



# The Littleton Weekly Record

THURSDAY, JUNE 18, 2026

LITTLETON

## School Official Sets Record Straight On Senior Prank As Public Weighs In

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## LITTLETON

# School Official Sets Record Straight On Senior Prank As Public, Parents Weigh In

BY ROBERT BLECHL  
Staff Writer

LITTLETON — Citing what he said is misinformation on social media, the operations director for the Littleton School District said he wanted to set the record straight about what occurred and didn't occur during the senior prank at the high school on the night of May 28.

Monday's school board meeting drew more than the usual number of attendees, among parents who asked questions about the incident and what comes next.

The board chairman said as far as he's aware, the incident is concluded and there's nothing more to look into.

The prank involved liquid soap and baby oil poured on floors, tables and desks overturned in classrooms, toilet paper scattered about, and students gaining access to the roof after being given keys and the

alarm code by a staff member.

The school board previously said that a staff member had been placed on paid administrative leave.

About half of the graduating class participated in the prank. Those involved wrote letters of apology and performed community service.

"We all try to do the best we can to balance accountability with compassion, and try to learn as much as we can from it," Littleton School District SAU 84 superintendent Steve Nilhas said Tuesday. "Changes will be made in district policies and procedures as a result of this ... to make sure it doesn't happen again."

The incident prompted the school district to revise its building safety and security policy, which was also presented on Monday.

## Report

The school district had several requests to conduct a more expansive report on the expenses incurred.

Nilhas, who tasked operations director Dale Prior to draw up a report, said during Monday's board meeting.

"I would like to clear up some falsehoods around the senior prank," said Prior. "First and foremost, in no way do I condone what the students did. They made a poor decision and accepted the consequences as a result. We can agree or disagree with the consequences. Some will think it wasn't enough. Others will think it's just right. Regardless of where we stand on this, this wasn't, quote, unquote, 'swept under the rug.' And our district has to begin to move forward."

To do so, Prior said it's necessary to clear the air on some things.

And although social media can be a wonderful thing, not everything that can be read on it is true, he said.

"My purpose is to share the facts," said Prior. "No em-

ployee was injured. No school property was damaged or broken. The whole school was not trashed, vandalized, or destroyed. Students did not access medical files or student records. Students did not have access to our security camera system. Students did not destroy computers with sand. Window screens were not broken to gain access to the roof. No monetary damage was done to the school. The students and custodians and the building principal cleaned up the mess before the next morning."

Athletes were not treated any differently than non-athletes and parents did not threaten the school district with a lawsuit if their child was punished, he said.

"In fact, multiple parents reached out to the school in a responsible manner to offer assistance," said Prior. "At least one parent helped clean up the toilet paper outside the school. This did upset many of the custodial staff because they have a lot of pride in the work that they do. I believe the apology letters that students wrote to the custodial staff were well received."

Prior said he considers himself someone who holds the kids he's coached through the years to high standards.

"I accepted their apology," said Prior. "This class completed just shy of 5,000 hours of community service while at LHS. They are a group with high character and bright futures. Sometimes good kids make bad decisions. By no means does this excuse their error in judgment. However, I will remember this class for everything they did for the LHS community and not allow one poor decision to define who they truly are. I think if we all took a moment to reflect on our own lives, we would find at least one poor decision we have all made. We accepted the consequences then, learned from it, and I feel this class has learned from their mistake as well."

He said, "We aren't judged on the mistakes we make. We're judged on how we respond to them. They owned their mistake, they did what we asked,

and it's time to move forward."

His words drew applause.

## Future

As part of the Safe Schools Act, the school district was required to fill out Form ED317, which regards school safety and discipline.

As part of the law and process, an incident report was submitted to the police department, though no criminal charges will be filed.

Regarding the incident, Steve Bromley, husband of Peggy Bromley, SAU 84's dean of students, said seniors are expected to pull some sort of prank, and if they didn't, they would be considered a lame class.

The prank tradition in Littleton has been going on for many years and is a day when graduates are expected to do something, he said.

"Did they get carried away with their prank?" said Bromley. "Maybe. Probably. I don't really know ... Nothing they did was meant to be malicious or mean to anyone."

No one was injured, those involved returned to clean up, and the Class of 2026 is a good crop of kids who have donated time to their community, he said.

The incident was driven by social media and a few people, said Bromley.

School board chairman Travis Howard was asked by one parent if it's over.

"I think it's over," said Howard. "On our end, there's nothing further we're looking into."

In the future, there needs to be better communication, including about expectations, said Nilhas.

In the past, many activities have had adult supervision, he said.

"We saw what happens when adult supervision is missing," said Nilhas. "We end up with kids on the roof."

While considering future protocols regarding the tradition of senior pranks and how they're supervised, the district should also consider another factor in the 2026 prank, said parent Jaime-Rose Kelly.

