



FRIDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2019

CLOSE TO HOME

Winter
Wonders

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The Year In Review

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Town Meeting Prep. Littleton Considers \$9M
Budget, Zoning Articles & More. Page 2



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News Briefs

Charter Academy Considers New Home

The North Country Charter Academy, established in 2004 and serving at-risk students across the North Country and Northeast Kingdom, is considering a new school building to house its Lancaster site.

Since the early days, its Lancaster center has been located at 4 Mayberry Lane in Lancaster, along Route 3 and just north of town, in the former U.S. Department of Agriculture building.

On Friday morning, state Rep. Edith Tucker, D-Randolph, issued an email to a host of school officials, elected officials and community members expressing her concerns about a Lancaster Zoning Board of Adjustment notice for a new NCCA location for grades 7 through 12.

"I have not been aware of public discussion of the needs, the costs, or the appropriateness of a computer-based teaching mode for middle-school-aged students," wrote Tucker.

On Dec. 18, the NCCA, looking into a special exception for a new school building in a commercial/industrial zone, went before the Lancaster Zoning Board of Adjustment, which approved a special

exception for a 7-12 charter school on a .39-acre lot at 281 Summer St. that is currently owned by CD Cairns Irrevocable Trusts (Michael and Brian Cairns), of South Burlington, Vt.

On Friday afternoon, Lisa Lavoie, superintendent of the NCCA, told The Caledonian-Record, "For the past two years, we've been looking at other options for a facility, whether we rent or whether we buy. We've been in the place we're in now for 16 years, and it's been a great place, but it's the lower level of the USDA building and we are looking to see if we can find a place above the ground with natural lighting that is closer to town for student projects."

At this point, no final plan has been decided, said Lavoie.

"It's not a done deal," said Troy Merner, a Lancaster state representative and member of the NCCA board of trustees. "We are still looking."

Although listed as a 7-12 school, the NCCA does not take 7th- and 8th-grade students, said Merner.

In her response to Tucker, Lavoie said the Mayberry Lane facility has served the school well for the decade and a half.

In discussing a possible relocation with the NCCA Board of Trustees and with Bob Every, land-

lord of the Mayberry Lane property, it was unanimously supported to conduct a search for a possible new location, said Lavoie.

NCCA is looking to move out of the basement and into a new environment above the ground, said Lavoie.

For the past 16 years, the school model has not changed and it will continue to operate in the same manner, she said.

The NCCA is still supported and overseen by the 10 founding school districts in the North Country, the academy's mission and goals will not be changing, and the proposal is for a new building to replace the current one and is not for a new school, said Lavoie.

The first step at looking at the Summer Street property was to see if ZBA would even approve it, said Lavoie.

There is no financial impact to the town or to

other schools or the communities and the NCCA has already been approved for a bank loan should the board decide to move forward, she said.

Before a certain date, there is some USDA funding for which the NCCA is eligible, said Merner.

Littleton Considers \$9.195M Budget, Several Articles

LITTLETON — While it remains a work in progress with numbers still subject to tweaking, the town is currently proposing a \$9.195 million operating budget for 2020 and three warrant articles to update the Littleton zoning ordinance as well as an article seeking to purchase a river district parcel.

The total proposed town budget and warrant article tax impact works out to a town rate of \$5.08

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Close To Home

Winter Wonders

Early this week, my youngest child and I walked home together through the sparkling darkness of the first night of winter. It's not a long walk from my folks' house, where we'd been to a Christmas party. Maybe a quarter of a mile, a journey of 10 minutes or so. Short though it was, that was the best part of my day.

At first, my daughter wanted to use the flashlight of my phone to see, but I convinced her to turn that off, said our eyes would get used to the darkness — that we could find our way by starlight. "The stars give off so little light," she said, though she acquiesced.

Off went the phone light, and we set out to find our way through the dark, with only the glint of stars above us and the glimmer of snow below. Vague outlines of tree branches reached inward and upward from the sides of the road as we stepped toward home. No cars drove by, no dogs barked, and we heard no voices but our own, talking about this and that.

We walked slowly through a wide tunnel of trees, descended the little hill near home, and turned onto our own driveway. As we reached the openness of our field, our view of the stars expanded, and I picked out the few constellations I could and pointed them out to my daughter. The Seven Sisters, Cassiopeia, Orion with his distinctive belt. We searched for the Little Dipper and speculated where others might be, shifted now from their summer locations.

With our heads turned upward, we exclaimed quietly together when we identified a recogniz-



BY MEGHAN MCCARTHY-MCPHAUL

able form in the sky and marveled at the vastness of so many stars twinkling overhead. They may give off little light, those stars, but that does not diminish their magic when you're gazing at them from Earth, as a tiny human amid a vast universe.

We both agreed we had made a good decision in choosing to walk home, rather than drive.

This type of quiet, one-on-one time with any of my children is rare. And as they approach teenagehood — with two of them arriving there in mere weeks — we are all often busy with various activities and responsibilities. And our mother-child discussions are, well, not always so relaxed and agreeable.

As I held my daughter's hand and listened to her sweet voice, I breathed it all in — the cold December air, the twinkle of stars and snow sparkle, the serenity of this moment under the winter sky.

I'll tuck it away with other winter wonders. The richly layered colors of sunrise, late though it comes these winter mornings, and the alpenglow lighting the peaks in the evening. The sparkle of snow on trees. Rosy cheeks and warm socks. Hot cocoa and a blaze in the fireplace. A soft blanket to wrap up in.

