

EST 2023

THE HOOKSETT BRIDGE

connecting the community

COMMUNITY NEWS

EVENTS

REAL ESTATE

Vol. 2, Issue 1

May-July 2024

FREE

Summer fun at home

Enjoy local trails, celebrate Old Home Days

By Ginger Kozlowski

Hooksett Bridge

Summer in New Hampshire is brief but wonderful. The days are long, the sun shines, and everyone comes out to play.

You don't have to go far to find some of the most enjoyable trails and parks in Hooksett, Allenstown and Pembroke. Allenstown is home to Bear Brook State Park, which offers camping, hiking, biking, archery, swimming and fishing on its 10,000 acres. There are two archery ranges and boat rentals to take advantage of. Hooksett offers several scenic walking trails and an amazing view from the top of the Pinnacle. Enjoy ice cream at the Brick House or Merrivale Farms in Hooksett or Lang's in Pembroke.

Plan to attend Hooksett's annual Memorial Day parade the Sunday before Memorial Day at noon starting at Lambert Park and ending at the American Legion.

Maybe you'd like to play a little pickleball or tennis, have a family picnic in a local park, take a kayak out on the Merrimack River, or catch a Little League game.

And, of course, the time-honored tradition of Old Home Day continues, inviting neighbors to mingle and former residents to come back home and still be part of the community. Hooksett celebrates on Sept. 21 and Allenstown-Pembroke Old Home Day is on Aug. 24. We have all the details inside this issue. We hope you'll find at least one event, a new place to cast a line or test out your walking shoes in the pages that follow.



Kyle Dube, 24, of Manchester enjoys his first day of the fishing season at Lambert Park in Hooksett. (Tony LaCasse Photo)

Hometown Hero Steve Green pays school lunch debt for all students

HOOKSETT – Hooksett Kind is a Facebook group that was created seven months ago by Hooksett resident Chet DuPont. The group focuses on spreading love and kindness throughout the town of Hooksett and beyond.

Recently the Hooksett Kind community was made aware of the fact that many students within the Hooksett school system

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PUBLISHER'S PAGE

Thank you for supporting the Bridge in its first year

LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

Tony LaCasse
Founder
The Hooksett
Bridge
Community
News LLC



Dear Hooksett Community,
As we celebrate our one-year anniversary, I am filled with gratitude for the incredible journey we've embarked on together with The Hooksett Bridge Community News LLC.

It's been a remarkable year of growth, learning, and, most importantly, community connection.

I want to extend a heartfelt THANK YOU to all our ad-

vertising partners, both long-standing and new, who have supported us from the very beginning and continue to stand by our side. Your belief in our vision and commitment to local journalism has been instrumental in our success. When you advertise with The Hooksett Bridge, you're not just promoting your business; you're becoming part of our ad family, and together, we're strengthening the fabric of our community.

To OddBall Brewing, Merrimack County Savings Bank, Cake Fairy Bakery, Starr Cleaning, Starr Home Improvements & Construction, Trash King LLC, Aaron's Outdoor Care, Title Mortgage Solutions, Signature Escrow & Title, Kenna-Gendron Farmer's Insurance, Main Street Man & Associates, Aloyo

Money Management, Teaching Totes, The Robie Store, Barrett Insurance, Advanced Comfort, Corey's Closet, Andrea Therrien (The Wax Specialist), Girl Scouts of The Green and White Mountains, Septic Check, Raven's Nest Self Storage, Hooksett Republican Committee, Hooksett Democratic Committee, Alpha Home Inspections, Junk N R Trunk, 1776 Painters, KRS Property Maintenance, Dressler Family Dental, Hooksett Area Rotary Club, Tokyo Joe's Martial Studio, and Paul Godbout of Guild Mortgage—thank you for your unwavering support and for being part of our advertising family.

In 2024, we're taking our commitment to community connection even further by introducing networking events and opportunities exclusively for our advertising partners. These gatherings will provide a platform for collaboration, networking, and fostering meaningful relationships because, at The Hooksett Bridge, we believe in the power of connections.

Our journey began with a simple idea – to provide Hooksett residents with a credible, reliable source for community news, events, and real estate. Inspired by my career in residential real estate, I envisioned

a publication that complemented my work by building relationships and connections in the community of Hooksett. With the support of individuals like Ginger Kozlowski, longtime editor of The Hooksett Banner, we turned that idea into reality. Though I may not have had prior experience in writing, journalism, or ad sales, I was driven by a passion for serving my community.

Our first publication, in April of 2023, marked a significant milestone. Supported by business connections and partners in the real estate industry, we distributed the newspaper ourselves at local places of business. However, it wasn't long before we recognized the need to expand our reach. In February's winter edition, we began mailing the publication to every single home and business in Hooksett, marking a new chapter in our journey.

As we've grown, we've encountered challenges and learning curves, but through it all, our focus remains on serving you, the residents of Hooksett, Allenstown, and Pembroke.

Your patience, understanding, and continued support mean the world to us as we navigate these growing pains and strive to deliver the best

possible experience.

Today, I invite you to further support community journalism by opting into our voluntary-based "community subscription." Your contributions will enable us to compensate local writers, ensuring that we can continue delivering high-quality news and events coverage to Hooksett and beyond. To subscribe, you can mail checks made out to The Hooksett Bridge to 42 Merrimack St. #C, Hooksett, NH 03106. Please write "Community Subscription" in the memo line. For digital options, you can use our business Venmo account @thehooksettbridge. Please note that your voluntary pay is not tax deductible, as we are a for-profit business. At this time, we are still very much a startup and reaching out to our community for support. Your contribution, no matter how big or small, makes a significant difference in sustaining the vitality of The Hooksett Bridge.

Remember, we publish four times a year – in spring, summer, fall and winter – and we're always looking for ways to involve the community. If you're interested in submitting news, events, writing, photography, social media, or any other form of participation, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Thank you for being part of our journey thus far. Together, let's continue to bridge the gaps, strengthen our community, and make The Hooksett Bridge a beacon of connection and unity.

