THE WINDHAM EAGLE

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Windham remembers military sacrifices on behalf of freedom on Veterans Day

By Ed Pierce
STAFF WRITER

A packed house paid tribute to the sacrifices Windham's military heroes continue to make during a moving Veterans Day observance on Wednesday.

Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 10643 Commander Jeff Cook welcomed visitors of all ages to the Windham Veterans Center and served as Master of Ceremonies for the event, which was standing room only and featured live patriotic music performed by the Windham Chamber Singers.

Cook introduced Ryan Murray, the new director of choral activities at Windham High School and the Chamber Singers conductor. Murray led the singers in performing "The Star-Spangled Banner" and the official songs of each branch of the armed forces as veterans in the audience stood as their song was played.

After an invocation by VFW Chaplain Roger Timmons, Cook said Veterans Day honors every American who has worn our nation's uniform, in war and in peace, at home and abroad, with gratitude, respect and humble thanks.

"Veterans Day is a sacred opportunity to pause and honor the extraordinary service, selfless sacrifice and unyielding commitment of generation after generation of veterans," Cook said. "Men and women from every corner of our nation, every background and every walk of life have answered the call, united by the same oath. Their vigilance has preserved the freedoms we cherish and the country we love."

According to Cook, the debt our nation owes extends far beyond those who have worn the uniform.

"Military spouses, children and families serve alongside their loved ones, carrying the weight of long deployments, frequent moves and missed milestones with remarkable strength and deserve our thanks too," he said.

Cook knows all too well about the contributions of military veterans to America's freedom. He is a retired U.S. Navy Seabee who deployed with the Navy SEALS to Afghanistan as a support Team platoon commander.

He was part of a group sent to build Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan which was the center of the war against the Tailban and al-Queda terrorists for 20 years.

"During this time, many military service young men and women tasked with this job died," he said. "It is important that we remember them for their sacrifice."



Windham High junior Nate Plati, left, and Windham Veterans Center resident Tom Theriault, were honored during the annual Windham Veterans Day observance for their contributions to the Windham Veterans Center before a standing room only audience in Windham. PHOTO BY ED PIERCE

During the Veterans Day observance, Cook called Windham Veterans Center President Tom Theriault, who also serves as American Legion Post Field-Allen 148 commander, to the podium. Theriault was recognized for his unselfish dedication to Windham veterans and their families and

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Women's acapella chorus incorporates while preparing for holiday performances

By Erin Rose
STAFF WRITER

Harmony 207, Windham's all women's acapella chorus, is celebrating incorporating with international non-profit Harmony, Incorporated and looking forward to meeting with members of the community at upcoming holiday events.

Denise "D" Dyer, the group's founder and director, welcomed the new members to the parent organization with pins, membership cards and welcome letters during their rehearsal on Tuesday, Nov. 3.

"My original goal was to have the chorus charter in 2027, but we took advantage of prorated dues with Harmony, Inc., got our paperwork in order and applied to Charter in October," she said, noting that joining the larger organization helps give the group access to its non-profit status and library of resources. "The more exciting part, on Nov. 3, was presenting the new member packets to 14 of our 15 new members."

The charter process complete, the group can now entirely focus on their busy schedule of performances throughout December.

Harmony 207 will start their slate of holiday performances on with a preview concert, to be held at St. Ann's Episcopal Church, located at 40 Windham Center Road, at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 1.



Members of Harmony 207, Windham's all women's acapella chorus, gather after a rehearsal in the Sanctuary of Windham Hill UCC Church on Nov. 3. The singers are preparing for holiday concerts and are celebrating incorporating with international non-profit Harmony, Incorporated. COURTESY PHOTO

"We will be doing the whole show (45 minutes)," Dyer said. "One of our members asked if they might have a concert there during the holidays, and we didn't want to add to the weekend busyness" so will hold the concert during their normal rehearsal time.

The chorus will also appear at the Windham Hill United Church of Christ's Festival of Trees, located at 140 Windham Center Road, performing at 4 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 4, the second of the event's three days, running from Friday, Dec. 4 through Sunday, Dec. 6.

"Another of our members asked if we might participate in the Festival of Trees, like a flash mob," Dyer explained. "We will sing three songs, stroll around and 20 minutes, sing again, and 20 minutes later sing again (we'll be there about an hour)."

"We'll be able to pass out invitations for women to come sing, as well as talk up the concert on Dec. 12," she said.

The group's solo concert will be held at the Windham Hill UCC Church at 2 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 12, featuring 10 songs performed by the women in four-part acapella harmony. The concert has been the focal point for their rehearsals in the six months since the chorus's forming.

"That concert was our goal - we will rehearse on Tuesday evenings in Fellowship Hall, and perform a concert during the holidays," Dyer said, noting that the group arranged with the church to use their facility free of charge to rehearse in exchange for the event. "The church will collect donations and allocate to a church program."

Finally, the group will perform at The Church of Latter Days Saints' free community concert, located at 755 River Road, on Wednesday, Dec. 16.

Each show will also contain an audience participation

see CHORUS Page 15

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INSIGHT

Another edition of 'Believe it or Not'

Journalists with longevity can point to one story that stands out as the oddest or perhaps the strangest in their careers. Mine happens to involve a Civil War soldier, lightning, an 83-year disappearance and an unbelievable recovery.

In 2014, I was writing for a daily newspaper in Laconia, New Hampshire and had the great fortune to tell this tale.

Loammi Bean was a 37-year-old farmer serving in the 8th New Hampshire Volunteer Regiment on Oct. 27, 1862 when his unit confronted Confederate forces near a site called Georgia Landing, close to an abandoned sugar refinery in Tigonsville, Louisiana. Bean was a private with less than a year of military experience when he was killed in action that day and his remains were buried in an unmarked grave near the battlefield.

His daughter, Nellie Bean Zebley, was about 14 when her father Loammi died and she grew up in very humble circumstances. Zebley married a wealthy banker from New York City but chose to live in Laconia, New Hampshire. She deeply missed her father and in 1894, Zebley paid to have an elaborate cast iron statue with a fountain and bronze memorial plaque at its base dedicated to her late father and installed at a prominent location near Lake Winnipesaukee close to where Civil War veterans' groups would gather every summer for reunions.

Nellie's health began to decline by the time she was in her late 70s, and she hired a private nurse by the name of Josie Swain of Warren, New Hampshire to care for her in her home in Laconia until she passed away at the age of 80 in 1928.

Now here's where the story gets weird.

In the early evening of July 24, 1931, violent thunderstorms ripped through Laconia and a bolt of lightning struck the Loammi Bean statue, shattering it and sending pieces of it flying nearby. When Laconia residents realized what had happened, they ran to the statue site and started gathering up and collecting pieces of the demolished statue as souvenirs. The next day's edition of the daily newspaper in Laconia reported that people were seen carrying off the statue's arms, hands, legs and whatever else they could find, including the memorial plaque for Loammi Bean.

The statue was not rebuilt, but some members of the town government sought to recover the bronze plaque and give it to Nellie's surviving family. That never happened and after a few years during the Great Depression, the mystery of the missing plaque faded slowly into history.

Some 47 years later in 1978, Robert and Sylvia Newton discovered a burned-out old farmhouse cellar on their property in Warren, New Hampshire. Robert had spotted something shiny when he attempted to illuminate down the cellar hole with a flashlight. He was able to reach down and grab the shiny object. Once the dust was cleared away, that object turned out to be a bronze plaque dedicated to a Civil War soldier, Loammi Bean of Laconia.

The Newtons then sat down and wrote a letter to the City of Laconia describing the object they had found on their property. They included a scroll etching of the plaque, put the letter and the scroll in a large manila envelope and mailed it off, hoping to receive a reply right away.

Once the envelope was received by the city, apparently nobody there knew what to do with the information inside and the city clerk's office set it aside in a filing cabinet. It sat there for another 36 years when it was placed into a box and given to the city's historical society.

The historical society's executive director looked over the letter and the etched scroll and quickly realized it was about the missing Loammi Bean plaque. She set out to find out if the Newtons still lived in Warren and if they still had the plaque.

The answer she found was that they were indeed still alive and still living at the same home in Warren, New Hampshire. And yes, they still had the plaque.

The best guess put forward to solve the mystery by the historical society's executive director was that sometime after lightning struck the Loammi Bean statue in 1931, someone tried to return the plaque to the Zebley and the Bean family, but she was dead and they were unable to do that. So, the person who recovered the plaque gave it to Zebley's nurse Swain before she had moved back to Warren from Laconia.

But how the plaque wound up in the cellar hole prior to its discovery by the Newtons is also an enigma. The Newtons lived more than four miles away from where Swain lived with her family before her death in 1947.

In 2014, the Newtons loaned the plaque to the City of Laconia where it was displayed at the public library in an exhibition dedicated to military veterans. Descendants of Zebley living in Laconia were able to hold the plaque and said they were grateful to be able to do that because it linked a relic of the past with their own family's history.

I've covered many unusual stories during my career, but this ranks right up there. <

~ Ed Pierce



NOVEMBER 13

1805 – Johann George Lehner, a Viennese butcher, invents a menu item he calls the "frankfurter."

1922 – The U.S. Supreme Court upholds mandatory vaccinations for public school students to safeguard public health.

1927 – The Holland Tunnel opens to the public providing access between New York City and New Jersey beneath the Hudson River.

1940 – The Walt Disney movie "Fantasia" debuts at New York's Broadway Theater.

1942 – U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt signs a measure lowering the minimum draft age from 21 to 18.

1971 – NASA's Mariner 9 becomes the first spacecraft to orbit the planet Mars.

1982 – The Vietnam Veterans Memorial is dedicated in Washington, D.C.