"Part of what blew this up so much was some inappropriate staff involvement with students



In the aftermath of the May 28 senior prank at Littleton High School, the SAU 84 operations director, citing misinformation on social media, sought to set the record straight on what occurred and didn't occur. (Contributed photo)

and obtaining pictures without parental permission and some texting and things like that," she said.

"I know that there are some protocols and ethics in place with adult staff members here at the school and how they conduct themselves privately on social media and text availability with students," said Kelly. "I think those protocols also need to be looked at because that is part of how this got blown up. Some of the internal people here blew this thing up. I think that needs to be looked at, how that happened and how they obtained things they used to blow this up."

After the events of the last few weeks, Prior was also tasked by Nilhas with developing some changes in regard to building safety and security.

"The biggest change is just the hours, and teaching staff only having access from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.," said Prior. "Outside organizations would have access on the specific time or hours that they ask."

Teachers can request an exception on certain days if they need to be in the building outside of those hours, and a few teachers that normally arrive before 6 a.m. have requested some exceptions, he said.

Teachers can stay in their classrooms after 10 p.m., but if they leave, the fob reader won't let them back in.

The changes allow programs like athletics and driver's education to continue as is.



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LITTLETON

# Assistant Town Clerk Applauded For Fast-Acting Welfare Check

BY ROBERT BLECHL  
Staff Writer

LITTLETON — The assistant town clerk is being applauded for going with her gut instinct and acting fast in requesting a recent welfare check for a citizen.

On Thursday, Jennifer DeForest said her response was based on a simple premise — caring for others, and a feeling that if something doesn't seem right, make a phone call.

"I just think we should all look out for one another," she said. "That's all I was doing."

Her action was brought up during Monday's Select Board meeting.

"We received a letter from a gentlemen here in town that is calling out our assistant town clerk that she knew that this particular individual's brother was overdue to register his vehicle in town," said Select Board member

Linda MacNeil. "He commends 'that her genuine concern for my brother prompted her to request a well-being check on him.'"

Shortly after DeForest called the Littleton Police Department and then Grafton County dispatch, Littleton Police Officer Ben Trapletti, under the supervision of Littleton Police Staff Sgt. David Wentworth, quickly responded.

"[He] conducted a well-being check on my brother and found him needing EMS services," said MacNeil, reading parts of the letter. "Had they not followed through, had this particular individual not followed through on their gut instinct, he cannot imagine what the outcome would have been. He said, 'Mere words cannot express my sincere appreciation for these individuals going above and beyond the call of duty, especially in Jennifer DeForest's case. She just knew something wasn't right. Our



Jennifer DeForest

*"I just think we should all look out for one another."*  
- Jennifer DeForest

family will be forever grateful to her for all that she did today as well as Staff Sgt. Wentworth and Officer Ben Trapletti. The town of Littleton should be proud of the work these employees did for one of their residents today. I know our family is."

It's from the McDonald family, said MacNeil.

"I just want to add to that we have the best municipal employees that I have ever had contact with," she said. "My hat's off to Jen for going with her gut and that the police department listened to her and did go do the welfare check."

On Thursday, DeForest said she knew that the resident in question hadn't been to the town office for the vehicle registration.

"My dad and he, they all grew up together, down in Warren," she said. "My dad was concerned so I followed up. He definitely needed medical attention and he got it. He needed atten-

tion and he got it, and is still getting it."

She encouraged others to go with their gut instinct when the moment calls for it.

"A lot of people hesitate to be nosy," said DeForest. "Nobody wants to get involved."

But if something doesn't seem right, she said, go ahead and make the call, because time could be of the essence.

"There's no harm in following through," said DeForest. "Just make sure. Had the guys not gone to check on him, the outcome would not have been good. That much we definitely know. It's just checking out to make sure someone's all right. That was all ... Really, the big takeaway is to check on each other. Check on your neighbors, check on your friends if you don't see somebody for a while ... We're all in this game together. Look out for one another."



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# At Sentencing, Two-Time Bank Robber Says He Was Framed

BY ROBERT BLECHL  
Staff Writer

After refusing to identify himself for the record, a two-time bank robber from the North Country made several objections during his sentencing, said he is essentially being given a life sentence, and claimed he was framed by “vindicative” and “vicious” prosecutors who are fantasizing about his guilt.

Merrimack Superior Court Judge Martin Honigberg, however, said a preponderance of evidence points to the guilt of John R. Griffin Jr., 65, who was given the near-maximum state prison sentence during the June 1 sentencing hearing.

Griffin, who has lived in Whitefield and Bethlehem and has worked in Littleton, was convicted in February by Honigberg on a Class A felony count of theft by unauthorized taking.

Griffin had acted as his own attorney and sought to represent himself before a judge and not a jury.

He was sentenced to 7 to 15

years in New Hampshire State Prison for robbing the Bank of America on Storrs Street in Concord in November 2024 while wearing a ski mask and goggles and demanding money. After a several-week police investigation, Griffin was arrested at his apartment in Berlin.