See you around town,

Tony LaCasse
Publisher

THE HOOKSETT BRIDGE

*Connecting the communities of
Hooksett, Allenstown and Pembroke*

Published quarterly

Owner/Publisher- Tony LaCasse
Sales Department - Tony LaCasse
Editor - Ginger Kozlowski

Ad Department/Graphic Design - Katherine Rivera
Digital Marketing/Website - Anita Wolcott

Reach us at publisher@thehooksettbridge.org
www.thehooksettbridge.com
The Hooksett Bridge on Facebook

Content contributions (stories, photos, etc.) are welcomed at editor@thehooksettbridge.org at least two weeks in advance of publication. Photos must be at least 150 dpi at 6 inches wide. We do not accept letters or opinion pieces.





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WE LOVE THE HOOKSETT BRIDGE

and feel very blessed to be a part of this wonderful community publication. Thank you Tony LaCasse for this opportunity!

Why community matters to Steve Labbe, owner of Paradigm: "For me, living and working in Hooksett sets the tone and completes me as a human."

Our coaching and gifts are what we want to share with you! Let's create a beautiful experience together! For more info, visit: paradigmph.com.

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SUMMER FUN

Bear Brook State Park - an outdoorsman's paradise

ALLENSTOWN – Due to the early April snowstorm, many trails became impassable for bicycles and horses due to downed trees, but the park is open for recreation. Trails are being cleared by volunteers from the New England Mountain Bike Association, the southern New Hampshire Snow Slickers and forest rangers.

The park offers over 40 miles of trails and roads with parking at Catamount Pond and Podunk Road.

The state Fish and Game Department stocked the fly fishing pond in early April and the pond opened for anglers on May 4. The department cleared the trails and renovated targets for the woodland archery course next to that pond. The park campground and the rustic cabins at Bear Hill Pond (south end of Podunk Road) were to be open for rent on May 3.



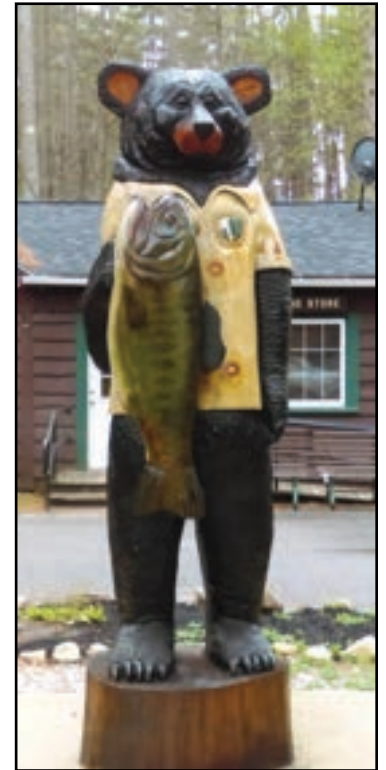
Kids fish at Catamount Pond in Bear Brook State Park. (Michael Frascinella Photo)

Park Manager Christina Pacuk announced the following spring events:

- Dynamic Cycling Clinic – May 18 and 19 at Hayes Field, teaching people how to be better riders.

- New Hampshire Snowmobile Museum Spring Rally, June 1 at the Snowmobile Museum on Depot Road.

- Wentworth Hunt Trail Ride, June 23 at Hayes Field.



A carved wooden bear greets campers at Bear Brook State Park. (Michael Frascinella Photo)

Nothing says summer like ice cream



Logan and Prudence Harmon, both sisters from Hooksett, enjoy their summer night at The Brick House Drive-In Restaurant in Hooksett. (Tony LaCasse Photo)

Slicing through the water



Dube's Pond in Hooksett is a great place to water ski. This is from a summer water ski tournament. (Courtesy Dube's Pond Facebook Page)

Write for The Hooksett Bridge!

Email editor@thehooksettbridge.org

SUMMER FUN

LOCAL TRAILS AND PARKS

HOOKSETT

Dogs are allowed but must be leashed, and all parks and trails are carry in/carry out.

Hooksett Riverwalk Trail and Brick Kiln Loop Trail

Trailhead and parking located past Hooksett District Courthouse and dog park off Merrimack Street.

Trail map and kiosk located at the entrance. Easy terrain for all ages and abilities, 1.5 miles of trail design. Open dusk to dawn with great scenery of meadows, farmland, river and benches for sitting at various locations including by the river. Connects to Suncook Village.

Pinnacle Park

Parking on Pinnacle Street, Trailhead located in parking area, 34 acres and 1.5 miles of trail.

This is a short hike with great views at the end, some steep hills and open year-round for hiking and snowshoeing. The trails are not well marked.

Great views of Hooksett Village, Pinnacle Pond and Merrimack River.



Clay Pond

Turn north from Route 27 onto Chester Turnpike, kiosk at the end of a Class 5 road. Easy to moderate terrain with 750 acres of conservation land. Trail connects to Bear Brook State Park.

Heads Pond Trail

Route 3 and Post Road, parking and trailhead. Flat easy terrain and 1 3/4 miles out and back. Dogs and bikes are allowed.

Quimby Mountain

Highest conservation area in Hooksett, off Quimby Mountain Road. Future plans for a trail.

Hooksett Dog Park

101 Merrimack St., Hooksett. Safe, clean, fenced area for dogs and benches for owners.

Lambert's Park

Merrimack Street

south of the dog park and courthouse on the Merrimack River. Public boat launch and picnic area

ALLENSTOWN

Bear Brook

In Allenstown's Bear Brook Park, 157 Deerfield Road. One of New Hampshire's largest state parks, a 10,000-acre preserve. 29 different hiking trails with varying lengths and difficulties.

Catamount Hill Trail is the most highly rated on AllTrails.com. It has a 4.2 mile loop. It is a moderately challenging route.

Fishing, swimming, biking, camping and kayaking are among many activities enjoyed here.

PEMBROKE

Memorial Park

Trails along the Merrimack and Suncook River. Playground area with picnic tables available. Basketball court and four ball fields, pavilion, gazebo and boat launch area.