1986 – U.S. President Ronald Reagan acknowledges sending defensive weapons and spare parts to Iran but denies it was sent to free hostages.

ON THE SPOT

What's your favorite Thanksgiving holiday dessert?

"Apple Pie or Cheesecake."
– Amanda Fogg

"Pecan pie, the kind that's full of nuts all through the filling plus a solid layer on top; vanilla ice cream makes it perfect."
– Francesco Paredon

"Hailey's Kitchen crème brulee and NY Cheesecake."
– Rebecca Coffin

"My double layer pumpkin pie."
Valerie Livesay Luce

"For this year I am going to make a Pumpkin Layer Cake with Brown Sugar and Cinnamon Cream Cheese Frosting." – Chris Macklin

"Several years ago, I learned how to make toffee pudding from my sister and it's so good after a huge meal."
– Mia Potenzio-Ransey

"Peach cobbler."
– Louise V. Snider

"Cranberry Raspberry Galette, Chocolate Pecan Pie and Caramel Apple Crisp."
– Isabella Mongon

"Every year we celebrate by bringing home a frozen Jubilee Ice Cream Cake."
– Deirdre Schulte

"Sweet potato pie."
– Lollie Gomez Nunez

"Cranberry orange spice cake."
– Sarah Singer-Miller

"My family always asks me to make mincemeat pie and it still tastes good after all these years." – Mitchell B. Robinson

"Caramel honey ice cream."
– Lois Fuller

"My memere's chocolate pie."
– Tawny Lamabe-Punto

"Ever since I was very young, I have liked lemon meringue pie and it remains my favorite Thanksgiving dessert today."
– Rick Seacroft

"Grands-Peres sugar dumplings served warm and then topped with maple syrup and ice cream."
– Anne Glotchshuk

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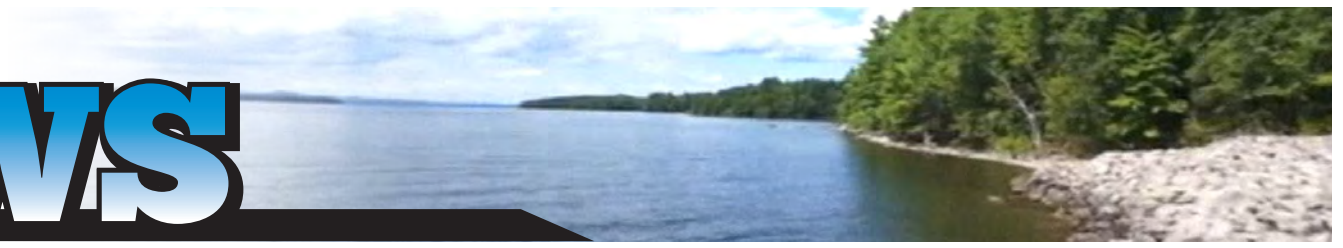



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Eagle NEWS



PWD secures $8.1 million grant to protect Sebago Lake

Portland Water District (PWD) has been awarded an $8.1 million federal grant to lead a regional watershed protection initiative safeguarding Sebago Lake, the drinking water source for more than 200,000 people.

Through the Sebago Clean Waters (SCW) collaborative, partners will advance stream restoration, forest conservation, and forest stewardship across the Sebago Lake watershed from Bethel to Standish.

The award, funded through the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), will leverage an additional $10 million in partner contributions, enabling more than $18 million in critical watershed protection work.

This award builds on an initial $8 million RCPP award secured in 2020. That award resulted in the conservation of over 12,000 acres of priority forest, the reconnection of 42 miles of rivers and streams, and the sustainable management of over 5,000 acres.

PWD's responsibility to provide safe, reliable drinking water begins with protecting its source. Watershed conservation and stewardship complement the treatment and monitoring programs by safeguarding water quality before it reaches Sebago Lake.

"Conserving land is essential to protecting Sebago Lake. This investment strengthens that protection by improving forest health and reconnecting streams," said Paul Hunt, Environmental Services Manager at PWD. "It is an $8.15 million commitment to the people who depend on Sebago Lake today and the generations who will depend on it tomorrow."

Over the next five years, this Phase II initiative will focus on three key priorities:

- Permanent Forest Conservation: Working with interested landowners to purchase conservation easements on high-priority forests to safeguard natural water filtration and prevent development fragmentation.
- Forest Stewardship: Providing private landowners with technical assistance and funding for forest management planning, invasive plant and insect control, and habitat enhancement.
- Stream Restoration: Removing barriers and improving stream crossings to promote fish passage, restore natural river flows, and build flood resilience.

Anticipated outcomes of this Phase II project include 30 miles of improved stream habitat, over 6,000 acres of improved forest stewardship and 2,000 acres of permanent forest conservation.

"This award demonstrates what strong regional collaboration can accomplish," said Karen Young, Partnership Director for Sebago Clean Waters. "By bringing together partners with shared interest in conserving the watershed, we are multiplying the impact of every dollar invested. This funding allows us to expand our reach, work with more landowners and build resilience into our regional ecosystem."

Half of the on-the-ground project funding is directed for aquatic habitat restoration along local streams. Over decades, outdated culverts and stream crossings have fragmented and degraded water habitat. SCW partners will upgrade crossings to restore natural stream connections, allow fish and other aquatic organisms to pass freely, and reduce local flood risks during heavy storms.

SCW partners the Lakes Environmental Association and the Casco Bay Estuary Partnership will work closely with Trout Unlimited to identify and repair important stream crossings in the Crooked River and other river networks in the watershed.

"Our lakes and streams don't exist in isolation, they depend on healthy tributaries and well-managed forests surrounding them," said Colin Holme, Executive Director of the Lakes Environmental Association. "This investment enables us to tackle critical stream crossings, open up miles of habitat for native aquatic species, and work directly with landowners and towns to keep our ecosystems thriving while improving road and drainage infrastructure at the same time."

The project is in support of a national NRCS priority to safeguard critical public drinking water sources.

About participants

Portland Water District protects public health and the environment by delivering clean drinking water to more than 200,000 Mainers and providing essential wastewater services.

Sebago Clean Waters works collaboratively to sustain and enhance clean water and healthy forests in the Sebago Lake watershed to support thriving human and ecological communities.

The SCW collaborative members are Loon Echo, Western Foothills, Mahoosuc, and Presumpscot Regional Land Trusts, Lakes Environmental Association, Casco Bay Estuary Partnership, Portland Water District, Open Space Institute, and The Nature Conservancy.

Trout Unlimited brings people together across the country to be champions for their rivers and help make our water cleaner, our communities healthier and our fisheries stronger. <



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RSU 14 Board declines naming new school after Diamond

By Ed Pierce
STAFF WRITER

By a vote of 7-2, the RSU 14 Board of Directors rejected a proposal to name the new middle school under construction for the late Windham legislator and children's advocate Bill Diamond.

Meeting on Wednesday, Nov. 4 at Windham High School, the board instead voted to name the school Windham Raymond Middle School to make the Raymond students, and the Raymond community feel that they are an equal part of the new school and to reflect both the communities of Windham and Raymond.

When the new school opens in August 2027, students attending Windham Middle School and Jordan-Small Middle School in Raymond are scheduled to go to the new school and each of the current middle schools will be closed. Fifth grade classes from Manchester School in Windham are also scheduled to attend the new school.

Prior to voting on the new school's name, members of the community spoke about their preferences for the new school's name and RSU 14 Board Chair Christina Small entered emails that the board received about the name into the meeting minutes.

John Cressey of Windham, a Windham High School graduate and local business owner organized an effort to have the school named for Diamond, who died Aug. 31, 2025 at the age of 80.

"Having the new school named for one of the most influential people in Windham and Raymond, who rose up to become Maine Secretary of State, all while still maintaining close ties to the community would be inspirational," Cressey said. "He deeply cared about the community and for children and was at every sporting event until he passed away. He sponsored a softball team every season for 30 years in Windham Little League even after his daughters were out of school."

Diamond had taught in both Windham and Raymond schools, was the original principal of Manchester School in Windham, and also served as principal of Windham Middle School, Jordan-Small Middle School in Raymond and was Superintendent of Raymond schools. He also represented both Windham and Raymond as a Maine State Senator, Windham as a Maine State Representative, and was Maine's Secretary of State from 1989 to 1997.

He also co-founded Windham Neighbors Helping Neighbors to provide heat assistance to those in need in Windham and Raymond, and the Walk A Mile In Their Shoes Foundation to end child homicide in the state of Maine. He was known statewide as a staunch advocate for children and led Maine Senate investigations into prominent deaths of abused children whose families were relegated to the state's child welfare system.

Some critics opposed naming the new school for Diamond because of his association as superintendent and director of governmental relations for the troubled Elan School in Poland in the 1980s, which was permanently closed in 2011 following allegations of abuse there.

After voting to name the new school Windham Raymond Middle School, some board members suggested that Diamond could be remembered by creating a scholarship for graduates in his memory.

Despite the RSU 14 Board of Directors vote, supporters of the naming the new school after Diamond have created a community petition drive and hope to present it at a future board meeting and ask the board to reconsider the school's name. Community members can also email comments about the school's name to schoolboard@rsu14.org <

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Geer wins House 86 seat while Bagshaw requests recount

By Ed Pierce
STAFF WRITER

As the 2026 general election results become official and candidates are sworn in for municipal and legislative duties, several questions about the election remain.

In Windham, incumbent Republican Barbara Bagshaw has formally requested a recount of votes in the Maine House District 106 race.

