeling: the lights flicker during a storm, the wind howls, and within seconds the house falls silent. Power outages are more than an inconvenience here—they can disrupt heat, water, and

even communication, often for days at a time. That's why more homeowners across the state are investing in standby generators before the snow flies.

Unlike portable units, standby generators are permanently installed outside the home and wired directly into the electrical system. When the power goes out, they kick on automatically, often within seconds, keeping essential systems running without the need to fumble with cords in the dark. In a state where winter storms routinely knock down lines, that kind of reliability can make all the difference.

The most obvious advantage is maintaining heat. With temperatures plunging well below freezing, losing a furnace or boiler isn't just uncomfortable—it can lead to frozen pipes and costly damage. A standby generator ensures heating systems keep humming, protecting both the family inside and the structure itself.

Refrigerators and freezers are another concern. After just a few hours

without power, food begins to spoil. A generator keeps appliances running, saving hundreds of dollars in groceries and avoiding unnecessary waste.

There's also the matter of safety. For homes with

medical equipment or residents who rely on powered devices, a reliable backup source of electricity can be lifesaving. Even for those without special medical needs, having lights, communication, and internet access during an outage provides peace of mind and security.

Standby generators add value to a property as well. Potential buyers in Maine understand the realities of winter storms and view a generator as a practical upgrade. It's an investment that pays dividends both while you live in the home and if you decide to sell.

While portable generators serve in a pinch, they require manual setup, constant refueling, and safe ventilation to

avoid carbon monoxide risks. A professionally installed standby generator, hooked up to natural gas or propane, offers seamless, worry-free operation all season long.

As the first snow approaches, the question isn't whether outages will happen this winter—it's how prepared you'll be when they do. For Maine homeowners, a standby generator is more than a convenience. It's security, comfort, and peace of mind in the face of another long, stormy season. <

How to stay safe and comfortable during a power outage

First and foremost, safety is key during a power outage. Avoid using gas ovens, charcoal grills, or outdoor generators indoors to heat your home; these can produce deadly carbon monoxide. If you rely on a portable generator, place it outdoors and away from windows or vents. Keep flashlights, batteries, and battery-powered lanterns on hand for safe lighting. A battery-operated radio is also essential to receive weather updates and information from local authorities when cell service or internet may be down.

Stay warm by layering clothing

and using blankets. Close off unused rooms to conserve heat, and if possible, designate one room to stay as warm as possible.

Fill the bathtub and any large containers with water before the outage if you have warning that outages may occur; this provides water to flush toilets and keep pets hydrated.

Food safety is another important concern. Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed to maintain temperature as long as possible. A full freezer can hold its temperature for up to 48 hours if unopened; a half-full freezer for about 24 hours. Discard any per-

ishable items that have been above 40°F for more than two hours.

Communication is important, too. Keep cell phones charged and have a backup power bank if available. Let friends and family know you are safe, and check on neighbors, especially the elderly or those with medical conditions, to ensure they have essential supplies.

Finally, preparation is the best defense. Stock emergency supplies, maintain generators and heating equipment, and create a family plan. Being ready can make a cold, dark winter outage manageable. <



6 simple ways to freshen your home before winter

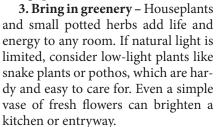
As Maine's temperatures drop and snow begins to settle, homeowners often spend more time indoors. Winter can feel long and cozy, but it can also make a home feel stale or uninspired. The good news? You don't need a major renovation to breathe new life into your space. Here are five inexpensive ways to freshen and liven

up your home before the cold sets in.

1. Rearrange furniture - Changing the layout of a room can completely transform how it feels. Move sofas, chairs, or rugs to create better flow and open up previously cramped spaces. Even small adjustments can make a room feel larger, brighter, and more inviting.

2. Add seasonal textiles - Soft throws, cozy blankets, and new pillows can instantly warm up a room. Opt for colors and textures that complement the season, such as deep reds, warm oranges, or soft plaids. Not only do they enhance comfort, but they

also refresh the visual appeal of your living spaces.



4. Update lighting – Winter days are short, and homes can feel dark and dreary. Swap out dim bulbs for brighter, warmer options. Use floor or table lamps to illuminate corners, and consider adding string lights or candles for a cozy glow. Layered lighting creates a welcoming atmosphere without a large expense.

5. Refresh with scent – Fragrance

can dramatically affect mood. Simmer cinnamon sticks, cloves, or orange peels on the stove, or use essential oil diffusers to infuse the home with comforting aromas. Seasonal scents instantly make your home feel fresh, inviting, and ready for the colder months.

6. Add small decorative touches - Little details like new artwork, seasonal wreaths, or decorative bowls can change the feel of a room without a big investment. Even swapping out cabinet knobs or adding a new table runner can give a space a refreshed, updated appearance.