Maple Grove Park

613 Route 27. Camping Park along the Suncook River.

Fishing derbies set for May 19, 26

By Michael Frascinella

Hooksett Bridge

PEMBROKE – For over 40 years the Suncook Valley Rod and Gun Club has hosted a free Fishing Derby at its pond on Academy Road. This year, the Children's Fishing Derby takes place on Sunday, May 19, from 9 a.m. to noon. The Senior Citizen Fishing Derby occurs the next Sunday, May 26, from 9 a.m. to noon. Register on the day of the event.

Chairman Jeff Stewart explained the details.

"We stock the pond at the club with trout from Summer Brook Farm," he said. "These fish are paid for by donations from community businesses and families. Each child between the ages of 4 to 12 is allowed to catch three fish.

We award grand prizes for first limits caught in each age group and largest fish caught. We give smaller prizes for all other children as they catch their limits. At the end of the Children's Derby, we draw prizes for several raffles such as 50/50 that help fund the event."

He then described the Seniors' Day.

"For the Seniors' Fishing Derby, the club holds 50/50 raffles and other raffles offering prizes, such as 100 gallons of fuel oil from our Co-Chairman, Cam, owner of Hebert Fuel Co., coolers, baseball tickets, and many more great prizes for attendees. A banner will display sponsor names and the sponsors will be announced during the event."

The club is asking for donations from local merchants and organizations to support this tradition. Donations are the key to making this event possible.

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SUMMER FUN

Hooksett Old Home Day Sept. 21 to feature parade, fireworks, fun

HOOKSETT – The heart of Hooksett will come alive Saturday, Sept. 21, as residents and visitors join together for the annual Hooksett Old Home Day. This cherished community event promises a day filled with free family fun and entertainment for all.

Attendees of all ages will be treated to an impressive lineup of activities, from lively live performances to exhilarating bounce houses, ensuring there is something to delight everyone. As children immerse themselves in the festivities, parents can relish in the sense of community and togetherness that permeates the event.

New to this year's celebration will be the Heritage Trolley Tour, offering participants a unique opportunity to explore the rich history of our beloved town. Guided by local experts, attendees can embark on a journey through time, gaining insight into Hooksett's storied past and vibrant heritage.

Undoubtedly, the highlight of the day will be the community parade, a colorful spectacle showcasing the spirit and pride of Hooksett. With vibrant



floats, spirited marching bands, and enthusiastic participants, the parade promises to bring joy and cheer to all who line the streets.

Throughout the day, local vendors and businesses will add to the festivities, offering a diverse array of goods and services for attendees to enjoy. From handcrafted treasures to delectable

treats, there will be something to pique the interest of every visitor.

Town organizations will also be on hand to engage with the community, providing information and fostering connections with residents. This opportunity for dialogue and interaction will further strengthen the bonds that make Hooksett such a special place to call home.

Entertainment

From 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., there will be free amusements for the whole family to enjoy. Whether it's carnival games, inflatable bounce houses, or delicious food vendors, there will be something for everyone to indulge in.

The main stage comes alive from 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., hosting a lineup of top-notch entertainment guaranteed to keep the crowd enthralled. Prepare to be amazed by the mesmerizing illusions of BJ Hickman, transported back in time by the harmonious melodies of The Bel Airs Doo Wop, and serenaded by the beloved tunes of our town favorite, Don Smith. Additionally, various community organizations will take center stage, showcasing their talents and contributions to the community.

Car Show

The streets of Hooksett will be transformed into a celebration of automotive excellence during this highly anticipated Old Home Day Car Show. Car enthusiasts and casual observers alike are invited to gather and marvel at an impressive display of classic and

contemporary vehicles.

From sleek sports cars to rugged trucks, the car show will feature a diverse array of automobiles, each meticulously maintained and proudly displayed by their owners. Spectators will have the opportunity to explore the craftsmanship and innovation on display, engaging in conversation and sharing their passion for all things automotive. To display your vehicle, contact Carrie Hyde at 603-785-6639, hooksettoldhomeday@gmail.com.

For many, the car show will be a highlight of the day, offering a unique opportunity to witness history on wheels. Vintage classics will stand side by side with modern marvels, creating a visual spectacle that is sure to captivate audiences of all ages.

Fireworks at dusk

As the culmination of the day's festivities, Hooksett Old Home Day will conclude with a spectacular fireworks display at dusk. Lighting up the night sky, the fireworks will provide a dazzling finale to a day filled with community spirit and celebration. Attendees are invited to gather with family and friends to enjoy this breathtaking spectacle and make lasting memories under the stars.

Seeking sponsors

Hooksett Old Home Day is made possible through the generous support of its sponsors. Businesses and organizations are invited to contribute to the success of this beloved community event. Sponsorship opportunities are available at various levels, offering valuable exposure and recognition. For more information about becoming a sponsor or any other information about Old Home Day, please contact Carrie Hyde at 603-785-6639, hooksettoldhomeday@gmail.com.

As the sun sets on another successful Old Home Day, attendees will depart with cherished memories and a renewed sense of community spirit. With its commitment to family, fun, and togetherness, Hooksett Old Home Day continues to be a highlight of the town's calendar, eagerly anticipated year after year.



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* We ask for donations to be dropped off before 3:00 pm during the hours we are open.





Hooksett's newest trail invites you to enjoy walking along the Merrimack River and conservation land. It goes from parking near the dog park and courthouse to Allenstown. (Courtesy photo)

Riverwalk Trail opens to Allenstown

HOOKSETT – For wide open spaces, scenic views of the Merrimack River, and a variety of wildlife, the Hooksett Riverwalk Trail offers visitors a great space to explore as the newest constructed trail in Hooksett.

With a grand opening event on May 16, this final phase takes hikers to the Allenstown border, where it meets up with the Allenstown trail system and fulfills a long-term vision for a regional trail connector between the two towns.

Here you will find nearly 1.5 miles of constructed trail on 126 acres of conservation land, which includes a trail loop, boardwalks over wetlands, and several bridges over creeks and waterways.

