



The Littleton Weekly Record

THURSDAY, APRIL 4, 2023

LOCAL NEWS

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Eclipse Events

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FREE



Cyan Magenta Yellow Black



Homeless Encampment. Overnight
Camping Ban Must Be Enforced. **Page 2**

Chief-Interim Manager Says Camping Ban Must Be Enforced

BY ROBERT BLECHL
Staff Writer

LITTLETON—The interim town manager said that after further study, the camping ban on town-owned property that was approved by voters must be enforced.

The ban was proposed after some residents expressed concerns about a homeless encampment of less than a dozen people on town land behind Littleton Water and Light.

In a 721-to-641 vote, residents during the March 12 town vote approved a petition article, which changed the zoning ordinance to prohibit overnight camping on municipal property unless otherwise permitted by the governing board.

Resident Megan Myers raised the topic during the March 25 Select Board meeting. She asked what the town's plans are and how the ban will be enforced.

Although the article passed, she said it was cruel, given that there was no alternative, and asked if the town was going to have a shelter for those without homes or if it would put people in need in motel rooms.

"I'll put my police chief hat on," said Paul Smith. "After consulting with counsel, the legislative body has spoken and they stated they want it enforced. So the department is obligated to en-

force it. The ordinance just requires a fine."

After revisions at the deliberative session, a first offense for a violation is a \$10 fine, and any second or subsequent offense within one year is \$25.

"Is there a certain amount of fines they hit before they end up in jail?" asked Myers.

"It doesn't state that in the ordinance," said Smith. "There is currently a lawsuit that is being brought to the U.S. Supreme Court that may define further action concerning that particular ordinance. It may deem it unconstitutional if there are no shelters available. And currently, Littleton does not have any shelters."

The case does not mandate that a municipality build or fund a shelter, but simply states action cannot be taken if there is no shelter or place for those who are homeless, he said.

"That's the legal version of it," said Smith. "Don't forget, it also allows the individuals to request permission from the board to camp on those properties."

"And as far as that's concerned, it's just fines, there won't be encampment sweeps, it won't be pushing them further away from services or anything like that?" asked Myers.

"We would never push anyone away from services," said Smith.

**TOWN LINE DISCREPANCY,
FOOTBRIDGE ANNIVERSARY**

About a decade ago, it was discovered that there was a discrepancy in a segment of the Littleton-Bethlehem town line near Railroad Street and a smaller segment that touches Union Street.

Although the town charter depicts it as a straight line, it is slightly curved, making for about a 500-foot differential.

The error might have occurred generations ago when farms were more common and digital mapping nonexistent.

In November, the Select Board voted to use nearly \$7,000 in InvestNH grant money to complete a line precision survey.

If the straight line is confirmed, then all of the properties in the curved section that leans toward Bethlehem would, at least in theory, become Bethlehem residences, with impacts ranging from schools for families with young children and different property taxation.

Littleton resident Marie Slack asked if the town line issue had been resolved.

"It hasn't been resolved," said Smith. "We're trying to set up a meeting with the town administrator of Bethlehem to put it to rest, but it has not been resolved. No lines have been moved."

Slack said she was right at the town line and wanted to know where she would pay taxes.

Smith agreed that there is much at stake concerning taxation and whether residents on the line would pay more or fewer taxes.

But meetings are coming up to help resolve the issue, he said.

"We have been provided mapping by engineers, and photographers and everything else, to try to find the right scenario that fits best for both communities," said Smith. "We're still waiting for Bethlehem to get back to us. We hope to have it resolved soon and with minimal impact to anyone involved."

When the town boundaries were drawn, in a time before GPS and GIS, trees stumps and other landmarks were used to draw town lines.

In 2014, Littleton officials were informed about the town line discrepancy by the state's E-911 organization, a division of the New Hampshire Department of Homeland Security that manages 911 calls and dispatching, which was then completing its maps.

One solution floated then was for the towns to do nothing and instead adopt the line where it currently is.

The covered footbridge in Littleton that spans the Ammonoosuc River near Mill Street celebrates 20 years in 2024.

Linda MacNeil, chair of the Select Board, suggested that the town find the ribbon cutting date in 2004 and tie in an anniversary celebration to a First Friday or Fourth of July event.

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Obituaries

Katherine B. Stoddard

Katherine B. Stoddard, 81, affectionately known as Bunny, died peacefully at home, March 27, 2024. Her daughter, Xondra Smith and beloved dog Gretchen were by her side.

Katherine Baines Stoddard was born April 5, 1942, to Mary and Kenneth Baines of Ridgewood, New Jersey. She graduated from Ridgewood High School in 1960 and Plymouth State College in 1964. Bunny married David E.



Stoddard in 1963 and settled in Littleton, N.H. She taught school and substituted for the local school systems before going into business. She was manager for several businesses, including the Littleton Diner before purchasing the Clam Hut on Meadow Street in 1986, successfully running the restaurant until 1998.

Bunny was a Girl Scout for 37 years rising to the position of Community Chairman. She organized yearly camping trips for the local Girl Scout troops and was a mentor and role model for many young women.

She was a member of the All Saints Episcopal Church where she served on the Dinner Bell Committee. She was also a member of the Littleton Elks Lodge 1831. Bunny enjoyed playing weekly bridge games with her friends.

Bunny is survived by her daughter, Xondra K. Smith, and husband Kim. Her twin sister, Caryl Matsis, and husband Matthew of Merrimack. Her nieces and nephews, Alesia Cleary, Helen Matsis, Ken Matsis, Shawn Atkins, and Courtney Lunn, all with whom she was very close to. Her most special

survivors are her grandsons who meant the world to her, Jason Smith of Littleton, Jonathan Smith of Littleton, and Joshua Smith and his wife, Courtney who live in Hahira, Ga.

Bunny was predeceased by her parents, Mary and Kenneth Baines, her husband of 58 years, David E. Stoddard, and her younger sister, Edith B. Atkins.

A graveside service will be held at Glenwood Cemetery in Littleton, May 17 at 11 a.m. with a Celebration of Life immediately following at All Saints Episcopal Church.

To view Katherine's online tribute, or to send condolences to her family, please visit: <https://csnh.com/obituaries/>.

Everett M. Ballard IV

Everett M. Ballard IV, 61, of Cedarville Arkansas, passed away from complications of a tractor trailer accident on March 25, 2024, at Regional One Health, Memphis, Tenn.

Born in Richmond, Virginia in 1962, Everett was the son of Marty E. and Carol (Cass) Ballard.

Everett loved his family. They were his life along with trucking for Brent Higgins; he loved the company he worked for, and they loved him. Brent became more than just boss to Everett, they were like family. In Everett's spare time he loved to draw. He was a great artist; he didn't even need a piece of paper. He could draw on a napkin or anything else he happened to find. In his younger years he loved to help his friends who raced on the local race tracks. He would help them work on the race cars. His favorite was dirt track racing.