Bagshaw has represented the district, which encompasses part of Windham, since she was first elected to the position in November 2022. She initially defeated Democrat Dana Reed by 23 votes in 2022 in a race that also featured a formal recount of ballots. In 2024, Bagshaw retained her legislative seat by defeating Democrat Doris Poland by 382 votes.

This year, however, vote tallies show Democrat Bradley Youngs, a former golf professional, restaurant manager, stay-at-home father, received 2,637 votes to Bagshaw's 2,498, a margin of 139 votes.

In a statement on Facebook from Nov. 6, Bagshaw shared a letter she sent to the Maine Deputy Secretary of State and the Bureau of Corporations, Elections and Commissions to formally request a recount. She will be represented by attorneys Joshua Tardy and Kim Pettengill in the recount.

"Due to the outpouring of concern and support from my constituents, we are requesting a recount," Bagshaw posted on Facebook.

According to Jana Spaulding, Maine Deputy Secretary of State for Communications, a candidate, including a write-in candidate, other than the declared winner in an election may apply to the municipal clerk in writing for a recount. Written recount requests must be received by the clerk within five business days after the day of the contested election.

She said that a recount is a public proceeding open to public attendance, subject to reasonable restrictions necessary to protect recount integrity or resulting from space limitations.

During the recount, the municipal clerk maintains control over the ballots and other recount materials. No recount personnel other than the clerk may have access to the areas where ballots are stored unless accompanied by the clerk or the clerk's designee.

The municipal clerk, in this instance Windham Town Clerk Anthony Blasi, will publicly explain the recount procedure at the start of the recount and shall supervise the sorting and hand counting of the votes in public with assistance from counters appointed by the clerk. A candidate may provide counters to conduct the recount under the supervision of the municipal clerk. If an insufficient number of counters is provided, the clerk shall supply counters. Municipal officers and candidates on that election ballot may not serve as counters.

Municipal clerks and counters shall follow all applicable laws and the rules for determining voter intent adopted by the Secretary of State. If any ballots are disputed as to voter intent, the candidates may resolve the dispute by consensus in accordance with rules for determining voter intent adopted by the Secretary of State. If a consensus cannot be reached, those disputed ballots must be set aside. If the number of disputed ballots potentially affects the outcome of the recount, the municipal clerk shall forward the disputed ballots to the clerk of the nearest Superior Court in the county in which the election was held.

Upon written request, the municipal clerk shall make the incoming voting list and absentee ballot materials, along with all records required by law to be kept in connection with the election, available for inspection, unless those materials have been requested as part of a state recount.

Following the recount, the municipal clerk shall reseal the package of ballots and incoming voting list and shall note on the package the fact that the recount was held and the date of the recount.

Within 24 hours after the results of the recount are determined, the municipal clerk shall prepare, sign and issue a final recount tabulation.

Spaulding said that all recounts take place at 45 Commerce Drive in Augusta, the same location as where Ranked Choice Voting tabulation is taking place for the U.S. House race between Paul LePage and Matt Dunlap.

see ELECTION Page 21

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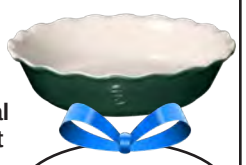
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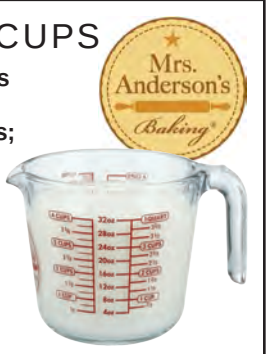
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LETTER to the editor

Editor,

The Windham Lions Club is especially grateful for the community support in our recent Stuff the Bus. Thank you very much for helping us collect 618 pounds of non-perishable food and the three bags of handmade knitted hats, mittens and sewn pillowcases. Thank you for all the support that Hannaford of Windham gave to us throughout the day from their management team and employee support. We wish to thank the RSU 14 Windham Raymond bus transport team for arranging the bus for that day. We are also thankful for Gary "Tiger" Bacon and Bus #9 for the safe delivery, departure and the unloading of all the donations. Thank you also for our Lions support team that helped us out: Gene, Ed, Lion cub AJ and Tay, and the food pantry volunteers. With everyone's support, we supported the food insecurities of our community members and for the donations to support our children in need during the holiday season.

Please do not forget to mark your calendar for Breakfast with Santa from 8 to 10 a.m. on Dec. 12, 2026. The breakfast is free (pancakes, sausage, orange juice, milk, hot chocolate, and coffee), but donations are accepted. Children will be able to talk with Santa and have pictures taken with Santa, so bring your camera. The Breakfast is at the Windham Veterans Hall behind Hannaford›s Windham Maine. (35 Veterans Memorial Drive, Windham Maine) The Windham Lions Club is very thankful to the Windham Veterans for the use of their center.

~ Robert Simmons
Windham Lions Club

STUDENT OF THE WEEK — Gracie Glaus



Grade: PreK **School:** Raymond Elementary
Teacher: Mrs. Cashman
Favorite subject(s) in school: Dramatic Play during center choices.
Parents' names: Byron and Mollie
Reason for selection: Gracie is a kind friend to everyone, making sure all are included and welcome in the classroom. She stands out as a leader and rises to expectations by setting a positive example and being a wonderful role model. Gracie has an infectious spirit that draws friends to her, bringing joy and laughter to the class. Gracie is an active learner who engages in all of the activities, striving for knowledge and understanding. Her creativity shows as she explores our invention lab using various materials and recyclable items to bring her ideas to life. In her learning, she engages and collaborates with others encouraging new ideas to bloom and flourish. She is a helper and loves being "an assistant" as she navigates the day, including others and being a friend to all.

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VETERANS *Cont. from page 1*

for spearheading the initiative this past year to raise $35,000 to install solar panels on the Veterans Center building, helping to reduce the facility's utility bills. The panels were installed during the summer and will keep the building affordable for rentals well into the future.

Cook then asked Windham High School junior Nate Plati to come forward where he was presented with a certificate of recognition for organizing the "Ultimate Murph Challenge" in May at the school on Memorial Dav.

The "Murph Challenge" honors the late U.S. Navy SEAL Lt. Michael Murphy, a Medal of Honor recipient who lost his life protecting his team in Afghanistan in 2005. Cook knew Murphy and said he was humbled that Plati chose to do this to raise money for the Windham Veterans Center.

The "Ultimate Murph Challenge" consists of a 20-mile run, 1,000 pull-ups, 2,000 pushups and 3,000 squats done in one day.

Through his completion of the "Ultimate Murph Challenge" Plati collected $6,000 in pledges and ended up with the second-largest donation to the Windham Veterans Center Solar Project.

Two local students were revealed as winners of VFW Post 10643's annual Patriot's Pen essay contest and Voice of Democracy competition.

Annaelle Kawaya, won $200 and a backpack as the winner of the VFW post's Patriot's Pen contest for her essay about "What A Veteran Taught Me About America." Kawaya is an eighth-grade student at Windham Middle School. Her essay will advance to VFW district competition in Maine in January.

Windham Christian Academy seventh-grader Willima Kindred won VFW Post 10643's annual Voice of Democracy contest for his speech about "What A Veteran Taught Me About America." For his winning entry, Kindred won $250 and a backpack and he also advances to VFW district competition in Maine in January.

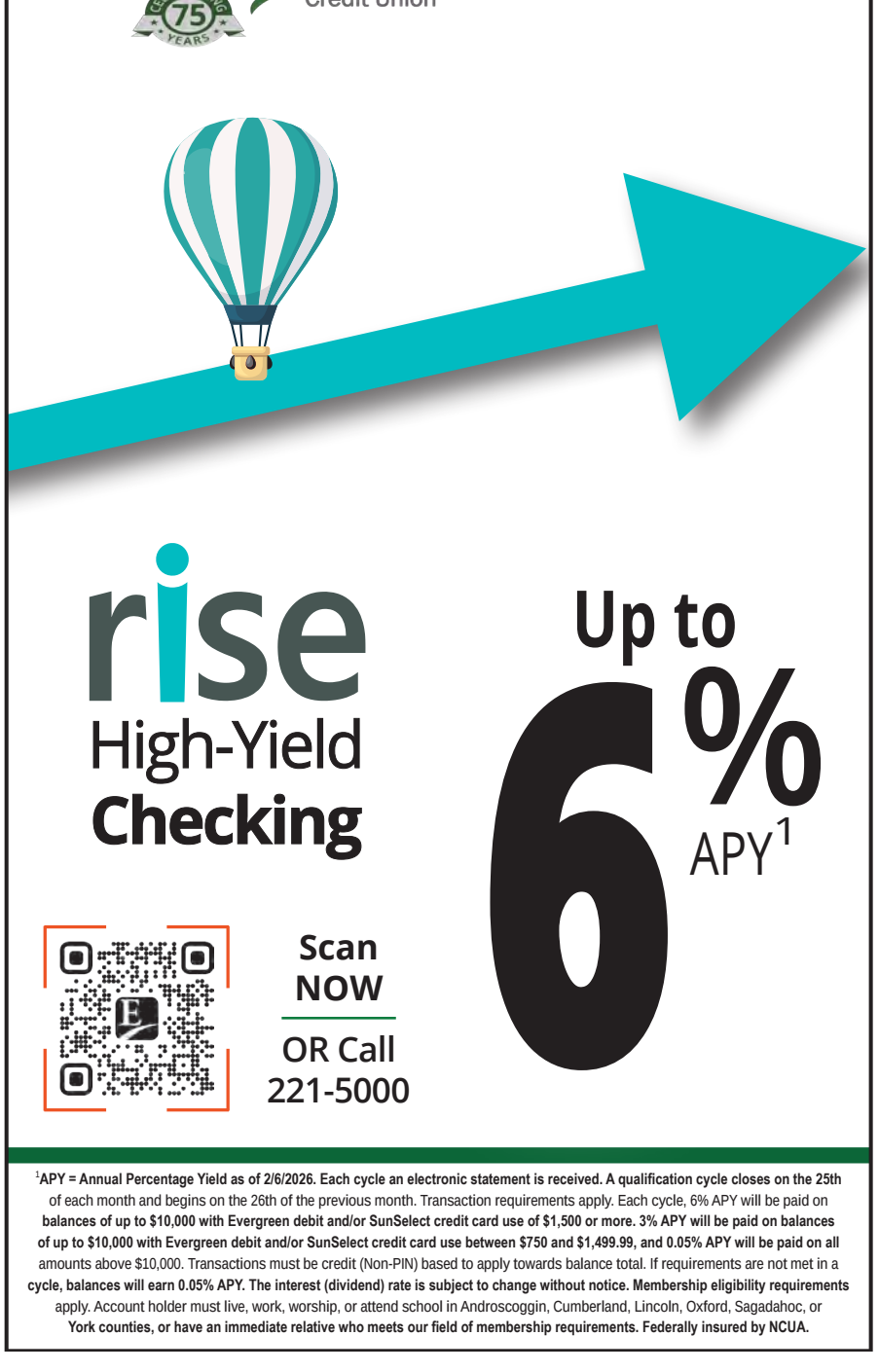
Also attending the observance were State Representatives Barbara Bagshaw and Mark Cooper and former State Rep. Gary Plummer. Windham Boy Scout Troop 805 presented the colors and helped set up the room for a luncheon after the event.

