



# The Littleton Weekly Record

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2025

LOCAL

State Lawmaker  
Appeals No Trespass  
Order From Elementary School

FREE



## Our Most Read Stories Of 2025

- › Firefighters Battle Elements, Flames In Fire That Destroys Home
- › Town Approves \$500K Grant Application For Community Center
- › Motorcycle Club Says Not Involved In Melee

## LOCAL

# State Lawmaker Appeals No Trespass Order From Elementary School

BY PAUL HAYES  
Staff Writer

WHITEFIELD — A state lawmaker said he has appealed a school board decision denying him a hearing over a no-trespass order that restricts his access to school property, following what he described as a lack of due process.

Rep. Joe Barton, R-Littleton, addressed the White Mountains Regional School Board on Dec. 18 to formally place on the public record that he requested a hearing regarding an Oct. 24 no-trespass order issued against him and that the request was

denied.

“On December 9, 2025, I submitted a written request for a hearing under Ed 204.01(a)(1) concerning the October 24, 2025, no-trespass order and its impact on my legal rights and parental participation,” Barton told the board.

Barton said he was notified by email on Dec. 15 that the board, after consulting with the district’s attorney, determined he was not entitled to a hearing.

“I want to be clear that I am not asking the Board to address the merits of the no-trespass order tonight,” he said. “I requested due process, and that request was denied without findings,



State representative Joe Barton, R-Littleton, outside of the Littleton polls on Tuesday, Nov. 5, 2024. (Photo by Paul Hayes)

explanation, or a hearing.”

Barton said the denial left him with no internal remedy and prompted him to appeal

to the New Hampshire Department of Education.

“My purpose this evening is limited and procedural: I am

preserving the public record that I requested a hearing under Ed 204.01(a)(1), that this School Board denied that request, and that I am pursuing review through the appropriate state process,” he said, asking that the statement be reflected in the meeting minutes.

The no-trespass order, dated Oct. 24, restricts Barton from exiting his vehicle on Whitefield Elementary School grounds and bars him from entering the school building, except to transport his child to and from school in accordance with established pickup and drop-off procedures.

Superintendent Marion An-

astasia requested the order following a dispute between Barton and school officials over crosswalk access near the school. In written correspondence, Barton said the order stemmed from an Oct. 17 incident in which he removed cones blocking a crosswalk in front of the school, arguing the cones were illegal and created safety hazards.

Barton has previously said the order was unconstitutional and interferes with his parental rights and participation in his daughter’s education, including attending meetings and school events. His daughter is a student at Whitefield Elementary.

## LITTLETON

# Town Approves \$500K Grant Application For Community Center

BY ROBERT BLECHL  
Staff Writer

LITTLETON — After a public hearing on Monday, the Select Board approved the submission of an application seeking a \$500,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for renovations to the Littleton Community Center and its annex to make new community space.

The last time the town sought and was awarded a CDBG for a town project was in 2014.

As they approved the community center application, the Select Board also discussed reentering the CDBG cycle and submitting grant applications for other projects.

For the community center, the grant funding would go toward improvements at the annex, also called the carriage barn, which has been closed since 2011 due to structural deficiencies and is now being corrected with other funding. Improvements include new insulation and renovations to create a year-round gathering space for 50 to 100 people.

Exterior and interior finishes

would also be restored to the historical style.

The main house will have weatherized windows, a heat pump heating and cooling system installed on the second and third floors, and renovations to make the third floor usable.

Of the total grant, up to \$35,000 would be retained by the town to cover eligible administrative and labor compliance costs.

In Littleton, the majority of residents are considered low to moderate income, which is a requirement by the New Hampshire Community Development Finance Authority, which administers the CDBG funding, and which makes Littleton a strong candidate for the community center grant as well as for CDBGs for other projects, said Donna Lane, a CDBG grant-writer.

“All projects must benefit low- and moderate-income persons,” she said.

The community center, which also offers spaces for rent to offset operating costs, welcomes a wide range of groups and serves many in town, said Lane.

For the grant, the center’s

board of directors must get a letter of interest from participating partners.

“Some things I have suggested are senior programs, exercise classes, kid programs, and meetings like for AA or something like that if they need any space,” said Lane.

Space could also be made available for organizations like the Tri-County Community Action Program, she said.