“This conservation area provides a beautiful landscape along the Merrimack River,

while protecting state-endangered and threatened species,” said Cindy Robertson, chair of the Hooksett Conservation Commission.

If you happen by in late July, you can’t help but notice the milkweed and large breeding areas for the Monarch butterfly, which make a migratory stop in New Hampshire between Canada and Mexico. The area is one of 283 registered Monarch Waystations in New Hampshire.

The trail system first opened in 2016. It includes the Brick Kiln Historic Trail Loop, named for the brick industry that took place on the property for more than 100 years, ending in the 1930s. You can read more about this interesting history on two large signs located on the property. These historic signs were the creation of the

late Kathie Northrup, long-time chair of the Hooksett Heritage Commission.

This trail would not be possible without the dedication of volunteer workers, the Conservation Commission, several state grants totaling \$210,000, and the efforts of Stantec, the engineering firm that provided trail design and oversight from its inception.

“We’re forever grateful to the many people who had a passion for this project,” said Robertson. “I want to personally thank Hooksett residents who made funding possible by approving three warrant articles over an eight-year period. Also, I want to point out that our long-time state representative Dave Hess was particularly valuable in conserving and developing this land for all to enjoy for generations to come.”

Proposed roundabout worries local resident

By Tony Lacasse
Hooksett Bridge

HOOKSETT – Alison Wilneff, a mother in Hooksett, continues to grapple with the heartbreaking loss of her daughter, Jillian Nelson, over a decade ago. Jillian’s life was tragically cut short at just 16 years old when she was struck and killed by a vehicle. The incident occurred right in front of the Wilneff’s home on Main Street, highlighting a long-standing safety issue in the area.

Main Street in Hooksett has become a congestion point for traffic, a crucial thoroughfare for commuters traveling to Concord or Manchester for work. The intersection of Main Street and Route 3A sees heavy traffic from nearby communities of Pembroke, Allenstown, and the southern part of Bow.

The frequent congestion poses significant risks to pedestrians and residents, as evidenced by Jillian’s death.

As discussions surrounding infrastructure improvements unfold, including the proposed widening of Main Street and the installation of a roundabout at the intersection, concerns about safety and community impact have arisen. The widening of Main

Street, while aimed at alleviating traffic congestion, brings new challenges for residents like Wilneff.


Wilneff already takes measures to shield herself from the constant reminder of her daughter’s passing, keeping her window treatments down to avoid seeing the traffic passing by. The prospect of Main Street widening brings the unsettling reality of cars passing even closer to her home, raising questions about property values, safety, and the well-being of residents.

Public meetings have been held to discuss the project, but many residents may not be fully aware of the extent of the changes and their implications.

Those interested in expressing their concerns can do the following:


- Attend public meetings and voice your concerns and suggestions.
- Reach out to local officials and representatives to share your perspective.
- Stay informed about developments and opportunities for community input.
- Connect with advocacy groups or organizations working on transportation and safety issues.

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IMPORTANT DATES FOR HOOKSETT VOTERS

June 4 (Tuesday) - last day to change political parties until Sept. 11.

Last day for voters already registered to change or declare a party affiliation.

Only undeclared voters may declare a party and vote on primary election day. Voters who register subsequent to this date may declare a party when

they register.

Sept. 10 (Tuesday) - State primary elections. At Cawley School from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Nov. 5 (Tuesday) - Presidential and state general elections. At Cawley School from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Join Hooksett Market Days monthly

HOOKSETT – The Hooksett Community Center will host Hooksett Market Days on June 9, July 14, Aug. 11 and Sept. 8 from 9 a.m. to noon at the Shoppes at Hooksett Landing, 1292 Hooksett Road. There will be returning ven-

dors and new vendors.

If you are interested in becoming a vendor, please email HooksettCommunityCenter@gmail.com. An application with guidelines will be sent to you. The deadline for submitting applications is May 22.

Shout Out! - Messages of positivity

Notice something good happening in town? Share it with us at editor@thehooksettbridge.org.

• I would like to give a shout out to Hooksett residents. I recently conducted a donation drive for Corey's Closet at my home, because I believe in their cause.

Hooksett residents stepped

up and filled my porch, which filled my car four times to deliver to Corey's Closet. I would like to encourage everyone to check out their cause and give them your donations.

Thank you, thank you, thank you.

– Carol Beauregard



Deadline for next issue is August 1



Representing the Hooksett delegation at the Annual Chiefs Breakfast were, from left, Greg Taylor, Capt. Jake Robie, Chief Justin Sargent, Corri Wilson and Linda Bonney. (Courtesy photo)

Hooksett police receive \$2,500 grant

HOOKSETT – Chief Justin Sargent, Capt. Jake Robie, and Hooksett's three representatives to the Concord Regional Crimeline Board of Directors attended the Annual Chiefs Breakfast held at New England College in Henniker.

As the recipient of a \$2,500 Crimeline grant, the Hooksett Police Department was able to purchase nine outer vest carriers for department personnel.

Hooksett is one of 22 member towns of Concord Regional Crimeline. Member

towns are eligible to apply for grants up to \$2,500.

For more information on Crimeline or to report an anonymous tip, visit [crimewatch.net/us/nh/merrimack/crime](https://www.crimewatch.net/us/nh/merrimack/crime) line.

Join Hooksett PTA June 8 for Color Run

HOOKSETT – The Hooksett Parent-Teacher Association will host a Color Run on Saturday, June 8, at Cawley Middle School.

The Color Run is a beloved community event that serves as the primary fundraiser for the Hooksett PTA. The Color Run brings together participants of all ages and fitness levels for a day of fun, fitness, and philanthropy.

Runners and walkers will be showered with colorful powder along the course, creating a vibrant and festive atmosphere that is sure to capture the spirit of our community.

As a nonprofit organization, the funds raised from the Color Run are essential to supporting our local schools and educational programs throughout the year. From classroom supplies to ex-

tracurricular activities, the proceeds directly impact the educational experiences of our students and contribute to the overall success of our schools.