He always loved Christmas and decorating the house and tree and shopping for his family. He wasn't one who liked to receive gifts, but he loved giving them. For the past few Christmases, he would go shopping for a child or children in need and he would go to their home and put the presents under the tree after they were in bed. He loved children but was never lucky to have any of his own, he would have been a great dad if he had. Everett was a very giving man; he would meet a stranger and if they needed his last dollar he would give it to them. Everett was a great man as well as son, brother, uncle, fiancé, stepdad, and friend. He will be missed more than words can say.

He left behind his sister, Kristine Ballard Hatfield and husband Jeff Hatfield of Norton, Vt.; his fiancé Rhonda Shelly and son Mickey Shelly all of Arkansas; three nephews Nicholas Ballard and wife Nicole of Littleton, N.H., Carl Brooks Jr. and his other half Carligh of Lunenburg, Vt., Timothy Brooks and husband Miguel of Norton, Vt.; a great nephew Nate Lombardi and two great nieces Rebeckah and Morgan Ballard all of Littleton, N.H.; and a great nephew Beau Brooks of Lunenburg, Vt., that he never got to meet. He also leaves behind Brent Higgins and wife Connie, of Arkansas. Along with many trucker friends.

He was predeceased by his parents Marty and Carol Ballard of Lancaster, N.H.; his paternal grandparents Everett and Francis Ballard of Richmond Virginia; and maternal grandparents Thomas and Christine Cass of Groveton, N.H.

There will be a celebration of life June 1, 2024, place and time will be announced at later date.

Arrangements are entrusted to Bailey Funeral Home, Lancaster, N.H. For more information or to send an online condolence, please go to www.baileyfh.net.

Mary Elizabeth McLaren

Mary Elizabeth McLaren, 87, passed away peacefully at Embrace Hospice House in Myrtle Beach, S.C. on March 29, 2024.

Mary was born in Skowhegan, Maine to Alice Mary (Hardy) Alexander and James Willard Alexander on July 1, 1936. At the age of five, Mary's family moved to Lancaster, N.H. She attended Lancaster Academy where she was captain of the school's cheerleading team. After graduating in 1954, Mary attended the University of New Hampshire. There she was a member of Sophomore Sphinx and Alpha Chi Omega sorority. At UNH, she met her future husband, Hazen McLaren, Jr. They were married on Oct. 13, 1956 in Karlsruhe, Germany where Hazen was serving in the U.S. Army. Sixty-seven years of marriage took them to homes in White Plains N.Y., Cornwall, N.Y., Baldwinville, N.Y., Westford, Mass., Barnet, Vt. and Myrtle Beach, S.C. Mary's outgoing personality and community involvement created a network of lifelong friendships from all these communities.

While raising her children, Mary served as an educator in Westford. In later years, she worked in the underwriting department of Minuteman Insurance/Sentry Insurance Co. in Concord, Mass.

Mary was a talented seamstress and needleworker. She was an enthusiastic Boston Celtics fan for over 50 years. As a lifelong Episcopalian, Mary served on the vestry and as the first female chalice

bearer at St. Mark's Church in Westford.

Mary would often relay fond memories of her teenage jobs in the White Mountains. She was one of the original elves at Santa's Village in Jefferson, N.H. during its inaugural season of 1953. She also served on the waitstaff at one of the grand hotels, the former Waumbek Hotel in Jefferson.

Mary is survived by her husband Hazen McLaren, Jr. of Myrtle Beach, her daughter Lynn McLaren, and her son Roderic McLaren and his wife Pamela. She is also survived by her grandchildren Brandon McLaren, Heather McLaren and Courtney McLaren. She was predeceased by her parents and a sister Marjorie (Alexander) Conway.

A celebration of life is planned for April 20 at 2 p.m. at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in North Myrtle Beach, S.C. A graveside ceremony is planned for a later date in Barnet, Vt.

Donations in Mary's memory can be made to the Lancaster Academy Alumni Fund or to the American Cancer Society.

**Robert B. Tobin Jr.**

Robert B. Tobin Jr., 57, of Lunenburg, Vt., died Tuesday, March 26, 2024, at his brother's home, surrounded by his family.

Bob was born in an ambulance outside of Van Nostrand's apple orchard in Gloversville, New York on Sept. 1, 1966, the son of Robert B. and Gerardine B. Tobin.

After graduating from Groveton High School in 1985, Bob traveled throughout Australia, where he worked a variety of jobs, including picking grapes in the outback. While traveling, he developed a passion for wooden boats and went on to graduate from The Boat School at the Maine Marine Technology Center in Eastport, Maine. He worked in boatyards in Seattle, the Adirondacks, Laconia, and Maine. Later in his life he changed careers, graduating from Goddard College in Plainfield, Vermont with a Bachelor's degree in Education. After student teaching at Cabot School in Cabot, Vermont, he worked as a paraeducator in Lunenburg and Gilman and at the White Mountains Regional High School, where he was currently employed.

Bob was a kind, generous, gregarious soul who enjoyed meeting people from all walks of life. He loved music and attending rock concerts with his brothers. He enjoyed many outdoor pursuits, including downhill skiing, hiking, four wheeling, and kayaking.

Family members include his mother, Gerardine B. Tobin of Lancaster, New Hampshire; his brother, William Tobin, his wife Laura, and their son Liam of Peacham, Ver-

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News Briefs

Grafton County Officials’ Legal Fight Sent To Belknap Superior

HAVERHILL — A high-profile legal battle is moving to a new venue.

The Grafton County Superior Court justices have transferred Sheriff Jeff Stiegler’s suit against the County Commission elsewhere, citing a conflict of interest.

The case will be sent to Belknap Superior, according to an April 2 order.

Stiegler has accused the County Commission of undermining his authority in the handling of two former employees.

He claims the commission in Feb. 2023 improperly overturned his suspension of an administrative employee for insubordination.

He also claims the commission, through Human Resources Director Karen Clough, interfered in a related internal investigation into a sheriff’s deputy.

He said the commission and Clough, who is his sister in law, took retaliatory action against him and sabotaged his ability to “lead, manage, and administrate his agency.”

He seeks punitive damages and injunctive relief to prevent such behavior in the future.

However, in a motion to dismiss, the commission said Stiegler’s claims were “frivolous, vexatious, and designed to harass the commission and Clough.”

The motion to dismiss states that the commission and Clough acted legally and within the normal scope of their roles.

They described his lawsuit as “nothing more than a list of non-actionable grievances Sheriff Stiegler has against two former employees and the Grafton County Human Resources Department.”