The quiet of darkness. Stars shining in the cold night sky. My child's hand to hold, as long as she'll let me.

Meghan McCarthy McPhaul lives in Franconia. More of her writing may be found at www.MeghanMcPhaul.com.

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ON THE COVER: In this file photo from February 2019, firefighters battle a large fire at the Rock's Estate in Bethlehem. The blaze destroyed three buildings, including the 112-year-old barn that served as the central building on the property. The major fire was one of the region's big stories in 2019. See other significant local moments in the year on Pages 7 to 14. (Photo by Paul Hayes)



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Obituaries

William Everett Abbott

William Everett Abbott, 84, of Dalton Road, Dalton, N.H., passed away peacefully surrounded by his family on Friday morning, Dec. 13, 2019, at Littleton Regional Hospital, after a long period of failing health.

Bill was born in Nashua, N.H., the son of Roland Webster and Hazel Almer (Packard) Abbott. He was raised in Hudson and was a 1953 graduate of Alvirne High School. While in high school Bill joined the Marine Corp Reserves, and upon graduation he served four years in the US Air Force as an aircraft engine mechanic. In 1955, he met Jean Switser of Dalton while she was attending UNH. They married in 1957 and resided in Long Island where Bill finished his enlistment until he was honorably discharged as a Staff Sergeant. Returning to Hudson, Bill joined his father's family business, Abbott's Dairy.

Bill and Jean lived and worked in Hudson, raising four children, until moving to Dalton in 1969. Bill became a self-taught auctioneer and antique and collectibles dealer. He purchased the old Grange Hall in Dalton beside their home for his antiques and had weekly auctions under a large tent for many summers. He started renting tents and ex-



William Abbott

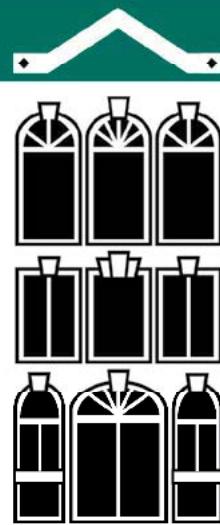
panded the business to become Abbott Rental, and in the 1980s moved the business to Littleton where it flourished. Bill was proud that Jean and all his children worked in the business and that it stayed in the family after his retirement.

Bill was a volunteer fireman of the Hudson and Dalton Fire Departments, a member of the American Legion, the NH Auctioneers Association, a past president of the NH Equipment Rental Association, and a trustee of the Dalton Congregational Church. He was an avid cribbage and chess player, reader and classical music lover.

Surviving family members include his wife Jean of Dalton; his four children, Judith Abbott of Littleton, Ann Hucksoll and husband Nick of Littleton, Roland Abbott and wife Carol of Lisbon, Richard Abbott and wife Sheena of Moultonborough; his brother George Abbott and wife Barbara of Hudson; 20 grandchildren and 19 great-grandchildren.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, Jan. 11, 2020 at 11 a.m. at the Dalton Congregational Church. Reverend David Abbott, pastor, will officiate. There will be a reception following at the Dalton Town Hall. Burial will be in the spring in Cushman Cemetery, Dalton. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in his memory to the American Legion Post 68, 2400 St. Johnsbury Road, Littleton, NH 03561.

Arrangements are under the direction of Bailey Funeral Home, 210 Main St., Lancaster. For more information or to send an online condolence please go to www.baileych.net.



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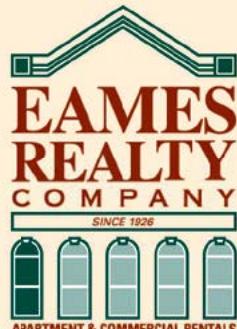
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per \$1,000 of assessed valuation, up from the 2019 actual municipal tax rate of 4.25.

The 2020 default budget is \$9.11 million that, along with warrant articles in the default budget proposal, comes out to a town tax rate of \$4.72.

In terms of the total town-school tax rate, the proposed 2020 municipal budget with all warrant articles works out to \$23.93, up 83 cents from the total tax rate of \$23.10 for 2019.

The total proposed 2020 default budget with all articles carries a rate of \$23.57, a difference of 36 cents between the default and proposed budgets.

The 2020 proposed budget will also have about 53 warrant articles, the largest number in some years, above the 39 articles presented in both 2019 and 2018, 32 articles in 2017, 43 in 2016, and 48 in 2015.

Town-sponsored warrant articles include a three-year collective bargaining agreement for the SEA union, representing officers in the Littleton Police Department, that carries a first-year cost of \$23,614, or .037 cents on the tax rate.

A two-year collective bargaining agreement for the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees does not have rate impact for 2020, according to the draft budget and warrant.

Zoning

Other town-sponsored articles include zoning and will ask voters to update the flood plain ordinances, add a short-term rental definition to the Littleton Zoning Ordinance, and change a residential zone into a commercial one.

On Tuesday, Littleton Zoning Officer Milton Bratz said the first article seeking a rezoning from residential to commercial involves two parcels owned by Eames Property Investment Co., a 2.57-acre parcel and a 6.94-acre parcel that are both at the corner of Cottage Street and Route 302/Bethlehem Road.

Both are currently in the Commercial-I and Residential-I zones and voters will be asked to put them solely in the Commercial-I zone.