For more information about the Color Run, including registration details and sponsorship opportunities, please visit <https://hooksettnhpta.betterworld.org>.

AREA EVENTS and MEETINGS

HOOKSETT

Restorative Yoga

Hooksett Library
Thursdays starting June 27,
6-7 p.m., \$5.

Chair Yoga

Hooksett Library
Fridays, 9:30-10:30 a.m., \$5.

Crochet Meet Up

Dog Agility Café
1328 Hooksett Road, Suite 16
Every Saturday, Feb. 15 - May 15, from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Hooksett Garden Club

Hooksett Public Library
31 Mount Saint Mary's Way
(lower level)
Fourth Wednesday of the month
February through October, 6
p.m.

Hooksett Community Kitchen FREE Community Supper

Every third Monday of the month
5-6 p.m.
Hooksett Congregational Church
5 Veterans Drive, Hooksett

Economic Development Advisory Committee
Hooksett Town Hall
May 15, June 19, July 17; 5 p.m.

Hooksett Riverwalk Trail
Grand opening
May 16; 4 p.m.

HYAA/USTA
Donati Courts
Arthur Donati Field
May 20; 4:30 p.m.

Planning Board
Hooksett Town Hall
May 20, June 3 and 17, July 15,
Aug. 5; 6 p.m.

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
Hooksett Town Hall
May 21, June 18, July 16; 6 p.m.

Town Council Meeting
Hooksett Town Hall
May 22, June 26, July 24; 6 p.m.

Conservation Commission
Hooksett Town Hall
June 10, Aug. 12; 4:30 p.m.

Zoning Board of Adjustments
Hooksett Town Hall
June 11, July 9, Aug. 13; 6:30
p.m.

PEMBROKE

Chair Yoga

The Suncook Senior Center
every Tuesday, 9-10 a.m., \$5.

Board of Selectmen

Pembroke Town Hall
May 15, June 5 and 19, July 3
and 17, Aug. 7; 6 p.m.

Pembroke Community Yard Sale
156 Main St.
May 18; 8 a.m.

Spring Concert: Mystical Forest
Pembroke Academy
May 23; 7 p.m.

Game Night and Potluck
156 Main St.
May 25; 5 p.m.

Zoning Board of Adjustment
Pembroke Town Hall
May 27, June 24, July 22; 7 p.m.

Planning Board Meeting
Pembroke Town Hall
May 28, June 11 and 25, July 9
and 23, Aug. 13; 6:30 p.m.

Roads Committee
Pembroke Town Hall
June 4, Aug. 6; 6 p.m.

Conservation Commission
Pembroke Town Hall
June 10, July 8, Aug. 12; 7 p.m.

Library Board of Trustees
Pembroke Town Library
June 19, July 17; 9 a.m.

ALLENSTOWN

Allenstown Planning Board Meeting
Allenstown Town Hall

May 15; 6:30pm

Community Cleanup Day
Allenstown Town Hall
May 18; 9 a.m.

Concert: Out On Bail Band
Allenstown Town Hall Gazebo
May 19, 3 p.m.

Selectboard
Allenstown Town Hall
May 20, June 3 and 17, July 1,
15 and 29, Aug. 12; 6 p.m.

Bike Rodeo
Allenstown Community School
June 8; 1 p.m.

Trustees of the Trust Fund
Allenstown Town Hall
July 24; 5 p.m.

*Have an event? Let us know.
Send your event information to
editor@thehooksettbridge.org.*

HERO - cont.

Continued from Page 1

were carrying varying degrees of lunch debt. Much of this was due to financial strains on many families in our town who did not meet the criteria for free or subsidized lunch programs. DuPont discovered that the total amount of school lunch debt was over \$25,000.

A financial appeal was put out to the Kindness Warriors within the group in the hopes of reducing or eliminating that financial burden on these families. As the group raised funds, it decided to broaden the efforts by reaching out to our entire community. As they educated citizens to this need, donations both small and large started to accumulate. In addition to individual donations, local business owner Steve Green of Green's Marine also made a very large and generous donation toward this cause.

The fundraising effort was successful beyond imagination and in just under three weeks all the lunch debt was paid off in full. An extra \$500 was even collected to be applied to future debt. All these funds were formally presented to, and accepted by, the members of the Hooksett School Board.

"The Hooksett Kind group sincerely thanks all its members, non-members and Steve Green for their contributions," said Dupont. "Together we demonstrated what is possible when a community is alerted to a need and is motivated to show kindness and compassion to others in their town. Our town residents accomplished what this Facebook group strives for, which is to be #HooksettKind both all day and every day."

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Ameriprise Financial

BUSINESS

Shop Allenstown with online business directory

By Michael Frascinella
Hooksett Bridge

ALLENSTOWN – Earlier this year, the Allenstown Economic Development Committee (EDC) took up the challenge of researching, tracking down, interviewing, and verifying entries in the Business Directory on the Allenstown website. The goal was to relieve local business owners of this task and make sure their business entries were accurate

and up to date.

The EDC tracking spreadsheet now contains 88 businesses, of which 60 have been verified and updated.

Did you realize we had that many businesses in town? Many operate from store fronts, others are home businesses.

Recently, three new local businesses have been identified and added to the Business Directory:

Integrity Plumbing and Heating LLC - 14 Letendre Ave., Allenstown, NH; 603-340-0964, integrityplumbingnh@gmail.com. On Facebook: www.facebook.com/IntegrityPlumbingNH. Over 10 years experience with heating, ventilating and air conditioning service, water heater installation and repair service.

SB Electric LLC - 5 Campbell St., Allenstown, NH; Stephen Bolser, 603-703-1209,

steve.sbelectric@gmail.com. Residential and commercial electric installations.

Small Town Styles - 43 Allenstown Road, Unit 4, Allenstown, NH, next to the Allenstown Laundromat; 603-406-968, smalltownstyles2024@gmail.com, https://small-town-styles.com. A full-service salon featuring haircut and styling, color and highlights, lash extensions, hair extensions, and Milk-

shake, Inca Glow and Olaplex treatments.

