THE WINDHAM EAGLE

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Windham's Holiday Tree Lighting brings community together to celebrate the season

By Erin Rose
STAFF WRITER

Members of the Windham community are welcomed to the Public Safety Building to celebrate the Holiday Tree Lighting from 5 to 7 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 29.

"The Holiday Tree Lighting and Celebration provides an opportunity for the community to come together, foster connections, celebrate local traditions, and create lasting memories while embracing the spirit of the season," said Kelsey Crowe, Deputy Director of the Windham Parks and Recreation Department. "Windham Parks and Recreation is excited to kick off the holiday season by bringing everyone together for a festive community celebration!"

The event is the first in five years to be held at the Windham Public Safety building after the COVID-19 pandemic meant morphing the event to meet social distancing requirements.

"This year will be the first year we are back at the Public Safety Building doing a tree lighting since 2019," Crowe said. "We changed the event to the Holiday Light Parade and brought Santa to the community, and in 2022, it turned into the Holiday Celebration out of the middle school."



The Town of Windham Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony and community activities will be held from 5 to 7 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 29 at the Windham Public Safety Building, 375 Gray Road in Windham. COURTESY PHOTO

In addition to the tree lighting, Santa and Mrs. Claus will appear at 5:15 p.m. to help ring in the holiday season and be available for pictures with the community. There will also be activities to entertain all attendees, both young and old, after Santa turns on the lights at 5:20 p.m.

"Windham Parks and Recreation will have a candy count activity, where you have to guess how many pieces of candy are in the jar, and the closest number will receive a $100 gift card," Crowe explained. "Parks and Recreation will also have a table to make reindeer food to bring home.

"Windham Summerfest will be passing out Snowman Soup and goodie bags and the Windham Public Library will have a table there for participants to make beaded candy canes," she said, adding that the Jimmy Macisso Trio "will be playing holiday themed music and additional cover songs throughout the evening."

see LIGHTING Page 10

Gift Assistance Program seeking applicants

By Ed Pierce
STAFF WRITER

For the most vulnerable members of the Windham community, the holiday season can be one of disappointment and despair as gifts for children must be overlooked to pay for basic survival necessities like food, clothing, fuel, electricity, and shelter. But each year, generous contributors donate to allow Town of Windham personnel to assist those in need receive gifts at Christmas and preserve the magic of Santa for younger kids and create joyful holiday memories they deserve.

Windham's Holiday Gift Assistance Program helps families who are struggling to make the season special due to financial hardship. The program is supported entirely through donations every year and is a beneficial program open to Windham families in need of a helping hand. It is completely confidential and open for all families with children up to 18 years old if still in school.

Windham Police Department administrative assistant Jessica Talbot is helping coordinate this year's Holiday Gift Assistance Program and says it is worthwhile and meaningful for both gift recipients and town staff who volunteer to help shop for new toys, clothing and books for children.

"My favorite part of my job is assisting with the planning and coordination of community events," Talbot said. "I'm naturally someone who enjoys helping others, and I strongly believe in the power of connection and community."



Windham's Holiday Gift Assistance Program helps families who are struggling to make the season special due to financial hardship and is supported entirely by donations. Confidential applications are due by Dec. 8 for families needing help this year. COURTESY PHOTO

She said the program is seeking applicants as Windham's Social Service Department is transitioning to new leadership after experiencing several retirements this summer.

"This year, the program got off to a later start than usual, which has made it more challenging to connect with families who may benefit from the assistance," Talbot said. "But the program is up and running and we have many donors looking to help families in need in Windham."

Talbot said then program is actively seeking ways to spread the word throughout the Windham community and ensure that eligible families are aware of the opportunity to apply for help over the holidays.

"Every child deserves to experience the magic of the holidays," she said. "If your family is facing a difficult time or could use a helping hand with holiday gifts this year, our Windham toy drive is here to support you."

Confidential application forms for assistance for eligible families through the program are available at the Windham Public Safety Building (375 Gray Road), Windham Town Hall (8 School Road), or at the Windham Food Pantry (377 Gray Road). Completed forms can be dropped off at the Windham Police Department (375 Gray Road) using the outside mail drop box or submitted at the inside lobby window. Help will also be available for anyone requiring assistance filling out an application.

All applications for help must be turned in by Tuesday, Dec. 8 and gift pickup notifications will be sent out by Monday, Dec. 21.

Talbot said that community members wishing to help can do so in several ways.

"The program relies on the generosity of local residents, businesses, and civic groups," she said. "Businesses, schools, and community groups can adopt a family and provide gifts for each child. Commu-

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INSIGHT

One year on

Last year at Thanksgiving, I was flat on my back in bed trying to recover from a serious viral infection but that my the least of my problems.

To start at the beginning, I was sitting at our kitchen table eating dinner on the evening of Monday, Nov. 10, 2025, and thinking about how I intended to cover the Veterans Day ceremonies the following day, something I do every year for the newspaper.

Over the meal, my wife Nancy asked me to repeat what I had just said, and she told me I sounded funny. She didn't mean humorous, she thought my pronunciation of certain words was off.

Later after dinner, we sat quietly and watched a television show. When it ended, Nancy again asked me to carry on a conversation with her, and she mentioned that she was worried because I didn't sound like myself. She asked if I felt OK and I said I felt fine. I told her I didn't hear anything different in the way I was speaking with her at all.

Fortunately for me, Nancy disregarded my objections and called 911 to have paramedics check me out. Two EMTs arrived in an ambulance, and we sat in our living room while they evaluated my condition and asked me questions. They said that they suspected I had suffered a stroke and wanted to take me to the hospital for doctors there to confirm that.

I walked out the front door and laid down on a stretcher in the ambulance as they raced to the hospital. I only waited for a few minutes before emergency room doctors started posing basic questions to me such as my age and who my primary care physician was. They agreed they thought that I had possibly suffered a stroke and within minutes I was taken down the hallway to where I had a CAT scan performed.

From there, one of the doctors took me on a gurney to a hospital room upstairs. Along the way, he said he recognized my name from stories he had read in the newspaper and he read the paper every Friday when it came out. As frightened as I was about having suffered a stroke, that conversation did make me feel a little better.

Nancy arrived at the hospital about the same time the treating physician visited me to perform some basic tests on me in my room. She told us that the CAT scan confirmed a small stroke and she wanted to keep me in the hospital overnight and have an MRI and an electrocardiogram on me done the next day. She did think it was just a small stroke as physically I did not sustain any paralysis, and it was just affecting my speech.

Although it was 9:30 p.m., Nancy called my boss Kelly and told her what had happened. In seven years at the newspaper, I had never missed a production cycle, but it was apparent that I was not going to be able to that week. Kelly rallied the staff and the newspaper team all pulled together and published a great edition that week.

The MRI and an electrocardiogram showed no damage to my heart and the tests revealed a tiny piece of plaque had broken off somewhere in my blood stream, traveled to the section of my brain that controlled how I pronounced the letters Z, C, X, D and T. My medications changed and I was placed temporarily on Plavix, used to prevent dangerous blood clots and lower the risk of strokes. I also was instructed to take a baby aspirin daily and was informed that I would be permanently on Lipitor, a medication to reduce high cholesterol and cut the risk of heart attacks and strokes.

Doctors kept me in the hospital for three days and while there I was given an extensive test to gauge my agility and ability to walk. They thought that my chances to make a full recovery were good and that eventually my speech pattern would return to normal. They did recommend that I see a speech therapist to help with that process.

Upon discharge from the hospital, I looked at life a little differently and thought the entire ordeal could have been much worse. I received great guidance from my boss Kelly and her husband Niels, as he had suffered a stroke a few years prior and told me what to expect ahead for me. I didn't drive for nearly two months, and I did return to work but by early afternoon, I would be tired and worn out. I discovered I was much more emotional as even watching a TV show would make me tear up.

After three visits to the specch therapist, he told me I no longer needed to see him and I was speaking perfectly. A big challenge came when I had to do a telephone interview for a newspaper article and somehow made it through that without an issue.

Now one year on, my life seems to be back to normal. I have a great deal to be appreciative for on this Thanksgiving and consider myself incredibly lucky to have gone through that experience and survived. < *~ Ed Pierce*

Today in HISTORY



NOVEMBER 27

1826 – English chemist John Walker invents friction matches.

1889 – Curtis P. Brady is issued the first permit to drive an automobile through Central Park in New York City.

1895 – Swedish chemist Alfred Nobel, the inventor of dynamite, creates the international Nobel Prize Awards.

1901 – The Army War College is established in Washington, D.C.

1910 – New York's Pennsylvania Station opens.

1924 – The first Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade is held in New York City.

1960 – Gordie Howe of the Detroit Red Wings becomes the first player in the National Hockey League to score 1,000 goals.

1989 – The world's first liver transplant is successfully performed at the University of Chicago Medical Center.

2001 – NASA's Hubble Space Telescope discovers a hydrogen atmosphere on planet Osiris, the first atmosphere detected on an extrasolar planet.

Inspirational Quote of the Week

"Have gratitude for all that you have, and you can be happy exactly as you are."
~ Mandy Ingber

ON THE SPOT

In your opinion, what is the best type of sandwich?

"My husband's homemade egg salad!" – Deb McKeen Matthews

"Skippy all-natural peanut butter and fluff on sourdough." – David Brickel

"Reuben or French dip." – Julie Mallett

"A Fluffernutter like my mother used to make for me." – Dean A. Smalley

"French Dip and Italian Beef." – Mitchell B. Robinson

"Grilled cheese." – Lois Fuller

"A Monte Cristo with ham and cheese sandwich dipped in egg batter and pan-fried." – Tawny Lamabe-Punto

"Chicken salad with Grey Poupon mustard and Romaine lettuce." – Rick Seacroft

"A traditional triple-decker Club Sandwich with turkey, bacon, lettuce, and tomato. I also like chopped shrimp and creamy coleslaw on a hard roll." – Anne Glotchshuk

"Peanut Butter and Strawberry Jelly!" – David W. Tettley

"Reuben." – Brian Butler

"BLT." – Terri Blasi

"Thanksgiving sub!" – Aaron Bradeen

"Original Italian at Amatos." – Michele Marie

"Nothing available within 1,500 miles of here. A real pressed Miami "cuban" sandwich, New Orleans roast beef debris po boy. Temp/humidity is different, can't even recreate the same type of bread for either once you're out of the south." – Kevin Mayberry

"Philly cheesesteak." – Pam Wilson

"Reuben from Good Life Market." – Jennifer Harmon

"Leftover turkey with horseradish mayo Thanksgiving night after the kitchen is put back in shape." – MB Davidson

"Hot dog." – Maci Jo Libby

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Eagle NEWS



Recount affirms Youngs winner of House District 106

By Ed Pierce
STAFF WRITER

Two-term Republican State Representative Barbara Bagshaw has officially been defeated by Democrat Bradley Youngs for the right to represent Windham in the 133rd Maine Legislature.