“They are working on the listing of the partners that come in and do programs,” said Lane. “These funds are competitive and they have to show they’re adding benefit in order to get these funds.”

The community center has had a few events recently, including a cookie decorating and crafts day on the afternoon of the Littleton Christmas Parade that was well attended, has been open on the weekends to offer a warm space for visitors and residents, and has user groups that include a quilting club, said Kerri Harrington, chair of the Select Board.

“I think the intent is to get a lot more activities happening, for all ages, too, not just seniors,” said Harrington.

As part of the CDBG requirements, the Littleton Community Center project must conform to Littleton’s proposed housing and community development plan goals of promoting adequate health, social services, recreational and social interaction services, and opportunities for residents and visitors.

The grants are available to municipalities in amounts of up to \$500,000 annually for economic development projects, up to \$750,000 for supportive housing projects, up to \$500,000 for housing projects, up to \$500,000 for public facility projects, and, based on Littleton’s population, up to \$350,000 for emergency funding.

Planning study grants are also available for up to \$25,000 annually.

The CDFA is on a fiscal year that extends from July 1 to June 30.

Rounds for public housing are in July and January, said Lane.

After submitting the community center application, the town will again be eligible for all funding programs on July 1, and economic development,

planning studies, and emergency programs can be applied for year-round, she said.

Selectman Ed Hennessey suggested that Littleton apply for CDBG funding for its wastewater treatment, which requires repairs and upgrades, including some following recent equipment failures.

“As long as the emergency has been known about for less than 18 months,” said Lane.

Theoretically, Littleton could be eligible for several million dollars in CDBG funding annually, said Lane.

“It’s rare to be a town that is primarily low to moderate income,” she said. “The next town over couldn’t apply for the treatment plant, but you can. You can do a lot of things that most of the towns can’t because of that.”

The second CDBG prong the town is required to meet is having an anti-displacement and relocation assistance plan, which doesn’t apply because the community center project will not dislocate any residents.

The third prong the town must meet and did is having a housing and community development plan, which the

town has from the 2014 CDBG award and which encompasses short-term and long-term goals.

Goals including encouraging a varied stock of safe and affordable housing for persons of all incomes, encouraging industrial and commercial development and expansion and retention of employment opportunities for all residents, and preserving and promoting town properties that have historic, cultural, and architectural value

“Clearly, this building and the annex, which has been sitting back there unused, is a beautiful space, so this falls under those state objectives directly,” said Harrington.

Littleton is also promoting existing neighborhoods and community centers, she said.

“I think it’s a good project,” said Selectman Roger Emerson.

The Select Board voted 4-0 to approve the submission of the Littleton Community Center improvements CDBG application and authorize the town manager to sign and submit the application, and upon approval, authorize the town manager to execute any documents that might be necessary to effectuate the CDBG contract.





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## OBITUARIES

## BENJAMIN BORNSTEIN

Benjamin Alexander Bornstein passed away on Dec. 18, 2025, surrounded by family. He was an exceptional man: brilliant, empathetic, thoughtful, and kind. Despite the physical hardships he endured over the last seven years, he faced each day with courage, grace, resilience, and an undiminished spirit.

Benjamin's life was marked by a love for learning and a dedication to his faith. A skilled linguist, he learned Latin, Greek, Portuguese, among others. Additionally, he taught himself Hebrew and embraced Judaism with devotion, studying the Torah at home when he could no longer walk to synagogue.

He earned his associate degree in nursing from Thomas Nelson Community College and furthered his education with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Old Dominion University. He was called to the profession of caring for others. His vocation delayed by a brain hemorrhage seven years ago, he worked diligently these past years toward the goal of eventually practicing nursing again: taking CEUs yearly to maintain his license, and pushing himself in countless physical therapy sessions toward this



goal.

His intellectual pursuits were matched by his passion for music in his early years, playing the piano, bassoon, bass guitar, and tenor saxophone. More recently, he found joy in artistic hobbies such as miniature painting, clay molding, and bookbinding.

An avowed cat lover, Benjamin also delighted in puzzles and games, especially logic puzzles, video games, and flight simulators. Every Shabbos, he cherished board games with his beloved wife, Janet.

Benjamin was preceded in death by his grandparents, Eunice and Leo Bornstein, and Betty Upham. He is survived by his loving wife, Janet Christine Bornstein; sister, Alison Matthews and her husband, Chase; parents, Peter Bornstein and Linda Upham-Bornstein; and grandfather, Horace Upham.