Spouses of Windham veterans joined Cook in the garden to place a wreath in memory of fallen veterans from the community. <









Windham Food Pantry seeks donations for holiday meals

By Erin Rose
STAFF WRITER

The Windham Food Pantry is preparing for its busiest season, with Thanksgiving and Christmas increasing the number of families seeking assistance with their holiday meals.

The pantry already has a sizeable list of families who have signed up to receive a turkey and accompanying foods and Patrice Leary-Forrey, the Food Pantry Coordinator for Windham, expects more families to reach out in the time before the holiday.

"At the moment, we have 65 families who have registered to receive turkeys and the fixings for the holiday," she said. "We'll continue to accept requests until the day we do distribution."

Located at 377 Gray Road in Windham, the pantry depends on donations from large local organizations to help support the families who utilize the temporary food assistance it provides.



The Windham Food Pantry is searching for non-perishable donations for the holiday season from the community. Donations can be dropped off for the food pantry from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Thursday at 377 Gray Road. SUBMITTED PHOTO

"There's lots of organizations that help make this happen," Leary-Forrey said. "We receive over 7,000 pounds of food a month from Hannaford, and probably 500 to 1,000 pounds of food two times a month from Wayside Food Programs. We're distributing more than 10,000 pounds of food each month."

For the holidays specifically, other local organizations are stepping forward to provide fresh produce to accompany the turkey, which will be provided by Wayside. Members of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, who have a lodge in Portland, provide fresh potatoes grown in Maine to accompany the meals.

"We had a very generous donation from the Odd Fellows – they donated 500 pounds of potatoes," Forey said. "They go to Presque Isle every year with a large trailer and pick up potatoes for several communities."

One local farm will also provide another fresh vegetable to expand the pantry's offerings for the holiday meals.

"We try to offer, when we can, the fresh produce," Leary-Forrey explained. "Webster's farm is very generous, and they bring by lots of squash for us. It's a great network that understands the importance of breaking bread and giving thanks."

While donations from larger organizations are essential to support the families in need, the community plays a vital role in filling the pantry's shelves, and Forey credits the many groups that dedicate time and energy to help.

"It's great we have lots of community support. We have Cub Scouts and Girl Scouts doing food drives for us," Leary-Forrey said. "We have a group of high school students who come to the pantry on a weekly basis to help support our Grab and Go food bags, as well as bagging food for the weekly food drive, and for Thanksgiving and holidays. It would not happen without the help from the volunteers."

As other organizations have ad-

see PANTRY Page 13

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PANTRY Cont. from page 12

dressed many of the elements of a traditional Thanksgiving meal, the pantry is particularly seeking shelf-stable items from the community, such as canned vegetables, boxed stuffing mix, and dessert mixes.

"The things that we collect for Thanksgiving and Christmas include boxed stuffing mix, turkey gravy, cranberry sauce, green beans, and canned corn," Leary-Forrey said. "We try and include some kind of cake or brownie mix for folks to have a little dessert. We also include instant potatoes in case we don't have the fresh. If we have extra jars of apple sauce or canned yams we'll include those."

Also needed for the holiday are aluminum pans sturdy enough to hold a turkey and items that are required for any gathering, including paper napkins, paper towels, and toilet paper.

"When you think about it, you're serving all this food to friends and family, you need to have the smaller things that are necessary," Leary-Forrey said. "We offer paper towels and toilet paper, as if you have extra guests in your home, you go through those things. Paper products are always welcome, year-round."

A good example of the need in the Windham community is shown by the food pantry's recent development of Grab and Go bags to enable those in need of a meal urgently to take a bag that contains a single meal from the facility's lobby.

"We're offering a temporary emergency food program and putting together, each quarter, a breakfast bag, a lunch bag, and a dinner bag," Leary-Forrey said, adding that it's a unique program that has not been used by other pantries. "We have exceeded our expectation of the need."

The pantry assembled 42 bags containing a complete breakfast, all of which were distributed within 15 days. Similar bags for lunches that were assembled this month went even more quickly.

"We put together another 42 lunch bags in November," Forey said. "We put them out the first and by the 10th, we had already distributed 42 bags. There is a huge need."

Other area food banks are seeing the same increase in need as recent economic stresses strain family budgets, and impact people's ability to afford basic necessities.

"If you talk to any food bank, I'm sure they're also seeing a huge uptick," she said, noting that the pantry works with the food bank in Harrison to distribute any surplus donations from Hannaford. "There is such a need, you don't want any of it to go to waste."

Donations can be provided to the Windham Food Pantry during business hours, from 8 a.m. through 4 p.m., Monday through Thursday. If a member of staff is not available to assist, Leary-Forrey says the donations can be left on the cart in the lobby.

Those looking to receive assistance should reach out to the food pantry staff to set up an appointment by calling 207-892-1931. Grab and Go bags can be picked up during business hours, but anyone using the bags is asked to follow the QR code on the bag to sign up with the pantry for services. Additional information can be found at www.windhammaine.us. <



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RSU 14's Katahdin Program administrator remains essential to student success

By Ed Pierce
STAFF WRITER

Rich Meserve says that he's fortunate to work with a team of talented colleagues that help students find their way in school after having struggled in other settings.

As the Head of School of the Katahdin Program, RSU 14's alternative high school program, Meserve says that seeing students embrace the opportunities and challenges that they are presented with at Katahdin is inspiring.

"In one way, shape or form, I am almost always thinking about the students I work with and how I can best support them," Meserve said.

His duties as school administrator include supervising and evaluating all professional and support staff, helping to plan, organize and directly implement all school activities, assisting in the development, revision, and evaluation of the curriculum, and establishing and maintaining an effective learning climate in the school. He also prepares the Katahdin program's budget, monitors expenditures, and coordinates school transportation and logistics.

The 2026-2027 school year is Meserve's 16th year of working for RSU 14.

"I first started with RSU 14 in 2004 working as a teacher at the REAL School for a number of years," Meserve said. "I then served as the assistant principal for REAL School until becoming the Katahdin Head of School in 2016. I served in that capacity for almost three years and then left to take a position as Director of School and Student Supports at the Maine Department of Education. I then returned for a year at Windham Middle School assisting with starting their Altitude Program and I am now back in my role as Head of School at Katahdin.



Rich Meserve has led RSU 14's Katahdin Program as its Head of School since 2016 and is now in his 16th year this fall of working for the school district.
SUBMITTED PHOTO

According to Meserve, the most challenging aspect of his job is breaking down the stigma of what an alternative program is.

"The Katahdin Program has the same graduation requirements as Windham High School, but we are small enough that we can tailor school to be a bit more individualized as well as having the flexibility in our schedule to incorporate experiential learning into the mix," he said.

He was born in Augusta and graduated from Falmouth High School and has lived all his life in Maine except while attending college and eight years that he spent in the Pioneer Valley region of Massachusetts. I have graduate and undergraduate history degrees.

"I moved back to Maine over the summer of 2004 and had three jobs offered to me, from three different districts, on the same day," Meserve said. "Weighing all three offers, I felt the most comfortable with the position at RSU 14. This initially had to do with the three people at my interview, Pender Makin, Lillie Hanlon and Rod Nadeau, and the way they painted a picture of what working with them would be like. Since that time, I have been incredibly impressed by the leadership of the district from the members of the superintendent's team to the school board."

Education is a second career for Meserve.

"I first got involved working with students as a part-time tutor in Massachusetts in my early 30s. Shortly after that I went back to school at UMass Amherst and became an Ed Tech for two years and then a classroom teacher," he said. "I have been a regular ed as well as a special education teacher/case manager. I have served as Assistant Principal, and Head of School, as well as in a director position at the Department of Education. I have volunteered for a number of education-related boards and committees and have been a member of the Teacher of the Year State Review Team for the last 12 years."

His most memorable moments in his career with RSU 14 involve connecting with students a few years after they have graduated.

"They are so thankful for the opportunity that the Katahdin Program provided them to not only earn their high school diploma but also the many other skills and experiences they were afforded by being part of the program," he said.

Meserve says the most important thing he has learned while working for RSU 14 is simple.