The second article seeks to define short-term rentals and deals with the recent development of Airbnb, the online offering of lodging, mostly stays in rooms in private homes, though it doesn't state Airbnb by

name, said Bratz.

The article will ask if voters are in favor of amending the Littleton Zoning Ordinance by adding the definition of "short-term rental" and permitting such rentals in the Residential-I, Residential-Ia, Residential-II, Rural, MU, and all Commercial zones.

The definition shall read "The providing for compensation of one or more rooms in a residential dwelling unit for stays of between one and 30 consecutive nights, where the dwelling unit would not generally be associated with a commercial activity, including but not limited to such commercial activities as a hotel, motel, rooming, boarding, tourist or lodging house, dormitory, overnight cabin or bed and breakfast. A short-term rental shall not be considered a Neighborhood Commercial Use."

Bratz said, "It's allowing the concept in all of those zones."

The third article will ask voters if they are in favor of updating the Littleton Zoning Ordinance, as proposed by the Littleton Planning Board and recommended by the New Hampshire Office of Strategic Initiatives, Floodplain Management Program and the Flood Plain Development Ordinance.

The update would clarify the current regulations by adopting the Model Floodplain Management Ordinance developed by the state Office of Strategic Initiatives, Floodplain Management Program, and Bratz said it would also allow himself, deputy town zoning officer Joanna Ray and Littleton Fire Rescue Chief Joe Mercieri to be the floodplain management team, assisting applicants with such things as permitting.

A hearing on the zoning articles is scheduled for 6:15 p.m. Jan. 7 at the Littleton Community House.

Other Articles

Other articles include an operating budget of \$524,549 for the town's new Emergency Medical Services, a budget that will be offset by an estimated \$361,711 in revenues, leaving an adjusted request of \$162,838.

Voters will also be asked to raise \$175,000 for the purchase of a 7-acre parcel for river district redevelopment, to be used for public space, recreation, and as a location for town events such as live music.

The town bond and budget hearing is scheduled for 6 p.m. Jan. 21 in the Littleton High School cafeteria.

SAU 36 Signs On To Support Lawsuit

White Mountains Regional School District SAU 36 has signed on to support a lawsuit filed against the state by a southern New Hampshire school district, which argues New Hampshire's education funding formula is unconstitutional.

On Monday, the SAU 36 school board voted unanimously to file an amicus curiae, or "friend of the court," brief in the lawsuit filed by the ConVal School District that is now before the New Hampshire Supreme Court.

It comes at a time when many school districts across the state, including SAU 36 and its five Coos

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News Briefs

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County towns (Carroll, Dalton, Jefferson, Lancaster and Whitefield), have for years experienced a larger share of local money needed to fund their schools as state education funding has not increased.

"SAU 36 is affected by the New Hampshire school funding formula because some of the towns in the district have low property values compared to the number of students it has," WMRSR Superintendent Marion Anastasia said Thursday. "Given this, they have to set higher property tax rates to raise the same amount of money as other communities."

The SAU 36 school board's decision to sign the amicus brief expresses support for the lawsuit that declares New Hampshire lawmakers are violating the state Constitution by not funding an adequate education, but it does not make SAU 36 a party to the case.

The brief will be written by John Tobin, an attorney on the side of ConVal who spoke before the SAU 36 school board on Monday and who is allowing school districts like WMRSR to support the lawsuit and file the brief at no cost to them.

In March, ConVal (the Contoocook Valley School District in Peterborough) filed its lawsuit that argues state lawmakers have a requirement to fund an adequate education and the state needs to increase by three times the adequacy aid it sends to school districts to meet the standard requirements under New Hampshire law.

The lawsuit challenging the state's funding formula names as defendants the state of New Hampshire, the New Hampshire Department of Education and its commissioner, Frank Edelblut, and Gov. Chris Sununu.

In June, Cheshire Superior Court Judge David Ruoff issued a ruling on the ConVal case, agreeing with the school district and declaring the state funding formula to be unconstitutional.

In September, the state appealed that ruling to the New Hampshire Supreme Court.

To get a court decision quickly before a district deadline for state funding, ConVal didn't challenge the whole funding formula but instead asked Cheshire Superior Court to add a few components to the definition of adequacy aid and require the state to write the district a check before June 30, Tobin said to SAU 36 school board members.

In a decision nearly 100 pages long, Ruoff concludes the formula for the base adequacy aid that the state is sending to school districts is irrational and inaccurate, but says it is up to the New Hampshire Legislature to fix it, said Tobin.

Ruoff's ruling supports the Supreme Court's Claremont decision from 1998 that holds that taxes used to fund an adequate education be uniform and fair.

"It's very frustrating to people in ConVal because in lots of ways, we were waiting for a quarter of a century for the court to make the Legislature do it," said Tobin, who was one of the attorneys who sued the state on behalf of the Claremont School District on the grounds that New Hampshire's public education is funded through a formula that results in inequities for students and taxpayers."

It is also frustrating to other school districts that have since joined to support ConVal in filing amicus briefs, among them, to date, Berlin, Derry, Pittsfield, Hopkinton, Newport, and the Mascoma Regional School District, he said.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Monroe Consolidated School is seeking proposals for the installation of a new shingle roof over the cafeteria portion of the school. Roof is approximately 50 sq. If approved work will need to be done between July 1, 2020 and August 18, 2020. Project location is 77 Woodsville Road, Monroe, NH.