A service to honor Benjamin's life was held on Dec. 21, 2025, burial took place at Williamsburg Memorial Park.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Shepherd Center in Atlanta, Ga.

## RODNEY LEE LAMOTTE

Rodney Lee Lamotte, 89, of East St. Johnsbury, Vt., was called to heaven on December 21, 2025, at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center. He passed peacefully with family surrounding him following complications from a heart attack.

Rod was born on July 16, 1936, in Lancaster, NH, to Louis & Mildred (McGoff) Lamotte. He graduated from Lancaster High School before entering the United States Air Force, where he served for four years before joining the National Guard. He married Marcella Pond, the love of his life, on Oct. 18, 1958, at St. Leo's Catholic Church in Lunenburg, VT.

After getting married they moved to Battle Creek, MI where they started their family with the birth of their son Mitchell. After serving in the military, they returned to the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont where more children followed, their family grew, and they shared the remainder of their 58 years together.

Rod was a man of many talents and spent most of his career as an owner of multiple businesses, most notably Rod's Used Cars & Service Center in East St. Johnsbury for over 50 years. In addition to his automotive business, he and Marcella ran a bed & breakfast, several business ventures, and owned several rental properties in the area. He became a pillar of the East St. Johnsbury community by serving for many years as a Selectman in St. Johnsbury and Kirby and by helping his neighbors.

Family was always most important to Rod. Having grandchildren next door meant that he was "Grandpa's Taxi". He built a Ford Festiva with two front ends with his son, Tracy, that they would drive at local parades. Most of his time with family was spent on birthdays and holidays, at BBQs and outdoor activities, and at bonfires with neighbors. In his later years, Rod also cherished his friendships, especially his rides with Francis Smith.

Around age 30, Rod acquired his childhood home in Guildhall, VT. For the early days it was referred to as "up on the hill" and later "camp." It was "on the hill" where many family memories were made. And it was the place where Rod and his family and close friends would gather for R&R on the weekends. Every Saturday, as soon as Rod closed up the garage at noon he'd head for camp, and Marcella and the kids would soon follow. In the evening, Rod would often don his white flagman outfit and head to Riverside Speedway at Groveton. Sunday mornings would



find Rod in the kitchen cooking bacon and eggs before heading to Sunday Mass at St. Leo's in Lunenburg. It was Sunday afternoons that the real adventures began. Those afternoons seemed suspended in time, leaving behind the bustle of the world. Those were some of Rod's most peaceful and happy times.

In the early spring, Rod and his best buddy Freddy would "sugar" up on the hill. Using snow machines to collect sap from the bucket and boiling on the old wood stove in the kitchen, using custom-made square stainless steel boiling pans. During spring and summer, Rod would pack the kids into his pickup and go for a ride on the class four roads along the hill. He was most happy when they got stuck and had to spend hours getting unstuck. In the winter he'd often lead Marcella and the kids in a snowmobile adventure starting from home in East St. Johnsbury all the way to camp where they'd warm up by the wood stove and cook hot dogs before going home. No matter the season or what was going on in his life, being "on the hill" with his family is where Rod created his most cherished memories.

Rod is survived by his children Mitchell (Kathy) Lamotte, Tina (Chris) Hahr, Tracy (Anita) Lamotte, and Nicole Wilson Silver (Robert Silver); grandchildren Matthew, Josh, John, and Tim Lamotte; Naomi, Adrian, Jonah, Brianna, Anders, Mary, Dominic, Rose, Isaac, Elise, & Daniel Hahr; Aaron Lamotte; Brennan Silver, Hailey, Madison, Owen, & Nathan Wilson, and Robert's daughters Kaelynn, Hannah, and Aliceah Silver; as well as many great-grandchildren. He is also survived by his sisters Rachel Nason, and Ruby Lauber. He was predeceased by his parents Louis & Mildred Lamotte; his beloved wife Marcella; brothers Phil, Daniel and Louis Lamotte, and his sister Anna Fain.