These simple changes don't require a big budget or major remodeling, but they can make a noticeable difference. A home that feels bright, warm, and lively encourages family gatherings, quiet evenings by the fire, and a more enjoyable winter overall.

With just a little creativity and effort, homeowners can enter the season with refreshed spaces that feel cozy, welcoming, and full of life...even when the temperature outside drop. <

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Fall 2025 HOME & GARDEN Guide

Protecting your home from Mice: A key step in preventing Lyme disease

By Brandon Lee, Associate Certified Entomologist - Mainely Ticks

Mice are one of the most important animals to consider when it comes to Lyme disease prevention.

The blacklegged tick, also known as the deer tick, is the primary vector of Lyme disease in North America. While many people associate these ticks with deer, the real reservoir of the Lyme bacterium (Borrelia burgdorferi) is the white-footed mouse.

When young ticks feed on infected mice, they acquire the bacterium and can later transmit it to humans, pets, and other animals. This means that mice are the key bridge in the cycle of Lyme disease, making their presence in and around homes a direct risk factor.

Once mice establish themselves near a home, they create more opportunities

for ticks to thrive in the environment. Ticks that feed on infected mice can easily drop into leaf litter, tall grass, or even near entryways and foundations, where people and pets may come into contact with them. A single mouse can host dozens of ticks, each with the potential to spread disease.

Beyond Lyme, mice can also spread other pathogens, such as babesiosis and anaplasmosis, through the ticks they infect. By allowing mice to nest in attics,

basements, or crawl spaces, homeown-

Top 5 ways to rodent-proof your home

- Seal the Gaps Close cracks in foundations, gaps around pipes, & openings near vents with caulk, steel wool, or hardware cloth.
- Eliminate Food Sources Store bird seed, pet food & pantry items in sealed containers. Clean up crumbs & spills promptly.
- Declutter Outside Remove brush piles, stacked wood, & debris near the foundation where mice like to nest.
- Trim & Tidy Cut back tall grass & vegetation around the home to reduce cover for rodents
- Check Indoors Inspect attics, basements, & crawl spaces for droppings or nesting materials, early signs of a mouse problem.

ers may unknowingly increase the like-

lihood of Lyme-bearing ticks flourishing right outside their doors.

Protecting your home from mice, therefore, is a critical first step in reducing exposure to Lyme disease. Exclusion techniques—such as sealing cracks, installing mouse barriers, and maintaining a clean perimeter free of food sources interrupt the mouse population and, by extension, the tick infection cycle. Combining these efforts with landscape management, like clearing brush and managing leaf litter, makes the property less attractive to both rodents and ticks.

In short, keeping mice out of the home is not just about avoiding gnawed wires or contaminated food, it is a proven way to reduce the risk of Lyme disease. <





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College roundup

Francesco Farinella, Eric Sawyer, Ethan Haley, Jade Stevens, and Grace Forant, all of Windham, have been named to the President's List for academic excellence at Southern New Hampshire University during the Summer 2025 semester.

David Ferrante and Christy Mitchell, both of Raymond, have been named to the Dean's List for outstanding academic performance at Southern New Hampshire University for the Summer 2025 semester.

Kaila Mank of Raymond has been named to the President's List for academic achievement at Western New England University for the Spring 2025 semester.

Becca Arris and Isabella Theriault, both of Windham, and Alec Brooks of Raymond, have been named to the Dean's List for outstanding academic performance at the University of Maine Presque Isle for the Spring 2025 semester.

Madelyne Hancock, Brenden Norwood and Haley Theberge, all of Windham, and Matthew McNally of Raymond, have been named to the Dean's List with Highest Honors at the University of New Hampshire for the Spring 2025 semester.

Elizabeth Bearce and Laura Bearce, both of Raymond, and Sadie Vancelette of Windham, have been named to the Dean's List with High Honors at the University of New Hampshire for the Spring 2025 semester.

Kylie Garrison and Bradley Smith, both of Windham, have been named to the Dean's List with Honors at the University of New Hampshire for the Spring 2025 semester.

Penny Lavallee, Katherine Lydon and Emily Morey, all of Windham, and Meghan Messinger of Raymond, have been named to the Dean's List for academic excellence at the University of Maine Fort Kent for the Spring 2025 semester.

Patrick Austin of Raymond has been named to the Dean's List with Highest Honors at the University of New Hampshire Manchester for the Spring 2025 semester

Antonio Candelmo, Nicholas Holmes, Adam Jalbert, Sharon Kennedy, Audria Nickerson, Jade Pierce, Kyle Cathey, Miranda Hopkins, and Ashley Mackie, all of Windham, have been named to the President's List for academic achievement during the Spring 2025 semester at the University of Maine Augusta.