The sentence gives him 530 days of time served through pre-trial confinement, six months suspended on the condition of good behavior, and requires him to pay \$12,800 in restitution to the bank. The maximum sentence under law for the charge is 7 1/2 to 15 years.

The sentence comes after Griffin was previously convicted and sentenced for an almost identical robbery of the Bank of America in Merrimack in 2013 while wearing a Barack Obama mask.

## Prosecutor Presents Case, Griffin Responds

After his 2024 arrest for the second robbery, assistant Merrimack County Attorney Casey Callahan said Griffin made threats of violence against prosecutors and police and characterized the robbery as a victim-

less crime.

“The state submitted a lengthy sentencing memorandum, and most of what I intend to say is already in there,” she said. “For the purposes of making this hearing any less antagonistic and prolonged than it needs to be, I will be brief in my presentation.”

For the 2013 robbery, Griffin was given a prison sentence of 3 to 6 years, but within days of his release, he began planning for his second robbery, said Callahan.

A former co-worker of Griffin’s told police of that planning in 2019, she said.

“I’m going to object to this,” said Griffin. “He puts the habitual in habitual offender. I don’t think that guy’s in his right mind. He has like a 66-page rap sheet.”

“The defendant has raised that issue before,” Callahan said to the judge. “If he in fact did make this up, it is a remarkable coincidence that five years later he did rob the Bank of America on Storrs Street just as that person had suggested.”

There were also other witness statements in 2020 regard-

ing Griffin making comments about having to rob another bank because he needed the money, she said.

“Given his immediate planning, that 3 to 6 had no deterrent effect whatsoever, so having a lengthier sentence is necessary,” said Callahan.

Learning from his first-time mistakes, Griffin also improved the planning for his second robbery and was frustrated that his plan didn’t work out, she said.

On top of that, Griffin’s conduct while the 2024 case was pending raises serious concerns about the danger he poses to public safety, said Callahan.

“Throughout the entire case, he has not once taken responsibility for what he has done,” said Callahan. “He has not shown remorse. In fact, he has repeatedly said this was a victimless crime because the federal government is going to reimburse the bank and the bank is somehow insured.”

There were many people in the bank, however, who were put in fear, as shown in the video, she said.

“The defendant has spent the last year and a half blaming and threatening everyone involved in prosecuting this case and investigating this case,” said Callahan.

Disturbing, violent, and explicit threats have been made by Griffin, she said.

“Part the concern is the defendant has demonstrated the capacity for long-term planning and intent to follow through,” said Callahan. “He has repeatedly stated throughout this trial that he continues to have the right to possess firearms, which is absolutely not true.”

Griffin’s conduct throughout the case also makes it necessary to have a significant period of supervision following his release, she said.

As for the co-worker comments, the police then took no action because it was a “nothing-burger,” said Griffin.

Callahan prosecuted the 2024 robbery with assistant Merrimack County Attorney Carley McWhirk.

“They are extremely vindictive, extremely vicious people, these two,” said Griffin.

He argued that no one was

put in fear at the bank, no one has definitively identified him as the suspect, and no one has connected him to the suspect car, of which there are many identical models in Concord.

“If I had been in that bank, I would have walked out with a hell of a lot more money than \$12,813,” said Griffin.

“The Concord Police Department decided they wanted to frame me for this even though they had no evidence to connect me to this, because I had been caught doing something similar in the past,” he said. “There was no looking for the suspect ... There’s no identification of me whatsoever. And I’m supposed to go to prison for this? I don’t understand that part. I’m a little upset about this.”

Regarding search warrants in the case, Griffin also claims that his Fourth Amendment right against unreasonable searches and seizures was violated, and the state used evidence that had been suppressed.

“So the Fourth Amendment doesn’t matter in this case,” he said. “The laws that function perfectly well in all the other 49 states, we ignore that here in New Hampshire. We’re not going to do that because we want to put Mr. Griffin in prison until he dies. I take umbrage at that.”

“This was a fantasy cooked up in Carley McWhirk’s mind to get mean old terrible John Griffin, conservative John Griffin,” said Griffin. “Let’s lock this bastard up for the rest of his life. This is a personal thing, for her anyway.”

Prosecutors “essentially want a death sentence,” he said.

To Griffin, Honigberg said the reality is that he has been found guilty of one count of theft by unauthorized taking. He asked Griffin which kind of sentence he thinks should be imposed.

Griffin said he is 65 and has ailments and has a daughter that he believes is his biological daughter, and she is homeless and needs his help.

“I made an offer to get her up in the North Country and get her into rehab,” said Griffin. “I’m sorry to get emotional. I don’t have any other family in my life.”

“From that, I’m going to



John R. Griffin Jr.

guess you would recommend a sentence that would leave incarceration,” said Honigberg. “Time served, in other words.”

“Time served,” said Griffin. “I’ll wear a bracelet. I was about to be hired at the paper mill in Berlin before I got snagged with this.”