Friends may call on the family on January 2, 2026, from 4-6 pm at Sayles Funeral Home, 525 Summer Street, St. Johnsbury, VT. A Mass of Christian Burial will be held on January 3, 2026, 10 am, at St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church in St. Johnsbury, with Rev. Lance W. Harlow as celebrant. Burial will be held in the spring at Grove Cemetery, East St. Johnsbury, VT, at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of flowers, charitable donations can be made to Good Shepherd Catholic School's tuition assistance program.

Memories and condolences can be shared with the family at [caledonianservices.com](http://caledonianservices.com).

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## Local State Senator To File Legislation Addressing Abuse And Neglect In Disability Care System

BY WILLIAM SKIPWORTH  
New Hampshire Bulletin

State Sen. David Rochefort, a Littleton Republican, said he and the state's legislative staff are in the process of drafting a bill aimed at addressing systemic abuse and neglect issues in New Hampshire intellectual and developmental disability care system.

In November, the Bulletin published a series of articles outlining abuse and neglect — sometimes fatal — committed by caretakers against people with disabilities. The stories also uncovered systemic failures of oversight and prevention that allowed the abuse and neglect to happen. State records obtained by the Bulletin show that from January 2023 through the first six months of 2025, 467 credible reports of abuse, neglect, and exploitation against people in the system were investigated by the state. The records also show 119 deaths occurred across the system during that time.

People with intellectual and developmental disabilities are legally entitled to care funded and overseen by the state. In New Hampshire, the Department of Health and Human Services' Bureau of Developmental Services contracts with 10 private area agencies, each responsible for a region of the state, to coordinate the care.

While investigating these tragedies, the Bulletin spoke with several family members of people within this system who were abused or neglected, their attorneys, and advocates within the community. Rochefort, who is chairman of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee, said the series alarmed him and pushed him to look into the issue.

"I don't think there's any opposition to making change here," Rochefort said. "I think there's a real desire to do something now from everyone in-

involved, even senators who are not on (the Health and Human Services Committee), who approached me on this."

He said colleagues from both parties have expressed support for the effort.

"I think that you're going to see action happen sooner rather than later," Rochefort said. "Nobody wants to kick the can here."

Rochefort said he and his colleagues are "still working out the finer details" of the bill, but it'll seek to strengthen oversight and improve data sharing to allow officials to better identify issues.

"Data on these things would be shared automatically, rather than the way that it's shared now," he said. "And it would give the state a better way to either respond to complaints or take action if there's an issue."

He also said the bill changes the composition of the Incapacitated and Vulnerable Adults Fatality Review Committee — a panel established by state law to review concerning deaths and make recommendations on how the state can prevent similar deaths in the future — to allow for "better representation of the communities affected and the people that would actually be able to affect change."

The Bulletin previously reported on the December 2022 death of Stephen Weidlich Jr., a man with physical and developmental disabilities who was found dead behind the care home where he lived. Additionally, in July 2019, Christine Marie Bill, a woman with disabilities, was found dead after overheating in a hot, sealed car, according to the Bulletin's reporting. Before the Bulletin published its findings, the co-chairs of the Incapacitated and Vulnerable Adults Fatality Review Committee, Vanessa Blais and Francesca Broderick, said they hadn't been told about either death and that each should have been reviewed by the committee.

# Happy Holidays

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BETHLEHEM

# Firefighters Battle Elements, Flames In Fire That Destroys Home

BY ROBERT BLECHL  
Staff Writer

BETHLEHEM — As first responders on Monday were called out to ice storm-related incidents or remained on alert, firefighters from multiple departments were called to Bethlehem for a fire that broke out before noon and destroyed a home.

They made as quick a response as possible given the weather, and without getting into a crash, said Sugar Hill Fire Chief Allan Clark.

The flames spread fast, though, and destroyed a three-bedroom single-fami-

ly log home at 134 Maple St., owned by Wayne Derby, who runs Northern Land Guide Service.

No injuries were reported, and the home was unoccupied at the time.

In addition to weather, firefighters were also hampered by other challenges.

“There was a lot of fire,” said Littleton Fire Rescue Chief Chad Miller, the incident commander who arrived on scene before acting Bethlehem Fire Chief Brian Charland, who at the time was on the other side of town for a carbon monoxide call. “The house was fully involved from the front when I got here. There was a compli-



A fire destroyed a home in Bethlehem on Monday. (Photo by Robert Blechl)

cation with the fire hydrant. It was either frozen or we weren’t able to open it. So that delayed. We used tank water to start,

but that had a little bit of delay with things. I really don’t think it would have changed the outcome, but it was just a challenge.”