For additional RFP details please contact Rose Harris, Business Manager at 603-638-2800 ext 14 or go to monroeschool77.com/notices

Mobile Sports Betting To Begin In New Hampshire Next Week

CONCORD, N.H. (AP) — New Hampshire will join Rhode Island next week as the second state in New England to allow sports betting.

The betting company DraftKings announced it will launch New Hampshire's mobile betting product ahead of schedule on Dec. 30. In November, Gov. Chris Sununu said the app would likely be operational by January or February.

Anyone physically in New Hampshire who is over the age of 21 and has downloaded the app will be able to place bets on professional sports online.

The New Hampshire Lottery Commission approved a six-year sports-betting contract with DraftKings in November. The company will pay the lottery 51% of gross gaming revenue for mobile and 50% of gross gaming revenue from retail locations.

Rhode Island became the first state in the region to allow sports betting in November 2018. The state launched its mobile betting application in September.

State To Consider Two Vaping-Related Bills Next Year

CONCORD, N.H. (AP) — New Hampshire lawmakers will be considering two bills to crack down on vaping this session.

Last session, the Legislature added vaping to state's tobacco laws and raised the minimum age for both cigarettes and vaping products to 19. Next year, lawmakers will consider a bill to go even further and raise the minimum age for vaping to 21.

Lawmakers also will take up a bill that would ban all flavored vaping products except for menthol.

Democratic Rep. Jerry Knirk told New Hampshire Public Radio that he believes it's a public health issue and that lawmakers should be doing everything they can to stop teens from vaping. But Republican Gov. Chris Sununu says he would not support banning sales of any vaping products.

Former Wausau Mill Parcel Sold; Hydrogen Plant Plans Unveiled

A parcel of the former Wausau Paper mill property in Groveton has been sold and it's slated to become the location of a new renewable energy plant that will run on hydrogen gas to serve the energy needs of current and future business tenants on the site.

It is also expected to add more jobs in the community.

On Oct. 25, Bob Chapman, who several years ago bought the mill property, sold the 2.7-acre parcel, at 156 Mechanic St. and formerly the location of the paper mill's co-generation plant, to the Utah-based Q Hydrogen Solutions Corp., doing business in town as Quasarwave NH

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LLC, for \$975,000, according to town property records.

A town building permit has been approved for the Quasarwave project, the first phase of which will include the installation of a water tank and a 7-megawatt reciprocating engine inside the building as well as a parking area through an easement.

The second phase will consist of an additional engine.

According to the minutes of a Nov. 6 meeting of the Northumberland Planning Board, Robin Irving, the town projects administrator, said there is no need for a site plan review because Quasarwave has downsized its operation and will be within the preexisting areas and should be grandfathered in.

Quasarwave is allowed to feed up to 200,000 gallons of water a day (collected from the Upper Ammonoosuc River) and the only output of the business will be electricity, Mitch Ingerson, of Jefferson, the project's local representative, and Shane Beattie, of Beattie Enterprises, in Lancaster, which will head up construction, told planners.

Resident Reggie Charon said the 200,000-gallon amount is far below what was drawn when the paper mill was running.

The planning board, in a 3-0 vote, approved a waiver of site plan review.

In October 2018, planners approved a letter of support for the pilot project, which would be a first for Q Hydrogen Solutions.

That letter was sent to the New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee, from which Quasarwave needed a permit.

In the 2018 presentation to planners, Q Hydrogen CEO Whitaker Irvin said the former co-gen building will have engines that run on hydrogen gas using the water from the river and the power generated will be sent over lines to users on the former mill site.

The power will reduce the cost of electricity by approximately 50 percent from the Eversource Energy cost for commercial lines and the plant will not have a grid backup to Eversource, he told planners.