Laura Clark, Thomas Dyer, Leann Johnson, and Orion Ludwick, all of Windham, have been named to the Dean's List for academic excellence during the Spring 2025 semester at the University of Maine Augusta. <

BRIEFS

Blood Drive

North Windham Union Church at 723 Roosevelt Trail in Windham is conducting a Blood Drive in conjunction with the American Red Cross from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday, Sept. 29. To sign up to donate, call 1-800-RED-CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or visit www.redcrossblood.org/give. html/find-drive

Cancer Support

The Windham Cancer Support Group will be meeting at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 30 at the Windham Public Library, 217 Windham Center Road in Windham. Anyone who is affected by cancer in any way is welcome to attend the meeting. FMI, send an email to coppjanet@yahoo.com

Operation Brew & Que

Volunteers of America Northern New England will host the 6th Annual Brew & Que event, a fundraiser to eliminate veteran homelessness in Maine, from 6 to 9 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 2 at Erik's Church, 824 Roosevelt Trail in Windham. Proceeds from the event will directly benefit veterans seeking to emerge from homeless situations in Maine. Stop by for "Good times and bad dancing" with live music from After Dark. Tickets are \$50 each whic includes food and entry. Purchase at www.brewquemaine.org.

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.

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Unbeaten Scarborough holds off Windham boys' soccer

By Matt Pascarella

STAFF WRITER

Windham went up against undefeated Scarborough at Windham on Monday, Sept. 22 and while the Eagles made it especially difficult for the Red Storm in the first half and kept them scoreless for the first 60 minutes, Scarborough's defense was equally as tough, and kept Windham scoreless for two halves. At the final buzzer, Scarborough won 2-0.

"I think especially in the first 60 minutes we were creating opportunities," said Windham senior Daniel Hancock. "We were possessing the ball, winning 50-50s, and that's just the energy we need to keep the whole game. We were confident on the ball and that led to us getting more opportunities. We know we can play with any team in the state; it's just playing that 80 minutes and scoring goals. That (scoreless for 60 minutes) gives us a little more confidence, but there's still a lot of stuff to work on; it's nobody's fault, we just got to keep communicating and working at practice. If we fill those gaps in, we'll be alright."

Hancock said their problem all fall has been finishing; they need to score. He believes things are going to start clicking soon and they'll figure it out.

Both teams started with incredibly strong defense. Windham went hard after the ball. Windham fired several shots at goal, but nothing got in.

Windham defense remained strong for the entire half as they made it difficult for Scarborough to score.

Senior Windham goalie Tate Robinson had several nice saves and the game was scoreless after one half of play.





(L to R) Windham senior Daniel Hancock is the first player to the ball during a boys' soccer game against Scarborough on Sept. 22. Sophomore Sean Lebel turns to quickly get by his opponent. PHOTOS BY MATT PASCARELLA

"We prepared for the game really well and we expected to play with them," said Windham sophomore Sean Lebel. "Our goal was to just hold them off as long as we could and put one in the back of the net, but unfortunately that didn't happen. We had great opportunities in the first half, and we just ran out of gas in the second half. We were able to pair the ball really well. We found marks in the back and when we were on the counterattack, we pushed the ball really quickly. We had a lot of good shots on net."

Lebel said the mental and physical aspects need work. They need to build up more and stay connected.

In the second half, Windham came out with equal intensity as the first half, but it only lasted the first 20 minutes, which is when Scarborough scored. Windham kept their heads up and continued to fight.

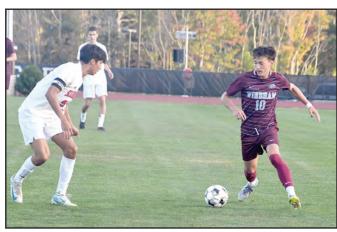
Scarborough scored again, but Windham would not allow any more goals before the final buzzer.

"That first 60 minutes is the best we've played all year and that's a huge

success," said Windham varsity boys' soccer coach Jeff Neal. "The grind is there, the desire is there, the work rate is there, the believability is there in moments, but it's not there consistently enough. We've got to put the ball in the net and that's something we're

tinue to work hard at day-in and day-out. We had some great chances, it'll come; everything seems to be right, but it's not coming up right. We're not going to get down on ourselves. We had some good combination play on the left flank in the first part of the second half but couldn't connect that run on the finishing ball ... and when you're trying to push it a little bit that's a hard thing to sustain. Hopefully we're going to have

some young players step up and we're going to see some opportunities and just run. If it's only five or six minutes if it gives some of our first-line guys a breather, I think tactically that's something we need to look at more. Fuel in the tank – we ran out of it tonight." <



working real hard Senior Dylan Crockett is focused on moving past a at, and we'll con-defender.