During a recount for the Maine House District 106 race requested by Bagshaw and conducted by the Maine Secretary of State's Office on Nov. 18, Youngs tallied 2,648 votes to Bagshaw's 2,500 votes. The recount determined that 85 ballots cast were left blank.

Following the Nov. 3 General Election in Maine, Youngs was declared the winner over Bagshaw by a 147-vote margin. But in the recount, Youngs added one vote to his winning margin for a final margin of 148 votes.

Bagshaw, a retired teacher, was elected as a state representative in 2022 and had been re-elected in 2024. She was a member of the Education and Cultural Affairs committee covering the Maine Department of Education; State Board of Education; school finance, governance and administration; school budgets; school facilities; curriculum, instruction and assessment; teachers and administrators; special education and child development services; education of deaf and hard-of-hearing students; career and technical education; charter schools, alternative education, school choice and home schooling; school district reorganization; online learning; student health, nutrition and safety; truancy and dropouts; educational services at juvenile correctional facilities; adult education; Maine Education Policy Research Institute; University of Maine System; Maine Community College System; Maine Maritime Academy; postsecondary education finance and governance; Maine State Library; and cultural affairs, including Maine Arts Commission, Maine State Museum, Maine Historical Society, Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Maine Humanities Council and Maine Public, formerly known as Maine Public Broadcasting.

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 was represented at the recount by attorneys Joshua Tardy and Kim Pettengill.

"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.

Spaulding 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. Recounts are open to the public and media and are livestreamed on the Maine Secretary of State's YouTube page.

Maine law lays out a specific plan, process and any related costs for votes to be recounted. In a recount, representatives of each candidate and staff members from the Maine Department of the Secretary of State manually review each paper ballot cast to determine the official vote tally.

During the recount, the Secretary of State's Office 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. Official results must be presented to the governor within 20 days of the election.

On Nov. 17, Bagshaw posted a letter she sent to the Maine Secretary of State Shenna Bellows saying that she had asked for a recount and an audit.

"We requested an extended audit, but we were told we had to do the recount first," she posted on Facebook.

Spaulding said while no request for an "audit" had been received by the Maine Secretary of State's Office, no such process exists.

"A recount is a losing candidate's opportunity to challenge the results by hand counting every ballot cast, and a recount for the House District 106 race affirmed Bradley Youngs as the winner by a 148-vote margin," Spaulding said. "Recounts are a bipartisan, public process with ballots counted by equal representation from both parties, and attorneys for both parties observed, and signed off on the results as accurate."

Youngs will be sworn in as a state legislator on Wednesday, Dec. 2, replacing the incumbent Bagshaw. <

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Author writes fictional tale of heroic pet onboard Titanic

By Erin Rose
STAFF WRITER

A local author is exploring the unknown stories of pets who experienced one of the greatest disasters in maritime history in an upcoming book.

Windham resident Michael Meeske, who writes under pseudonym V.S. Alexander, is publishing a new historical fiction novel, "The Voyage", on Tuesday, Dec. 15.

"The early comments I have been getting have been 'oh, I didn't know there were dogs on the Titanic.'," he said. "I don't think a lot of people are aware."

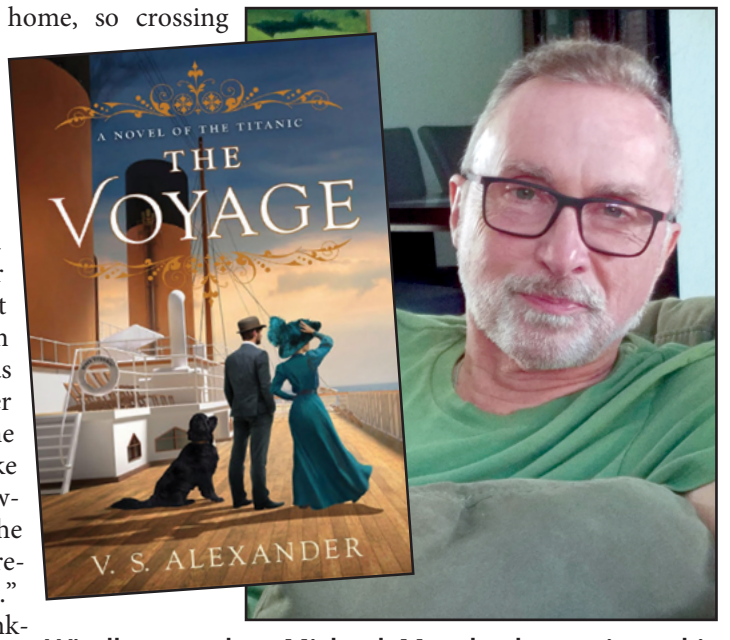
The story follows the journey of Sir Gordon Shelton and his American wife Ruth, as they are gifted first class passage to New York aboard a new ship on its maiden voyage, the Titanic. Along for the journey was their Newfoundland dog, Finn, as first-class passengers were permitted to bring their dogs on board.

There were whispers of a dog like Finn onboard the vessel, but it has not been proven in official records, Meeske said.

"There was a rumor that he was onboard and after the sinking, guided people to lifeboats and the Carpathia, the rescue ship," he explained. "But it was never proven that any Newfoundland was on board, as the others were logged in. He's a legend."

Published by Kensington Publishing, the book begins with Gordon and Ruth as they approach the sailing. Gordon has a lifelong fear of water following an incident in a river near his childhood home, so crossing an ocean with such a long-standing fear is a daunting task, but he perseveres.

"He has a childhood fear that he hasn't quite gotten over that he has to face in order to get on the boat," Meeske said. "The Newfoundland, it [the water] doesn't really bother him."



Windham author Michael Meeske has written his eighth historical fiction novel 'The Voyage' under the pen name TS Alexander about the ill-fated maiden journey of the Titanic in 1912. The novel will be available Dec. 15 from Kensington Publishing Corporation. SUBMITTED PHOTOS

After the sinking, Finn finds himself in the role as rescuer, and Ruth has to navigate the tragedy and the desperate search for her loved ones.

"Finn has a struggle. He's in the water with his master, and he does find his way back eventually to his home," Meeske explained. "The story becomes all about Ruth's grief and survival after the sinking, and her search for Finn."

Official records for the transatlantic journey list 13 dogs on the passenger manifest, with some being housed in the ship's kennel, where dogs were treated to daily exercise on the deck, and others stayed in their owners' staterooms.

see TITANIC Page 16

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Local veteran's groups create displays at Windham Library

By Erin Rose
STAFF WRITER

The Windham Public Library will host three different displays to both honor veterans in the community and provide information on the organizations that support them throughout the months of November, December, and January.

Sally J. Bannen, Technical Services Librarian at the library, found that she had an open display for three months and was encouraged to pay tribute to local veterans after a suggestion by a local veteran.

"We were approached by one of our regular patrons, who also volunteers with our children's programs, Alola Morrison," she said. "She and I had gotten together in May to talk about helping transport some women veterans to a memorial ceremony. We kept in touch and I told her 'I have an open spot. Would you be interested in doing something?'"

The displays will help members of the community expand their knowledge of the organizations, Morrison said, and give people a better idea of all they do in Windham.

"I think some people assume all we do is take care of discarded flags and put flags around the graves of soldiers who have died. We do that, but we do more," she said. "We like to work with the community too. We have to keep the community aware of what we're doing. That's one of the reasons why I thought it would be a nice gesture to have something displayed at the library because it was a way of connecting with the community."



The Windham Public Library will host three different displays to both honor veterans in the community and provide information on the organizations that support them throughout the months of November, December, and January. SUBMITTED PHOTO

Morrison took the chance to help expand the public's awareness and, in conjunction with the leadership of the Windham American Legion Post 148, decided to split the time and provide a month each to two other organizations, Veterans of Foreign Wars and Disabled American Veterans, to give them a chance to publicize their organizations. The display is on the second floor near the elevator, providing all seeking out the library's adult section a chance to check out the details contained in the glass case.

"This is great opportunity to talk about all of the veterans and several of the groups," Bannen said.

"She asked me if I would do three months. I had some things in mind and went to my commander, and he said we should go out to the other organizations," Morrison said. "They volunteered, so I volunteered to do it for the Legion and Auxiliary."

The display for November was prepared by Morrison, representing the American Legion Field-Allen Post 148 and the American Legion Auxiliary Unit 148.

The display highlights the four pillars of the American Legion, which is the largest veterans' organization in the United States, with more than 1.6

see LIBRARY Page 18

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Wayne G. Whitney, 86



RAYMOND — Wayne G. Whitney, 86, of Raymond, died Sunday, November 8, 2026, at the Norway Center for Rehabilitation in Norway, where he had been a resident for the past four months.

He was born on September 17, 1940, in Portland and raised in Raymond. He attended local schools and graduated from Bridgton High School in 1959. He attended Southern Maine Vocational and Technical Institute in South Portland and the University of North Carolina's truck driving school. Wayne drove for Shaw's Supermarkets for 32 years. After retiring, he drove a dump truck for a local excavation contractor.

Wayne served as a deacon and elder of the Raymond Village Community Church and was a member of the Raymond-Casco Historical Society. He was active in the Masons and Shriners as a member of Presumpscot Masonic Lodge in Windham and Kora Shrine in Lewiston.

Family was very important to Wayne, and he loved traveling to visit them whenever he could.

He is survived by his wife of 64 years, Linda (Clark) Whitney of Raymond. He is also survived by his sons, Kevin and his wife, Leslie, of Raphine, Virginia, and Kerry and his wife, Heather, of East Berlin, Connecticut. His surviving grandchildren are Keegan Whitney of East Berlin, Connecticut, and Erin Volovnik and her husband, Ricky, of Coopersburg, Pennsylvania. He is also survived by their daughter, Brynn Volovnik.

A memorial service celebrating Wayne's life will be held at 11AM on Saturday, December 5, 2026, at Raymond Village Community Church, 27 Main Street, Raymond, Maine.
Private interment will be at Murch Cemetery in South Casco.