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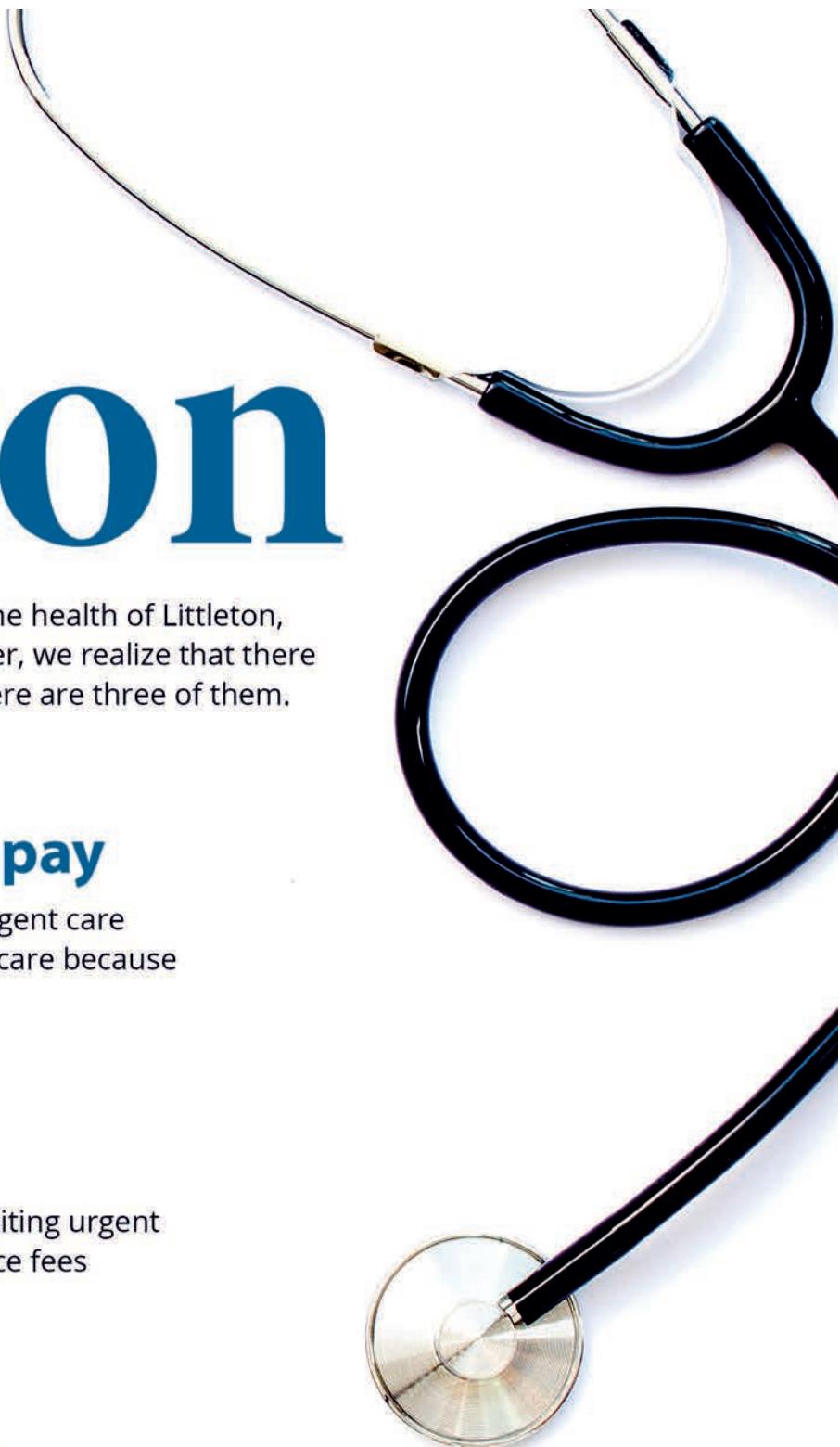
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The Year In Review

A LOOK BACK ON THE EVENTS OF 2019

The Year In Review 2019

Stories Of The Year

Photos Of The Year

N.H. Top Stories



THE TOP LOCAL STORIES OF 2019. PAGE 8

THE TOP LOCAL PHOTOS OF 2019. PAGE 10

THE LEADING HEADLINES FROM 2019. PAGE 13



PHOTOS BY PAUL HAYES

LEFT: Presidential candidate Elizabeth Warren, D-Massachusetts, holds a town hall meeting at Toad Hill Farm in Franconia on Wednesday, Aug. 14, 2019. RIGHT: Harry Robertson, right, has a selfie taken with Democratic Presidential candidate Sen. Cory Booker during a campaign stop at Schilling Beer Co. in Littleton, N.H., on Sunday, May 12, 2019.

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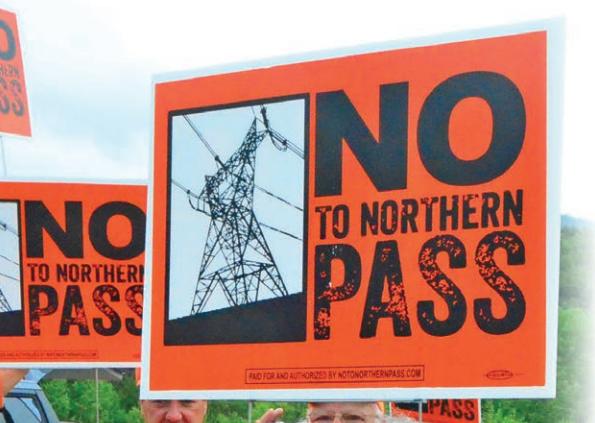
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FIVE FOR 2019

Northern Pass Defeated

Following a decade long battle, the Northern Pass transmission line project was defeated. The end came in July, when the New Hampshire Supreme Court upheld the project's 2018 rejection by the state Site Evaluation. The court ruling effectively killed the project, ending the threat of 100-foot-high towers cutting through Coos and Grafton counties. Eversource had proposed Northern Pass in 2011 as a way to transport 1,000 megawatts of Candian hydropower into New England. The company touted the 192-mile transmission line as a clean energy project and an economic windfall for the state. However the \$1.6 billion project was strongly opposed by an alliance of elected officials, residents and environmentalists who successfully argued the project would damage local communities and harm the region's tourism economy.

Tragedy In Randolph

It was one of the worst tragedies in state history. Seven members of Jarheads MC, a motorcycle club for military veterans, were killed in a car crash on June 21. The accident occurred when a westbound pickup truck towing a trailer crossed the yellow line and struck the bikers, who were headed to the American Legion hall in Gorham. The driver of the truck, 23-year-old Volodymyr Zhukovsky of West Springfield, has been charged with seven counts of negligent homicide and is being held without bail. The case led to sweeping changes at the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles, where thousands of out-of-state suspensions (including Zhukovsky) had been overlooked. There was also a massive outpouring of support for the "Fallen Seven," including a memorial ride that drew 4,500 and the unveiling of a permanent memorial at the crash site.