Stiegler’s complaint is dated Jan. 29.

Nearly a year earlier, Stiegler and administrative employee Karen Bragg got into a disagreement on Feb. 24.

Stiegler ordered her into his office to discuss the matter, Bragg declined because she was upset and wanted to avoid an argument. Stiegler suspended her for insubordination, Bragg appealed the suspension to the County Commission.

The County Commission on Feb. 28 voted 3-0 to overturn the suspension. Stiegler objected that the commission did not allow

him to cross examine Bragg, challenger her claims, or participate in non-public deliberations. The County Commission said Bragg’s work status was their purview and Stiegler had no standing.

Stiegler opened a related investigation into a sheriff’s deputy, for reasons related to Bragg’s testimony. He claims the commissioners, through Clough, attempted to subvert the investigation. The commissioners denied such claims and said Clough’s actions were routine administrative procedure.

Board Eyes Special Town Vote To Buy Land For Safety Services Complex

As the town tries to find a home for a new public safety facility, the Bethlehem Select Board voted to petition the superior court for a special town vote for residents to consider a possible land agreement between the board and a private seller.

Although Bethlehem has several town-owned parcels that it has explored, board members, during their meeting on Monday, said none are as ideal as the new prospective site, which encompasses a 2.7-acre parcel and 1.3-acre parcel at 757 and 758 Main St./Route 302.

The board voted 5-0 to petition Grafton Superior Court to hold the special election to purchase the land to be used as a future public safety facility site that would house the police, fire, and ambulance departments.

The board has until April 12 to negotiate a purchase and sale agreement for the parcels being sold by Jack Massoni, which have had a listed asking price of \$300,000.

In March 2022, the Select Board authorized the formation of a safety services committee to explore land as well as facility designs to replace the existing fire and police departments at town hall that are in space that town officials said is aging and becoming more cramped for today’s vehicles, equipment, and needs.

“The committee had several meetings since last year discussing a future site as well as what kind of facility we would be looking at for police and fire,” said Select Board Chairman Mike Bruno. “We looked at several sites, and one of the first ones was right on Route 302, but it was on private property.”

The land had been on the committee’s “wish list,” until it went on the market a few months ago, he said.

The opportunity to pursue it requires a special town meeting session, which includes public hearings before the vote.

Monday’s board vote begins a sequence of events, including April 12, the first day to file with the superior court, and April 26, the last day to give notice for public hearing.

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ON THE COVER: FILE - The moon covers the sun during a total solar eclipse Monday, Aug. 21, 2017, in Cerulean, Ky. On April 8, 2024, the sun will pull another disappearing act across parts of Mexico, the United States and Canada, turning day into night for as much as 4 minutes, 28 seconds. (AP Photo/Timothy D. Easley, File)

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The final day to hold a public hearing would be May 3.

If the board cannot reach an agreement with the seller by April 12, then the board will not petition the court for a special town meeting and there is no cost to the town, said Bruno.

"We want to make sure there's an agreement prior to that date, and if there isn't, this is a wash," he said.

If there is an agreement, then the proposal gets put to voters for the ultimate decision.

In light of recent tax rate increases on the school and town sides, Select Board member Veronica Morris said she is having a hard time justifying how the board will ask taxpayers for another.

"I know it's the perfect spot, but I have a hard time proceeding regardless of what happens with the seller at this point," she said.

Resident Chris McGrath said he opposes the project based on the tax impact and suggested that the town explore other options.

At some point, the town will need a new public safety facility, said Selectman Bruce Caplain.

"I absolutely agree," said Morris.

"The impacts to the taxpayers probably won't be for a couple of years, and when the Profile [School] bond ends, which is much larger than this would be, we could do another bond for this facility that would be significantly smaller than Profile so it would still reduce the overall impact to the taxpayer," said Caplain. "So I think that it's a good time to keep moving forward with it."

Another prospective site along Elm Street

would require installing three-phase power and an estimated \$1 million for a new road.

Select Board member April Hibberd said she agrees with Morris, but the other aspect of the newly proposed land along Main Street is a cost savings that the town will have in the long run.

There are four acres for sale across from the two Massoni parcels, but it has wetlands and a brook running through it, said Bruno.

While Bruno said he agrees with Morris about the tax burden, he said the town needs to move forward with a new public safety facility, and it might not have another location that's going to be as reasonable in cost compared to what it would cost to build where the town already owns land.

Caplain suggested financing the land purchase over several years, so the annual impact is minimal.

Select Board member Nancy Strand reminded the board that it would be the voters who would decide.

"Mostly, I'm for this because I think it's the best cost savings we can do for this facility that is so badly needed," she said. "The only other spot that we could say, yeah, we could go here is Elm Street, and the cost of the road alone is more than the cost of this property. So it seems to me like this is a better cost project than trying to find another place for it. And it is such a good location. But again, it's the voters. This starts the whole process so the voters can decide and we have to decide what we're presenting to the voters."

The board could present the land purchase as a bond or as a one-time payment, though board members don't seem too keen on the latter because of the tax impact, said Strand.

"So we may have to get creative as to how this is going to be financed, but what we're asking for now is to allow us to pursue it," she said.

The cost of a special election runs \$4,000 to \$5,000, which the town budgets for annually in the event of a special town meeting request.

In response to a question asked by McGrath about studies being done on the site to determine if it's a suitable location for the facility, Bruno and Caplain said the board can make a purchase and sale agreement subject to an environmental assessment.

Resident Chris Jensen said he looked online at the two properties and their asking price of \$300,000 and asked if the board has made a tentative offer to the seller.

"There's been discussion, but there's been no agreement," said Bruno.

The town is working with the seller through a broker and town legal counsel.

"It's still in negotiation," said town administrator Mary Moritz.

The board must make a deal by April 12 in order to meet the special town election deadline, and if there is no agreement, then it will not move forward with the court petition, said Bruno.

If the process moves forward, the board will make an offer, and then voters will vote on that offer.

He said there will be two public hearings if there is a special town meeting.

The vote is not solely for a purchase price, but also for how it will be funded, said Strand.

"That's why it's important to have the best shot at causing the least amount of pain and yet accomplishing what we need," she said.

Colebrook Attorney Nominated For Superior Court Judge

A Colebrook native who has practiced law for nearly three decades in his hometown could be the next judge at the New Hampshire Superior Court.

During the New Hampshire Executive Council's March 27 meeting in Concord, Gov. Chris Sununu nominated Jonathan Frizzell, a partner in the Waystack Frizzell law firm, as a superior court justice.

Following a public hearing before the executive council next week, Frizzell could be confirmed in a council vote in May.

"My family and clients who have learned about this have been very supportive," Frizzell said April 3.