EDC Vice Chair Lisa Lemire and EDC member Nancy Beaulieu took the initiative of spearheading this effort and devoted much time and energy to this ongoing project.

The EDC encourages you to add a bookmark for the Business Directory to your web browser so you can quickly find a local business to provide the products or services you need.

Small Town Styles brings Concord hairstylist to Allenstown

By Michael Frascinella
Hooksett Bridge

ALLENSTOWN – Small Town Styles, a new business, located at 43 Allenstown Road, Unit 4, next to the laundromat, opened in March. Erika Serrecchia is the owner and a stylist and Danielle Whiting works as a stylist.

Why Allenstown?

“I was a booth renter in Concord, NH,” said Serrecchia “but I wanted to be closer to home and to have my own salon where I could provide a welcoming atmosphere for customers and other stylists as well. We chose Allenstown because this location is a busy place with visitors coming to the shops all day long, it’s

close to home, and I grew up in town.”

Serrecchia has been a stylist for over 12 years, and Whiting has been a stylist for over 10 years.

Serrecchia said “We offer a variety of services for you and your family! This includes hair cuts and styling, color and highlights, lash extensions, hair extensions, and treatments like Inca Glow, Olaplex and Milk Shake. The most popular ones are lashes and coloring.”

Many businesses offer more than goods and services.

“We would like to help with updos (upswept hairdos) for young ladies attending high school proms,” said Serrecchia. “We would also love to get involved in the Allen-

stown-Pembroke Old Home Day, possibly in the parade, in August this year.”

Whiting added “We are looking to bring on more stylists to satisfy our customers’ needs.”

Small Town Styles is open:

Monday 9-7

Tuesday 12-7

Wednesday 9-4

Thursday 9-4

Friday 9-6

Saturday 8-2

Sunday closed

Hours are subject to change.

For inquiries and appointments, call 603-406-9680, send an email to Small Town Styles or visit their website.



Small Town Styles owner and stylist Erika Serrecchia takes care of a customer who visited from Hopkinton. (Michael Frascinella Photo)

Make a donation to support The Hooksett Bridge!

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or checks to 42 Merrimack St., #C, Hooksett, NH 03106

BUSINESS

Child care to replace church

By Michael Frascinella
Hooksett Bridge

ALLENSTOWN – Due to unfortunate circumstances, Sunrise Baptist Church at 44 Pinewood Road (Route 28) had to put their property up for sale. Michael Donnelly, owner, purchased the property for conversion to a child care facility called It Takes a Village Child Care. This is the type of business that many New Hampshire parents are struggling to find so they can go to work. The change of use also changes the property from tax exempt to taxable.

When asked why he chose Allentown, Donnelly said “My wife and I have lived in Pembroke and Allentown for years and we like it here. When this property became available, we decided it was a good location to expand beyond our original business on Buck Street in Pembroke.”

Because the new business is a change of use, Donnelly applied for and received a waiver from the Zoning

Board in March. He then applied for and received a waiver of Site Plan Review from the Planning Board in April. Next steps involve applying for various permits and licenses, and then hiring contractors to remodel the building, pave travel lanes, install signs and do landscaping.

The facility is expected to be licensed to care for 34 to 38 children and employ five or six child care workers.

Business hours are to be 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday to Friday.

Back in October 2023, the town requested a trip generation analysis of the additional traffic resulting from the new business. The state Department of Transportation reported a traffic count along Route 28 of 11,000 vehicles per day for June 2023. The trip analysis estimated that the child care facility would add an average of only one vehicle every two minutes.

Donnelly said there are many details to be completed but hopes to open the facility this fall.

Farewell to R&R



Evan and Clara Eastman from Ossipee check out as the final customers at R&R Public Wholesalers in Hooksett. (Courtesy photo)

BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Support your local businesses! Advertise here in the local business directory.

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(603) 867-9836
heartsonghealing@comcast.net

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The Hooksett Bridge is published quarterly on the 15th of February, May, August and November.

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For details, reach Tony LaCasse at publisher@thehooksettbridge.org.

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REAL ESTATE

From serviceman to real estate investor

The inspiring journey of Zachary Oak

By Tony LaCasse
Hooksett Bridge

ALLENSTOWN – In an era where homeownership seems like an elusive dream for many young Americans, Zachary Oak, an active-duty Army veteran, 24, defies the odds and emerges as a beacon of hope.

Currently residing in the quaint town of Francestown, Oak's journey from military service to real estate investment is nothing short of remarkable. This is especially true when so many young Americans feel that they will never be able to make a purchase due to rising home prices and interest rates.

Amidst soaring housing prices and escalating interest rates in the Northeast, the dream of homeownership appears distant for most. The affordability index, a crucial metric reflecting the gap between income and home prices, has plummeted to 102 percent, signaling a challenging landscape for prospective buyers. Just a year ago, the index stood at a staggering 110.2 percent, underlining the stark contrast in affordability over a short span.

However, within this daunting scenario, Oak's story stands out as a testament to resilience and strategic planning. With my assistance as a seasoned real estate professional,



Allenstown duplex provides flexibility and financial freedom for U.S. Army veteran and first-time multifamily owner Zachary Oak of Francestown. (Courtesy photo)

Oak embarked on a journey to secure his foothold in the multifamily market after much research and consultation with his real estate agent. Discussing the cost to buy land and build new, purchasing manufactured homes and placing on land, purchasing a single-family home and condos, etc., there are many options to choose from.

Oak had originally thought that buying land and waiting to build was going to be the smartest way to go. This might have been true if new construction materials and labor were not so inflated along with the land in the southern New Hampshire area. Serving as Zach's exclusive buying and listing agent since January 2024, I facilitat-

ed a groundbreaking deal that defied conventional norms.

Negotiating on behalf of Oak, I am orchestrating the acquisition of a duplex in Allenstown, demonstrating the power of strategic leveraging and savvy negotiation. Through a VA loan, Oak secured the property with zero down payment, clinching a deal \$7,000 below the asking price.