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LRH Asserts Independence



Seeking to stand on its own, Littleton Regional Healthcare waged wars on two fronts. In September, LRH withdrew from the North Country Healthcare, exiting the multi-hospital partnership in order to resume as an independent facility. The split was not amicable, with dueling lawsuits pending, each focused on whether LRH had the right to withdraw. Meanwhile LRH continues to fight a ConvenientMD location on Meadow Street, arguing the community is too small to support two walk-in clinics (LRH opened its urgent care center in the spring). LRH filed a lawsuit in Grafton County Superior Court, seeking to vacate state approval of the ConvenientMD location. An injunction to block its opening was denied, the case is ongoing.

Other Top News

LITTLETON EMS: In August, Littleton parted ways with Golden Cross Ambulance and started its own in-house emergency medical services. The decision was made after Golden Cross sought a five-year contract without cost guarantees. Littleton EMS is a three year pilot project, staffed by EMS-certified fire department personnel, which can be ended at anytime by the Town Manager. In November, the fire department proposed an EMS budget of \$245,592 — \$4,657 more than the previous contract with Golden Cross. • **BIOMASS SHUTDOWN:** Two local wood burning power plants (Pinetree Power in Bethlehem and DG Whitefield) shut their doors after lawmakers failed to deliver a subsidy, and their futures are in doubt. Two efforts to deliver the subsidy failed: Gov. Chris Sununu vetoed a law requiring Eversource to buy renewable energy credits from biomass plants (it survived an override vote) and a similar law passed in 2018 was ruled invalid by federal regulators. •

MAC'S CLOSES: Mac's Markets in Whitefield and Franconia both closed this year. Each was the only grocery store in town. In Whitefield, Mac's closed in September and re-opened two months later as Whitefield Market and Deli under the ownership of Josh Dumont. The Franconia location was shuttered on Nov. 20, claiming over a dozen jobs. It was subsequently bought by Trevor and Thad Presby, who plan to maintain the property as a supermarket. • **BALSAMS FOR SALE:** Developers put The Balsams up for sale after failing to raise public or private funding for a proposed \$173 million redevelopment project. The Balsams, a historic grand hotel encompassing over 10,000 acres with an 18-hole golf course and The Wilderness ski area, has been closed since 2011. The property is currently 50-50 owned by Dan Hebert and Les Otten. • **WOODBURN CASE:** Former state Sen. Jeff Woodburn continued to fight multiple charges, alleging he assaulted his former finacee Emily Jacobs multiple times between Aug. 2017 and June 2018. Woodburn has served notice he intends to claim self defense. A move to dismiss Woodburn's attorney for allegedly disseminating a photo of Jacobs was put off. The case is expected to reach trial in the first half of 2020. • **RIVER DISTRICT:** Littleton's River District continued its transformation into an arts and culture draw for locals and tourists alike. This year plans advanced for a 7-acre parcel near the senior center, which hosted a concert by The Dawg Trio featuring David Grisham in September, and is the proposed site of the \$800,000 Littleton Riverside Commons performance and gathering area, which would also include a welcome center, a labyrinth garden, and reconfigured parking. •

FRANCONIA NOTCH PARKING: In response to rising numbers of hikers, parking was banned along the Franconia Notch Parkway near popular trailheads. The goal was to remove hundreds of cars parked along the highway shoulder. To accommodate hikers, a shuttle service was created, ferrying people between Cannon Mountain's Peabody Lodge parking lot and the trail head locations.

Dalton Defies Dump



Dalton took pre-emptive action to block a proposed landfill. In the process, they fundamentally changed the way the town operates. In a special election on July 30, voters approved temporary emergency zoning by a 154-129 margin, in hopes of stopping Casella Waste Systems' proposal to build a 180-acre landfill near Forest Lake State Park. The new zoning -- which will last for a year-and-a-half unless made permanent by Town Meeting -- will require major new commercial or industrial construction projects to submit site plan reviews and get special exceptions to move forward. Those matters will be handled by a newly formed Zoning Board of Adjustment. The zoning was OK'd by a narrow margin following a fiery battle between pro- and anti-zoning factions, with those for zoning arguing it was a necessary tool to fight the landfill, and those against worrying it would only infringe on property owners rights.

Rocks Estate Fire



The night before Valentine's Day, a community suffered a heartbreak loss. The main barn building at The Rocks Estate -- which contained a gift shop, a function room, a classroom, and the local headquarters for the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests -- was destroyed by fire on the evening of Feb. 13. Seven local departments responded to the fast-moving blaze, which also claimed two smaller buildings. The fire was later ruled accidental. It was a notable loss because the property is historic (listed on the National Register of Historic Places) and is a community center (hosting many weddings, events, and educational tours and programs). Nearly a year later, the Forest Society has not announced plans to replace the 112-year-old barn, but the 1,400-acre Rocks Estate re-opened for the Christmas tree season and held the annual Trees For Troops event in December.

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Happy
New Year

The Year In Review

A LOOK BACK ON THE EVENTS OF 2019

The Year In Photos

TOP: With temperatures in the mid-90s, Gavin Silva and Keagin Grady dive off a rock into the Ammonoosuc River in Littleton on Saturday, July 20.

BOTTOM: An unidentified member of the Jarhead Motorcycle Club is consoled at the scene of a fatal accident on Route 2 in Randolph on Saturday, June 22, 2019. Seven were killed and three were injured when a pickup ran into a group of club members riding eastbound on Friday evening.