THE WEIGHT OF THE WARREN

Jack Henry

Age: 17 Team: WHS varsity boys' soccer Coach: Jeff Neal

Parents' names: Jill and John Henry

Reason for selection: In every game Jack always plays big. He constantly grinds, and is constantly scanning the field, he plays in the center part of the pitch for WHS. Lots of times the ball goes through him to connect from offense to defense. He has to play both ends

of the ball, and it's not a glorious position; you don't get to score goals in that defensive-center mid or sometimes attacking center-mid position. He just works all the time, and he punches up; he's always punching up. Whether that be going in and tackling guys that are twice his size or winning airballs against guys that are twice his size, the team is able to be successful, because they have guys like Jack. Jack epitomizes getting in there and doing the hard work.





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The Windham Eagle Page 15

Field hockey falls to Gorham after neck-and-neck game

By Matt Pascarella

Windham's varsity field hockey team played Gorham at Gorham High School on Tuesday, Sept. 23 and despite a strong start for the Eagles in which they tied the game 1-1 at the half and 2-2 early in the second half, the Rams pushed ahead and outscored Windham 7-2 at the final buzzer.

"I think we did good; we wanted to win really bad," said Windham sophomore Sarah Smyth, who scored Windham's two goals. "We just ran out of energy; we put all our best in the second half with the most momentum, but some calls didn't go our way. We need to come out with that energy that we did in the first quarter and keep it up throughout the second half of the game and keep wanting to win and be first to the ball. I think we did really well with our corners, everybody was where they needed to be, and I think that our fast breaks up the field worked really well, and we did well around defenders. I think just finishing in the circle (needs work). We had a lot of shots, especially in that first half. We had many shots around the goal; they just didn't happen to go in."

In the first quarter, Windham moved the ball well and defense kept Gorham mostly away from Windham's goal. Offense had several shots on goal, but nothing went in.

Smyth scored from the corner with less than two minutes remaining in the second quarter which tied the game, 1-1, at intermission.

In the first minute of the second half, Smyth scored on a corner shot as Windham took the lead.

Unfortunately, Gorham scored again and tied the game, 2-2, in the third quarter.

From this point on, Windham would fight hard, but Gorham took a big lead and scored goal after goal. The Rams held a three-point lead over the Eagles at the end of the third quarter.

"I think we definitely could have





(L to R) Windham sophomore Sarah Smyth fires the ball at the goal and scores during a field hockey game at Gorham High on Tuesday, Sept. 23. Sophomore Mirabelle Kri plays the ball right between two opponents. PHOTOS BY MATT PASCARELLA

come out with more positive attitudes in the second half to defeat Gorham," said Windham junior Morgan Mc-Lain. "We started to lose more and more hope after like two more goals (scored) in the third quarter, and I think that we all started to get really, really tired and ... then we couldn't just keep up with ourselves. We can take away from this to not let the scoreboard affect our emotions because we can obviously come back from whatever challenges we face because we are a strong team with a ... lot of good stamina. This has been our first game that's been a challenging one and we're not done. We still have a lot of motivation in us."

The Eagles continued to fight hard, but Gorham made it difficult.

"(Windham) played the whole game, and they stayed in it," said Windham varsity field hockey coach Maddy Perfetti. "We made the adjustments that we set out to make at halftime, and it just didn't work for us. There were a couple calls that ended up turning the momentum which was really tough. A lot of it comes down to momentum and who's going to make more mistakes and who's going to recover from those mistakes.

It feels bad, but the attitude after the game and getting back to work is going to set us up for a good season. It was our first really competitive game, and it showed. We're ready, though. The first half was great; we were with

Gorham, even into the third quarter, if not having more possessions than Gorham. Seeing those things and then seeing the attitude after the game, I feel strongly it's going to be a great rest of the season." <









Submit letters by Tuesday at Noon to: editor@thewindhameagle.com or mail to: 585 Roosevelt Trail, Windham, 04062

As a resident of Windham and as a Senior Citizen, I am concerned about the significant growth of property taxes in our community. I do understand that we must continue to

support community services such as public safety and our schools, however we need to find ways to lower the tax burden on our citizens.

Like many others in our community, I feel the heavy impact of these

tax increases. It is my hope that we can elect town officials who share my concern. That is one reason why I support Deborah Devou for Town Council. Deborah believes we need to cut property taxes and balance growth in our community.

Deborah has retired from service at the Cumberland County Sheriff's Office. Deborah is obviously a person of high integrity and responsibility. She continues to serve as a volunteer in our community and would be a great asset to our Town Council.