Furthermore, the seller's agreement to cover all closing costs, totaling \$13,000, added another layer of financial advantage. This means that Oak doesn't have to bring any money to the closing table; in fact, he is expected to receive money at the closing table! Did you ever think that you might be able to purchase a property in

southern New Hampshire for less than \$400,000, pay only \$1,200 a month and get paid to do it? It is possible to do!

The duplex, poised to become Oak's first foray into real estate investment, holds immense potential for wealth accumulation. With a monthly mortgage payment estimated at \$1,200 after rental income from the other unit, Oak's investment promises not only financial stability but also the opportunity for substantial equity growth as it does need repairs and updates. This is only more of an opportunity for him as it opens the door to sweat equity. Oak is handy, so this makes complete sense for him. This may not make sense for other types of buyers.

In a strategic move, Oak plans to retain his condo in Francestown while embarking on renovations for the Allenstown property. Once the updates are complete, I will list the Francestown condo, paving the way for him to capitalize on its sale and further bolster his investment portfolio.

This will allow Oak the time he needs to update the units in Allenstown and bump up the rental rate in the other unit and prepare his unit for occupancy while moving in and getting his condo prepped for sale at the same time!

It is a great strategy if you own a home and are able to hold onto it for even just one or two months before selling.

This is possible for Oak, as he has what the VA calls "entitlement." This is when the VA allows our veterans the opportunity to own multiple properties at the same time as long as they don't use all of their entitlement. This depends on the amount you owe on your other property and the amount you are looking to request from the lender.

There are so many great benefits that our veterans are afforded thanks to the Veteran Administration when it comes to housing! If you are ever interested in learning more about your veteran benefit please reach out to a local veteran real estate expert. As the brother of a navy submariner, I value and respect our veteran community greatly and would be honored

See INVESTOR next page

REAL ESTATE

INVESTOR - cont.

Continued from previous page

to help.

Oak's journey emphasizes the significance of strategic investment and putting in the time consulting with your local real estate agent in the current real estate landscape. He underscores the viability of multifamily properties as a means to navigate the challenges of affordability and generate substantial returns through sweat equity and strategic leveraging. Knowing the local market and what towns can offer you these types of opportunities is also essential.

As Oak prepares to embark on this transformative journey, his story serves as a beacon of inspiration for aspiring homeowners and investors alike. Through perseverance, strategic

planning, and the guidance of seasoned professionals, the dream of homeownership in the Northeast remains within reach, even amidst turbulent market conditions.

For those seeking to emulate Oak's success and carve their path in the real estate market, I extend an invitation to explore the possibilities. With expertise and dedication, I stand ready to guide aspiring homeowners and investors towards their goals, one strategic investment at a time.

Contact Tony LaCasse, Main Street Man & Associates at eXp Realty:
 603-716-5769
 tony@themainstreetman.com
 120 Main St., Suncook, NH 03275




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Main Street Man to open office in Suncook

*Fulfilling a dream
and revitalizing
Suncook Village*

By **Tony LaCasse**
Hooksett Bridge

SUNCOOK – In the heart of Suncook Village, where history whispers through the brick facades and granite and tree-lined streets, a new chapter is being written. I am Antonio Marco LaCasse, known as “Tony” to friends and neighbors. At 24 years old, I hope to embody the spirit of a new generation of entrepreneurs with a vision to revive the charm and prosperity of Main Street. My journey from childhood memories to professional aspirations is a testament to the power of heritage, community, and the pursuit of dreams. I am the owner and Realtor on record for the residential real estate practice Main Street Man & Associates at eXp Realty.

My journey into real estate was inspired by more than just familial ties; it was fueled by a desire to follow in the footsteps of my grandfather – a French Canadian immigrant who carved his own path to success in the world of property. Summers spent alongside my grandfather, learning the ropes of small-scale property management and the art of the deal, laid the foundation for my future endeavors.

It was my cousin Nicole

Garrity who ignited my passion for real estate, encouraging me to obtain my license and embark on a career that would blend heritage with opportunity. Three years ago, I took the leap, diving headfirst into the dynamic world of real estate with Keller Williams Metropolitan Realty. But my sights were set on something greater—a dream to open my own office, a beacon of opportunity in the heart of my beloved hometown.

The path to realizing this dream was not without its challenges. My desire to establish my office in Hooksett Village faced logistical hurdles, with limited commercial properties available. Undeterred, I pivoted my vision, setting my sights on the neighboring Suncook Village – a historic gem waiting to be polished.

I decided that Hooksett and the lower Suncook Valley (Allentown and Pembroke) were going to be my area of choice for planting my roots deep. That is where the choice for my new real estate office came into the picture. I wanted to be purposeful in my decision of where my office was going to be located.

Suncook was not my first choice, however it is centrally located in the target market area that I am focusing on. The tri-town area of Hooksett, Allentown and Pembroke are underserved, in my opinion, regarding a local hometown real estate agency that provides superior client service and is



Tony LaCasse's new office storefront is located at historic 120 Main St. in Suncook Village, below the historic town clock, with the entry to the right of the bench. Signs to come. (Tony LaCasse Photo)

focused on the communities. This is where I fill in as Main Street Man & Associates at eXp Realty in my office location at 120 Main St. in historic Suncook Village.

My dad always said, “Get involved any way you can to make a difference.” I reflected on this, hearing about my father’s dedication to community involvement. It is very interesting to me, hearing as I grow older, all of his involvement in the community when we were living in Pittsfield.

I was only 5 years old when we moved out of Pittsfield and into Hooksett, so I don’t recall memories of my father being so involved in that community. I now realize that I am following in my father’s footsteps. He instilled in me, without me knowing it, a deep sense of civic duty wherever it

was that I was going to choose to put roots down. Hence the name of my business, Main Street Man & Associates. I am all about community and service.

Main Street Man & Associates stands on the threshold of a new beginning. Securing a prime location on Main Street in historic Suncook Village, within the iconic Suncook clock tower building, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, my dream is taking shape thanks in part to my landlord Mr. Bibeau. As the founder of Main Street Man & Associates at eXp Realty, I am not just opening an office; I am igniting a spark of revitalization in Suncook Village and bringing anyone willing to come for the ride with me!