Frizzell graduated from Dartmouth College in 1991, followed by the Franklin Pierce Law School (UNH) in 1996, whereupon he was hired as an associate for a Colebrook law firm launched by Phil Waystack in the mid-1970s.

In 2007, the firm that represents clients in personal injury, wrongful death, estate planning and other matters of civil law as well as some criminal defense, was renamed Waystack Frizzell.

In 2014, Frizzell was honored with the Vickie M. Bunnell Award for Community Service from the New Hampshire Bar Association.

In addition, he has been a board member and

Coos County representative for the New Hampshire Association for Justice.

"I've been practicing 27 years, mostly in the superior court," said Frizzell, who has practiced as a civil attorney. "I have three children who all have careers out of our hometown of Colebrook."

It was an advertisement for a judge slot at superior court that drew his interest and prompted him to seek it out.

"With the full support of my partner, Attorney Waystack, he encouraged me to apply," said Frizzell. "My wife (Kathy) and I talked it over and it seems like a good opportunity."

If confirmed, he will be a full-time judge sent to whichever superior court in New Hampshire needs him.

Frizzell has represented clients involved in personal injury matters, vehicle and tractor-trailer crashes, ATV and motorcycle crashes, workplace and construction site injuries, product liability, and other cases, including wrongful death and probate administration.

"I have not focused on criminal law," he said. "The law firm that I'm with has done criminal law so I am familiar with it, being in the firm and helping other attorneys. Not all attorneys practice in all areas, and I think my strength in civil law will allow me to not have to work to learn that side of the law. If I'm confirmed, I will work hard to make sure I do enough training and have enough knowledge on the criminal side."

On April 10, the executive council will hold a hearing on his nomination, followed by a vote that could occur on May 1.

He was asked what he most looks forward to if appointed as a new superior court judge.

"My family in the law firm has always had a sense of public service," said Frizzell. "I want to continue public service. I always get excited when I go into a courtroom and I want to do the right thing for the people of New Hampshire."

InDepthNH first reported Frizzell's nomination.

Wounded Veteran, Former Chief Honored With Police Awards, Commendation

During a recent visit to Sugar Hill, former Sugar Hill Police Chief Jose Pequeno was presented with two awards from two New Hampshire police associations and a commendation from a member of New Hampshire's federal delegation.

Pequeno, accompanied by his mother, Nelida Bagley; son, Gaige; daughter, Alexandria; and grandson, Zayden, visited the Sugar Hill town office on March 19.

"It was a spur-of-the-moment thing," said Sugar Hill Police Chief Michael Ho-Sing-Loy. "They were going to do it down in Concord."

Presenting him with the President's Outstanding Service award from the New Hampshire Association of Chiefs of Police was Littleton Police Chief Paul Smith.

The award, presented on behalf of Chiefs of police association president Allen Aldenberg, states, "Chief Jose Pequeno, of the Sugar

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Hill Police Department, in recognition of your commitment and contributions to the citizens of Sugar Hill and the state of New Hampshire and your service and loyalty to all the citizens of the United States for your service and sacrifices.”

Presenting Pequeno with an award from the New Hampshire Police Association was Jeff Mullaney, a director of the association.

It reads, “In honor and appreciation of your service to our country and NH Law Enforcement.”

Chuck Henderson presented him with a commendation honoring his service from the office of U.S. Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, D-NH.

It was Pequeno’s first visit to the town office in several years.

“We thought there’d be 15 to 20 people and there was about 40,” said Jen Gaudette, Sugar Hill’s administrative assistant. “It was really nice. All the National Guard guys were here and a lot of the local police, who had worked with Jose. So that was nice.”

Pequeno, a Marine who celebrated his 50th birthday in March, grew up in the Berlin-Gorham area and served in the Lisbon and Lincoln police departments before being appointed chief of the Sugar Hill Police Department.

He was 29 at the time, making him the youngest police chief in New Hampshire.

Pequeno also served in the New Hampshire Army National Guard and, in 2005, was deployed to Iraq.

Less than a year later, in March 2006, he was severely injured during an insurgent hand grenade attack and was not expected to live.

Suffering a traumatic brain injury, Pequeno is in a wheelchair with restricted movement and an inability to speak.

But technology, along with a strong will that has been present since the beginning, has helped him make even greater strides in communicating with others.

In Florida, where Pequeno lives full-time with his mother, he has a computer device that allows him to look at the screen and answer questions with his eyes.

“It’s made a big difference,” said Ho-Sing-Loy. “The other day, it was amazing. You see the smile on him, you see his eyes light up. People talk to him and he’s smiling and nodding and understanding.”

Pequeno and his mother stay with Alexandria in Gorham when visiting the North Country.

Gaudette said that the North Country Public Safety Foundation, which was created to assist Pequeno, assists in his visits to the North Country.

“We help with the lodging for them,” she said.

During a visit last winter, Adaptive Sports Partners of the North Country assisted Pequeno in skiing at Bretton Woods, said Gaudette.

The snowstorm canceled a birthday party that had been scheduled for March 23 in Berlin.

“That was sad, but I was glad we got to see him on Tuesday,” said Gaudette.

WMRSD Explores Options For Full-Time Pre-K

The White Mountains Regional School District is exploring alternate ways to reinstate full-time pre-Kindergarten.

WMRSD is in talks to partner with Tri-County CAP’s Head Start Program to provide full-time Pre-K for ages three and four.

Discussions are in the beginning stages, said Superintendent Marion Anastasia.

“It is do-able [but] there’s a lot of planning that would have to happen,” Anastasia said.

The school district aims to reinstate full-time preschool, in order to improve education outcomes for students and to support working families.

“The lack of child care primarily, but also preschool, is having a substantial impact on just about every sector from a workforce perspective,” said school board member Kristen Van Bergen Buteau of Lancaster. “A lot of people are asking ‘Where did the work force go after the pandemic? Why didn’t they come back?’ And there’s a fair percentage of folks who are home because they’re caregiving and don’t have options.”

If the proposal moves forward, it would not be enacted until at least the 2025-26 school year.

BUDGET CHALLENGES

White Mountains Regional is pursuing creative Pre-K solutions following back-to-back budget defeats.

WMRSD downsized age 3/4 preschool to part-time in 2023-24 after the budget failed, as part of \$750,000 in mandatory spending cuts.

Plans to revive full-time preschool in 2024-25 took a hit when the budget failed again, requiring another \$200,000 in spending cuts.

Those cuts have not been determined and the school board will be presented a plan next month.

Making matters more difficult, the school district recently learned of an unanticipated expense for next year.

WMRSD will have to hire a special educator to serve students enrolled at Heartwood Charter School in Jefferson. That position is not budgeted.