I urge all members of our community to join me in supporting Deborah Devou for Town Council. She will be a voice for those of us concerned about growth and taxes in our community.

~ Bill Holmes, Windham

Editor,

Every day it seems that another precious freedom is threatened, making me depressed, angry, even frightened. I ask myself what I can do, then remember – I can still participate in the most important right: the right to vote in our free and fair elections – at least for now.

In November Mainers have a choice: to continue our free and fair election system or not. Voter turnout is important and is higher in many states that have equal access to absentee voting. Why is the White House urging to end absentee balloting?

The claim that mail-in ballots are corrupted is unfounded. I have worked as a ballot clerk for over 15 years. There has never been voter fraud. Our Town Clerks are professional, knowledgeable, and diligent in following the law.

If you wonder what you can do during these times, vote No on Question 1. Our state and country depend

~ Sue Accardi, Raymond

Editor,

This November, in choosing who will represent us on the Board of Education and Town Council, the voters of Windham find themselves at an important crossroad with each set of representatives.

For the School Board the choice is between stable, moderate leadership and what would appear to be chaos. The candidates endorsed by the Windham Democratic Committee, Christina Small, running for re-election, and Mathew Irving, promise to balance the needs of the entire community while also upholding state and federal law, and more importantly, not leading that board down the rabbit hole of culture wars.

For Town Council, Maggie Terry and Joe Campbell, both running for the first time, have two goals in mind: effectively managing future growth and doing so while restricting tax in-

see LETTERS Page 20

LEGAL NOTICE

TOWN OF RAYMOND, MAINE

NOTICE OF STAFF SITE PLAN REVIEW

Wednesday, September 17, 2025

You are hereby notified that the Raymond Code Enforcement Officer and Contract Planner are considering approval of an Amendment to an Approved Staff Site Plan Review for the following property:

LOCATION: Pipeline Road @ Viola Avenue and Maisie Drive

MAP & LOT: Map 005, Lot 027 **APPLICANT:** Sebago Solar

REASONING: Entry access to Solar Project located in Windham

YOU HAVE UNTIL OCTOBER 15TH, 2025 TO RESPOND WITH ANY OBJECTIONS TO OR CONCERNS ABOUT THIS PROJECT.

You may email your comments to the Raymond Planning and Zoning Administrative Assistant at sandy.fredricks@raymondmaine.org. Application and additional materials are available at the Raymond Town Office (401 Webbs Mills Road) during regular business hours and on the town website: raymondmaine.org

LEGAL NOTICE

TOWN OF RAYMOND, MAINE **RAYMOND PLANNING BOARD PUBLIC MEETING**

Wednesday, October 8, 2025 • 7:00 PM

Broadcast Studio - 423 Webbs Mills Road and Via **ZOOM**

You are hereby notified that the Raymond Planning Board will hold a meeting at the Raymond Broadcast Studio and via Zoom on Wednesday, October 8th, 2025, at 7:00 pm on the following matters:

- 1. Presentation to the Board by Vernon Malloch, OCP regarding Marijuana Ordinance
- 2. Review Draft of Marijuana Regulation Ordinance Review latest Draft of STR Ordinance - THE BOARD WILL BE DISCUSSING COMMENTS FROM LEGAL REVIEW AND MAKING A DETERMINATION TO ACCEPT SAME. THERE WILL BE NO PUBLIC COMMENT ANTICIPATED.
- 3. Staff Communications and Updates

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

JOIN ZOOM MEETING

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85302660838?pwd= OAmzatj8bQedGEpHB2hvUalkfKmW0d.1 Meeting ID: 853 0266 0838 Passcode: 0LY9NA

ONE TAP MOBILE INSTRUCTIONS

https://us02web.zoom.us/meetings/85302660838/ invitations?signature=JpVDf45JQTsvdhVhhU8du51spXMMZCQ8z6Ee_eg9Ts

LEGAL NOTICE

TOWN OF RAYMOND, MAINE

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS PUBLIC HEARING

Tuesday, September 30, 2025 • 7:00 PM

Broadcast Studio - 423 Webbs Mills Road and Via **ZOOM**

You are hereby notified that the Raymond Appeals Board will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, September 30th, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. to hear information on the following application:

APPLICANT: Teresa Ellis, Dennis Martin & Lisa Martin **LOCATION:** Map 78/Lot 62A Zone LRR 1

DESCRIPTION: Administrative Appeal of Permit issued July 22nd, 2025 to Sheena-Jo Randall and Jonathan Stickney for a 4 x 4 temporary platform with stairs to access Thomas Pond.