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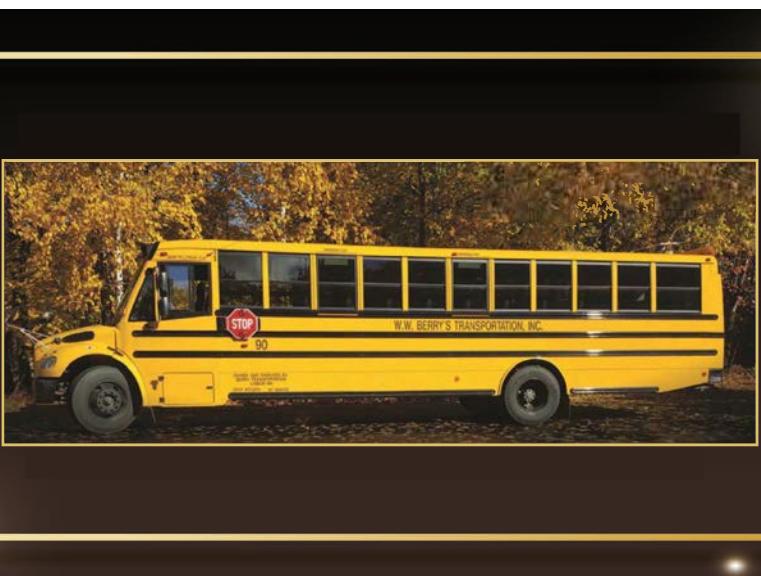
Cyan Magenta Yellow Black



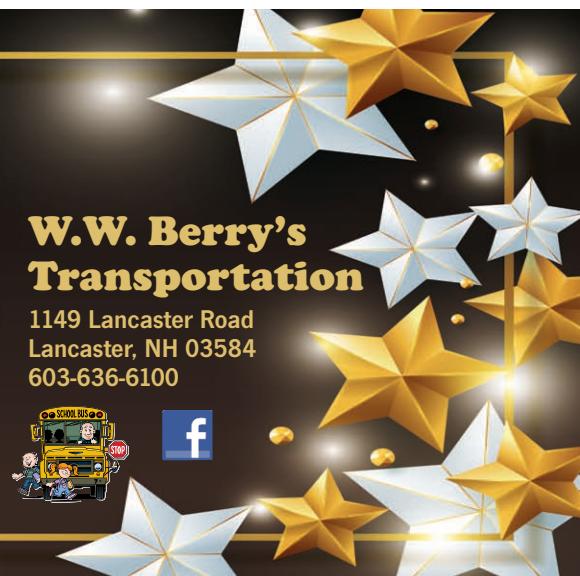
TOP LEFT: New Hampshire Gov. Chris Sununu reacts to a question by Cub Scout Uriah Bois at Lakeway Elementary School in Littleton on Wednesday, Jan. 16, 2019. Sununu met with members of Pack 209 after touring the school, concluding a day-long swing through the area. BOTTOM LEFT: Friends create a memorial to 14-year-old Krystina Crews on River Road in Bath on Monday, Oct. 14. Crews was killed in a single-vehicle crash the previous day. RIGHT: Friends and family held a memorial ride on Saturday, Aug. 17, to remember Josh Yeargle, the 44-year-old who died following a crash between his motorcycle and another vehicle on July 3.



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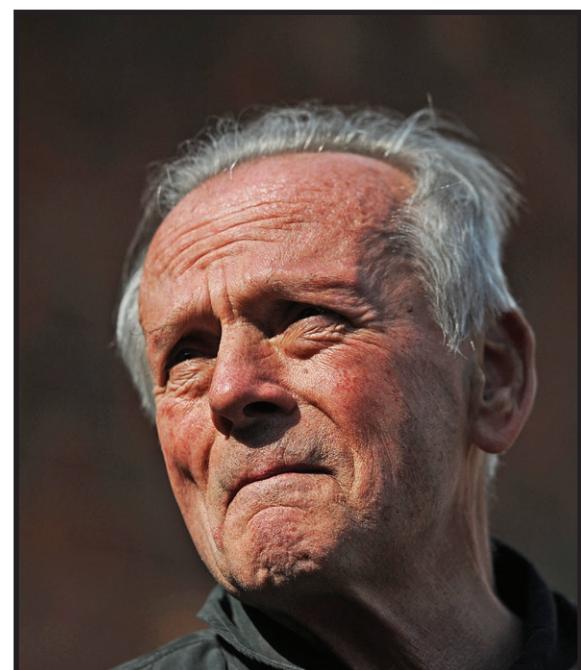
A LOOK BACK ON THE EVENTS OF 2019

The Year In Photos

TOP: Those attending a memorial event for Spc. Alan Burgess are reflected in Burgess' headstone at the Landaff Cemetery on Tuesday, Oct. 15. The event that marked the 15th anniversary of Burgess being killed in action in Mosul, Iraq.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Fred Murray addresses the media outside the Grafton County Courthouse on Wednesday, April 3, 2019 after a fruitless search of a Haverhill residence in connection with the disappearance of his daughter, Maura, who was last seen on Route 112 in Haverhill on the night of Feb. 9, 2004.

BOTTOM LEFT: Aundrea Harter wears a necklace reading "Forever Love" which contains a portion of her fiancee Zack Compher's ashes. Compher, 29, suffered from combat related anxiety and PTSD and took his life at his Littleton apartment on Jan. 20, 2019.