In order to make the default budget cuts and fund the special educator position, the school board will have to make hard decisions.

Anastasia sounded a hopeful note on Thursday that the school district could resume full-time pre-school in 2024-25 for age four, but not age three.

Full-time Pre-K in 2023-24 would have required an additional 3.5 staff positions: One full-time equivalent teacher, a 0.5 full-time equivalent case manager, and two paraprofessionals.

Board Okays \$300K In Upgrades For Plant, New Sewer Violation Fines

LITTLETON — As the state reduces allowable effluent levels from wastewater treatment plants, the Select Board has authorized \$300,000 for upgrades to its treatment plant as part of a new first phase.

In August 2022, following state-listed deficiencies in Littleton’s plant that need remediation to get back into compliance, the town enlisted Hoyle Tanner and Associates to proceed on a facilities plan, which is now at about the 60-percent stage, Doug Damko, director of the Littleton Department of Public Works, said during the board’s meeting on March 25.

“It’s pretty extensive,” he said. “They did a lot of thorough investigation and interviews and talking to NHDES [Department of Environmental Services] as well. It will be a comprehensive guide for us going forward for the treatment plan.”

But there are now several items that need to be addressed, said Damko, who asked for the board’s authorization to proceed with the first-phase project.

To reach compliance for the new constituent levels, Littleton is currently under a timeline for its environmental permit, also called the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit.

“One of those is dealing with copper,” said Damko. “That’s been one of the more challenging items and we’ve been doing a trial program to try and come up with a good program to treat our wastewater. We’re basically using chemicals to treat the wastewater to better remove copper from the water, but we still need more work to accomplish that. So as part of that phase 1 project, we’re looking at a \$300,000 project to expand chemical treatment at the plant and also to do some other site improvements that are just a general benefit to the operation of the plant.”

He said the state updated the plant’s permit in 2020, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency issued a new permit that reduced many of the effluent limits.

“Stuff we were being compliant with we are now out of compliance,” said Damko “And they added some new stuff like phosphorous. Fortunately, we didn’t get PFOS or PFAS on the list, but I heard that’s coming. But phosphorous and copper are the two. We’ve been able to successfully treat for phosphorous, but copper’s been challenging. But we’re working on it.”

Because compliance is the primary concern, Littleton Public Works will begin the third phase in 2024 and complete it within the year.

The second improvement within the first phase that will prepare the plant for subsequent projects is eliminating the temporary office trailer building that the town has been renting for several years and moving the staff back into the main control building, which will need HVAC, electrical, and communication upgrades.

The rental office trailer, which costs the town \$10,000 annually, was moved on-site after odor issues arose in the main control building years ago.

“There’s a cost savings there,” said Damko.

The third improvement is replacing the plant’s manual access gate with an automated system with emergency vehicle access.

The first phase can be completed with money currently in the sewer reserve fund without impacting taxpayers.

See News Briefs, Page 8



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Select Board

Continued from Page 2

She said there is also a proposal to dedicate the bridge to someone.

The bridge was designed by Glenn Lavoie, whom Smith said Hails from Littleton.

"It's very unique, that type of design," he said.

The design dates back to the 1900s, said Smith.

Monday was the last board meeting for Damko, who, after five years as Littleton's public works director, is departing after April 5 to take an engineering opportunity in Michigan working for the Michigan Department of Transportation.

"I'd like to thank him for his effort and everything he's done in Littleton," said Emerson.

Residents applauded Damko.

News Briefs

Continued from Page 7

"Nine percent of sewer user fees build up reserves and that's what these funds are for," said Damko.

The board voted 3-0 to expend the money from the available sewer fund balance.

Select Board Vice-Chairman Roger Emerson called the \$300,000 "money well spent to get us back into compliance."

"Permit compliance is our highest priority," said Damko.

The first-phase project is a smaller package project that didn't fit into some of the larger upgrades, such as the more expensive \$1.93 million second-phase project, which was approved by voters in 2022 and is funded by federal stimulus money and a state clean water revolving fund loan, said Damko.

The third phase, which was delayed and will now be on the town meeting warrant for 2025, is a \$500,000 project to upgrade septage receiving.

New Fine For Sewer Violations

In January 2023, the Select Board adopted updates to the sewer user ordinance that established fees and penalties for sewer users, including penalties aimed at some larger users for illegal or unsanitary discharges and discharges that can cause sewer backups.

"Myself and staff have been working with those fees and are going forward with our industrial pre-treatment program to get it up to date," said Damko. "That culminated in the summer of last year with a community meeting at the opera house. We've been doing outreach to businesses, initially getting them information on the town sewer ordinance.

Any sewer user who puts something other than regular domestic waste into the sewer system needs to have an industrial discharge permit, he said.

The outreach is continuing into 2024.

"There was one area that we overlooked and that was at the beginning of the process," said Damko. "We had identified five primary areas of violation in that penalty schedule. But there is a sixth one ... to add and that's at the beginning — a failure to complete the permit process. We have had challenges getting applications returned and permits signed. We're doing extensive outreach and followup, but just had challenges in that particular area."

The sixth revision to the penalty schedule adds that any failure to complete the permit application process for Class I and II permits within 90 days of initial contact by the town will result in a written notice of violation, and if no response is received within 30 days, there will be a \$250 penalty per day until the permit is signed and completed.

"How many businesses have not sent it in?" asked Select Board member Kerri Harrington.

"Fortunately, it's only been a small

amount," said Damko. "We completed about 60 permits. Less than five we're having some trouble with."

He said the state has requirements in its standard language for sewer user ordinances.

The board voted 3-0 to add the sixth area of violation.

N.H. House Passes Bill To Give Towns Local Control Over Casinos

Local supporters are buoyed after an amendment to a casino bill at the New Hampshire statehouse passed the House of Representatives on March 28.

House Bill 1223, cleared in a 282-86 vote, is now en route to the Senate.

"It was embraced well in the House and I think it's a really good exit from the House and entrance to the Senate to walk in with that nice of a majority," Littleton resident Debi Warner, an advocate and impetus for the bill, said Friday.

"We're just hoping that the Senate understands this is not a gambling bill, but a local control bill," she said. "We want the people to have a local voice on something that has such a strong presence in the community."

The catalyst for the amendment is a mixed-use casino (to feature historical horse racing machines, which are similar to slot machines, as well as table games) being proposed by casino developer Greg Carlin in the building that currently houses the Staples office supply store along Meadow Street in Littleton.

Raising concerns about what they say could be negative impacts are a group of local residents led by Warner, who contacted state Rep. David Rochefort, R-Littleton, about sponsoring a local control bill for the 2024 legislative session.