Memorial donations may be made to the Raymond-Casco Historical Society, PO Box 1055, Raymond, ME 04071.
Arrangements are in the care of Hall Funeral Home in Casco, where condolences and tributes may be shared at www.hallfuneralhome.net.

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Loon Echo Land Trust opens new trail at Rolfe Hill Forest

By Briana Bizier
STAFF WRITER

If you're searching for a short and sweet adventure close to home, Loon Echo Land Trust has a new trail that's perfect for just about everyone. Morton's Meander, a lovely, winding half-mile trail in Rolfe Hill Forest in Casco, is now open to the public.

Rolfe Hill Forest is home to several trails for mountain biking, but Morton's Meander is special. This trail was designed specifically for adaptive mountain bikes for riders with disabilities. Adaptive bikes can have two, three, or even four wheels. Some have hand cranks, some have electric motors, and all are designed to help people get out and enjoy the natural world.

To accommodate a wide range of adaptive bikes, all of Morton's Meander is at least 48" wide. In addition, the gentle curves of the Meander trail have lower banks and wider corners than a typical mountain bike trail to ensure adaptive bikes won't tip over. "It's a very forgiving trail," Matt Markot of Loon Echo told me as we explored the Meander. "And it's just a great place to go for a walk."

Markot explained that the trails designed for people with disabilities also end up serving a wide range of hikers and bikers. The Meander's easy curves and low banks make the new half-mile trail a good choice for children or anyone who is learning how to mountain bike. The many curves also make this a perfect place for very young hikers who might run low on enthusiasm on a longer, more conventional trail and for older hikers looking for a short stroll in the woods.

Loon Echo acquired the 400 acres of woodlands, wetlands, and streams that became Rolfe Hill Forest in 2024. The land had been in the Rolfe family since the 1700s, and it is the site of the very first homestead in Casco. Over the years, Dave Morton, longtime Casco Town Manager, worked with Loon Echo Land Trust and the Rolfe family to help create the preserve. The name of this new trail, Morton's Meander, honors Dave and his work to see this land conserved.

As we explored the twists and turns of Loon Echo's newest trail, Markot admitted that building an adaptive trail is expensive. Funding for the Meander came from the Maine Trails Program, which was created in 2024 after Maine voters approved a $30 million trails bond to fund outdoor recreation, as well as private donations and fundraising. Loon Echo hired trail builders from nearby Mt. Abram, a ski area and bike park, to create the Meander. "It's important to us to use local businesses," Markot said. "At the end of the day, we want what we're doing to benefit our neighbors in the Lakes Region."

As part of the Meander's creation, Loon Echo also improved the Que-5 ATV and snowmobile trail that runs through Rolfe Hill Forest. The preserve remains open to ATVs and hunters as well as hikers and bikers. Loon Echo even provides blaze orange vests to borrow at the trailhead kiosk.

Morton's Meander is the first half of a longer planned trail for adaptive mountain bikes. The second part of the Meander, which will hopefully be completed in 2027, will create a mile-long adaptive biking loop. "Our goal is to build a world-class trail system," Markot said. "It's our love letter to the community."

The Rolfe Hill area is identified in

→ see **TRAIL** Page 29



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SALUTE TO SERVICE
PROFILES OF THOSE WHO SERVE OUR COMMUNITIES

Windham's Fire-Rescue Chief committed to serving keeping community safe

By Ed Pierce
STAFF WRITER

Brent Libby doesn't consider his role as Fire-Rescue Chief for the Town of Windham as anything typical.

"It's a 24/7 job," Libby said. "Emergencies don't just happen Monday through Friday."

Besides overseeing the town's Fire and Rescue services, Libby serves as the local Emergency Management Agency director and the Town Fire Warden. Windham Fire-Rescue provide fire suppression, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), hazardous materials response, and fire prevention and inspections to ensure a fire-safe community.

Emergency Medical Services amounts to about 67 percent of the department's call volume currently, Libby said.

As the Windham EMA director, Libby is responsible for emergency management situations such as hazard mitigation, storm response, and sheltering.

As the Town Fire Warden, Libby oversees issuing burning permits. And each of these roles connects with a different entity within the state, Libby said.

"It's a little bit of everything some days," he said. "There's always something to pick up and work on."

According to Libby, his interaction with town residents is one of the most rewarding aspects of his work. He says he especially enjoys when he's representing the department at community events or when people drop by with their children to see the town's firetrucks.

"We can talk a little bit about what we do," Libby said. "It's always great to show people where their tax dollars are going, and what services they're getting."

He's also a paramedic, and while he doesn't work in that capacity often, he said that he enjoys direct patient care.



Brent Libby has served as Windham's Fire-Rescue Chief for 11 years. He also works as the town's Emergency Management Agency director and he is the Windham Fire Warden.
COURTESY PHOTO

"It's nice to encounter somebody that needs assistance and then be able to carry that care through to the hospital," Libby said. "You get to know people a little bit and hopefully make them a little more comfortable and at ease in their time of emergency."

One of the biggest current challenges for Windham Fire-Rescue, Libby said, is ensuring that they have adequate staff to respond to the needs of the community at all times.

"What once was a very robust volunteer fire department has transitioned to what we call a combination department," he said. "Now, the department has full time, per-diem, and paid on-call staff."

Currently, the department has 20 Call Company members that also work per-diem; 22 Per-diem Firefighter-EMT's from out of town; nine Call Company Fire-Police (Traffic Control); seven Live-in College Students; four Full-time Firefighter-Paramedics; 12 Full-time Firefighter-EMT's (basic/advanced); four Full-time Shift Captains; three Deputy Chief's (one Call Company, two Full-time); one Full-time Fire-Rescue Administrative Coordinator; and one Full time Fire-Rescue Chief.

"When short staffed we call our neighboring communities for help, just as they do for us," Libby said." The departments end up working together, which is great but can also present challenges of its own."

He said staffing is difficult because there are fewer people going into the industry, and per diem staff often work for several departments at the same time.

The Windham Fire-Rescue Department has a program where college students, most from the Fire Science program at Southern Maine Community College live at the East Windham and South Windham stations. These students are with the department for at least two years, sometimes longer if they decide to continue their studies. Libby said th program has been good for recruitment, with many participants staying on as per diem or on call staff when they are finished with school.

Libby has served as the Windham Fire-Rescue Chief for 11 years. Prior to this position, he worked in Standish for 10 years, six of those as chief. Libby began his career as a junior firefighter in Gorham, where he grew up. He now lives in North Windham.

When not at work, Libby spends time with his rescue dog, visiting with family, working in the yard, kayaking, and other outdoor activities.

Under his leadership, Libby says that the care provided by the Fire-Rescue personnel to the community that they serve remains exceptional.

"Everything that they do is in the interest of the people that we're helping," Libby said. "They really, truly care for the people that they're serving. They may never have met them before, they may never meet them again, but it's important that the time that we interact with them is the best that it can be." <

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Holiday Gift & Event Guide

LIGHTING *Cont. from page 1*

Festive refreshments will also be available, including hot chocolate and cookies, provided by The Refuge Church. Local organizations, including the Windham Police Department and Windham Fire-Rescue, will have tables for attendees to meet and interact with those in public safety who serve the community.

There is no charge for the event, but attendees are asked to consider donating to the town's Giving Tree, which is being managed by Age Friendly Windham at the celebration. The tree holds tags that list gifts for members of the community in need of additional assistance this holiday season.

"Each tag will have a wish on it," Crowe said. "This could be clothing items, a gift card for heating oil or food, donation for a ride to a doctor's appointment, hygiene products, etc. You can pick one or more tags to take home with you, purchase the items listed on the card and drop them off at the Parks and Recreation office before the drop off deadline."

"There will also be an estimated cost on the tag if you would rather give cash, and you can do so right at the event," she added. "This is a great way to give back and help brighten the holiday season for a community member."

While there had previously been a real tree used for the holiday festivities, it was taken down during the renovations to the public safety complex several years ago. Now, the town's Public Works department sets up an artificial tree in its place outside of the building, adding lights and ornaments to bring it to life.

"We add new tiers each year, so the tree continues to grow and shine brighter every season," Crowe said. "Public Works employees get the tree ready and set up every year, including all of the other decorations around town. They do great work and have everything ready before the tree lighting, so when Santa turns on the tree lights, he is also turning on all the lights around town."

The Public Safety Complex is located at 375 Gray Road (Route 202) in Windham. More information about the Holiday Tree Lighting and the schedule of events can be found at windhammaine.us. <



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Holiday Gift & Event Guide

Giving Tuesday celebrates the power of generosity

As the holiday season begins, a day dedicated to kindness and generosity reminds people that the greatest gifts are not always found beneath a Christmas tree. Giving Tuesday encourages individuals, families and businesses to make a difference by supporting nonprofit organizations, volunteering their time and helping neighbors in need.

Celebrated annually on the Tuesday following Thanksgiving, Giving Tuesday falls on Dec. 1 this year. The event follows the busy shopping days of Black Friday and Cyber Monday, shifting attention from purchasing gifts to giving back to communities.

Giving Tuesday began in 2012 as an initiative created by the 92nd Street Y in New York City, in partnership with the United Nations Foundation. What started as a simple idea to encourage charitable giving during the holiday season has grown into a global movement involving millions of people in countries around the world.

The concept is straightforward: Everyone has something to give, whether it is money, time, resources or an act of kindness.

For nonprofit organizations, Giving Tuesday represents much more than a symbolic celebration. It provides an important opportunity to raise funds, attract new supporters and increase awareness of the services they provide throughout the year.

Many charitable organizations depend heavily on donations to maintain their operations. Food pantries, animal shelters, youth programs, senior services, homeless shelters and organizations assisting families facing financial hardships rely on community generosity to continue their work.

These contributions help purchase food, provide emergency assistance, support educational programs, cover operating expenses and ensure essential services remain available to those who need them most.

For smaller, community-based nonprofits, even modest donations can make a significant difference. A contribution of $10 or $20, when combined with donations from others, can help provide meals, purchase winter clothing or supply necessities to struggling families.

The timing of Giving Tuesday is particularly meaningful. While the holidays bring celebrations and excitement, they can also create additional financial and emotional challenges for individuals already experiencing hardship.

For some families, putting food on the table, heating their homes or purchasing Christmas gifts for their children can be difficult. Local nonprofits often experience increased demand during this season, making community support especially important.

The movement's impact continues to grow. In 2025, an estimated 38.1 million Americans participated in Giving Tuesday, contributing approximately $4 billion to charitable causes. Since its creation, the event has generated an estimated $22.5 billion in donations nationwide.