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Motorcyclists Killed, Death Penalty Repeal Headlined 2019

CONCORD, N.H. (AP) — A collision that killed seven motorcyclists in New Hampshire, a legislative vote to repeal the death penalty, and a barrage of candidate visits leading up to the first-in-the-nation presidential primary were among the state's top stories in 2019.

Others included the shooting of a bishop and a bride during a wedding, an impasse over the state budget, and challenges to two laws affecting voters.

A look at the state's top stories:

MOTORCYCLES CRASH

A pickup truck hauling a trailer collided with a group of motorcyclists in Randolph, New Hampshire, in June, killing seven. The truck driver, Volodymyr Zhukovskyy, of West Springfield, Massachusetts, was charged in their deaths and pleaded not guilty. Officials said Zhukovskyy's license in

See **2019**, Page 14

TOP: Littleton players including starting guard Jasmine Brown, center, celebrate after the No. 1 Crusaders beat No. 3 Hinsdale 42-31 in the Division IV championship at Plymouth State University's Foley Gym on Friday, March 1, 2019.

MIDDLE: Merrick Houston updates the manual scoreboard between innings at Lisbon Lions Club Community Field on Wednesday, April 17, 2019.

BOTTOM: Woodsville head coach Brent Cox, center, awards a game ball following the Engineers' 8-2 home win over Littleton on Wednesday, May 8, 2019.

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T

2019

Continued from Page 13

Massachusetts should've been suspended because of a drunken driving arrest in Connecticut.

DEATH PENALTY

New Hampshire, which hasn't executed anyone in 80 years and had only one inmate on death row, became the 21st state to abolish the death penalty after the Democrat-controlled Legislature voted to override Republican Gov. Chris Sununu's veto.

ELECTION 2020

New Hampshire was visited by numerous presidential candidates ahead of the 2020 presidential primary. By the end of the filing period for the Feb. 11 first-

in-the-nation primary, 33 Democrats and 17 Republicans got on New Hampshire's ballot.

STATE BUDGET

Sununu and Democratic leaders in the Legislature agreed on a compromise two-year budget less than a week before temporary funding measures were set to expire. Sununu vetoed the budget earlier in the year, saying it set up unsustainable spending expectations and "job-killing tax increases."

MISSING FOR DECADES

Three suspected victims of a serial killer were identified decades after their remains were discovered in barrels in a state park. The state attorney general's office confirmed one of the victims was Marlyse Elizabeth Honeychurch, 24. Her two daughters, Marie Elizabeth

Vaughn, 6, and Sarah Lynn McWaters, 1, also were identified. A fourth victim, a little girl, remains unidentified.

VOTING RIGHTS

Two New Hampshire laws affecting voter registration and residency face court challenges. A trial over the constitutionality of a law requiring voters to provide more documentation if they register within 30 days of an election awaits a judge's decision. And a federal judge denied a request that would have blocked a law requiring voters to be full-fledged residents from being enforced for the presidential primary.

CHURCH SHOOTING

Dale Holloway was accused of storming into a Pelham church and shooting and wounding a bishop and a bride during a wedding. The groom at the

wedding was the father of a man charged with killing Holloway's stepfather. Holloway later was charged with attacking his public defender, who suffered severe head injuries. Holloway pleaded not guilty in both cases.

FOREVER CHEMICALS

The state approved some of the country's toughest drinking water standards for a class of toxic chemicals that have been used in everything from firefighting foam to nonstick cookware but are now raising health concerns. A group including 3M, a farmer and others sued the Department of Environmental Resources, alleging that the state didn't follow the appropriate process in approving the standard for perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances, collectively called PFAS. The state denied wrongdoing.

JUVENILE CHARGED

A couple who ran a chiropractic practice were gunned down in their home in Alton, and an 11-year-old boy was charged with second-degree murder. The killings stunned those who knew James Eckert, an ultramarathon runner, and Lizzette Eckert, who "loved being a mom to her three children" and running the family farm, according to the couple's obituary.

SUNUNU'S VETOES

Sununu's list of more than 50 vetoed bills emerged largely unscathed after override attempts in the Legislature. There were failed override attempts for bills including ones creating a paid family medical leave program and raising the state's minimum wage and measures related to labor and employment law.

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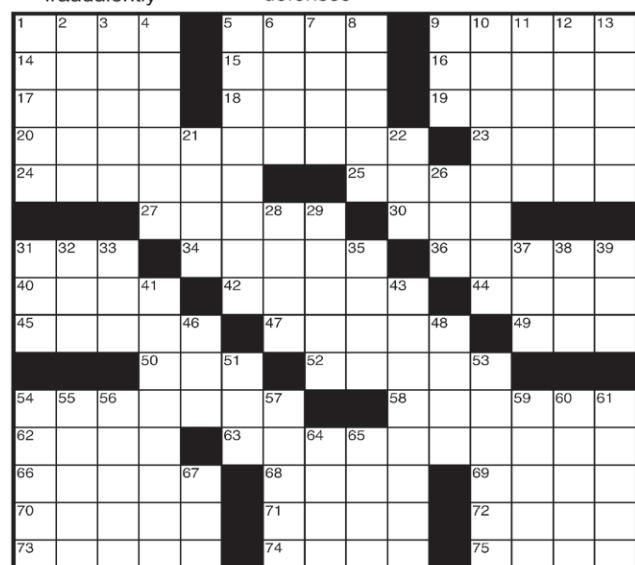
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