While keno, a betting game involving numbered cards that the New Hampshire Legislature legalized in 2017 for establishments with liquor licenses, carries a local option that allows residents to have an up or down vote at the annual town meeting on whether they want keno, casinos have no such option.

HB 1223 seeks to change that.

"It will allow the question about the local option for casino gambling and games of chance to be placed on warrant articles," said Rochefort.

The HB 1223 amendment, called a "non-germane amendment," came later in the legislative session, after the deadline had expired for new bills to be presented.

But language was drawn up and the amendment ultimately replaced the original bill, which was abandoned.

"We were able to get language that not only Debi's group agreed to, but also the New Hampshire Charitable Gaming Association," said Rochefort. "So the operators of these facilities agreed to this language

as well. They want to be good neighbors and they would like to be able to get the temperature of a town before they come in, rather than come in blindly. They were eager to work with us on this."

If HB 1223 is made law, any developer applying for an operator license after July 1, 2024, would have to first obtain majority approval of the municipality through a question that asks, "Shall we allow the operation of games of chance within the town or city?"

The bill would also allow residents to take a vote if a casino already permitted has not begun operation within seven years or has ceased operation and has not reopened within seven years.

Rochefort and Warner said the bill respects investments already made in current casinos as well as the applications protected under current law.

"I don't want to make it so the state can pull the rug out from under them," said Rochefort. "I won't push any legislation that would do that. We've got safeguards that protect the current operators. But in communities where there is nothing, we'll have the option. The town will be able to have a say in it."

Rochefort said he's indifferent to gambling, and HB 1223 is not an anti-gambling bill.

"If it was an anti-gambling bill, I probably wouldn't have supported it," he said. "It's more of a local control bill."

During the March 12 town vote, Littleton residents voted 856-588 on a petition to amend the zoning ordinance to prohibit casinos and commercial gaming parlors within the town limits.

Although it was learned after the petition was submitted that it is non-binding because the state currently preempts local control, supporters like Warner said it puts the town on record on where it stands.

"The fact that we were able to pass our local ordinance with such a good margin had a lot to do with the power of this voice in the Legislature," said Warner. "It was known that the locals said something and it was important to notice. I think that was very empowering for the representatives throughout the hall thinking about their own little towns."

HB 1223 had the support of three Republicans and three Democrats from across the state.

If it passes, however, it would likely not impact or put an end to Carlin's casino proposal, because that application with the state is already in, said Rochefort.

"If someone applies for something, it's hard for the state to do that," he said.

"That was the sad part of it," said Warner. "It's bittersweet for us because Greg is already protected by other laws in New Hampshire and by the moratorium in place."

At the same time, the bill, if made law, would be in effect by the time the current



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News Briefs

Continued from Page 8

casino moratorium expires on June 30 and the market opens up again in July, said Warner.

HB 1223, rather, would apply to future casino proposals in Littleton and elsewhere, said Rochefort.

“It certainly helps Bethlehem, Dalton, Sugar Hill, Colebrook, Lisbon, and every town,” said Warner. “People’s voices are empowered.”

Former DPW Director Resigns, Declines Road Agent Position

WHITEFIELD — Former Public Works Director Rob Larson has resigned.

Larson’s final day was March 14, according to town officials.

The Select Board dissolved the Public Works Director position effective March 24, in a cost-cutting move designed to protect taxpayers during tough economic times.

Since then, the four departments previously overseen by the Public Works Director (highway, water, sewer, transfer station) have been run by department heads.

Larson was offered the newly created position of road agent to manage the highway department, but declined, town officials said.

Since then, Todd Ferland has been promoted to Road Agent.

SURPRISE DECISION, COST PRESSURES

As reported last month, the Select Board crafted the proposal to cut the Public Works Director position in non-public meetings without Larson’s input.

He was notified of the decision in an executive session before the Feb. 26 board meeting.

“I was very, very surprised by it,” Larson said the following day. “I was not consulted; none of the employees were consulted.”

The Select Board explained at the time that cutting the position was necessary to meet rising costs and soaring tax rates.

The Road Agent (hourly wage) will be paid less than the Public Works Director (salary), and the board predicts savings in future budgets.

“Our budget was extremely tight this year,” said Selectman Shawn White. “We’re trying to find every way possible to save money.”

The staff shakeup marks the beginning of a Select Board push to streamline municipal government and make it more cost-effective.

Those efforts are meant, in part, to offset school spending, White said.

New Hampshire continues to downshift education costs to local taxpayers. Whitefield’s local education tax rate increased by \$1.06 in 2023 and will increase by another \$2.68 this year.

“We’re looking at restructuring the town and trying to make things more efficient,” White said. “[Eliminating the Public Works Director] is just the first step.”

DIFFERING OPINIONS

Larson criticized the move, saying that eliminating the 15-year-old Public Works Director position could have far-reaching, unin-

tended consequences for the Town of Whitefield.

He questioned if a return to separate highway, water, sewer and transfer station department heads would stall progress and delay economic development efforts.

In particular, he worried about the town’s ability to manage grants without a Public Works Director, especially for large-scale projects like the planned \$2.7 million Union Street reconstruction.

“In my opinion, the town’s going to go backwards,” Larson said.

However, the Select Board arrived at the decision after much thought over several months, they said.

In the end, they made what they considered a difficult but necessary choice.

Said White, “It’s not easy for us to do, but it’s just something that needs to be done.”

Local Reps’ Landfill Bills Pass House, Move To Senate

Three landfill-related bills sponsored by local state representatives are on their way to the New Hampshire Senate after passing handily in the New Hampshire House of Representatives.

This year, as opposed to past years, supportive lawmakers hope they gain traction in the Senate.

After concerns about the amount of trash being imported into New Hampshire, House Bill 1632, sponsored by state Rep. David Rochefort, R-Littleton, and co-sponsored by state Rep. Linda Massimilla, D-Littleton, seeks to prohibit newly permitted landfills from accepting more than 15 percent of out-of-state waste.

“It came out of committee unanimously, which was phenomenal,” Rochefort said March 29.

On average, about half of all waste land-filled in New Hampshire is from out of state.

On Thursday, HB 1145, co-sponsored by Rochefort, which seeks to prohibit the private ownership of new landfills and instead put ownership under the state or a political subdivision, passed in a 208-162 vote.

HB 1620, another bill sponsored by Rochefort and co-sponsored by Massimilla, seeks to place a moratorium on permitting landfills through the year 2028. It goes to a Senate committee hearing on Tuesday.

“I see a lot of support, a lot of interest,” said Rochefort. “I think it’s just a testament to the fact that the New Hampshire House of Representatives really is concerned about clean water and they really understand the issue and they understand it’s a pressing issue. We’ve got three trash-related bills headed to the Senate. In the past, we’ve only had one.”