Griffin said he is also an author and has a Christian book deal through which he would get paid \$5 per book.

## Sentence

Honigberg took a brief recess to consider the sentencing positions of the state and Griffin.

Upon returning, he said the assumption is that Griffin will be appealing everything to the New Hampshire Supreme Court.

“Whatever happens, happens,” said Honigberg. “I’ll just remind you that my decision was based on the record in this case ... The finder of fact at the criminal trial was me. I reviewed the evidence. I concluded that the state had proven beyond a reasonable doubt all of the elements of the crime. The key finding in there was whether, in fact, the defendant was the person who took the money from Bank of America. Mr. Griffin does not agree with my finding. I understand he will probably never agree with that finding. But looking at the copious circumstantial evidence, there was no reasonable conclusion other than guilt.”

Given Griffin’s record, a prison sentence is appropriate, he said.

“The sentence he received for his prior similar conduct was significant, but given that he’s done it again and the state characterized that he learned

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# Profile Grads Told to Be Curious, Present, Grateful As They Prepare For Next Stage

BY ROSIE SMITH  
Staff Writer

BETHLEHEM, NH — Profile School's Class of 2026 celebrated the finale of their high school careers on June 5th as they entered the school's gymnasium for the last time as students. Graduate Addison Koehler welcomed those in attendance, recalling the times together as classmates, "For some of us, this journey began 12 years ago ... We learned our ABCs together, survived a pandemic together, and somehow grew up side by side. As the years went on, others joined our class ... bringing new friendships, new perspectives and new memories ... No matter when you arrived, tonight reflects the role every one of us played in reaching this moment." Addison used a quote by Henry Ford to describe their journey: "Coming together is a beginning, keeping together is progress, working together is success."

Coming together is a beginning: "Our beginning was different from most. As 7th graders navigating COVID, we learned

what it meant to start over in unusual circumstances ... we were separated ... placed in small cohorts ... we still found ways to build new connections; *Keeping together is progress*: "our class was far from united ... we were still discovering who we were and where we belonged ... as the years passed, we found our rhythm ... learned how to support one another; *Working together is success*: "Success isn't measured by the awards we received or the titles we earned. It's the bonds we have formed and memories we created ... As I stand here facing my classmates, I see countless examples of success."

She concluded, "What makes these successes so meaningful is that none of them happened alone. Behind every success is the support of teammates, classmates, teachers, coaches, friends and family members ... Tonight is ... proof of how far we have come, not just as students, but as young adults ready to set off on the next chapter."

Principal Brandon Ray also addressed the families and friends of the graduates, expressing his thanks for their sup-



The members of Profile School's Class of 2026 are ready for their Commencement Ceremony to begin on June 7th. (Contributed photo)

port, "a big topic of conversation this year ... has been partnership ... working together so that we, with you, help them (the graduates) be here today ... Thank you for the trust ... to trust us with your kids every day throughout their high school career."

He added, "I would describe this class as a class full of leaders ... it gives us a lot of hope and appreciation for what they're going to be doing in this world."

Valedictorian Nathaniel Rolfe spoke of the expectations he's experienced during his final year of high school, "After I turned 18, I spent about two weeks waiting for the ball to drop ...

I expected that I would wake up on September 17th, 2025 with the lightning bolt of clarity that all these adults in my life seemed to have ... When I turned 18, I was waiting for the moment to arrive when I would finally feel grown up. But the ball never dropped ... it just kept rolling, seemingly uphill.

"I was applying to college ... I was faced with all these questions. 'What's your major?' 'Where do you see yourself in 5 years?' ... I know that not all of us on stage are legal adults, but I think we all have felt the subtle pressure of these questions ... At our age, the pressure to figure things out is real ... We're seniors, after all. We know what's up, don't we? ... 'Senior' comes from Latin for 'older,' and with age comes wisdom ... doesn't

it?

"over time, I began to suspect something ... all you grown-ups are doing exactly what we do: you're figuring it out ... It became evident ... confidence isn't always real, and what matters is not certainty at the crack of dawn, but having the courage to get out of bed and figure it out as you go... there's something strangely comforting about this ... Once I realized that uncertainty isn't failure, I started to look differently at how often my own plans had changed."

He continued, "I assumed successful people had things figured out long before they turned 18 ... now I realize how much it meant I was growing. Every new passion changed the way I saw the world ... changing your path, your interests, and yourself are not simply means to an end. These things are not obstacles that prevent life from beginning ... they define life itself.

"None of us had things figured out, and many of us still don't. Though this stage is full of championship athletes, brilliant students, talented artists, incredible dancers, many of us are walking into the next stage of our lives with plenty of accomplishments, but not many answers ... we are at a precipice, and I'm starting to feel the same way I did on the evening of my 18th birthday ... judging from

past experience, I think many of us are gonna spend the next few weeks waiting for the ball to drop. That's perfectly okay. Let it roll. Give it time."