Giving Tuesday also emphasizes that generosity does not require financial resources. Volunteering at a food pantry, donating gently used clothing, collecting toys, visiting an elderly neighbor or helping someone with everyday tasks are meaningful ways to participate.

Businesses can contribute by sponsoring charitable initiatives, matching employee donations or organizing workplace collections. Families can involve children by selecting a cause to support, teaching younger generations the importance of compassion and community responsibility.

Although Giving Tuesday lasts just one day, its message extends throughout the year. Nonprofit organizations need consistent support beyond the holiday season, and recurring donations or volunteer commitments can provide valuable stability.

Ultimately, Giving Tuesday serves as a reminder that the holiday spirit is not measured by how much people spend, but by how much they care. Every act of generosity, regardless of size, has the potential to brighten someone's life and strengthen the community. <

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Holiday Gift & Event Guide

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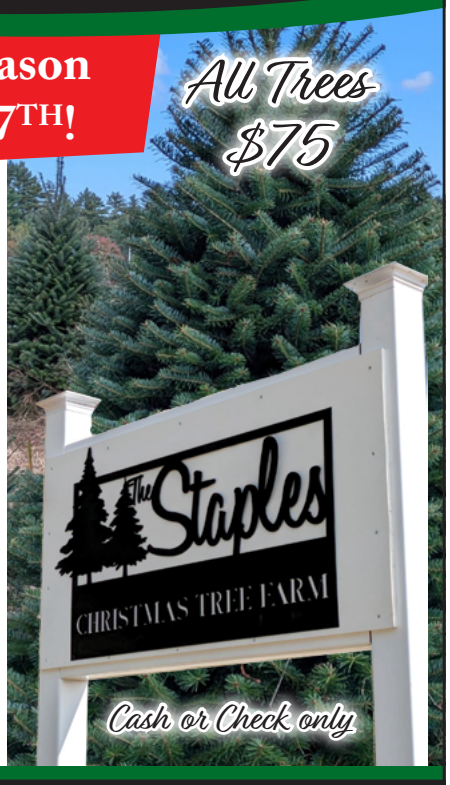

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Lake Region Community Chorus returns for holiday concerts

By Ed Pierce
STAFF WRITER

Some of the most popular music makers in the Lakes Region of Maine are once again returning to the stage to perform in Christmas concerts of traditional holiday favorites.

Members of the Lake Region Community Chorus are preparing to appear during a joyous celebration of song called "Jingle All the Way" that expresses the promise, hope and meaning of the season at 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 4 and 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 6 at the Lake Region High School auditorium in Naples.

Singing will be enhanced with instrumental accompaniments by Rusty Wiljer (percussion), Emmett Burns (cello), Glen Jukkola (violin), Anne Polak (flute), Adam Quincy (trumpet), Brian Sprunger (electric bass), Pam Ward (guitar), and eight bell chime ringers led by Carolyn Stanhope. The concert will conclude with the singing of the "Hallelujah Chorus" with audience participation.

Lake Region Community Chorus is directed by Jan Jukkola and Charles Oehrtmann and accompanied by Patrick Speckamp. This enthusiastic singing group is made up of 45 singers from 12 surrounding towns in the Lakes Region of Maine including from Windham and Raymond, who will present a varied program made up of traditional Classical pieces, folk songs, show tunes, and medleys of hits by popular recording artists.



The Lake Region Community Chorus will offer free 'Jingle All the Way' holiday concerts at 7 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 4 and at 3 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 6 at the Lake Region High School auditorium in Naples.
SUBMITTED PHOTO

The chorus is a vibrant and dynamic non-profit organization providing choral programs for the Lakes Region of Maine community.

Its history is short because it's a relatively new organization. The chorus had its first meeting in February 2013 to discuss the possibility of forming a choral group in the Lakes Region. Then it was amazing at how quickly everything seemed to come together, and with Laurie Turley as its original conductor, chorus members performed their first public concert in June 2013.

Since that time, the original Lake Region Community Chorus group of around 36 singers continues to grow with voices joined together in song. Its purpose is to provide an opportunity for individuals with an interest in singing to share their love of choral music through regularly scheduled rehearsals that will culminate in community and outreach performances. It also strives to enhance each member's ability to sing by teaching vocal exercises and techniques and to enrich their choral experience by providing a wide variety of musical selections that will increase their knowledge and appreciation of choral literature.

Lakes Region Community Chorus performs two concerts each year. The first one falls in early December and features holiday-themed music. The other is a springtime concert generally falling in mid-May.

With the generous support of Bridgton Academy, some concerts are performed in the Twitchell Chapel on the Bridgton Academy campus in North Bridgton. Rehearsals are held on Monday nights at Twitchell Chapel. For the December concert, rehearsals start around Labor Day, and for the Spring concert, they start around the end of January.

Chorus members would like to thank Saphrona Stetson and Greg Watkins for all of their help and support and assistance at Lake Region High School. The chorus also would like to thank their enthusiastic audiences and local sponsors for their support. Donations to help cover music and operating costs will be most appreciated.

Each concert is free but donations to help cover the expense of music and operating costs will be gratefully accepted.

If interested, come and join the Lake Region Community Chorus as they lift their voices in beautiful music and song for the public. This year's uplifting holiday concert is sure to create the Christmas spirit in everyone who choose to attend.

Please visit the Lake Region Community Chorus website for more details or call 207-647-2584. <




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- ___ Do you notice unkempt hair, dirty or lengthy nails, poor oral hygiene or body odor?
- ___ Are they wearing the same clothes repeatedly?
- ___ Do you see a significant change in their weight?
- ___ Are they eating a healthy diet/nutritious meals?
- ___ Are they repeating themselves? Do they seem lost or confused during regular conversations?
- ___ Do they still get out and do the activities they enjoy, or are they hesitant to leave the house?

Around the House
- ___ Is their home, that was once tidy, now being neglected?
- ___ Are things as clean as they used to be?
- ___ Do you see potential tripping hazards, such as cords, rugs or newspapers piled up in the middle of the floor?
- ___ Is there enough bright lighting inside and outside of the home as well as stairwells?
- ___ Is there a lot of unopened mail or unpaid bills piled up on the desk or counter?
- ___ Do they have expired or spoiled food in the refrigerator or pantry?

Overall Safety
- ___ Are they navigating the stairs OK, or would they benefit from more secure railings on both sides of the stairs?
- ___ Are they having trouble with mobility—getting in and out of bed, a chair or the tub/shower; on and off the toilet?
- ___ Do they lose track of their medications… or skip them altogether?
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TITANIC *Cont. from page 4*

While not looking to give too much away for readers, the author recognizes that hearing a dog is a main character in a book will prompt an inevitable question – does the dog survive?

"He's the hero," Meeske said. "Other than that, I don't want to spoil the book for people."

Meeske was inspired by the tale of Kitty, a dog who belonged to American millionaire John Jacob Astor and his wife, Madeleine.

"Kitty was an accompaniment to their trip to Europe," Meeske said. "She was an Airedale and was probably the most famous dog on the liner."

Sadly, the beloved pet did not survive the sinking of the ship in the North Atlantic Ocean on April 15, 1912. Three dogs did survive the tragedy, small dogs who were smuggled aboard lifeboats with their owners as they fled the ship.

Developing the story took Meeske about two years, as historical fiction requires heavy research to ensure accuracy while building the storyline. The book is his eighth book for the publishing house and will be his last before moving to a new company.

When starting out in his writing career with Kensington in 2015, his editor at the time determined that it would make business sense for Meeske to use a pseudonym for his historical fiction books, allowing the author to use his creativity to craft a new name for himself.

"I liked the name Alexander and had used a similar name previously for another book," he said. "I also wanted a name that was up front in the fiction list. The A's come first."

"It's one of the great things about being an author – you can just come up with these names and kind of hide yourself," he added.

Meeske spent more than 20 years in the Boston area before moving to Florida to escape the cold of New England winters.

"There got to a point where I got frustrated with the weather," he said, prompting the move south to a warmer location.

However, over time, the wintertime conditions in the area have shifted, bringing Meeske north to Maine where he has rediscovered his love for a northerly climate.

"In 23 years since moving to Florida and moving back, the weather has dramatically changed," he said. "Not having four seasons for so long, you come back and say, 'wow, there is such a thing as fall.'"

Meeske has lived in Windham for the past two and a half years.

More information about "The Voyage", including how to preorder the book, can be found at local and national booksellers.

Details on Meeske's other historical fiction books and how to purchase them can be found at https://michaelmeeske.com. <

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LIBRARY Cont. from page 6

million members. It works to advocate for veterans' affairs and rehabilitation, including ensuring they have access to healthcare and supporting wounded or homeless veterans, and promotes national security to ensure troops retain a good quality of life and tracking any soldiers who were prisoners of war or missing in action. The Legion also promotes patriotism and civic duty, with programs to help support care for the American flag, voter participation, and different community groups. Finally, the group seeks to protect and support youth, including scholarships and support networks.

There are also photos of the Legion's activities, challenge coins from different events that the Legion has hosted, and a hat and patriotic scarf. Pamphlets with more information are on top of the display, so anyone interested can readily access additional details.

The Legion's Auxiliary Unit is also highlighted in the display, as Morrison said that their support is essential to the Legion.

"I'm also a member of the auxiliary, and the auxiliary does a lot to support the veterans. It started with women that supported their husbands during active duty," she explained. "When they returned, the women wanted to continue to do so, so they formed their own organization. We help out financially, as well as helping with supporting their events."

"They go hand in hand," Morrison said.

In December, the Veterans of Foreign Wars will take over the space, with Disabled American Veterans preparing a display for January.

Morrison served in the military twice, serving in public health in Massachusetts for two years before resigning her commission to move to Maine with her husband, Joseph, who passed away in 2017. However, her time as a civilian came to an unexpected end as she was approached to join a new project with the Army.

"In 1972, there was a young lady with the Army who came visiting while I was a dietician at a local hospital," Morrison said. "She said that she was trying to get a group of medical people to go into the service in the hospital division. It was a little part-time job, and I needed a little extra money and it sounded interesting. They got me back and I stayed in from 1972 to 1984."

The choice to rejoin the military was one she shared with Joseph, as the requirements of the service meant he would take on more obligations at home.

"It was a big commitment for my husband too. One weekend a month wasn't bad, but the two weeks a year I had to make a commitment to was hard," Morrison said. "He was willing to do it."