In recent years, landfill-related legislation has passed the House, only to die in the Senate.

See full story at www.CaledonianRecord.com

Judge Rejects Reconsideration In Eminent Domain Case

Ruling in favor of the state, a Coos Superior Court judge has rejected a motion for reconsideration in a nearly 6-year-old eminent domain case stemming from the Rogers’ Rangers bridge replacement between Guildhall and Lancaster.

The case was brought by Shane and Trina Beattie, who argued that the New Hampshire Department of Transportation’s taking of nearly one acre of their land to build a new bridge 30 feet north of the former bridge was unnecessary and negatively impacted their property.

In September 2018, questioning the public benefit, they filed a preliminary injunction with the New Hampshire Board of Tax and Land Appeals, where the NHDOT had filed a declaration of taking.

Two months later, the case was transferred to the superior court, which concluded that a state commission’s decision in 2013 to study a replacement for the then-structurally deficient bridge was not the result of fraud or a gross mistake. The court then granted the state’s motion to dismiss.

The Beatties, who hired an engineer who concluded that their property would likely see a higher flood level, altered flood patterns and longer flooding because of the new bridge and roadway approach, appealed to the New Hampshire Supreme Court, which remanded the case back to the superior court, per the Eminent Domain Procedure Act.

The Beatties, represented by attorney Jonathan Frizzell, argued that the state did not adequately analyze all burdens and social costs suffered by impacted property owners and did not consider other alternatives as part of the balancing test to determine the public benefit.

In January 2024, Judge Lawrence MacLeod ruled in favor of the state, concluding that the superior court found that the state’s balancing test appropriately considered all public benefits against all burdens and social costs suffered by every impacted property owner.

Ten days later, Frizzell filed a motion for reconsideration, arguing that the court overlooked evidentiary requirements set forth in the superior court rules.

See full story at www.CaledonianRecord.com



FREE CHILDHOOD SCREENING

The Littleton School District (SAU 84), is excited to announce a **FREE** childhood screening on Friday, May 10th for children between the ages of birth and 5 years of age residing in Littleton, NH.

This **free** screening will be held at Lakeway Elementary School.

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The Littleton School District hopes that, through this screening, children in need of any type of early childhood educational services can be identified and receive the support they need.

Appointments will be taken starting **Monday, April 15th through Friday, April 26th**. You can call Lakeway Elementary School at (603) 444-2831 between the hours of 7:30 am - 3:00 pm and schedule an appointment with the Mildred C. Lakeway Office Staff.

If you have any questions about this **FREE** childhood screening, please call Elizabeth McCarthy, Preschool Coordinator at (603) 444-2831.

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Littleton Adjusts Municipal Plans For Eclipse Day

BY ROBERT BLECHL
Staff Writer

LITTLETON — As total solar eclipse day nears, town officials have made some adjustments, including giving non-essential staff a day off and rescheduling a Select Board meeting.

The adjustments were part of the overall planning that the town has undertaken in the past few weeks, which has involved local organizations, including the library, chamber of commerce, United Way, and the New Hampshire Departments of Safety, Homeland Security, and Emergency Management.

The eclipse will occur on the mid-afternoon of April 8 and will be total from Lancaster north to Colebrook and Pittsburg and 99

percent in the Littleton area.

From the darkening sky beginning at around 2 p.m. to the sky lightening back up (what Littleton Fire Rescue Chief Chad Miller called a “run-up period” and a “run-out period”), the event in most of the North Country will last two hours or more.

“We’ve had an eclipse meeting already and we’re having our next eclipse meeting on the first [April 1] to finalize the planning,” Paul Smith, Littleton police chief and interim town manager, said during the board’s meeting on Monday. “In general, we’ll be looking at an increase in traffic probably a week in advance of the actual eclipse and then either the day of, late that evening, or early the next day just everybody leaving the area at once as far as motor vehicles. We are still in the planning process

of that.”

Littleton is just south of the direct path of totality.

“We’re extremely close, Moore Dam being one of the areas that could see it,” said Smith. “So we’ve reached out to Great River Hydro and are working with them if they have any security needs of safety issues.”

He said the next time the area experiences a total solar eclipse, it will be in 360 years.

“Typically, there’s a total eclipse every 18 months, but what makes this one special is it’s over land,” said Smith. “A lot of them are over the ocean.”

The last full eclipse over land in parts of the United States was in August 2017, and it received much media attention and people showing up from around the world to the path of totality locations, he said.

“That being said, because it is such a gap, schools are giving the children the day off,” Smith said to Select Board members. “My recommendation is that you provide non-essential administrative employees a day off with pay to view the eclipse with their families and children, because they’re so far and few between.

Board member Kerri Harrington said it’s important, and residents won’t have the same opportunity for another 360 years.

The board voted 3-0 for the employee day off.

In terms of the estimated number of people, Miller said Homeland Security is calling it “the Great Unknown,” but there are estimates of possibly 40,000 people arriving in northern New Hampshire to view the eclipse.

“We’re just getting some estimates out of St. Johnsbury that are quite high as well,” said Miller. “How we play as the intersection, I don’t know exactly, but one of the things is they expect most people to be departing Monday evening after the eclipse ... Tuesday is a work day for people.”

In order to avoid heavy traffic issues around the time of the April 8 Select Board meeting, the board voted 3-0 to move the meeting to 5 p.m. Tuesday, April 9.

NHDOT ADVISES COOS ECLIPSE WATCHERS TO STAY ON MAIN ROADS

For Coos County, the New Hampshire Department of Transportation has issued a travel advisory for the total solar eclipse, which will occur in the mid-afternoon on Monday, April 8.

Potentially heavy traffic after the event might impact travel in Coos County, much of which will be in the path of eclipse totality.

NHDOT, local officials, New Hampshire State Police, and the New Hampshire Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management are encouraging all visitors to the county to stay on the state highways to reach the eclipse viewing venues as well as for their return trip home.

See **Eclipse**, Page 11

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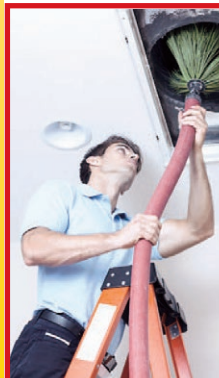
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Obituaries

Continued from Page 4

mont; and Andrew Tobin, his wife Catherine, his former wife Molly, and their two children, Chloe and Kieran of Lancaster. Bob took great joy in his niece and nephews as well as his dog, Skye.

A celebration of life will be held in June at Andrew Tobin's home on Middle Street, Lancaster.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made in his memory to the North Country Home Health & Hospice Agency, 536 Cottage St., Littleton, NH 03561.

For more information or to send an online condolence, please go to www.baileyfh.net.