"Every human being has potential and supporting all students is paramount to giving everyone the best opportunity to live a happy and successful life," he said. <

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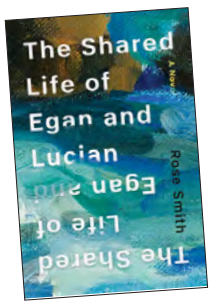
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CHORUS Cont. from page 1

section, so those planning to attend should warm up beforehand as the chorus will teach attendees parts before leading them to sing the song.

"We have a song in our repertoire that wasn't a Christmas Song, but it was taught at our inaugural meeting on May 5," Dyer said, adding that the melody will sound familiar, but the verses have been rewritten. "It's a cute song, and an opportunity to invite any women who play along to come join us."

Once the final performance is completed, rehearsals will halt for the holiday season.

"We will take a break for the rest of December, so that we can enjoy the holidays with families and friends" Dyer explained. "The Music Team (4 section leaders and director) will meet to talk about music to learn starting in January."

"January 5, we were planning a 'welcome back' potluck, and will make it our charter party," she said. "Harmony Incorporated's International President will attend the meeting to help celebrate the charter with the members."

The chorus is still accepting new members and is hoping to connect with some women who recently posted on Facebook about wanting to join a singing group in the area.

"We've heard from three people that they were looking for a place to sing, and in Windham, we're the only group of women," Dyer said, noting that the group will soon number 23 after being founded in May.

Harmony, Incorporated, an organization of 2,000 women and more than 65 chapter choruses in the United States and Canada, was founded in 1959 and hosts area and international competitions and provides educational resources for its membership, including a library of music and arrangements in four-part harmony.

"There are five of us who were already members of Harmony, Inc. Choruses and know that audiences will love the four-part harmonies in all of their imperfections – perfection isn't the goal," Dyer said. "Sharing the joy of singing 4-part a cappella music with women they have grown to care about is the goal."

For more details about Harmony 207, visit the group's Facebook page, Harmony 207 Windham, Maine. Rehearsals are held at the Windham Hill UCC Church from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Tuesdays. <


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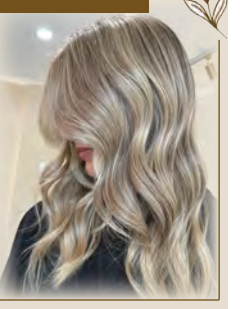
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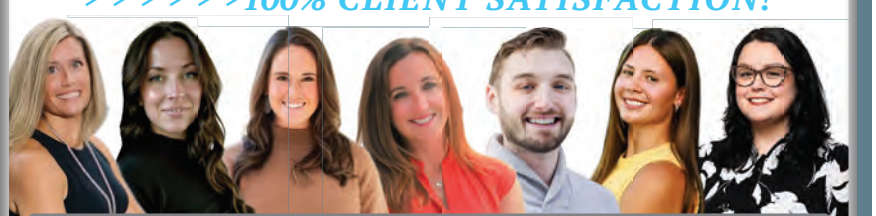
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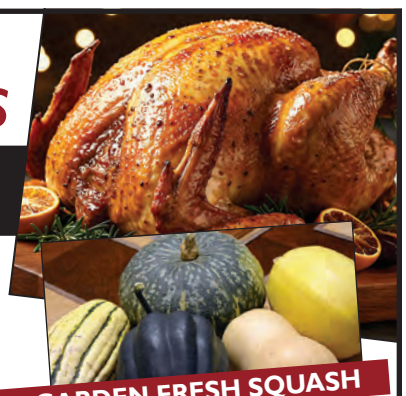
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Some numbers don't add up

By Andy Young
STAFF COLUMNIST

Maine's recent U.S. Senate election involved some seemingly counterintuitive math, while simultaneously providing significant food for thought.

America's Declaration of Independence includes a preamble stating, among other things, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." If any or all of the 56 signers of that document were alive today, hopefully they'd have long since extended those inalienable rights to all people, regardless of gender, race, or pigmentation. But perhaps that's wishful thinking, since 85 percent of the wealthy white male landowners who endorsed the Declaration in 1776 owned slaves, or profited from slavery.

The inalienable rights the founders were referring to don't apply to less tangible things, though. Unlike human beings, all numbers are not created equal, and that was bad news for Maine's soon-to-be ex-Senator Susan Collins.

Ballots in the just-completed election were cast in approximately 448 different municipalities. Ms. Collins, who was poised to become the longest-serving U.S. senator in Maine's 206-year United States history, received a majority of the votes in 336 of those places. Winning the state's voting precincts by a three-to-one ratio suggests the veteran legislator should have breezed to a sixth term. The opponent she routed? He'd most likely head back to the oblivion of his northern Maine roots, perhaps returning to work logging in the same forests where he'd toiled for years prior to his entering politics.

But when it comes to election-related numbers, size matters.

While Troy Jackson won only a third of the number of Maine locales Collins did, he carried the day in Portland, South Portland, Lewiston, Scarborough, Brunswick, Bangor, Saco, Auburn, Windham, Gorham, Biddeford, Westbrook, Sanford, York, Falmouth, Augusta, Kennebunk, Wells, Cape Elizabeth, Waterville, Topsham, Cumberland, Yarmouth, Freeport, Kittery, and Old Orchard Beach. And not coincidentally, those places are, in that order, the 26 Maine communities where voting was the heaviest. The largest Maine electoral district in which Collins outpolled Jackson was the town of Standish, where 5,319 votes were cast.

According to results posted in the New York Times, Collins outpolled Jackson by 63 percent in Maxfield (population 89), 69 percent in Willimantic (population 134), and a staggering 78 percent in Moose River (population 188). Unfortunately for the outgoing senator, the total number of ballots in those three communities was 243. That's less than 10 percent of the 2,550 that were cast in Kennebunkport, which Jackson won by 21 percent. Collins actually got 100 percent of the votes in two Maine communities, but a total of just six people in total voted in Square Lake unorganized territory (three) and T15 R6 WELS (the other three). Collins won 45 of the 47 Maine municipalities where fewer than 100 people voted, but the combined number of votes in all those communities (2,642), was less than the small towns of Raymond (2,840), Gardiner (2,874), and North Yarmouth (2,875), each of which was carried by Jackson.

Winning an election while carrying just a quarter of a state's municipalities seems implausible. But then, so does having a legislative body like the U.S. Senate. America's least-populated state gets the same representation as California does, even though there are 66 Golden Staters for every resident of Wyoming. There are 49 times as many Texans as Vermonters, and 32 times as many Floridians as Alaskans, yet each of those states gets the same complement of U.S. Senators – two.

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American Legion Field-Allen Post 148 Americanism Officer John Facella displays poster made by students at Raymond Elementary School in support of veterans. Facella joined several other Post 148 Honor Guard members who attended the annual Veterans Day Assembly celebration at the school in Raymond. The Post Honor Guard presented the colors for the event, listened to choreographed patriotic songs, and then met with two fourth-grade classes for a Question and Answer session with the students. Facella has coordinated this event for several years now and says that he was very pleased with the enthusiasm of the students and staff. The posters will be display throughout the month at the Windham Veterans Center in Windham. SUBMITTED PHOTO

ELECTION Cont. from page 6

The recount for Maine House District 106 will be held soon as new state legislators will be sworn in on Dec. 2 with the 133rd Maine Legislature convening in Augusta on Jan. 8, 2027.

In Raymond, Democrat Abigail Geer has been declared the winner of the Maine House District 86 race for the seat representing Raymond, Casco, Frye Island, and Poland. Geer defeated Republican incumbent Rolf Olsen receiving 2,572 votes to Olsen's 2,512.

Olsen has served in the legislature since defeating Democrat Craig Messigner by 227 votes in November 2024.

Results from the Nov. 3 election were slow to be reported for this race with Geer clinging to a 34-vote lead, 2,540 to 2,506, with 99 percent of the votes counted. The final margin of victory for Geer was by a total of 60 votes.

Geer is a community organizer and first-time legislative candidate who had previously run for Raymond Select Board in 2021.

Olsen was seeking a second term as a state legislator and previously served 29 years on the Town of Raymond Budget/Finance committee including 15 years as chair and for nine years on the Town of Raymond Select Board with three years as Select Board chair. <

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Eagle SPORTS



Windham football prevails in Class A North semifinals

By Matt Pascarella
STAFF WRITER

With a fifth consecutive win, third-place Windham outlasted second-place Portland during a very rainy semifinal playoff game at Fitzpatrick Stadium in Portland on Friday, Nov. 6. Windham defeated the former state champions 21-14 as the Eagles advanced to the Class A North Final.

While Portland scored in the third and fourth quarters, Windham remained ahead and their defense prevented the Bulldogs from tying the game.

"The strategy coming into this game was composure," said Windham junior Jordan Pastore, who had 104 rushing yards. "They have a good play; we get back up and have another good play. Eventually those good plays stack up, and we beat them on the scoreboard. My coaches always say focus on the first five or six yards and that's what I did. I played for my seniors, and I just wanted to get the job done for (Windham) so we could come back next week. We went back, we watched film, we saw everything, it was all self-inflicted wounds. We knew that we could go in there, make some plays and beat ... Portland."



(L to R) Windham junior and quarterback Patrick Davenport heads up the field during the Class A North prep football semifinal playoff game against Portland at Fitzpatrick Stadium in Portland on Friday, Nov. 6. Junior Jordan Pastore runs for yardage. Senior Landon Wyman will not be stopped as he navigates by defenders. PHOTOS BY LAVON MCKOY

The Eagles came out hungry and ready to shut down the Bulldogs. Both defenses held each other back and kept the first quarter scoreless.