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

JOIN ZOOM MEETING

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82188775406?pwd= qxmlzt46F4tzKIdkpsbj3fi1Hja8MX.1 Meeting ID: 821 8877 5406 Passcode: 6zLVdE

ONE TAP MOBILE

Meeting ID: 821 8877 5406 Passcode: 6zLVdE

Find your local number: https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kcCuxNQkD7

The Windham Eagle Page 17

Federal Reserve drops interest rate .25 percent finally

By Matthew Trudel SPECIAL TO THE WINDHAM EAGLE

The Federal Re-

serve lowered the

benchmark interest

rate by a quarter

of a percent (.25



low suit.

percent) last week. This is the first rate cut this year, and

-Matt Trudel, Five Star Realty they seemed to signal there will be a series of cuts to fol-

This is meant to lower interest rates and provide some relief to consumers. This does mean mortgage rates will go down slightly, but it is not immediate. This takes a little time for the market and banking industry

What does this mean for buyers and sellers in today's market?

For buyers it means several things. The first one is obvious that hopefully they can lock in a lower interest rate when they find the property that they want to purchase.

Rates are currently fluctuating right around 6.5 percent with good credit. I can see the rates being in the 6.25 percent to 6 percent range in the near future. This change in rate also helps buyers in another way that many people don't think about.

The lower rate now gives the buyers more purchasing power.

Buyers gain more purchasing power with a lower interest rate because the loan amount can be higher than the previous loan amount and still keep the payment the same.

For example, let's just say a buyer has a loan amount of \$400,000 with an interest rate of 6.5 percent and the payment is \$2,528. Now if the interest rate drops to 6 percent the buyer can keep the same payment of \$2,528 and can increase their loan amount to \$421,695. This translates to them being able to look at homes \$20,000 to \$25,000 higher in price or compete against other buyers for a property and offer a higher price.

This is also good news for all of you sellers out there.

The lower rate will help sellers out when they decide to put their property on the market if it isn't already listed and on the market. The lower rate gave buyers more purchasing power as we just discussed. This means more buyers can afford to purchase the seller's property. So now the seller has a larger pool of buyers and potentially more competition from those buyers.

With the Federal Reserve signaling another lowering of the rate may be coming, should buyers wait to purchase a property?

That is more of a personal decision that should be made about what your current situation is. Everyone has different reasons and motivations for purchasing a property. I personally think buyers should not wait in hopes of a lower interest rate.

The old saying is "You marry the property, but date the rate." This just reminds buyers that if the rate does go down significantly that they can refinance in the future.

Speaking of refinancing a property, current property owners can benefit from the Federal Reserve lowering the interest rate as well.

Current property owners who may have purchased their home in the last year or so should keep an eye on what the Federal Reserve does in their next few sessions. It appears they plan to make another rate cut in the next session and maybe a couple more rate

So, when is it a good time to refinance or how much of a change in your rate makes it worth it to refinance?

The general rule is you need to be getting at lease a rate 1 percent lower than your current rate. I usually say at least 1.25 percent lower. There are other factors as well to take into consideration like closing costs and the term of the loan. You should also calculate how long it will take you recoup those closing cost from the amount you will be saving with this lower rate.

All in all, we are heading in the right direction with this rate drop and hopefully the Federal Reserve follows through in the next session with another rate cut.

This article was written by Matt Trudel, Owner/Broker of Five Star Realty, Windham. Reach out to him for all your real estate needs at 207-939-6971 or send him an email at: matt@ fivestarrealtymaine.com. <



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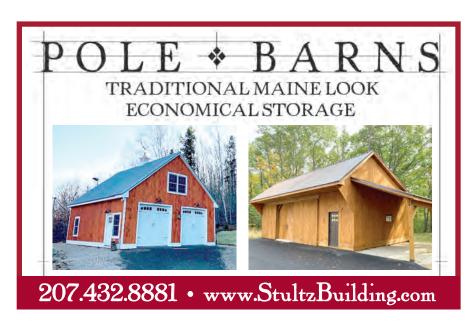
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PLEASE NOTE: FOOD AND GAMES FEATURE ALTERNATES WITH MOVIE REVIEW

THE WINDHAM EAGLE'S

ooking

By Angela Paris SPECIAL TO THE WINDHAM EAGLE • JUGGLINGACTMAMA.COM

Easy Chicken Tortilla Soup

This Easy Chicken Tortilla Soup recipe really couldn't be more simple and is ready in just 30 minutes. It starts with a can of tomato puree and a carton of chicken stock. I use low sodium products so that I can control the amount of salt in the recipe. Be sure to taste before serving and adjust your seasoning as needed. I use chicken breasts, but you can use any chicken you like even shredded rotisserie chicken. Everyone gets exactly what they like by adding delicious toppings to suit their own tastes. Makes six servings