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Eclipse Day Viewing Events
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Barton
Eclipse Viewing, 2 p.m., Crystal Lake State Park, 96 Bellwater Avenue Barton.

Burke
Solar Eclipse Viewing, 2:30 p.m., Burke Mountain Base Lodge, 223 Sherburne Lodge Road, East Burke. The eclipse will be visible from many spots around the resort. To watch the eclipse on-mountain there will be a designated viewing spot at the Summit. A viewing party at Hotel Patio with Nix Mix DJ from 2 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Colebrook, N.H.
Coos Brewing Eclipse Party, 30 Bill Bromage Dr., 1 p.m.

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Eclipse Viewing in the Labyrinth with Cosmic Adventures and Activities, The Lavendar Farm and Top of the World Barn. Go online to lavender-essentials.com for more information.

Franconia
Cannon Mountain, Franconia, N.H., 2:30-5:30 p.m. With Dub Apocalypse.

Groveton
Eclipse Pizza Party, 1:30 p.m., State Street ballfield, Groveton, N.H.

Irasburg
Solar Eclipse Party, Leach Public Library, 130 Park Ave., eclipse glasses are available. Take a chair and watch on the common.

Island Pond
Lakeside Viewing Party, 2-8 p.m., Lakeside Park, 32 Mill Street, Island Pond.

Jay
Jay Peak, 2:30-3:15: Pink Talking Phish plays the entirety of Dark Side of the Moon leading up to totality.

Lunenburg
On the Common, activities from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Visitors will have the opportunity to experience Lunenburg, Vermont during its annual maple-sugaring season. Additional details online at www.topofthecommon.org

Lyndon
• Lyndon Institute, 2:45 p.m., Robert K. Lewis Field. Event by Lyndon Institute Career and Technical Education and Lyndon Institute

Alumni.
• Eclipse Day in the Park, Bandstand Park, 2 to 4:30 p.m. Free eclipse glasses available.
• Eclipse Sale & Viewing Party, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Antiques & Emporium, 182 S. Wheelock Road, Lyndonville.

Newport
Total Eclipse at Gardner Park, 2 p.m. to 4:45 p.m., Gardner Park Road. William Vinton, an esteemed educator from the Northeast Kingdom Astronomy Foundation, will speak about this celestial event and musician Kyle Chadburn will be there to enhance your eclipse experience.

Northumberland, N.H.
At the small ball field on State Street, 1:30 p.m. Sponsored by the Granite Guild, enjoy a pizza party with donations coming in from Batch's Kwik Stop, North Country Shop and Save, and North Country Family Restaurant. Drinks were donated by Ocean State Job Lot, and free eclipse glasses while supplies last.

Pittsburg, N.H.
NASA on site in the school parking lot to observe the eclipse and hopefully learn more about the shape of the sun's corona. Learn more about how to take part in NASA's research here: <https://science.nasa.gov/solar-system/skywatching/sketch-the-shape-of-the-sun-for-science-during-the-solar-eclipse/>
St. Johnsbury
• Sun+Moon+You: Eclipse Viewing Event, noon-5 p.m., Fairbanks Museum & Planetarium, 1302 Main Street, St. Johnsbury. With Jane Lindholm & Mark Breen. Info, <https://fairbanksmuseum.org/solar-eclipse>.
• Papa Tirozzi Bakery & Pizza, 1-4 p.m. 2165 Portland Street (Route 2), St. Johnsbury. Kids activities, a special menu, lawn games, dog friendly.
• Green Mountain Mall lawn, Memorial Drive.

Walden
Eclipse Party, 2-5 p.m., Walden Community Library, 135 Cahoon Pond Road

Waterford
Viewing Party, 2-5 p.m., Rabbit Hill Inn, Route 18, Lower Waterford.

Westmore
Eclipse Viewing, 2:15 p.m., Fellowship Hall, Hinton Hill Road, Westmore.

West Charleston
Solar Eclipse Viewing, 2-4 p.m., Vermont Reindeer Farm, 3108 Chilaious Road, West

Charleston.
Whitefield, N.H.
Eclipse Event, Mountain View Grand, Whitefield N.H.

Other Eclipse-related Events
Brighton
Solar Eclipse Cookie Decorating Party, Three Branches Cafe and Bakery, 28 Cross St., 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Columbia, N.H.
Eclipse Concert, Cynthia MacLeod & Gordone Belsher, 7 p.m., Great North Woods Center for the Arts, 1993 US Rte 3.

Jay
Jay Peak, 4 p.m. to 4:45 p.m., the Science Behind the Eclipse with Meteorologist and Science Educator Chris Kudek. FREE at the Clips & Reels Recreation Center on Tramside.

Lancaster, N.H.
Weeks Memorial Library will be crafting Eclipse Viewers and making Eclipse Art on Saturday, April 6 at 10 a.m. Families with children ages 5 years and older are welcome to attend. For more information, contact Ronnie Buckman, youth services librarian, at 603-788-3352 or email: wml@myfairpoint.net.

Lyndon
• Eclipse Viewing Devices Workshop, Coleigh Library, Tuesday, April 2, 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. Take your own cereal box or similarly sized box.
• Poetry Eclipse Open Mic, 5:30 p.m., Satellite Gallery & Community Space, 71 Depot Street, Lyndonville. Open mic readings. Call 802-229-8317.

Pittsburg, N.H.
Eclipse dinner with four seatings at 3 p.m., 4:30 p.m., 6 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Friday April 7 at the Pittsburg Ridge Runners Clubhouse. The dinner is a fundraiser for the Class of 2027. Reservations required and cash only. Call 603-331-5646 or 331-5518.

Westmore
Westmore Festival, April 5, 6 and 7 from 12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m. Astronomer Bill Vinton workshop; limited fine arts and crafts with Eclipse theme; Environmental Science events focused on the natural resources of Willoughby Lake. Raffles - Glamping Tent, Galileoscope, Celestial quilt, Local musicians, food, more. More details online at <http://www.westmorecommunitychurch.com/>

Eclipse

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Some secondary highways and local roads were not designed to handle large volumes of traffic, and springtime in the North Country can bring frost heaves and very soft shoulders.

Traffic generated by the solar eclipse will impact roads throughout New Hampshire.

Please obey all officers assisting with traffic control as well as all signs and traffic control devices.

Be prepared for slow travel heading south after the eclipse on Monday evening.

Official New Hampshire travel information will be posted to the NHDOT Facebook and Twitter social media pages, and motorists are encouraged to visit newengland511.org for real-time traffic information for Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont.

Residents and visitors with questions should email the New Hampshire Joint Information Center at jic@dos.nh.gov or call (603) 223-6169.

Visitors seeking event information should visit NHSolarEclipse.com.

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