Nathaniel's final thoughts to his classmates: "Be curious, because our generation has the wealth of the world's knowledge at our fingertips; Be present, because every moment shapes the next, and what's happening right now is all that has ever mattered; Be grateful, because often, you don't realize how much things make your life better until they're already behind you ... Growing up is a process ... no one ever gains complete clarity. So let the ball roll. I know it'll take you all to places you never imagined."

Before the presentation of diplomas, Salutatorian Anna-Sophia Wakeham told her story of becoming a Profile student: "I once believed that becoming someone meant figuring out who you were ... Then I moved twelve hundred miles ... and realized that identity is much more fluid than that. We become different people when we encounter unfamiliar places, unfamiliar challenges, and unfamiliar people ... We were not all raised the same way ... Our childhoods looked different, our families look different ... our plans for the future look

See **Profile**, Page 7

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## LITTLETON

# Preparing For Out-Of-State Move, MacNeil Resigns From Select Board

BY ROBERT BLECHL  
Staff Writer

LITTLETON — As she prepares for a move to Oklahoma in late June, Linda MacNeil, who has served as a member of the Select Board for nearly half a decade, is stepping down.

She tendered her resignation during the board's meeting on Monday, when it became effective.

The town is now on the search for a replacement to appoint to the board for the remainder of 2026, after which the seat will go up for election in March 2027 and then move to the standard three-year election cycle.

After being elected to her first Select Board term in 2022, MacNeil was reelected to a second three-year term in 2025.

Since 2021, she has also served as a commissioner of Littleton Water and Light, and was the first woman appointed as a LWL commissioner. Her last commission meeting is on Monday, June 15.

In a letter she read during Monday's Select Board meeting, MacNeil thanked fellow Select Board members Kerri Harrington, Paul Lehmann, Taylor Caswell, and Ed Cherian, and town manager Troy Brown for their support during the past several months.

"Thank you for allowing me to work with you," she said. "Thank you to the voters of Littleton. You put your trust in me and I did the best I could with as much information as was available in making decisions for the betterment of the town. Thank you for allowing me to work on the police advisory board, planning board, Riverfront Commons, Lakeway committee, and more that I actually do not remember specifically. We did accomplish a great deal over these last 20-plus years. You will continue to accomplish much for the benefit of the town."

Growing up in Littleton and being a third-generation native, MacNeil said she has grown to appreciate what Littleton stands for.

"A community of people that want the best for everyone, the best for



On Monday, Littleton Select Board member Linda MacNeil, seen here in 2024, tendered her resignation as she prepares for a move to Oklahoma to be closer to family. (File photo by Robert Blechl)

Littleton, and welcoming those that visit as well as those that make it their home," she said. "I will miss the people, working with the town managers, previously Jim Gleason and now Troy, I will miss the department heads, the municipal employees, the dynamic of getting things done and improving our

town."

To be closer to family, MacNeil is moving to Ardmore, in southern Oklahoma, with her husband, Bob.

"I trust that when we return in a year for a visit, I will see great improvements and an even more vibrant downtown," she said. "Thank you for your confidence and support in me."

MacNeil received applause, a card, and flowers.

"I just want to say thank you," said Kerri Harrington, chair of the board, who was first elected to the board in 2024. "Coming into this you were such a supporter and held my hand, and seeing a strong woman. I stepped into something that was new for me and you've been very helpful and I consider you a friend. I learned a lot from you and I really appreciate it."

"It's been a pleasure," said MacNeil. "The Select Board that the town has in place is an incredible diverse group."

"I want to personally thank her because when I was selected to become the next town manager here, Linda and I spent a lot of time prior to me

officially starting, and obviously when I first came on board," said Brown. "She spent a lot of time educating me on the past and where we want to go in the future, and welcoming my family, my wife, and my children when they came up. It was probably the best onboarding experience I've ever had in my career. You really made it special. .. It's tough to lose you."

"We're going to miss you, Linda," said Harrington.

On Wednesday morning, Brown outlined the succession plan in a group email.

"On behalf of the Town, I would like to thank Linda for her service and dedication to the Littleton community during her time on the Select Board," he said. "We wish her and her husband all the best in this next chapter. The Select Board will begin a public process to fill the vacant position until the March 2027 Town Election. Information regarding the appointment process and opportunities for interested residents to apply will be announced the end of this week."

## Profile

Continued from Page 6

different ... though we all had different upbringings, we went from a group of individuals to a class here at Profile ... We were the class whose sixth-grade field trips were canceled. We also had to spend middle school staring at a Chromebook in our childhood bedroom, trying to figure out how to unmute ourselves on Zoom. Then we came back to school socially awkward and frantic."

AnnaSophia describes her journey: "I moved here from Tuscaloosa, Alabama, my freshman year. Under the blazing southern sun, I felt like nobody in particular, but I knew where I stood. Then I arrived in the quiet

of the White Mountains ... it seemed to be the middle of nowhere; it felt louder than ever on my first day at school ...