More details on the displays can be found by visiting the library at 217 Windham Center Road, or through its website at https://www.windham.lib.me.us/. American Legion Field-Allen Post 148 and Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 10643 are at 35 Veterans Memorial Drive, behind the Windham Mall. <

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Still not enough

By Andy Young
STAFF COLUMNIST

It's Thanksgiving, so for the seventh year in a row I'll attempt to list everything I'm thankful for in 600 words.

I'm grateful for my family's good health, and I truly appreciate having steady employment doing meaningful work I love. I'm thankful I live where there's electricity, tap water that's safe to drink, and a working furnace. I'm also grateful for having reliable transportation, a garage to park it in, and being able to, when necessary, cut grass, rake leaves, and shovel snow off the driveway. Having that capability is something no one, particularly someone of my vintage, should ever take for granted.



I'm thankful for having had parents and grandparents who truly loved me. They helped me develop the work ethic and social skills necessary for negotiating each day of life I'm granted, while simultaneously aiding me in smoothing over some unusually unattractive imperfections. I'm also deeply appreciative of my siblings, who despite frequently being reminded of those flaws have chosen to forgive me for them.

I'm beholden to the teachers, coaches, employers, and numerous friends who taught me valuable life lessons. And although the names have changed, I'm still grateful for those four classifications of people, since they're currently performing those same services for my children.

I sincerely appreciate the innovative and collaborative colleagues I work with, my kind and thoughtful neighbors, and friends (both near and far) who make time to stay in touch. I'm also thankful for certain medical advances. Were it not for replacement body parts and the skilled surgical teams who routinely install them, my current existence would most likely be far less enjoyable.

There are some less tangible things that I'm thankful for too, and nearly all of them involve daily human interaction. I'm thankful for young people with old souls, and for older people with young hearts. I'm grateful for every time I benefit from a random kindness, and even more delighted when I get the opportunity to perform one myself.

I'm thankful for nights when departed friends or relatives appear in one of my dreams. Those visits help me remember them more vividly. I'm also thankful for apparently lacking the ability to recall my nightmares.

Then there are some trivial things I'm inordinately thankful for, like bicycles, dried apricots, fiction by Carl Hiaasen, size 14 sneakers, the daily Wordle puzzle, and any apple that's not a Red Delicious.

I'm also fervently grateful for not having to deal with some awfully unpleasant things that too many others are exposed to every day. For example, I don't live in a war zone. I also don't have to deal with venomous snakes, termites, martial law, scorpions, radioactive waste, poisoned gas, killer bees, armed robbers, chronic back pain, fire ants, oil slicks, violent anti-government uprisings, or violent pro-government uprisings.

One humbling part of Thanksgiving is knowing how little I've had to do with obtaining any of the priceless benefits I've been provided with. I had no control over where, when, or to whom I was born. I've done nothing to avoid hurricanes, earthquakes, or similar natural disasters, and the state of my health is more attributable to good fortune than to anything I've done or haven't done. Nearly every advantage I have is due to random chance, happy coincidence, or someone doing me a solid. Maybe what I should be most thankful for is dumb luck!

Finally. I'm thankful the Windham Eagle's savvy management continues providing me with this weekly public forum. And most of all, I'm grateful that 600 words still aren't nearly enough to adequately express my gratitude for all I've been blessed with. <



Town of Windham's Annual

RABIES CLINIC

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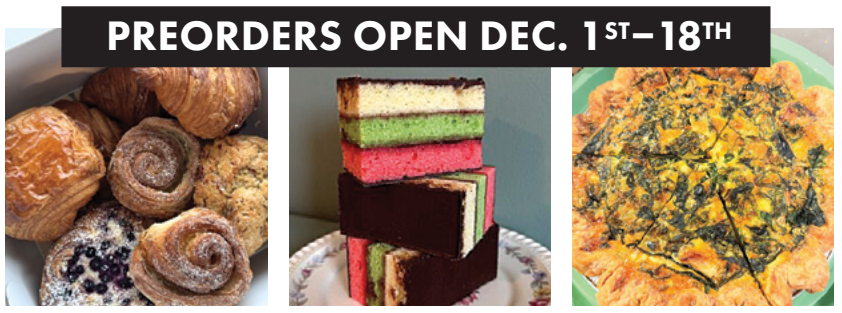

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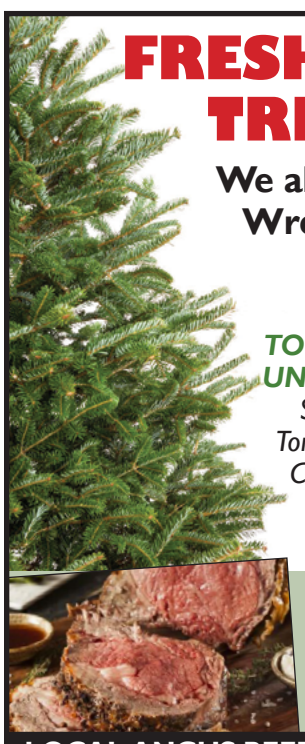

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BRIEFS

Cribbage Club

Windham Public Library's Cribbage Club meets from noon to 2 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 1 in the library's meeting room, 217 Windham Center Road. Join Marie Bishop and other cribbage enthusiasts every first and third Tuesdays with all ages and abilities welcome. Instruction is available for new players. FMI, call 207-892-1908 ext. 5 or email: rmarcotte@windhammaine.us. Transportation may be available from Age Friendly Windham. Call 207-892-4649.

Craft Fair

North Windham Union Church, 723 Roosevelt Trail, invites the public to a Craft Fair from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 5. There will be crafters/artisans, holiday baked treats and candy, a holiday photo booth, themed gift basket raffle, jewelry sale, silent auction, and a soup and sandwich lunch. FMI, call 207-892-6142.

Ladies' Christmas Tea

Covenant Family Fellowship is hosting a Ladies' Christmas Tea from 10 a.m. to noon on Saturday, Dec. 5 at 37 Northern Pines Road in Raymond. Participants are asked to bring a brunch-type of food to share and cookies for a cookie swap. This event is for ages 13 and up. RSVP by Nov. 29 to Pam Miner at 207-632-6941.

Holiday concert

Performances of "An American Family Holiday" concert by the Windham Chamber Singers will be at 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 5 at the Windham Performing Arts Center on the campus of Windham High School. The Windham Chamber Singers are now under the direction of Ryan Murray. Tickets are $15. To obtain tickets, go to windhamchambersingers.com.

Water Rate Program

Portland Water District is expanding its customer assistance program, Lifeline Water Rates, as part of its continued commitment to keeping essential water service affordable for all customers. Through a new partnership with Maine DHHS, eligible customers will now be included in the PWD Lifeline Water Rate assistance program. Eligible customers will not need to apply or take additional steps and will be notified when the credit is applied to their account. FMI, go to www.pwd.org/customer-assistance-lifeline-rates

Maine Celtics tickets

Raymond Village Library, 3 Meadow Road in Raymond, has a limited number of free tickets to Maine Celtics games. To obtain the free tickets you must a Raymond resident and have a valid Raymond Village Library card. FMI, call 207-655-4283.

Windham holiday gift assistance

Windham families in need can sign up for Holiday Gift Assistance through the Windham Toy Drive. Kids up to age 18 if still in school are eligible. To sign up, call 207-777-1156 before the Dec. 8 deadline. All requests are confidential.

Christmas help

Applications are now open for Christmas Assistance through the It Takes A Village 207 organization. Eligibility is based upon location and program requirements. All applications are confidential. To apply, send a private message on the It Takes A Village 207 Facebook page.

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Military veterans groups visit RSU 14 classes

The three military veterans' organizations in Windham have been busy visiting schools in the area in connection with Veterans' Day on Nov. 11.

The American Legion Field-Allen Post 148, the Disabled American Veterans Albert Worthen Chapter 3 Windham, and the Veterans of Foreign War Post 10643, combined forces to engage with several of the schools.

On Wednesday, Nov. 4, the American Legion Color Guard attended a Veteran's Day Assembly at Raymond Elementary School. The Color Guard marched into the assembly with flags and then listened to Raymond fourth graders sing the various military patriotic service songs.

Raymond Elementary School Principal Diana Jordan and her staff and 210 students attended the assembly, along with some parents of students and other veterans.

After the assembly the Color Guard members moved to a fourth-grade classroom. About 30 students and teachers listened as each veteran introduced himself. Then for the next hour, the students peppered the vets with various questions about military life and service.

On Thursday Nov. 5, two groups of veterans visited Windham Middle School. The vets sat with five seventh-grade classes or about 125 students in total and again following introductions, the students asked many questions about careers in military service.

Then on Thursday, Nov. 12, another visit was paid to the Windham Middle School Altitude classes in the seventh grade and eighth grade. During that visit, the veterans spoke with about 26 students.

The veterans that assisted in these visits included Brian Cunningham, Larry de Hof, John Facella, Larry Gilpatrick, Frank Mcintosh, Alola Morrison, Craig Pride, and Roger Timmons.

The students gained a better appreciation of military service efforts made by our veterans, and the veterans said that they were impressed with the various questions posed by the students.

All three veterans' organizations wish to thank the teachers and staff of the RSU 14 school district who helped make this all happen. <

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Grade: Third **School:** Windham Christian Academy
Teacher: Mrs. Willings **Favorite subject:** Math
Parents' names: Adon and Jamie Shaw
Reason for selection: Carter is a wonderful student who takes his work and class time very seriously. He cares a lot about his classmates and loves to encourage whoever needs it at the time. Carter excels at academics with math being one of his favorite subjects. Teachers admire Carter's integrity and gentleness when addressing other students and staff. A description of Carter would not be complete without mentioning his athletic strengths and his fantastic sportsmanship. We are so blessed to have Carter in our class this year.

Show community support by becoming our Student of the Week Sponsor!
CONTACT MELISSA FOR DETAILS
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Report urges statewide mental health program for Maine's heritage industries

The Working Group to Prioritize Wellness and Mental Health Resources for Heritage Industries has submitted a report to the Maine Legislature, recommending that the state establish a Heritage Industries Mental Health and Wellness Program. The program would give workers in agriculture, fishing, forestry, and logging one confidential place to start when they need support.

The working group was created by Resolve Chapter 147 (S.P. 862, L.D. 2144). Its members represent the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF), the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), the Department of Marine Resources (DMR), and industry, community, and health organizations. Over meetings held between May and September 2026, the group heard from workers, healthcare providers, service providers, and the public.