It took some 90 minutes to knock down the flames, he said.

As of early Monday afternoon, no cause for the fire had been determined, said Charland, who had not yet spoken with the property owner.

In the driveway of the home, Charland used his phone to notify the New Hampshire fire marshal’s office about the fire.

He described the interior of the home as gutted.

The incident remains under investigation, said Miller.

As smoke wafted from the house, firefighters equipped with air tanks for safe breathing went in and out of the structure, checking for hot spots.

Responding to the scene — where firefighters staged apparatus, connected hoses to a nearby hydrant, and blocked off a segment of Maple Street — were the Bethlehem, Littleton, Sugar Hill, Franconia, Whitefield, and Twin Mountain departments.

Because of the snow and ice, the tires of some engines were outfitted with chains.

Clark described some roads that had yet to be treated as sheets of ice.

The Maple Street fire occurred nearly a year after a February 2024 fire destroyed a home along Brook Road in Bethlehem.

WHITEFIELD

# Motorcycle Club Quashes Rumors, Says Not Involved In Melee “In Any Way, Shape Or Form”

BY PAUL HAYES  
Staff Writer

WHITEFIELD — A local motorcycle club says it played no role in a recent altercation in downtown Whitefield.

Bethlehem-based [Unbroken Souls RC](#) said it was not involved in an incident that took place Dec. 5 in King’s Square.

Club President Jason Mooney addressed the matter in a statement posted on social media Dec. 13.

involved [in the altercation] they wouldn’t be able to help us anymore,” Mooney said. “After the third phone call and the second email, I made that post just so the general community understands that we weren’t involved in what had taken place.”

Mooney said his eight-member club was founded “just under a year ago” and is an independent, registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit that primarily focuses on helping veterans and children.

Unbroken Souls RC has organized events including an Easter egg hunt, trunk-or-treat and

photos with Santa Claus, and is planning additional events such as a chili cook-off and a daddy-daughter dance.

The group has also volunteered with a local weekly meals program, supported food drives, washed more than 100 headstones at the state veterans cemetery, and held fundraisers for The Logan Brown Memorial Fund, which supports scholarships for local children to attend training camps at Highlands Mountain Bike Park, and Operation Delta Dog, which rescues canines from kill shelters and trains them as service animals

for veterans.

Mooney said Unbroken Souls RC is not associated with any other motorcycle clubs.

The club’s mission statement is “to making a difference in our communities. Welcoming both riders as well as non riders. All motorcycle makes and models welcomed. Both street and cruisers.”

Whitefield police have not released additional details about the Dec. 5 incident, which involved several people and resulted in one person needing medical attention. Rumors circulating online and in the com-

munity have linked another motorcycle group to the altercation.

In his statement, Mooney wrote, “we have no more information on what took place other than what’s been released publicly by our local law enforcement agencies.”

He closed by thanking community members who continue to support Unbroken Souls RC. Reached last week, he said he hopes the Whitefield incident will not cause long-term harm

to the reputations of his club or other groups working to make a positive impact.

“It’s tough when you’re riding club because, when people look up certain entities in this realm, there’s not enough positives,” Mooney said. “I just hope people understand that when something happens with another organization or another club, that it shouldn’t reflect poorly on every club.”

“I would like to start off by saying that the Unbroken Souls RC out of Bethlehem was not in any way shape or form involved in this incident,” Mooney wrote.

“We as a group will continue to support our communities in any way we can. I ask you all not to let this incident leave you thinking that every man or woman who wears a vest are bad people. Most of us are wearing it because we are proud to be a part of something bigger than just ourselves. Its a symbol of family, friendship and being united together to make a change.”

Mooney said he issued the statement after financial donors contacted him with concerns about whether the club had been involved.