INGREDIENTS

1 tablespoon of olive oil 1 sweet onion, finely diced 1/2 cup of sweet bell pepper, finely diced 1 clove of garlic, minced 1 32-ounce box of chicken stock 1 15.9-ounce can of tomato puree

1 pound chicken breasts, diced 1 tablespoon of taco seasoning mix 1 teaspoon of garlic powder 1/2 teaspoon of ground cumin

2 cups of Spanish rice prepared

Salt and Pepper to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

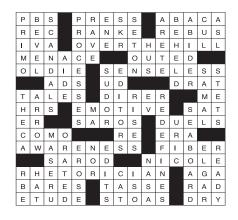
In a Dutch oven heat the olive oil over medium heat, then add the onion and peppers and cook until tender. Add the garlic and cook for 1 to 2 minutes more. Stir in the chicken stock and the tomato puree. Add the chicken to the pot. Season with taco seasoning mix, granulated garlic, cumin, salt, and pepper. Bring the soup to a boil, then reduce heat and allow the soup to simmer for 20 to 25 minutes until the chicken is tender.

Just before serving, stir in the prepared Spanish rice. Serve with optional toppings such as tortilla strips, sour cream, chunks of avocado, Queso Blanco, chopped cilantro, and slices of jalapeno peppers.

Cooking Corner proudly sponsored by Mills & Co.



LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS





15 18 20 21 30 31 35 38 42 48 49 52 53 61 63 65

CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Expression of surprise
- 4. Keyboard key
- 7. One who works on lights
- 12. Notable children's story
- 15. Fall back into a bad pattern
- 16. Eye parts
- 18. Atomic #18
- 19. Of she
- 20. Farm state
- 21. One point south of southeast
- 24. British media entity
- 27. Asian garment
- 30. Drench
- 31. Expressions of pleasure
- 33. Turf

CROSSWORD PI

- 34. UK trade union (abbr.)
- 35. Bleated

- 37. Fifth note of a major scale
- 39. Paddle
- 41. Monetary unit of Italy
- 42. American classical pianist
- 44. Shuts down for the day
- 47. Seize
- 48. Soluble ribonucleic acid
- 49. Greeting
- 50. Some cars still need it
- 52. Atomic #22
- 53. Let go
- 56. Marched in public
- 61. U.S. residents, Mexicans and Canadians
- 63. Hostilities
- 64. Speak aloud
- 65. River in NE Scotland

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Razorbill genus
- 2. Longtime Baltimore tight end
- 3. Performs on stage
- 4. Supports a sentiment
- 5. Rugged mountain ranges 6. Broadway songwriter Sammy
- 7. Snakelike fish
- 8. Men's fashion accessory
- 9. Hospital worker
- 10. Something to scratch
- 11. No (Scottish)
- 12. Volcanic ash
- 13. Of this
- 14. American jazz drummer Watts 17. Drop down
- 22. English dialect
- 23. Predatory seabirds 24. Imams' deputies
- 25. Fertility god
- 26. Fence material

- 28. Parks and DeLauro are two
- 29. Distinctive smell (Brit.)
- 32. Protein-rich liquids
- 36. Touch lightly
- 38. Season for Catholics 40. Boat race
- 43. Police actions
- 44. Chinese river
- 45. Waterfall (Scottish)
- 46. Walk ostentatiously
- 51. Type of carpet
- 54. Mauna ___, Hawaiian volcano
- 55. Sea eagles
- 56. An enclosure for confining livestock
- 57. Dry
- 58. An increase in price or value
- 59. The highest point of something
- 60. Government lawyers
- 62. Larry and Curly's pal

HOW TO SOLVE:

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

LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS

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			8	4				

The Windham Eagle Page 19

PLEASE NOTE: THE BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT IS A PAID ADVERTISEMENT. TO HAVE YOUR BUSINESS HIGHLIGHTED CALL MELISSA: 207-894-3500

In the small towns of Maine, there are few things more exciting than a night out with friends. Whether it's a concert in Portland, a casino excursion in Oxford, a hockey game at the Cross Insurance Arena, or a bachelor or bachelorette party that's planned to last until the early hours, getting everyone to and from the event can be the trickiest part. That's where the Songo River Queen Bus comes in. This new option gives groups a way to travel together, leave the cars behind, and turn the ride itself into part of the celebration.

The Songo River Queen Bus is owned by Ryan Calvalho and his wife, Kellyann. They also operate the Songo River Queen II and Songo River Princess, offering scenic and entertainment cruises on Long Lake, the Chute River, and Brandy Pond. They started the Songo River Queen Bus to bring a much-needed service to Naples. Their goal: where transportation meets camaraderie. Rather than organizing carpools, choosing designated drivers, or juggling parking at busy venues, small parties can book the bus and travel as a unit. Everyone boards together, arrives together, and heads home together. The stress of driving melts away, replaced with conversation, laughter, and anticipation for the night ahead.