Workers are under pressure

Heritage industries are central to Maine's economy and identity, but the people who sustain them face persistent stressors, including seasonal income, high injury risk, geographic isolation, financial volatility, limited access to services, and stigma. The working group's public survey, which received 279 responses, found:

- 63 percent of respondents were self-employed.
- 52 percent had delayed getting health care in the past 12 months, most often because of cost and time away from work.
- 49 percent said mental health was a major or moderate concern in their industry, rising to 74% among agriculture respondents.

Rural residents face additional barriers. About one in five Mainers live in a federally designated mental health professional shortage area, and some counties have no psychiatrists.

Next Steps

The report is now before the joint standing committees of the Legislature with jurisdiction over agriculture, conservation and forestry; marine resources; and health and human services. Each committee may submit legislation to the 133rd Legislature in 2027.

Dana Doran, Executive Director, Professional Logging Contractors of the Northeast said, "Loggers and their families face unique pressures, from financial uncertainty and physical risks to isolation and the emotional toll of changes in the industry and way of life. Establishing a Heritage Industries Mental Health and Wellness Program would provide an important, confidential resource for the people who work in logging, helping ensure that no one has to face those challenges alone."

"In agriculture, the work never really stops, and neither should support for the people doing it," said Nichole Sargent, of Southpaw Packing in Raymond. "These recommendations make mental health care affordable, culturally competent, and accessible throughout farm life, because those who care for our lands and livestock deserve support, too."

Core components would include:

Confidential counseling and navigation – Short-term, low- or no-cost support made available without an employer referral, by phone, online, or in person.

- Coverage help – Provide assistance enrolling in and keeping MaineCare and their marketplace coverage.
- Integrated screening – Mental health check-ins, paired with injury, traumatic brain injury, and primary care screening at worksites and industry events.
- Prevention and training – Mental Health First Aid and peer-support networks built on existing industry efforts.
- Accountability – Public reporting on identified data, including the number of people served, referral completion, and unmet needs. <



Christmas COLORING CONTEST



CONTEST OPEN TO CHILDREN AGES 2-14. ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY TUESDAY, DEC. 15

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Parent's Contact Phone:_____

Parent's Email:_____

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MAIL OR DROP IN BLACK BOX ON BUILDING COLORING PAGE WITH COMPLETED ENTRY FORM TO:

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585 Roosevelt Trail, Windham, ME 04062

As seen in the 2026 Community Calendar



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6 Parks & Recreation Holiday Celebration 3:30PM	7 AL Aux 148 Mtg 6pm WVC Planning Board Meeting 6:00PM Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day	8 National Brownie Day Council Meeting 6:00PM	9 Veterans Coffee 9-11am WVC VFW Mtg at WVC Parks & Recreation North Pole Hotline	10 SLRCC - Bid of Christmas (TBD) Library Board of Trustees Meeting 4:30PM Parks & Recreation North Pole Hotline	11	12
13	14 Planning Board Meeting 6:00PM	15	16 Parks & Recreation Creative Kiddie Craft 8:30AM Veterans Coffee 9-11am WVC Red Cross Blood Drive 12-5pm WVC RSU 14 Board of Directors Meeting	17	18 Parks & Recreation Family Trivia Night	19
20	21 First Day of Winter WVA Meeting 6pm WVC	22 Council Meeting 6:00PM	23 Veterans Coffee 9-11am WVC DAV Mtg 6pm WVC	24 Christmas Eve	25 Merry Christmas Town Offices, Library closed	26 Library Closed Kwanzaa
27	28 Planning Board Meeting 6:00PM	29	30 Veterans Coffee 9-11am WVC	31 2026 Business Equipment Tax Reimbursement (BETR) Filing Deadline New Year's Eve		

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TRAIL Cont. from page 7

the Town of Casco's Open Space Plan for its significant ecological and recreational importance for residents. The land is home to over 60 acres of wetlands, vernal pools, and a trout stream.

Located just half a mile from LELT's Hacker's Hill Preserve on Quaker Ridge Road, Rolfe Hill was an important addition to the region's network of conserved lands. It is in an area of increasing development pressure, the 400-acre property plays an important role in safeguarding the water quality of Sebago Lake, which is the source of drinking water for over 200,000 Mainers and many Cumberland County businesses on a daily basis. Sebago Lake is so clean, thanks in large part to its forested watershed, that it is one of 50 surface water supplies (out of over 13,000) in the country that is not required to be filtered.

Rolfe Hill was identified by the conservation partnership Sebago Clean Waters (SCW) as a high priority for protection. SCW is a coalition of 10 nonprofit partners, including LELT, working with the Portland Water District to accelerate the pace of land conservation in the Sebago Lake watershed to protect water quality, community well-being, a vibrant economy, and fish and wildlife habitat.



Cooper Kilmartin of Casco uses a wheelchair and lives near the Morton's Meander Trail. He is excited about the opportunity to ride his adaptive bike on the new trail. SUBMITTED PHOTO

Loon Echo Land Trust was founded in 1987, and is a nonprofit organization that protects land, ensures public access to the outdoors, and builds and maintains recreational trails. The organization currently conserves over 9,000 acres of land and manages a 35-mile trail network across the Lake Region and protects many important local landmarks. For specific information about other LELT properties, upcoming events, or how to get involved, visit LELT.org or visit their Facebook page.

If you're looking for a casual stroll, a place to ride any kind of mountain bike, or just a nice spot to enjoy December's brief sunny days, I highly recommend strolling on Morton's Meander. The parking lot is at 559 Quaker Ridge Road in Casco. The Meander branches off from the ATV trail a few steps from the parking lot. Happy hiking! <

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Eagle SPORTS



WHS varsity girls' basketball wins preseason tournament

By Matt Pascarella
STAFF WRITER



Windham HIgh's Lady Eagles varsity girls' basketball team gathers after winning the Dick Meader Invitational at Maranacook Community High School in Readfield on Saturday, Nov. 21. PHOTO BY MATT PASCARELLA

The Windham varsity girls' basketball team took the court for the first time this preseason in the Dick Meader Invitational, at Maranacook Community High School in Readfield on Saturday, Nov. 21. The Invitational featured Maranacook, Mount Desert Island and Dover-Foxcroft. Windham advanced to the championship after beating Maranacook 47-34 in the first game. The Eagles then played Dover-Foxcroft in the championship and defeated the Ponies 43-26.

"It was a really good start to the preseason," said Windham senior Isabella Vassoler. "That was our objective and I think we met that goal by winning this. We got everyone in, everyone played so great and our entire bench started and finished perfect. The second game went really well, because we worked as a team, our shots were hitting, our defense was much better, we really kicked it up and showed we could be a good team."

Windham played Maranacook first and this game was an even match early on. Late in the first half, Windham pulled away and led 23-20 at intermission.

From the second half on, Windham pressured and held onto their lead. Windham juniors Mackenzie Delewski and Sitota Hatch both sunk three-pointers; as did senior Denali Momot. Windham gave 100 percent and left the Bears in the dust by double digits.

In the championship game, Windham really turned up the power and over the course of two halves sank seven three-point shots.

Sophomore Jadyn Underhill said that boxing out and playing as a team are important takeaways from the day. Underhill said shooting was good during these games.

Momot scored within seconds of the start of the championship game as the team moved the ball well.

"We came out (in the championship game) a lot harder," said Momot. "We were checking out and getting more defensive rebounds. We also were making much better passes and shots were falling better than in the first game. We had been watching (Dover-Foxcroft) play before us and we saw their skill level and who their target players were, so we knew what to expect. We knew they were going to come out hard ... (the way we played) shows how important checking out is, boxing out on defense and staying together as a team, keeping the positivity up, because that worked really well."

Dover-Foxcroft had a slight lead early on, but that would not last. The Eagle's offense quickly drove up the scoreboard and had a substantial lead of 24-12 over Dover-Foxcroft midway through.

While Dover-Foxcroft slowly tried to close the points gap in the second half, Windham offense could not be beat. Windham hit three three-pointers and led by over 20 late in the third quarter. They held onto their lead to win the invitational.

"The goal is to come out and try to execute things we've been working on," said Windham varsity girls' basketball coach Brody Artes. "I thought the kids did a really good job with that, there are some things we need to work on, but that's fine because it's November. Our rebounding (needs work); defensively we weren't great early on but got better over the course of the day. It's a lot of little things that we can surely clean up, and that's why we (participated in) this (to see those blind spots). We shot the ball really well we were pretty good offensively ... shared the ball well, we tried to mesh some veteran players with some new players and today was a good start."

After the game, Delewski was given the All-Star award and Vassoler was awarded Most Valuable Player. <

ATHLETE OF THE WEEK



Ella Higgins

Age: 14 **Team:** WMS seventh-grade basketball
Coach: Darcey Gardiner
Parents' names: Sarah and Ronnie Higgins
Reason for selection: Ella being chosen for athlete of the week is beyond deserving. For two years now she has consistently been the athlete who shows up to practice daily wanting to get better and putting in the effort to help her team get better. Ella is so cool, calm, and collected in any situation yet she's able to serve an amount of competitiveness that brings teammates up to a higher level of play around her. Being named a captain for the team this season has been a role that Ella has stepped into wonderfully, with her ability to connect with her teammates; leadership has been natural for her. Coaches are excited to see where Ella can take her game as she enters high school next year.

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WMS girls' eighth grade basketball crushes Falmouth, seventh grade team falls after second half push

By Matt Pascarella
STAFF WRITER

Windham Middle School's girls' basketball eighth- and seventh-grade teams played Falmouth at Windham in their season openers on Thursday, Nov. 19 and the eighth-grade team pummeled the Navigators to earn their first win, 53-12. The seventh-grade team had a slow start but made up for it in the second half, falling to Falmouth, 34-24.

EIGHTH GRADE

"When we started practice two-and-a-half weeks ago, we really just picked up where we left off last year," said Windham Middle School eighth grade girls' coach Darcey Gardiner. "It was really obvious to me that these girls have gotten stronger, they've gotten bigger, they've gained more knowledge about the game of basketball, I'm out there doing more managing than I am coaching. We're working on some zone defensive stuff that we built on since last year. I think this entire team is a threat from the outside of the arc. I love that they're seeing an open shot now and taking it. It's this group and how much they've worked together in the past is what leads to us having successful wins like this."

Gardiner said rebounding and the time and place to where put the pressure on need work. Once they figure that out, it will help boost them the rest of the season.

Windham scored at the very beginning of the game and soon took a substantial lead.