“They said if we were in-

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TOP STORIES

- 1.Burke Crash Kills Lyndon Man; Driver Charged With DUI
- 2.Lyndon Man Admits To Driving Crime That Killed Close Friend
- 3.VSP Busts Underage Drinking Party Around Concord Bonfire
- 4.Biden Frees Felon Connected To NEK Homicide
- 5.Vermont Railway Co. Plans Revival Of Twin State Freight Operations
- 6.Burke Mountain Ski Resort Faces Uncertain Future as Petition Launched for Timely Sale
- 7.Firefighter Resigns Following Allegations Of Criminal Conduct
- 8.Patients Protest Departure of Physician From Weeks Medical Center
- 9.Nolan, Four Assistants Not Returning To Coach LI Football
- 10.Judge Denies Defendant's Jamaica Vacation In Child Sexual Assault Case
- 11.Longtime Champions Work Toward Burke Mountain Resort Purchase
- 12.Officials Identify Border Agent & Dead Immigrant Killed In Deadly NEK Shootout
- 13.Man Shot Outside Concord Ave. Residence Reportedly By Gunman In Passing Vehicle
- 14.Activity At Large, Long-vacant St. Johnsbury Property To Begin
- 15.Rail Restrictions Close Key North Country Snowmobile Trail, Reroute Another
- 16.Feds To Seek Death Penalty In NEK Double Homicide
- 17.St. Johnsbury Public Works Employee Victim Of Carjacking
- 18.Nursing Home Sued In Rape Of 95-Year-Old Dementia Patient
- 19.Lyndon Institute Officials Take Steps To Erase Coaching Controversy From Internet Following Community Outcry
- 20.Jury Acquits Lancaster Truck Driver Charged For Pedestrian Death
- 21.Rutland Woman Cited For Simple Assault Against Pregnant Woman At Youth Hockey Tournament in Lyndon
- 22.Officer Struck In High Speed Chase Allegedly By YouTube Personality Erik Von Conover
- 23.Bail Set At \$100K For Danville Man Accused Of Sexual Assault Of 9-Year-Old
- 24.Wal-Mart Closes For Facility Maintenance
- 25.Before Time Runs Out, Burke Couple Plans Wedding To Celebrate Love And Life
- 26.Family Of Alleged Child Sexual Assault Victim Demonstrates Outside Courthouse
- 27.Vermont Is Projected to Lose More Manufacturing Jobs
- 28.Police Arrest People For Concealing Location Of Suspect Charged With Attempted Murder Of Police Captain
- 29.Bethlehem Fire Chief Placed On Leave
- 30.After 45 Years, Owners Sell The Coffee Pot Restaurant
- 31.Judge Dismisses Assault Charge Against Police Sergeant
- 32.Two Arrested in Lyndonville Domestic Dispute Involving Gunfire
- 33.Structure Fire On Railroad Street
- 34.Crash Victim Off Crepeault Hill Road Pulled From Vehicle In Critical Condition
- 35.Last Minute Plea Deal Resolves Multiple Sexual Assault Charges For Barnet Man
- 36.18-year-old Dies From Injuries Suffered In Crash
- 37.No Kings Day Rally In St. Johnsbury Draws Crowd Of 1,000+
- 38.One Hurt In Two-vehicle Crash At Maplefields
- 39.Jury Finds Local Woman Guilty Of Defaming School Employees
- 40.Police Dept. Reverses Course Regarding Review Of Capt. Gray Shooting Response
- 41.From Ruin To Revival: Remodeler Restores The Lodge At Great Falls
- 42.Lyndon Institute Faces Backlash After Coach's Contract Not Renewed
- 43.Town Clearing Out Riverside Homeless Encampment
- 44.Stevie Van Zandt Coming To Town For Launch Of New Product At St. Johnsbury Distillery
- 45.Littleton Gets The Boot
- 46.Bear Den Partners Share Vision For Anticipated Burke Mountain Ownership
- 47.#RyanStrong: Lyndonville Teenager Faces Long Road To Recovery After Grievous Accident
- 48.Lyndonville Man Wins Vermont Writers' Prize For Poetry
- 49.Man's Work Truck Remains Impounded 4 Months After Jury Acquittal
- 50.Judge Holds Local Contractor In Jail For 'Eerily Similar' Criminal Behavior Involving Truck, Metal Pipe
- 51.Pet Memorial Rainbow Bridge Dedicated
- 52.Family, Community Mourn Death Of Former NEK Doctor
- 53.Problem Property Headed To Auction
- 54.Police Union Holds 'No Confidence' In Chief Pierce
- 55.A Vermont Border Agent's Death Was Latest Violence Linked To The Cultlike Zizian Group
- 56.Fire Damage At 418 Railroad St. Contained To Rear Of Building
- 57.Lyndonville Store Manager Accused of Embezzling Thousands
- 58.Arrest Warrant Issued For Woman Accused Of Ramming Police Cruiser
- 59.NEK Woman Facing Manslaughter Charge Following Boyfriend's Fatal Fall
- 60.Pair Indicted For Vandalizing Tesla Cybertruck
- 61.Man With 1,850 Police Contacts Busted Again In Burlington



# Communities Approve Bike Ride To Raise Money For Mental Health

BY ROBERT BLECHL  
Staff Writer

LITTLETON — The Select Board on Monday approved a benefit bike ride for 2026 that will run through three towns and raise awareness and money for mental health and suicide prevention.