"Everything is bigger in the South. It is easy to be a small fish in a big pond, easy to hide in the shadows. Being anonymous became a sense of comfort ... comfort hides fears. Here, everything is small. There were no shadows to hide in. Only curious people wondering who I was ... In my first year, I found one friend ... who made this strange, unfamiliar place feel like home ... for the first time, I began to see a version of myself who belonged here ... In my junior and senior years, I got to know this class better and found a place for myself here that I genuinely love."

AnnaSophia's parting words of advice: "The college or career you're heading towards does not know where you're from. They do not know the battles you've faced. They do not know how far you've come ... But you get to find your own light and make your own way ... Our differences are ... one of the reasons we are not all the same people we were four years ago. In those moments when our differences have shone, we have become better at thinking, listening and being good people ... We are heading into a world that will constantly pressure us to sort ourselves ... The pressure to conform will feel so real ... we must not give in.

"Be authentically, stubbornly, unapologetically yourself. Stay curious about the people around you who are being themselves, too. And when you enter your next stage and realize you are not who you thought you were, welcome it. That is where it gets interesting ... We made it. All of us. *Exactly* as we are ..."

**Profile School Class of 2026:** Katie Jean Baker, Natalie Jane Brantley, Joseph J. Clarke, Levi Clementino, Bryce Lee DiMarzio, Daryion Marcel Faustin, Adora Maria Fresolone, Levi Asher Ghanooni, Ana Luisa Wennrich Griffiths, Marcus B. Hamilton, Lily Hodgdon, Belkin Brubaker Holder, Micah Saxton Jacobs, Addison Marie

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Salerno, Jackson Thibault, Raiden Joseph Valentine, Cameron Venezia, Tyler Steven Vermette, Bailey Verret, AnnaSophia Rose Wakeham, Mya Walker, Avery Weir, Zachary Whitcher, Madison Willey and Wyatt Michael Wright.

## ON THE COVER

Profile School has added a new element to its high school graduating class this year. The ongoing tradition has been the graduates marching through Profile in their caps and gowns and then participating in a parade through Bethlehem and Franconia, N.H., during which they visit their former elementary schools. This year, the students met with the Kindergarten students (the Class of 2039), who in turn joined the older students in their parade. Above, some of the younger students get to spend time with the big kids — the 2026 graduates. (Contributed photo)



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## Suspect Accused Of Firing At Border Patrol Agent Released On Medical Furlough

BY ROBERT BLECHL  
 Staff Writer

As the suspect accused of shooting at a Border Patrol agent in Pittsburg is granted release on medical furlough to prepare for surgery for a gunshot wound to the head, defense attorneys seek to designate the case as “complex” as the judge delays the trial by nine months.

Last week, a judge ordered that Blu Zeke Daly, 26, also known as Cullan Zeke Daly, of Manchester, continued to be held on preventive detention after agreeing with prosecutors — who argued that Daly is a flight risk and poses a danger to the public — and concluding that the circumstances of the case raise serious questions about Daly’s willingness to comply with court orders and be supervised on release.

A trial was then scheduled to begin on June 16.

Daly faces up to 40 years in federal prison after being indicted in May on one count of attempted murder of a federal officer and one count of assaulting a federal officer with a deadly weapon.

The incident occurred shortly after midnight on Feb. 22 after the unnamed agent made a traffic stop in West Stewartstown about a half hour before, after prosecutors said Daly had been driving a 2012 Honda Civic “suspiciously” in an area known for illegal border crossings.

Daly is alleged to have driven away from the stop and traveled about 30 miles north to the closed international border gate, which is locked during overnights. The agent followed at a distance.

At the gate, Daly made a U-turn and fired a handgun at the agent, who had already exited his cruiser, activated its blue lights, and asked Daly to stop and step out of the car, said authorities.

When the agent returned fire, one of his bullets struck Daly in the head.

A day after the June 1 detention hearing, when Judge Andrea Johnstone ordered that Daly continue to be detained, Daly’s public defenders, Jeffrey Levin and Eric Wolpin, filed a motion asking the court to continue the trial and designate it as a “complex case.”

“The defendant is not ready for trial in two weeks,” they said. “The defendant suffered a traumatic brain injury and is being treated in a trauma unit at Dartmouth Hitchcock Hospital in Lebanon, New Hampshire. Still missing a sizeable quadrant of her skull, she is scheduled for a cranioplasty by a neurosurgeon on June 17, 2026, followed by a period of recovery and rehabilitation. The defendant’s severe injury and lengthy recovery trajectory, in addition to other factors requiring engagement of multiple experts, make this matter unusually complex, and prompt this request for designation as a complex case.”

In addition, the discovery in the case is voluminous, and Daly’s current condition and medical situation make reviewing discovery and preparing for trial with her especially challenging,

they said.

A flurry of motions was then filed during the following days.