Windham defense limited Falmouth scoring the entire first quarter. They passed and rebounded with offense remaining in top form. At the half, Windham led 27-4.

The second half brought the Eagles keeping up their intensity. At one point during the third quarter, Windham led by 30 points and showed no signs of slowing down. They kept up their offensive and defensive efforts until the final buzzer.

"Our offense (led to the win) and we were doing really good at taking the ball to the hoop," said Kelenese Dickson who scored 14 points. "I think we were a little nervous (coming in), but once we got used to it, we did pretty good. Our passing, and offense and shooting all went well. Defense, running more of our plays and taking care of the ball more needs work."

SEVENTH GRADE

Falmouth had control early in the game and jumped out ahead. Windham gave up several turnovers, and the Navigators had a big lead after the first quarter.

As time on the first half began to run out, Windham put some points on the scoreboard and kept their heads up. At the half, Falmouth led 20-6.

Both Windham offense and defense made up a significant amount of their deficit during the second half. They moved the ball well and Windham's Elliana Wood and Colby Sargent both hit three-pointers.

"Trying to win was our approach," said Sargent, who scored 16 points. "Falmouth is a pretty good team, they're just faster than us; less errors and stronger with the ball. Defense went pretty well, help side went alright and cutting in the open. Boxing needs work; we realized we had more in us in the second half and played with hustle."



(L to R) Windham eighth grader Avary Caiazzo takes a shot from the top of the key during the season opener against Falmouth on Thursday, Nov. 19. Eighth grader Kelenese Dickson goes in for a layup. Seventh grader Chloe Penney lines up a shot. PHOTO BY MATT PASCARELLA

With four minutes remaining in the game, Windham trailed by 8. They continued to work hard and fought until the very end.

"Our biggest goal was effort, getting all those 50-50 balls," said Windham Middle School seventh grade girls' basketball coach Jaime Bell. "We were just looking to work together as a team and hustle. We were a little nervous ... but our hustle and intensity picked up in the second half. We finished a lot closer than earlier in the game, but I think we came out a little slow. Getting used to playing with each other, and knowing what to expect when we get out on the court (needs work)." <

Windham Raymond Schools
RSU 14

SCHOOL BOARD UPDATE

AT-A-GLANCE

Discussion topics are subject to change. Please check meeting agendas for the most up-to-date information.

RSU 14 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Upcoming School Board Work:

- CDS Transition Update
- RES State of the School
- Audit Presentation
- Annual Achievement Report
- WHS New Course Approval

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Upcoming Committee Work:

- Year-to-Date Spending
- Audit Review
- Fund Balance
- Reserve Planning

POLICY COMMITTEE

Upcoming Committee Work:

- IKE - Promotion, Retention and Acceleration of Students
- ILA - Student Assessment/Local Assessment System
- JEA - Student Compulsory Attendance
- KLGC - Relations with Law Enforcement Personnel

CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

Upcoming Committee Work:

- No meeting scheduled

FACILITIES COMMITTEE

Upcoming Committee Work:

- Windham Middle School Building Next Steps

UPCOMING MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and subject to change.

December 2, 2026:
6:30 p.m. at Windham High School: Board Meeting

December 7, 2026:
9:00 a.m. at Central Office: Policy Committee

11:00 a.m. at Central Office: Finance Committee Meeting

December 8, 2026:
5:00 p.m. at Central Office: Facilities Committee

December 16, 2026:
6:30 p.m. at Jordan-Small Middle School: Board Meeting

December 21, 2026:
9:00 a.m. at Central Office: Policy Committee

SCAN HERE TO SEE BOARD MEETING AGENDAS, MEETING VIDEOS, BOARD MEMBERS, FINANCES, SCHOOL POLICIES & MORE

Eagle REAL ESTATE & Home

Cutting through the noise: What's really happening in Maine's real estate market?

By The Libby Starnes Team
SPECIAL TO THE WINDHAM EAGLE



– Pamela Starnes/Tiffany Libby, The Libby Starnes Team

If you've been paying attention to the real estate market lately, you've probably noticed one thing: there's a lot of noise.

One headline says home prices are falling. Another suggests it's a great time to buy. Social media is filled with predictions about interest rates, housing crashes, and whether sellers have missed their opportunity. Everyone seems to have an opinion about where the market is headed.

But here's my question: **Are we paying too much attention to the noise and not enough attention to what's actually happening in our market?**

After years of historically low inventory, multiple-offer situations, and homes selling well above asking price, Maine's real estate market is experiencing a shift. And while change can create uncertainty, it doesn't necessarily mean something is wrong.

The Market Is Changing, Not Disappearing

According to the Maine Association of REALTORS®, October 2026 saw a 6.58 percent decrease in single-family home sales compared to October 2025, while the statewide median sales price declined 5.63 percent to $402,500.

Those numbers certainly tell us something, but they don't tell the entire story.

We're seeing more inventory, longer marketing periods for some properties, and buyers becoming increasingly selective. Homes that might have received multiple offers within days a few years ago may now require additional marketing, price adjustments, and patience.

This isn't necessarily a bad thing. It's a market working toward greater balance.

Buyers Are Cautious, but Opportunities Exist

One of the biggest challenges facing buyers continues to be affordability. Higher mortgage interest rates, property taxes, insurance costs, and everyday living expenses are influencing purchasing decisions.

Many buyers are taking their time, evaluating their finances, and waiting for the right opportunity.

However, waiting for the "perfect" market can be a gamble.

Today's buyers may have opportunities that were difficult to find just a few years ago: more properties to consider, greater negotiating flexibility, and potentially fewer competing offers.

The key is understanding what you can comfortably afford and making decisions based on your financial situation rather than predictions about what might happen next.

Sellers Need to Adjust Their Expectations

For sellers, the days of simply putting a sign in the yard and expecting multiple offers are no longer the norm in many areas.

Pricing, presentation, and patience have become more important than ever.

Buyers have options, and they're paying attention to condition, updates, location, and overall value. Overpricing a home can lead to extended time on the market, fewer showings, and ultimately price reductions.

That doesn't mean homes aren't selling. They absolutely are.

But successful sellers must understand that today's market requires a thoughtful pricing strategy, professional marketing, and realistic expectations.

A home's value isn't determined by what a neighbor received two years ago or what someone believes it should be worth. It's determined by what qualified buyers are willing to pay in today's market.

Remember, Real Estate Is Local

One of the biggest mistakes buyers

→ see REAL ESTATE Page 33

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REAL ESTATE Cont. from page 32

and sellers make is assuming national headlines accurately reflect what's happening in their own communities.

The market in Windham may look very different from Portland, Casco, Gorham, or another part of Maine.

Even within the same town, property values and buyer demand can vary significantly depending on location, condition, acreage, price point, and amenities.

That's why local market knowledge matters.

A statewide statistic is helpful, but it should never replace a detailed analysis of comparable properties and current market conditions.

Don't Let the Noise Make Your Decisions

Real estate has always experienced cycles. Interest rates change, inventory fluctuates, and buyer confidence rises and falls.

What concerns me most isn't the changing market. It's the number of people allowing fear, speculation, and conflicting information to prevent them from making informed decisions.

If you're considering buying, selling, or investing, ask questions. Understand your options. Work with professionals who know your local market and will give you realistic advice, even when it's not necessarily what you want to hear.

The right time to make a move isn't always when the headlines say it is. It's when the decision makes sense for your circumstances, finances, and long-term goals.

The bottom line? Turn down the noise, focus on the facts, and remember that opportunities exist in every real estate market. You just need to know where to look.

This article was brought to you by The Libby Starnes Team at Signature Homes Real Estate Group, specializes in helping buyers and sellers across the Lakes Region and Southern Maine. If you're considering buying or selling this year, they are always happy to help you explore your options. For more updates, listings, or to schedule a consultation, visit www.libbystarnesteamhomes.com or follow The Libby Starnes Team on social media. Call them at 207-838-8051 or 207-712-2424 or visit them online at www.libbystarnesteamhomes.com. <



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GIFTS Cont. from page 1

nity members can volunteer to sort, wrap or help distribute gifts."



New unwrapped gifts from the community will also be accepted at the Windham Public Safety Building until Wednesday, Dec. 16 for the Holiday Gift Assistance Program.

"Or goal is simply to help people and that is what we want to do with this program," Talbot said. "Windham's Holiday Gift Assistance Program reflects the compassion and generosity of the community. With the continued support of donors and volunteers, we can help ensure that families facing difficult circumstances still experience the joy and wonder of the holidays."

For questions regarding applications, donations, or volunteering for Windham's Holiday Gift Assistance Program, call Talbot at 207-892-1919. <

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LEGAL NOTICE

TOWN OF RAYMOND, MAINE

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

SITE WALK

Saturday, December 5, 2026 • 10:00 AM

You are hereby notified the Raymond PLANNING BOARD will hold a Site Walk at the above location on **Saturday, December 5th, 2026 at 10:00 a.m.** regarding the information for the following proposed project:

APPLICANT: FT Holding LLC submitted by James Seymour, Sebago Technics
LOCATION: Map: 016 Lot: 056 Zone R Dyer Road
DESCRIPTION: Proposed 14 Lot Subdivision on 92 acres. Subdivision will either be conventional or cluster TBD at next Planning Board Meeting.

The site walk will commence at 10:00 a.m. meeting at the project site on Dyer Road.

LEGAL ADVERTISEMENT

TOWN OF RAYMOND, MAINE

PLANNING BOARD

Wednesday, December 9, 2026 • 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, December 9th, 2026 at 7:00 pm** on the following matters:

PRELIMINARY PLAN REVIEW MINOR AMENDMENT TO APPROVED SUBDIVISION
APPLICANT: Silas Canavan, Canavan Civil Consultants on behalf of Frick Joint Trust
LOCATION: Map: 008 Lot: 48E Zone VR Westview Drive
DESCRIPTION: Application for an amendment to an approved subdivision to allow creation of a backlot driveway.

SKETCH PLAN REVIEW
APPLICANT: James Seymour, Sebago Technics on behalf of FT Holding LLC
LOCATION: Map: 016 Lot: 56 Zone R and a Portion in RP Zone Dyer Road
DESCRIPTION: Application for sketch plan review of 14-lot conventional subdivision and 14-lot cluster subdivision.

– PUBLIC HEARING –
Ordinance Updates to be in compliance with State regulation regarding ADUs

Copy of the submitted applications are available for review on the town website (www.raymondmaine.gov/agendas) after November 6th, 2026 or at the Town Office (401 Webbs Mills Road) by appointment during regular business hours.