In the second quarter it was second and six Windham from the 21-yard line. They moved the ball up to third and goal; Pastore scored. The extra point was good, and Windham had a 7-0 lead.

"They got some great players, and we found a way to stop Portland," said Windham senior Landon Wyman. "We made plays specifically for them, because we knew they were going to overlook us and weren't going to focus on us. We came out here and proved them wrong. We came out with a winning mentality and got it done. We have a great team."

Pastore found the end zone in the second quarter. The extra point was good as the Eagles pulled away from Portland. At the halftime, Windham led 14-0.

"Tonight was the loudest sideline I've seen us have," said Windham junior and quarterback Patrick Davenport, who had 52 passing yards. "The most energy we brought to the field, the most energy we had on the bus; there wasn't much that was stopping us tonight. Cleaning the game up ... the little things (needs work)."

The third quarter had Pastore scoring his third touchdown of the night. Portland answered and scored toward the end of the third quarter.

Portland scored again in the fourth quarter but Windham played smart and ran out the clock.

"I thought the kids were incredible, they did everything we asked, and I thought they handled the good moments and the bad moments and ... stayed pretty even for four quarters," said Windham varsity football coach Matt Perkins. "Even at the end of the game, Portland had scored too late and ... it was one of those situations where we had to take care of the clock, get a first down, and I thought the guys understood the moment and finished. I thought Windham really played amazing. Our physicality and maturity were night and day compared to (when we first played Portland in the regular season). How we handled ourselves, how we got off the ball, how we handled play-to-play and our composure. Expectations were to compete play-to-play and not get caught up in the moment whether it was good or bad, but to handle things with maturity; to deal with good and bad situations and play a full game which we didn't do (when we played Portland in the regular season)."

Windham will play first place Oxford Hills in the Class A North Final at Oxford Hills High School in South Paris on Saturday, Nov. 14. Kickoff is at noon. <

ATHLETE OF THE WEEK



Landon Rancourt

Age: 11
Team: Windham Little League Fall Ball Team 2
Coaches: Jason Sun, Kevin Rancourt
Parents' names: Samantha and Kevin Rancourt
Reason for selection: Landon's sportsmanship is influenced by his love for the game. His coaches are frequently given feedback from opposing team's coaches, parents and even players as to how kind and encouraging he is to all players on the field. Landon is the first to be there to pick up a teammate who is struggling. He is a constant voice on the field and dugout reminding his team to move on to the next play and helping to keep everyone engaged. Landon's flexibility and willingness to step up and be challenged is an asset to any team he plays for. He consistently volunteers to step into high-pressure situations in effort to help the team in any way he can. Landon also has a relentless work ethic.

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Windham Youth Football seventh- and eighth-grade team finish as runners-up after incredible season

By Matt Pascarella
STAFF WRITER



The Windham Youth Football seventh-and eighth-grade team displays its runner-up trophy after playing in the Southern Maine Youth Football League Atlantic Division Championship Game at Thornton Academy on Sunday, Nov. 8. PHOTO BY MATT PASCARELLA

Windham Youth Football seventh- and eighth-grade football team was an unstoppable force this season. Their coach Bryan Freese has been coaching many of these young athletes since they were in elementary school and it meant a lot to everyone involved that they made it to the Southern Maine Youth Football League Atlantic Division Championship at Thornton Academy in Saco against Thornton Academy on Sunday, Nov. 8.

The Eagles gave their all, but at the final buzzer, the Trojans won, 20-0.

"Our strategy was to hold them to pass coverage; because last time we played them it was their passing that defeated us," said Windham eighth grader Lucien Kri. "In practice we've been working on how to cover their passing offense. It was the game of the year, probably the most important game of our Youth Football career. Our running defense (went well) we really held them to good running defense. We needed more defenders in the backfield for passing and to believe in ourselves more. Team chemistry stands out looking back on the season. We're all family, we're all brothers and we had each other's backs."

Thornton Academy won the coin toss and deferred as Windham started strong, but the Trojans capitalized on a fumble early in the game. Thornton Academy scored, but their two-point conversion was unsuccessful.

The Eagle's defense didn't allow much ball movement, and Thornton Academy would not find the end zone for the remainder of the half.

While Eagle defense was strong, so was Trojans' defense. Windham got a few first downs but struggled to get near the goal line. At halftime, Thornton Academy led 6-0.

During halftime, Windham Youth Football players and eighth graders Avery Russell, Lucien Kri and Cameron Young were recognized for making the Atlantic All-Star team.

"Coming into this game we put (the regular season loss to TA) behind us," said Windham's Young, who was the leading rusher during the game. "We put in a bunch of new plays for offense and defense. We did good getting the first downs, but it was just the turnovers that hurt us. It meant a lot for the whole team to make it to the State Championship, because last year (we came close). The big part for us was turnovers and keeping our mindset in the game; after the first couple touchdowns we (hung) our heads. That really hurt us."

Partway into the second half, Thornton Academy scored again on a completed pass, but the two-point conversion was no good.

Windham got several first downs and connected on a long pass but struggled to get near the end zone.

Eighth grader Steven 'SJ' DePaolo II said Windham needed to want it more; they came out flat. DePaolo II said they lacked energy and made multiple mental mistakes. He said in the first half, they ran the ball well and their defense was good. If Windham had forced a few turnovers and stopped Thornton Academy's run game, the end result may have been different.

"We changed up some formations, try to run inside, we thought we had them inside, make some adjustments that way," said Windham Youth Football seventh and eighth grade coach Bryan Freese. "Defensively we changed some formations knowing that their quarterback had a great arm. We did a good job on defense, especially on run defense; we defended the pass well. On offense we had a hard time moving the ball, they had a swarming defense. We matched up well but came up short."

Freese said it's been the team's goal for eight to 10 years to compete in this game and just being there was special.

"It shows all the hard work the coaches and the players have put in over the years," he said. "Throughout the season we learned a lot of things; the way that the team came together and adjust and adapt to certain adversities in different situations ... showed we got good heart and concentration. These kids will be good in the future moving forward."

The Eagles finished their season with a spectacular 9-2 record. <

Youth Cheerleading's Showcase a tremendous success

By Matt Pascarella
STAFF WRITER





The third and fourth grade Windham Youth Cheerleading squad participate in Windham Youth Cheerleading's year-end showcase at Windham High School on Wednesday, Nov. 4. Fifth grader flyer Grace Gilligan shows her spirit. PHOTO BY MATT PASCARELLA

Every year, at the end of Windham Youth Cheerleading's season, it holds a showcase to demonstrate all they've learned over the season. The 10-week youth cheerleading program is open to grades kindergarten through eighth grade. Last year the program had more than 100 participants and this year has been no different with over 120 athletes participating. The program's annual showcase was held at Windham High School on Wednesday, Nov. 4.

"The showcase was a success because the girls performed with confidence, energy, and heart; coaches Amy (Rousse), Nicole (Warner), and I could not be prouder of these girls and everything they accomplished this season," said Marie Gilligan, Windham Youth Cheerleading fifth and sixth grade coach and Director of Corporate Sponsorship and Fundraising for the program. "Watching all their hard work come together at the showcase was such a special moment for us as coaches. It's incredibly rewarding to watch them grow in their skills, confidence, and relationships with one another."

Each season, the goal is to introduce the sport of sideline cheer as well as introduce athletes to new stunts, cheers, jumps and tumbling. Windham Youth Cheerleading wants to enhance skillsets and knowledge about the sport. It aims to ensure that every participating athlete can foster friendships, achieve personal and emotional growth and a love for cheer.

"The showcase is the highlight of the sideline season," said Stacy Davis, seventh and eighth grade coach and Director of Windham Youth Cheerleading Finance. "It is the time to show their loved ones all their hard work. You can feel the nerves, excitement and pride on the night of showcase. We also recognize the importance of loved ones' involvement as well as the support we get from the Windham community. Our program could not continue to grow without the support of the families and community."

This was a record year for the program as they raised more than $23,000 through fundraising and sponsorships which enabled the group to buy new uniforms for every single cheerleader in the program and provided scholarships for 10 athletes this season.

"I have been doing cheer since I was 7 or 8," said Windham eighth grader Aubrey Eklund. "The connections I made with all my friends meeting new people and how fun it is to perform in front of others. We did a lot of practice. My goal is to hit all our stunts. One of the big things I've learned over the course of the season is facials, if you have big expressions (it makes for a better routine). I want to get better at tumbling ... I do competitive cheer too, so I want to get to be really good to compete at a high level."

Windham third grader Wyatt Bangs has been a member of Windham youth Cheerleading for two or three years. Bangs said cheering is fun because he can do stunts. His goal for the showcase was to at least do a handstand walk. He wants to keep participating in Windham Youth Cheerleading as he progresses from grade to grade.

"I have been doing cheer for five years," said Windham eighth grader Abby Baltos. "I love all the jumps and stunts I do and I get to make new friends along the way. My goal was to perform my best and remember the routine and having my motions sharp and smile. I want to keep my level up so I can make varsity as a freshman, although that's a big goal. I also do competitive cheer, so I just want to maximize how hard I can push myself to be really good." <

BRIEFS

St. Ann's Christmas Fair

The St. Ann's Christmas Fair will be held from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 14 at St. Ann's Episcopal Church, 40 Windham Center Road in Windham. There will be homemade baked goods, a Cookie Walk, meals to go, fresh balsam wreaths, seasonal greens, crafts and gifts, gift baskets for sale, Christmas décor, Santa and more.