In a response on June 3, assistant U.S. attorneys Charles Rombeau and Alexander Chen agreed to a continuation of the trial for up to three months, but, at the present point in the proceedings, opposed a designation of the case as “complex.”

“Counsel for defendant thus far has declined to identify for the government the nature of the ‘multiple experts’ defendant may seek to hire for trial,” they said.

The government, therefore, does not have a present factual basis to conclude that the trial in the case will be unusually complex within the meaning of the federal criminal rules and statute, said Rombeau and Chen.

On June 4, Wolpin and Levin filed a motion for a temporary release of Daly directly to Encompass Health Rehabilitation Hospital, an acute rehabilitation facility in Concord.

“As has been discussed in previous hearings, acute rehabilitation care is necessary and time sensitive,” they said. “It has been delayed due to Ms. Daly’s custodial status. It continues to be delayed due to Ms. Daly’s custodial status. The defense requests that the Court temporarily release Ms. Daly so that she can receive necessary services from the Encompass Health Rehabilitation Hospital in a timely manner.”

Daly’s unmet rehabilitative needs are a “compelling reason” for temporary release, said Levin and Wolpin, who sought an expedited hearing to address release.

Also on June 4, Daly gave up her constitutional right to a speedy trial.

On June 5, following the expedited hearing, Johnstone issued an order setting conditions of temporary release directly to Encompass for reasons of medical furlough.

Conditions include a 24-hour lockdown in a private room at Encompass and visitation restricted to four family members.

Any violation of conditions would result in immediate return to the custody of the U.S. Marshals Service.

Upon her discharge from Encompass, Daly is to return to USMS custody.

Following a status conference on Monday, Judge Landya McCafferty issued an order stating that the matter will be continued for approximately nine months.

“The court finds that the ends of justice served by this continuance outweigh the best interest of the public and the defendant in a speedy trial,” wrote the judge.

Some time prior to the shooting, Daly had identified as a male when she lived in Massachusetts and then a female on her driver’s license in New Hampshire, U.S. attorney Erin Creegan said several days after the shooting.

Investigators are determining the motive and if Daly was part of a broader ideological group, said Creegan.

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# Fundraiser Launched For Ross Family Following Crash

## STAFF REPORT

Following the tragic death of two Danville girls in a car crash Saturday morning, the community has rallied swiftly and generously around the Ross family with an outpouring of support that has surpassed \$25,000 through an online fundraiser launched by relatives and con-

firmed by the family as legitimate.

Olivia, 8, and Rylin, 2, died following a car crash in Woodbury and their father, Jonathan, was severely injured and taken to Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center. The community was initially cautioned via social media about online fundraising efforts on their behalf, but Chel-

sea Ross, the girls' mother, has since acknowledged that a campaign launched by her brother and sister-in-law is the only online fundraiser and noted that a few local ones are underway as well.

The campaign, launched on the [www.supportnow.org](http://www.supportnow.org) platform, had raised over \$25,000 out of a \$30,000 goal as of 5:30

p.m. Tuesday, with over 200 donors.

"No words can adequately express the heartbreak and grief they are facing. As they begin to navigate the difficult days ahead, they will need the love, prayers, and support of their family, friends, and community," states the message from Kali and Jacob Ross. "Any

support you are able to provide—whether through prayers, meals, financial assistance, or simply sharing this message—is deeply appreciated. Your kindness can help bring comfort, strength, and hope to Jon and Chelsea during this incredibly painful time."

A Facebook group dedicated to the Danville Community

page has also indicated it's been arranged to collect cards, flowers and messages of support at the Danville Farmers Market on Wednesday, and the items will be delivered to the family.

Other local fundraisers are in the works as well, including one launched by Kingdom Leather, along with friends and colleagues.

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# Northern Border Regional Commission Announces Millions In Local Grants

BY ANDREW MCGREGOR  
Staff Writer

The Northern Border Regional Commission announced Friday a round federal funding to support infrastructure upgrades, workforce development and community revitalization projects across the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont and New Hampshire's North Country, with Newport emerging as one of the largest beneficiaries.

NBRC is awarding \$45.4 million through its spring grant programs, including millions directed to communities in the NEK and North Country. Of that total, there are several projects in and around Newport, led by a \$3 million award to the City of Newport for major downtown infrastructure work.

The Newport project will replace undersized water and

sewer lines on Main Street while adding bike lanes, sidewalks, trees and public gathering spaces. The work is intended to support future housing and commercial growth as part of the city's larger redevelopment strategy.

"This is a transformational moment for Newport," said Mayor Rick Ufford-Chase. "These upgrades are absolutely necessary, and accomplishing those improvements through a grant means we expect to complete them without placing the financial burden on local taxpayers. It's a huge win for our residents and for our future."

"This project makes a big difference to me as a commercial building owner who has been on Main Street for 25 years," said Rick Woodward. "Sewer challenges outside our building have been a significant and expensive program throughout my tenure

here. I know that this project is primarily an effort to prepare Main Street for new development, but it will make a big difference to the businesses already doing business here as well."