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.

SCAN HERE TO REGISTER IN ADVANCE FOR THIS MEETING OR GO TO:
https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/hTJ9PBaNTNau7gcbKdSkgg

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Eagle

PLEASE NOTE: FOOD AND GAMES FEATURE ALTERNATES WITH MOVIE REVIEW

FOOD AND GAMES

THE WINDHAM EAGLE'S Cooking Corner

Turkey Noodle Soup

Cooking and preparing a Thanksgiving meal can be a genuine chore, and in the days following the feast, many seek creative ways to use all those leftovers. This turkey noodle soup is not only delicious, it's simple to make, and also has everything in there to yield a healthy and satisfying meal in the days after the turkey carcass had been hauled away and the holiday decorations stored for yet another year.

INGREDIENTS

2 tablespoons of extra-virgin olive oil
2 medium carrots, peeled and finely chopped
2 celery ribs, thinly sliced
1 medium yellow onion, finely chopped
Kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper
3 minced garlic cloves
6 cups of low-sodium turkey stock or chicken broth
2 cups of water
Small bunch of fresh thyme
1 bay leaf
1 teaspoon of dried oregano
Pinch of crushed red pepper flakes
6 ounces of egg noodles
3 cups of cooked shredded turkey

INSTRUCTIONS

In a large pot over medium heat, heat the oil. Add carrots, celery, onion, and cook, stirring, until softened, about 7 minutes; season with salt and pepper.
Add garlic and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 1 minute more.
Add turkey stock or broth, water, thyme, bay leaf, oregano, and red pepper flakes. Bring to a boil, then add noodles.
Cover and cook until pasta is cooked through, about 7 minutes.
Discard the thyme and bay leaf.
Add the turkey and bring the mixture to a simmer.
Cook, stirring occasionally, until warmed through or about 5 minutes; season with salt and pepper, if needed.

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E	L	B	A	■	I	R	A	N	I	■	A	R	T	Y
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■	■	■	D	A	R	E	D	E	V	I	L	■	■	■
A	C	E	■	R	A	D	■	L	I	B	■	R	E	M
R	A	B	B	E	T	■	P	E	A	■	S	E	M	I
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M	A	R	I	■	A	G	L	E	T	■	I	B	I	S
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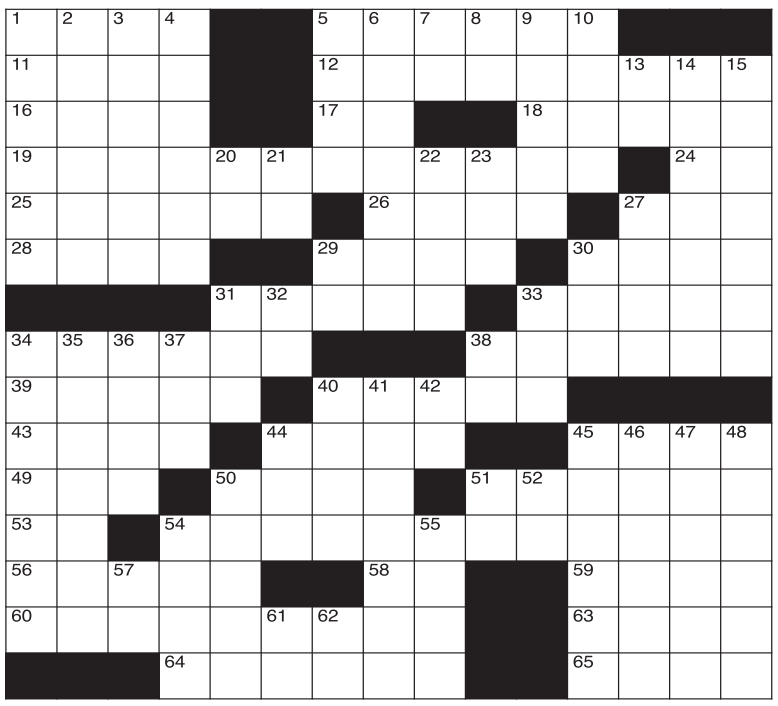

CLUES ACROSS

1. Popular wine __ Spumante
5. Greatly impressed
11. __ and that
12. Uttered with passion
16. Boats
17. Veteran actor Harris
18. Casserole with game
19. Reprehensible acts
24. They precede C
25. Says under one's breath
26. Taxis
27. It transfers genetic info
28. NFL great Randy
29. Where college students sleep
30. Major European river
31. Taco condiment
33. -frutti
34. Polish city
38. Astronomy unit
39. Khoikhoin peoples
40. Bears QB Williams
43. Scrambled, fried, boiled
44. Price indicators
45. One-time world power
49. When you hope to get somewhere
50. Farm building
51. Choose carefully
53. Magnum was one
54. One who combines
56. Nursemaids
58. Partner to Pa
59. Notable river
60. Officially honors
63. Colorless compound
64. A fancy chair
65 Email function

CLUES DOWN

1. The central area in a building
2. Religion of Japan
3. Leggings
4. Officially distributes
5. Arabian Sea seaport
6. Spanish doctors
7. It cools your house
8. Currency of Poland
9. Slowly moves into
10. Days (Spanish)
13. Unit of volume
14. Emit
15. With two replaceable hydrogens
20. Title for a man
21. Equally
22. Scarlett's home
23. One-time tech titan
27. Subway dwellers
29. One-tenth of a liter
30. Central European river
31. Distress signal
32. Expression of sympathy
33. The bill in a restaurant
34. Football equipment
35. Dance music
36. Russian river
37. Cosmetics giant Mary __
38. Gym class
40. Automobiles
41. Roman honorific
42. Losses in sports
44. Skin tone in summer
45. Distant planet
46. Critical humor
47. Illegally obtained
48. Go back over
50. Home appliance brand
51. Unit of radioactivity
52. Home of the Flyers
54. Short official note
55. Emit coherent radiation
57. Anno Domini (in the year of Our Lord)
61. Most common noble gas (abbr.)
62. Toward

SUDOKU

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

Eagle BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

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

Randall Orchards Wood-Fired Pizza

If you haven't heard this by now, some of the best wood-fired pizza in the Lakes Region of Maine is available all year-round at Randall Orchards in Standish.

Located just off Route 25 in Standish, they use only top-quality hand-cut ingredients for its pizza, cheese shredded in-house, their own pizza sauce recipe, home-grow their own vegetables in season and feature pizzas baked on-site in ovens using apple wood from the orchard's trees trimmed throughout the year. Each menu item sold by Randall Orchards Wood-Fired Pizza is carefully selected to satisfy your craving for authentic, delicious and highly affordable take-out pizza.

They keep prices as low as possible to provide for customers the best they can. Owners want their products to always be affordable so that customers continue to come back throughout the year.

Randall Orchards Wood-Fired Pizza offers a variety of 12-inch Neapolitan style pizzas known for a thin, soft center and a light airy charred rim. Pizza selections include favorites such as Classic Cheese Foundation; Pepperoni; Potato Au Gratin; The Butcher; Smoked Ham and Apple; Chicken Alfredo; Pacific Gold; Honey Chipolte Pulled Pork; Merrifield Maple Sausage; Chicken Bacon Ranch; Margherita; Randalls Veggie; Moonshine BBQ Brisket; and Sparkling Bird Buffalo Chicken.

Hours for Randall Orchards Wood-Fired Pizza are from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays and 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sundays. During the winter they will be closed on Mondays. Specials are always taking place such as $2 off all pizzas for in-person or phone orders. Randalls also offers special seasonal items like pumpkin egg rolls and Happy Gobbler pizza. Gluten-free options are also available.

Randall Orchards itself is a historic, family-run apple orchard and farm stand just off Route 25 near the Gorham town line. It offers seasonal options to the public such as pick your own strawberries, blueberries, peaches and has 23 different varieties of apples available when in season.

Edgar Randall established the orchard in Standish in 1906 and fir more than a century, the Randall family has grown classic New England and heritage apple varieties including Wolf River, Nodhead, Gravenstein, Northern Spy, McIntosh, and Cortland. Forested lands around the orchard have been conserved for public trail use and include a 3.5-mile hiking and biking trail network managed in connection with the Presumpscot Regional Land Trust.

The idea to offer pizza started a year ago in September as an addition was made to the orchard's farm stand as demand grew for their popular made on-site apple fritters and cider donuts. Those were so popular that they were routinely selling out of 1,200 donuts at a time and a decision was made to expand the farm stand to a year-round business.

Besides pizza, Randall Orchards also has savory side dishes like marinated chicken nuggets, jojos (potato wedges), Buffalo chicken egg rolls, desserts including apple cheesecake egg rolls, fried Oreos, and peanut butter pie and a selection of beverages such as fresh-pressed cider pints, Moxie, sodas, sweet tea, and water.

When in season, the Randall Orchards farmstand sells McIntosh, Cortland, Macoun, Golden Delicious, and Empire apples, fresh cider, pumpkins, squash, maple syrup, whoopie pies, and weekend cider donuts. With the holiday season having officially arrived, a great selection of Christmas trees is now available. The farm stand is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. all week.

Online reviews are spectacular.

"The pizza is amazing. In a town where good restaurants are in short order, this place has convenient brick oven pizza. My family had the Moonshine BBQ Brisket pizza (amazing) and the regular cheese. The best pizza I've had in Maine other than one other. The most shocking was the prices were actually respectable and not inflated." ~ Daniel White

"This place was great! We stopped at both the store and did u-pick apples! The cider and donuts were delicious, but the pizza was absolutely amazing! The staff was so friendly! We will definitely be back! I highly recommend!" ~ Grace Fantoni

"Great pizza, the best cider and super kind staff! Cute little igloos to sit in as well with your pizza- worth the trip. Can't wait to come back!" ~ Rebekah Linne

Find them on Facebook under Randall Orchards Wood-Fired Pizza and follow the orchard under Randall Orchards. Ordering may be done online through toasttab.com (direct link can be found on Facebook or scan the code in the ad below), by phone by calling 207-553-8273, or in-person by the stopping by the Randall Orchards Farm Stand at 1 Randall Road in Standish. <



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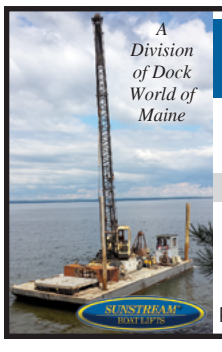

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