Craft and Bake Sale

The North Sebago United Methodist Church, located at 820 Sebago Road, Route 114 in Sebago is hosting a Craft & Bake Sale with light lunch available from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 14. FMI call Mabel at 207-787-2530

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Christmas in the Village Holiday Fair

Casco Village Church, United Church of Christ is hosting its annual "Christmas in the Village Holiday Fair" from 9 a.m., to 1 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 14 at 941 Meadow Road in Casco. This year's fair will feature Christmas decor, greens, craft vendors, a bake table and cookie walk, and a doll house raffle. There will be a Soup, Chili, Chowder, and Sandwich Luncheon for only $6, and the church's Clothes Closet will be open. FMI, call 207-627-4282.

Blood Drive

American Legion Post 148 will conduct the monthly Red Cross Blood Drive from noon to 5 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 18 at the Windham Veterans Center, 35 Veterans Memorial Drive. For appointments call 1-800-RED CROSS or go to the RED CROSS app.

Community Resources Lecture Series

Members of the Raymond Lions Club will offer a presentation as part of the Community Resources Lecture Series at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 18 at the Raymond Village Community Church, 27 Main St. in Raymond. This event is free and open to the public. FMI, call 207-655-7749.

Bean Supper

The American Legion Field-Allen Post family is hosting its last Bean Supper for 2026 at 4:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 21 at the Windham Veterans Center, 35 Veterans Memorial Drive. The menu includes a variety of beans, chili, sides, and desserts. The Post Auxiliary will also be hosting its homemade Holiday Pie Raffle to support its scholarship program. The event is open to all. Cost is $10 at the door, and kids under 12 eat for free. FMI, call 207-892-1306.

Raymond Food Pantry

The Raymond Food Pantry is open from 4 to 6 p.m. on the second Thursday of every month at the Lake Region Baptist Church, 1273 Roosevelt Trail. Donations for the food pantry may be dropped off at the Church. FMI, call Gary at 207-655-6594.

PUBLIC NOTICE OF INTENT TO FILE

Please take notice that ***Regional School Unit #14 at 228 Windham Center Road, Windham, ME 04062, (207) 892-1800*** intends to file an Air Emission License application with the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) pursuant to the provisions of 38 M.R.S., Section 590 on ***November 9, 2026***.

The application is for ***a renewal of the air emission license*** at ***the Raymond Campus***. According to Department regulations, interested parties must be publicly notified, written comments invited, and if justified, an opportunity for public hearing given.

A request for a public hearing must be received by the Department, in writing, no later than 20 days after the application is accepted by the Department as complete for processing.

The application and supporting documentation will be made available for review by contacting the DEP Bureau of Air Quality offices in Augusta, (207) 287-7688, during normal working hours.

A copy of the application and supporting documentation may also be available at the municipal office in ***Raymond***, Maine.

Written public comments may be sent to ***Jane Gilbert*** at the Bureau of Air Quality, State House Station #17, Augusta, Maine 04333.

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Eagle REAL ESTATE & Home

Made by Hand, Made with Heart: Welcoming the Holiday Season

By Theresa Bouchard
SPECIAL TO THE WINDHAM EAGLE


— Theresa Bouchard
TS Staging & Design

It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like… November. The pumpkins have barely left the front steps, and already the twinkle lights are going up. Walk into almost any store right now and you'll find aisles glowing with ornaments, garland, wreaths and ribbon. Some neighbors have their trees lit before the Thanksgiving turkey is even thawed. And honestly? Most of us are happy about it. Craft fairs are filling up weekend calendars, holiday playlists are back in rotation, and there's a lightness in the air that's hard to find any other time of year.

Why We Decorate Earlier (and Buy a Little More)

If it feels like the decorations come out sooner every year, you're not imagining it. Stores stock holiday goods early because shoppers are ready for them, and shoppers are ready because decorating simply makes people feel good. When life feels busy or uncertain, bringing out the lights and the familiar decorations offers comfort and a sense of something to look forward to.

There's a practical side, too. Putting up decorations in early November means you get to enjoy them longer. All the effort of hauling out bins and untangling lights pays off over eight weeks instead of three.

And then there's the fun of something new. A fresh color palette, a new wreath for the door or a few updated pieces for the mantel can make a familiar room feel brand new. As a home stager and designer, I see it every year: a few thoughtful touches can completely change how a space feels, and how the people in it feel, too.

The Joy of Making It Yourself

As fun as it is to shop, there's something extra special about decor you make with your own hands. More and more people are skipping the identical big-box ornaments and creating pieces that feel personal, meaningful and one of a kind.

Here in Maine, some of the best supplies are right outside the door. Fresh balsam and cedar boughs, pinecones, birch bark, red winterberry and a few sprigs of eucalyptus can become a wreath, a mantel garland or a table centerpiece that smells as good as it looks. Add a velvet ribbon or a few brass bells and you have something that rivals anything in a catalog.

If you'd rather work indoors, the ideas are endless. Garlands of dried orange slices and cinnamon sticks, hand-painted or salt-dough ornaments, felted snowmen, knitted mini stockings, beaded snowflakes, mason jar luminaries and simple wooden signs are all easy places to start. You don't need to be an expert. Half the charm of handmade decor is that it looks handmade.

Why Crafting Feels So Good

Crafting gives our hands something to do and our minds a chance to rest. Measuring ribbon, tying bows and arranging greens has a way of quieting the to-do list in your head. There's also real satisfaction in finishing something and seeing it hang on your own tree or front door.

It's even better with company. Gather the kids, grandkids or a few friends around the kitchen table with a glue gun, some ribbon and a pot of cocoa. Swap ideas, share supplies and laugh over the projects that didn't quite turn out. Some families make one new ornament together every year, and over time those pieces tell the story of who they are.

Handmade Pieces Become Heirlooms

Those homemade treasures are the ones we pull out year after year. Ask anyone about their favorite ornament, and chances are it's the lopsided one a child made in second grade, not the one with the fanciest price tag.

Handmade decor makes wonderful gifts, too. A wreath for a new neighbor, a personalized ornament for a teacher or a set of hand-sewn napkins for a host says "I made this for you" in a way nothing from a store can. And when you buy from a local maker, you're bringing home a piece of someone's creativity while supporting your own community.

Come Find Your Holiday Spark at The Merry Makers Craft Fair

If you love handmade holiday decor, or you're looking for one-of-a-kind gifts, join us for The Merry Makers Craft Fair from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 29, at TS Staging & Design, 630 Roosevelt Trail, Unit 2, in Windham.

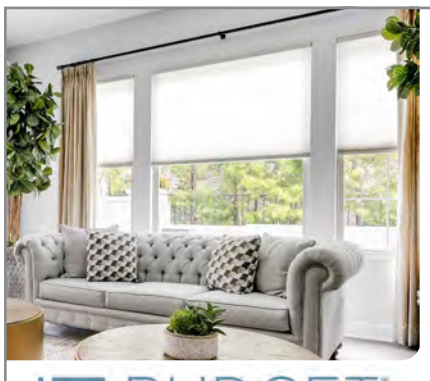
The fair is all about handcrafted holiday pieces made with care. It's the perfect way to kick off the season, pick up something special for your own home and support local makers. Please note that we accept cash and Venmo only.

So go ahead: hang the lights early, turn up the music and dust off the glue gun. The holidays have a way of making everything feel a little brighter.

This article was brought to you by Theresa Bouchard of TS Staging and Design. If you're preparing to sell your home or simply planning a refresh, give them a call. This year's Eagle Choice Award winner for Interior Design/Home Staging, TS Staging and Design is located at 630 Roosevelt Trail, Unit 2, in Windham. They welcome the opportunity to bring out the best in your home and help you take the next step with confidence. Contact Theresa at 207-400-9393. <

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PLEASE NOTE: FOOD AND GAMES FEATURE ALTERNATES WITH MOVIE REVIEW

FOOD AND GAMES

THE WINDHAM EAGLE'S Cooking Corner

Scrumptious Apple Cake

It's been a great fall for apple harvests and
here's a handy way to put your leftover apples to good use.
This moist Apple Cake is easy to prepare,
and its rich taste will please every member of the family.

INGREDIENTS

⅔ cup of vegetable oil, and a little more for the pan
1 ½ cups of light brown sugar
3 large eggs
1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
1 ¼ teaspoons of kosher salt
2 ½ cups of all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons of baking powder
1 teaspoon of baking soda
4 cups of apples, cored and chopped into ¼- to -½-inch pieces
Cinnamon Sugar Topping
2 tablespoons of granulated sugar
2 teaspoons of ground cinnamon

INSTRUCTIONS

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Place a little oil in a 9-by-13-inch metal baking pan and line it with a sheet of parchment paper that hangs over the two long sides.
In a large bowl, whisk to combine the oil, brown sugar, eggs, cinnamon and salt. Mix in the flour, baking powder and baking soda with a flexible spatula until a few streaks of flour remain. The batter will be thick.
Fold in the apples until well combined. Spoon the batter into the prepared pan, spreading it in an even layer. Mix granulated sugar and cinnamon in a small bowl, then sprinkle it evenly over the batter.
Bake until the cake is golden brown and a toothpick inserted into center comes out clean, 40 to 45 minutes.
Let cake cool in the pan for 15 minutes before using the parchment paper to transfer to cooling rack.
For topping, mix sugar and ground cinnamon and drizzle lightly over top of cake.