Additional Newport-area investments will support that effort. The Northeastern Vermont Development Association received \$500,000 to acquire and stabilize the long-vacant "pit" property on Main Street, a site long viewed as a barrier to downtown investment. Meanwhile, the Vermont Agency of Transportation secured \$500,000 to acquire the Newport railyard, positioning the site for expanded freight use and job growth.

Elsewhere, the funding touches a wide range of communities and priorities across the region.

In Colebrook, N.H., the North Country Community Recreation Center was awarded \$1 million to transform a shuttered outdoor

rink into an all-weather, multi-use recreation hub by constructing a roofed facility capable of hosting events and recreational activities.

In Northumberland, the Moreno Valley Cultural Arts Foundation received \$273,696 to expand its Coös Catalyst Center, adding space and equipment for a small business incubator and entrepreneur resource center designed to boost workforce participation and economic opportunity.

Several regional workforce-focused efforts also received funding. Evergreen Start was awarded \$500,000 to expand shared services for child care providers across northern New Hampshire, with the goal of adding up to 300 new child care slots and stabilizing the workforce.

Similarly, the North Country Education Services Agency

secured \$268,205 to launch a teacher internship stipend program aimed at addressing persistent educator shortages by reducing financial barriers for student teachers.

In Vermont, the Town of Danville received \$444,955 to construct a municipal parking area with electric vehicle charging stations and trail connections designed to improve access to the village center and support tourism.

Farther north, Canaan Fire District No. 2 was awarded \$545,572 to replace aging water mains along River Road, a project expected to improve drinking water reliability, fire protection and public health while reducing system leaks.

Across New Hampshire, Vermont, Maine and New York, the commission's Catalyst Program alone is distributing more than \$32 million for projects ranging from housing and health care to outdoor recreation and local business development.

NBRC Federal Co-Chair

Chris Saunders said the awards demonstrate the agency's role in helping rural communities pursue locally driven development strategies.

"These investments help improve the day-to-day lives of the people living in our communities and highlight the exciting opportunities in our regional forest economy," Saunders said in the announcement.

Federal and state officials also emphasized the long-term impact of the funding, particularly in rural areas that often struggle to finance large-scale projects.

The Vermont congressional delegation, in a joint statement, said the investments will "help protect clean water, modernize healthcare facilities, revitalize downtowns and improve our transportation system."

In New Hampshire, members of the state's delegation highlighted projects ranging from infrastructure improvements to workforce and recreation initiatives as key to strengthening rural economies.

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Continued from Page 4

from some of his first mistakes and made a more careful effort on this round to avoid detection, we have to assume that he is not going to stop unless he is incarcerated for a period of time," said Honigberg. "He does need to be deterred, and behind bars for a considerable period of time is the only practical way to do that, given his record."

Then, the threats, he said.

"Mr. Griffin has made constant numerous threats against the safety of the prosecutors in this case and alluded to potentially including others in the scope of his ire and his, quote, 'declaration of war,' close quote," said Honigberg. "And if others aren't abiding by the law then he doesn't have to abide by the law. Those are all very concerning comments ..."

Honigberg imposed the state's recommended sentence of 7 to 15 years.

Once two-thirds of his minimum sentence is served, Griffin has the right, under New Hampshire RSA 651:20, to re-

quest that the remainder of his sentence be suspended.

"Do you understand the sentence that is being imposed, Mr. Griffin?" asked Honigberg. "Mr. Griffin is choosing not to respond."

"Well, I mean, you're speaking very fast," said Griffin. "You say two-thirds of the minimum sentence. I'm practically there."

"Mr. Griffin, I'll tell you something," said the judge. "I'm older than you. I have plenty of health problems. I'm sympathetic that you're having health issues. I'm sympathetic that you have a situation with your family. But sometimes with complaints about getting old and seeing the end of life, you need to pick your audience. Okay? That has nothing to do with the sentence that was imposed today."

Griffin asked what happens at the two-thirds sentence point in time.

"You need to do your own research," said Honigberg. "You do better research than a lot of lawyers. It's RSA 651:20. Read it."

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Join the team at Schilling Beer Co. in Littleton, NH!

We're seeking dependable, hard-working individuals to join our Back-of-House team in our fast-paced, chef-driven kitchen. Whether you're an experienced line cook or looking to begin a career in hospitality, we'd love to hear from you.

Requirements:

- \* Positive attitude and strong work ethic
- \* Ability to work in a fast-paced environment
- \* Reliable transportation
- \* Weekend and holiday availability preferred

WE OFFER:

- \* Competitive hourly pay based on experience
- \* Sales-based gratuities
- \* 401(k) with company match
- \* Employee discounts
- \* Flexible scheduling
- \* Advancement opportunities for dependable team members

Apply today through the Careers page at <https://schillingbeer.com/>

Schilling Beer Co.  
18 Mill Street, Littleton, NH

Help Wanted 200

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