One of the best parts of the experience is the sense of community it creates. For concerts, the atmosphere on the bus starts to feel like a pre-show



warm-up, sharing friends playlists, talking about the band, and getting into the spirit long before the music starts. At sporting events, the ride itself can feel like the beginning of the tailgate, with cheers and predictions bouncing back and forth across the seats. For bachelor bachelorette parties, it provides a safe and stylish way to move between

dinner, bars, and late-night stops without ever breaking up the group.

Safety, of course, is another major benefit. No one has to worry about who's driving home, who is navigating unfamiliar streets, or where to find the car after a late night. By keeping everyone together and out of individual vehicles, the Songo River Queen Bus ensures that the fun doesn't come at the cost of responsibility. Parents



The Songo River Queen Bus offers a fun, safe travel option for groups of up to 50 people within finding spots near **80 miles of Naples.** COURTESY PHOTO

The bus is also practical. Parking at large events has become a challenge, when multiple cars are involved. Fees

sending their kids

to a game, friends

planning a night in

the city, or bridal

parties celebrating

their last fling be-

fore the ring can all

relax knowing the

especially

ride is covered.

the entrance often means arriving hours early. By taking the bus, groups bypass the headache. Drop-offs and pick-ups happen closer to the action, and the night flows seamlessly from start to finish. It's an especially welcome convenience for

those who want to enjoy a party but don't want to deal with the hassle of driving back at the end of the evening. Beyond the logistics, the bus adds a

sense of occasion. Stepping onto a pri-

vate ride reserved just for your group transforms a regular outing into something special. The journey becomes an extension of the celebration itself. For birthdays, anniversaries, or reunions, it offers a chance to reminisce and share stories before the main event. For bachelor or bachelorette parties, it creates a festive, moving headquarters where the laughter never stops. Even a simple trip to a game can feel elevated when everyone is traveling together with the energy building along the way.

The Songo River Queen Bus is more than a ride; it's an opportunity to reimagine how small groups experience local events. The bus can accommodate up to 50 people and is affordable, at only \$100 per hour for a 4-hour minimum. As more people look for ways to spend time with friends and family without the stress of driving, this bus fills an important gap. It's not just about getting from one place to another, but about making every part of the night, even the ride, memorable.

So, the next time you and your friends are planning a trip to a show, a game, or a night on the town, consider leaving the cars at home. Step aboard the Songo River Queen Bus, settle into your seat, and enjoy the ride. The destination will be worth it, but chances are, you'll find that the journey is just as much fun.

The bus operates year-round. To reserve your date call 207-693-6861 or send a message on Facebook through the Songo River Queen II page. <



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LETTERS Cont. from page 16 creases.

This group offers the best way forward for our town and schools. Everyone should vote, and I suggest supporting these candidates.

~ Jim VanNest, Windham

Editor,

Town of Windham residents, as a mother of a Windham High School student, I care deeply about who serves on our school board. That's why I support Destiny Johnson. For over 25 years I've witnessed personal accounts of her steadfast passion for kids firsthand, whether out on the field coaching or standing alongside parents to encourage our youth. Her commitment goes beyond words; it

shows in her actions and the time she gives to help our children grow.

Destiny also brings practical experience of running a small, independent business with her husband in Windham. That takes hard work, problem-solving, and accountability. These are qualities we need on our school board.

I trust Destiny to prioritize fairness and safety while preparing our students to become confident, independent contributors to society. She has the heart of a mom, the skills of a business leader, and the voice of a coach who never gives up on kids.

Elect Destiny Johnson for Windham School Board.

Thank you for this consideration. ~ Melinda L. Smith, Windham

Steps to protect against ID theft

- One way to help safeguard your personal information is to enable automatic updates on your device's operating system and antivirus software. These updates often fix known security vulnerabilities that criminals could exploit.
- Be cautious of unsolicited calls, texts, emails and social media messages. Criminals spoof phone numbers and impersonate trusted sources to appear legitimate. Avoid clicking on links in emails, texts or online ads. Rather, type the web address of the company whose site you want to visit directly into you web browser. Let your voicemail or answering machine handle unfamiliar calls. If the call is important, the person will likely leave a message, and you can verify the number and information before calling back.
- Shred anything containing sensitive information that you don't need to keep for specific purposes. For example, shred credit card statements, sales receipts, medical statements and credit offers that you no longer need. AARP offers free document shredding and other fraud-related events across the country. To see if one is planned near you, visit aarp.org/local.

Learn how to spot and avoid scams with AARP Fraud Watch Network™. Suspect a scam? Call our free helpline at 877-908-3360 and talk to one of our fraud specialists about what to do next. <

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