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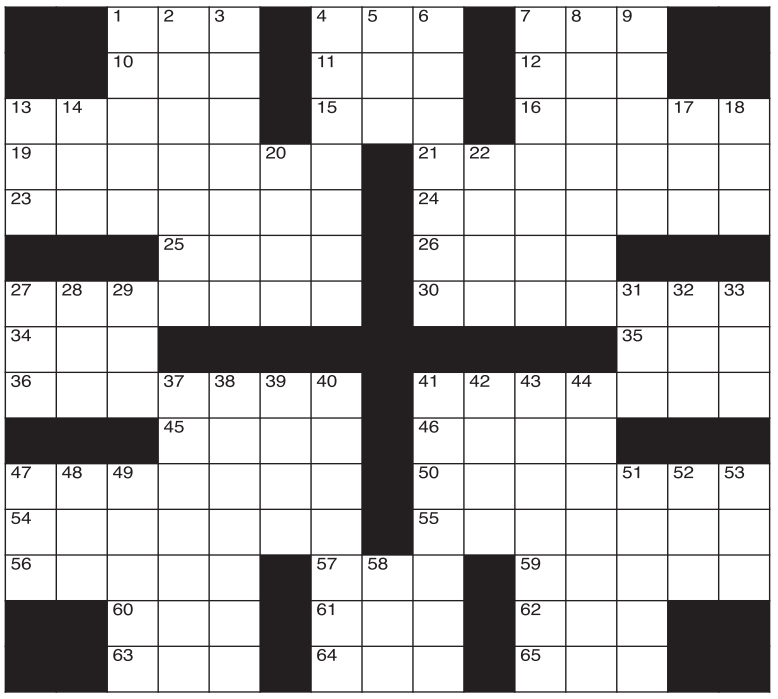
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	R	A	B	B	I	S		S	A	L	I	N	E	
M	A	D	E	I	R	A		A	B	A	L	O	N	E
A	B		A	N	A	L	O	G	I	Z	E		D	A
H	I	N	D	S		A	U	G		E	A	G	E	R
D	E	U	S		S	A	T	E	S		C	R	A	N
I	S	M		R	A	M		D	K	G		O	R	E
		E	X	E	C				R	O	G	U	E	S
A	C	R	I	S					W	U	N	D	T	
B	R	A	V	E	D				M	A	I	D		
R	U	T		T	A	R		P	O	N		H	U	S
E	S	O	P		B	A	S	A	L		T	O	N	E
A	A	R	O	N		P	I	P		S	A	G	E	R
S	D		S	A	T	I	R	I	C	A	L		A	U
T	E	H	E	R	A	N		S	A	R	C	A	S	M
	S	E	R	A	P	E		T	R	I	A	G	E	

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CROSSWORD PUZZLE



CLUES ACROSS

1. Tire pressure metric
4. Request
7. Clairvoyance
10. 007's creator Fleming
11. Male adult
12. Norse mythological figure
13. Coffin cloths
15. Breeze through
16. Ladyfish genus
19. We all take them
21. Nobleman's jurisdiction
23. Members of U.S. Navy
24. Rummy-like card game
25. Unable to move
26. Type of horse
27. Parted
30. Woman's cloak
34. South American plant
35. Prohibit
36. Something one takes
41. Dish detergent manufacturer
45. Romanian river
46. Personification of pity
47. Makes upset
50. Discuss again
54. Medical instrument
55. Support
56. Informal term for money
57. Catch doing something wrong
59. Prehistoric people
60. Large African antelope
61. Automobile
62. "Losing My Religion" rockers
63. High-resolution scientific instrument
64. A major division of geological time
65. Attempt

CLUES DOWN

1. Indoor plant
2. Fit to be sold
3. Rather
4. Collected
5. A baglike structure in a plant or animal
6. Irish rap group
7. Ageless
8. Lists indicating curriculum
9. Pokes at
13. Public television station
14. They __
17. Cooking tool
18. Separately managed account
20. Iron-containing compound
22. Swiss river
27. Former French coin
28. Electronic countermeasures
29. Taxi
31. Helps little firms
32. Unhappy
33. Midway between northeast and east
37. Glowing
38. Lists of items to be discussed
39. An informal body of friends
40. Indispensable quality
41. Neural structures
42. Brews
43. A place to dock
44. Festive singer
47. Sino-Soviet block (abbr.)
48. Northernmost point of mainland Wales
49. Most worthless parts
51. Type of "bear"
52. Take or consume
53. Defunct European organization
58. Swiss river

SUDOKU

				1	8	6	7	4
3				7		9	5	
	8		9	6			3	
1		9			7	8		5
	7		6				2	3
		4	8	5			9	
7			1	4				
6		8				7		
								9

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

3	1	2	9	4	8	5	6	7
8	4	9	5	7	6	2	1	3
7	5	6	3	2	1	8	9	4
5	2	7	1	6	3	4	8	9
6	3	8	4	5	9	7	2	1
4	9	1	2	8	7	3	5	6
2	6	3	7	9	5	1	4	8
1	8	5	6	3	4	9	7	2
9	7	4	8	1	2	6	3	5

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Prioritize Puzzles Publishing

For puzzle creator SK ROBB, completing a word search puzzle won't solve all your problems, but it is a problem that you can solve.

Based in Westbrook, SK ROBB creates word search puzzle books and publishes them through Amazon. The pen name is personal: S and K were her childhood initials, ROB comes from her last name today, and the extra B honors her late father, Bob, the best dad a girl could ever hope for. It's a family business, with SK building the puzzles and her husband, Gary, owner of White Dog Arts, designing every cover. Prioritize Puzzles Publishing offers a growing collection of word search books for those who value both relaxation and a well-crafted challenge.

"We are a publishing house, using Amazon as our platform, the largest print-on-demand publisher in the world. Our word search books range from monthlies to famous birthdays, where I always include a personal birthday puzzle, to our All the Random series in easy, medium, and expert levels," SK said. "We also have series for the seasons, the decades, and global history. Our USA 250th Anniversary Word Search celebrates our country this year alongside our States and Capitals book and our smaller 6 x 9 books, which take a meandering walk through each state. Most of our books include 'fun facts' between puzzles, from devotionals to interesting nuggets about a person or place. We call it 'quiet learning,' and I love learning new things as I research each book."

She hopes puzzlers love the books as much as she does and says they make perfect stocking stuffers for the holidays.

"We plan to offer more than word searches, but I've always planned to expand once we reach 100 books on Amazon," she said. "We have more than 50 titles listed now. November marks our one-year anniversary, and I am very proud of what we've built and how far we've come. It is absolutely my favorite thing to have my puzzles in the hands of so many people who love solving as much as I do."

For SK, the goal has always been simple.

"My husband will randomly ask me, 'What is the goal here? What are we doing here?'" she said. "Our Easy Jumbo, a book I listed on Jan. 1, is our top seller day after day, and I love that. But my most favorite thing is that I just want puzzlers to have good solves, happy learning, and contentment in what we provide. I think what distinguishes us from our competitors is quality, extras, pricing, and humility."

Working toward 100 titles, SK says she's learned as she goes.

"I recently gave our very first book, Christmas Cheer Word Search, a glow-up for the season. I didn't know what I was doing with that first book. It's clear now, 50-plus books later. With each book, we've elevated, evolved, and continue to improve," she said. "I'm still proud of that first book and all the ones that came after. But when you know better, you do better. That is where the quality and extras come in. I always want to provide the best experience I can, and I am always willing to listen to feedback, the good and not so, as that will continue my learning in this business."

Prioritize Puzzles Publishing keeps its pricing competitive, with large print books starting at $9.99. "I'm not trying to gouge anyone," SK said. "I would give away the books if I could, and we'll be hosting giveaways on TikTok, where folks can follow along at @ThePuzzleQueen8."

"We care. Puzzlers are a large community, and it matters so much that the book you hold in your hands, with your pen or highlighter at the ready, is a good one," SK said. "We want you to enjoy solving these puzzles and find relaxation in them. We are local, and while we are on Amazon, I would love to share more locally. We are growing, we will be hiring two local folks in 2027, and we are going to keep bringing quality puzzles to our customers for as long as we can."

Though relatively new to the puzzle business, SK says she is building the brand with intention toward superior puzzles, customer fulfillment and screen-free enjoyment. That intention shows up in the details, from the fun facts and devotionals to the Easter eggs tucked inside. Curious Cats Word Search, for example, is a love letter to the family's grand-cat, Pumpkin.

"I believe we bring quality and creativity to the puzzle world. I've seen what else is out there, and I am striving to do better," SK said. "Feedback has been great, on Amazon and off. Most folks say, 'You do what now?' I love creating and sharing and seeing others enjoy my crafts."

Find Prioritize Puzzles Publishing books on Amazon under SK ROBB. <

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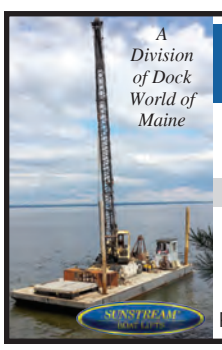
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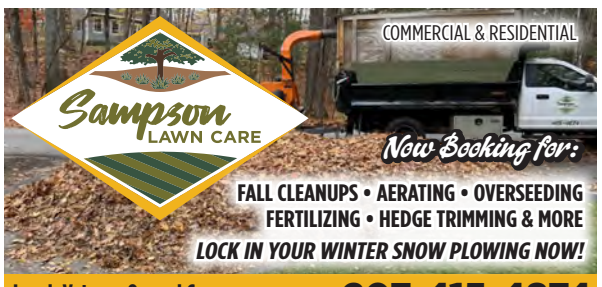
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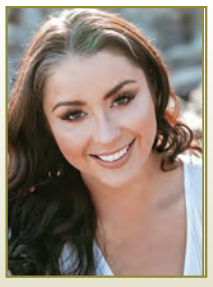
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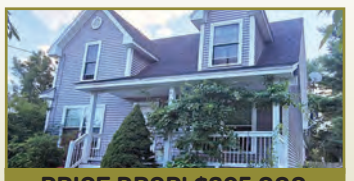
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