The event, the first of its kind locally, is being organized by the nonprofit Bike the North Country, also known as Tri-Town Bicycle, which was founded by Bruce Caplain, of Bethlehem.

“Bike the North Country is looking to do a benefit ride on Sept. 19, a bicycle ride that goes through the towns of Franconia, Littleton, and Bethlehem, pretty much a 30-mile loop,” said Caplain, who spoke at Monday’s Littleton board meeting. “We’re asking for each town to support it. We’ll be applying to the state for approvals because most of it’s on state roads.”

The ride will begin at Cannon Mountain in Franconia, come through Franconia village along Profile Road, continue by the former White Mountain School in Bethlehem to Old Franconia Road, come down Cottage Street in Littleton, hang a right on the recreational rail trail, continue to Route 116 in Bethlehem, connect to Wing and River roads, tie in to Trudeau Road, and then move along Route 3 and back to Cannon Mountain.

“It’s a benefit ride to promote mental health awareness and suicide prevention,” said Caplain. “We, sadly, had a really talented and inspirational rider lose his life to mental health issues recently. Working with his family, we’re putting

this benefit ride together to raise awareness and funds for mental health awareness. We’ve met with all the towns. Franconia and Bethlehem have all approved.”

In Littleton, police chief Paul Smith has signed off as well, he said.

At least for the first year, Smith doesn’t foresee a traffic hazard and said cyclists will be spread out by the time they enter Littleton.

There will be no costs to the town because traffic control won’t be needed, said Smith.

Riders will be on the streets in Littleton for short stretch, from the VFW post at the top of Cottage Street at the Bethlehem-Littleton town line to the recreational trail at Cottage Street near the Littleton Opera House.

“The exposure in Littleton is very limited,” said Selectman Ed Hennessey.

The hope is to have volunteers posted at intersections to manage traffic, ensure that cyclists are safe, and there are no issues, said Caplain.

The hope is to also make it an annual ride that grows each year, he said.

As for raising money, Caplain said there will be a registration fee, and additional money can be generated through ride sponsors.

Littleton’s Cottage Street sidewalks and improvements project is expected to be completed by the Sept. 19 ride date, which falls on a Saturday.

If not, no work is expected to occur on weekends.

“If there’s still an issue with Cottage Street, we’ll reroute it,” said Caplain.

The Select Board voted 4-0 to support the ride.

## Family Launches Brien L. Ward Foundation

LITTLETON, N.H. – In honor of Brien L. Ward’s lifelong commitment to the Littleton community, the Ward family has announced that, through the support of family, friends, and community members, more than \$20,000 has been raised to benefit Remich Park. Funds will support improvements to the town pool and other youth recreation projects.

Ward passed away on November 8, 2025, leaving a legacy of public service, volunteerism, and dedication to Littleton’s children. In partnership with Friends of Remich Park, the fundraising initiative was created to celebrate his life by supporting the causes he cared about most.

“The outpouring of support from the community has been overwhelming,” said John Ward, Brien’s eldest son. “Our family is deeply grateful to every indi-

vidual and business who contributed. This generosity helps preserve a place that meant so much to our father and ensures future generations will continue to enjoy Remich Park.”

To carry forward Brien Ward’s legacy of service, the Ward family has established the Brien L. Ward Littleton Foundation, dedicated to expanding opportunities for Littleton’s young people. The foundation will provide scholarships for Littleton High School students pursuing skilled trades programs, technical certifications, and four-year college degrees.

The foundation’s first major fundraising event will be the BLW Classic Golf Tournament, scheduled for July 3, 2026 at Maplewood Country Club.

More information can be found at [BWard@novuspublicaffairs.com](mailto:BWard@novuspublicaffairs.com).



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