This office will be made available of course for Main

Street Man & Associates’ clients first and foremost for selling, buying, and investing consultations. I envision eventually being able to offer small seminars open to the community for local residents to be able to have the opportunity to learn about real estate, financial wealth, independence through real estate, and all the options out there for all types of people!

The addition of Main Street Man & Associates is a positive step forward in the revitalization of Main Street. Indeed, Suncook Village is experiencing a resurgence, with new businesses breathing life into old storefronts. From jazz bars to quaint eateries, the landscape is evolving, fueled by the vision and determina-

See OFFICE next page

TONY LACASSE

MAIN STREET MAN

& ASSOCIATES

603-716-5769




REAL ESTATE

New townhomes, condos soon for rent

By **Tony LaCasse**

Hooksett Bridge

HOOKSETT – The housing landscape in Hooksett is undergoing a notable transformation with the surge in new construction condos and townhomes slated to transition into rental properties. At least four distinct developments are currently underway or in the pipeline, re-shaping the residential offerings in the area.

One of the prominent projects familiar to residents is the construction of attached condos adjacent to the Brick House Drive-In restaurant on Hooksett Road. These units, owned by builder/developer Wayne Kenney, are anticipated to be completed by this spring. According to sources within the real estate industry, a property management company has been enlisted to oversee the rental operations on behalf of Kenney.

Another significant addition to Hooksett's rental market is the townhomes being erected on Maurais Avenue, situated off Mammoth Road in South Hooksett. Developed by Ron MaClaren, these townhomes are on track for completion by year end. While MaClaren is deliberating over whether to sell or rent the units, their arrival promises to inject further diversity into the local housing market.



New townhomes being built on Maurais Avenue in South Hooksett. (Tony LaCasse Photo)

In addition to these ongoing projects, the planning board has greenlit plans for two 24-unit apartment buildings in South Hooksett, positioned near Bypass 28 and Auburn Road. The timeline for commencement and completion of these units remains uncertain.

Meanwhile, plans are underway for another apartment building on Thames Road, the site originally designated for the school bus depot. Those interested in exploring the proposed development can access plans at the Hooksett Town Hall offices.

As Hooksett evolves with these new residential offerings, residents are encouraged to stay informed by reaching out to the planning board and town councilors for updates and insights into the burgeoning developments re-shaping the community's housing landscape.

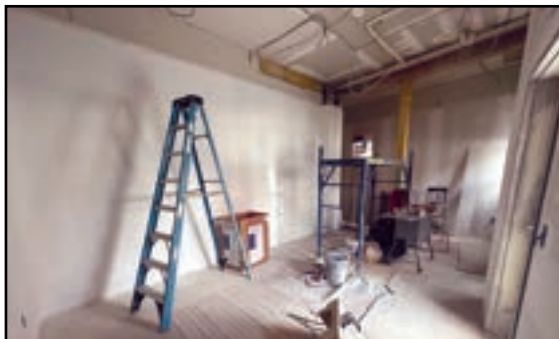
OFFICE - cont.

Continued from previous page

tion of local entrepreneurs like me.

Sponsoring local community events and organizing them too is what I love to do in my free time when not helping buyers, sellers and investors! This is The Main Street Mentality. I wish to leave behind a legacy for others, knowing that I did everything I could to make this area a better place in which to live for all!

My journey is not just about bricks and mortar; it's about community. Collaborating with fellow business owners, engaging with residents, and partnering with landlords like Mr. Bibeau, I am weaving a tapestry of connection and opportunity. My office, slated for a grand opening on June 18, will be more than a place of business—it will be a hub of community engagement, a space where neighbors gather, dreams take flight, and coffee flows freely.



Drywall is up, plumbing and electrical being finished, then paint and refinishing original hardwood floors. Expected move-in date is June 1. (Tony LaCasse Photo)

As I prepare to unlock the doors of Main Street Man & Associates, I extend an invitation to all: "The door is always open, and the coffee is always on."

If you have a real estate need call or text me anytime at 603-716-5769.



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Light Up the Village returns, is looking for sponsors

HOOKSETT – Light Up The Village is back for its highly anticipated third annual community event on Saturday, Dec. 7, promising a day filled with joy, wonder, and holiday magic in the heart of Hooksett.

This year the Light Up The Village Committee has decided to partner up with the Hooksett Fire Department and Hooksett Public Library to formulate an entire “Hooksett Holiday Hullahaloo” that will bring the entire community together. The annual photos with Santa that the library puts on every year is always a huge hit, as is the annual Santa Parade that the Hooksett Fire Department puts on. This is why we are combining all three events into one big fun day from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Donations and sponsorships are needed to build the lighting fund, to ensure that this event can sustain itself for years to come. More village property owners are encouraged to participate. Those who

step up are asked to purchase soft white holiday lighting. The committee would like to light up the Congregational Church of Hooksett, Holy Rosary Catholic Church and parsonage, Hooksett Town Hall, Hooksett Village Fire Department, American Legion, state Grange, The Robie Store and the Hooksett Village Water Precinct. This will require a minimum of \$20,000.

Businesses and organizations are invited to sponsor this unforgettable event, offering opportunities for brand visibility and community engagement. The Light Up The Village Committee is very excited to offer highly coveted levels of marketing and sponsorship this year for your business!

For sponsorship inquiries and more information, contact Ted Donohue at ted@truechoiceenergy.com and copy Tony LaCasse at lutvhooksett@gmail.com.

Town Council Spotlight – Tim Tsantoulis

HOOKSETT – Our first Town Council Spotlight is on Hooksett’s Town Council Chairman Timothy Tsantoulis. He is dedicated, devoted and kind.

Tsantoulis learned from a very young age the personal satisfaction that comes from hard work, commitment and “doing it yourself.” Both his parents worked; his father always held two jobs and his mother, who was the longest serving employee at the JFK Arena in Manchester, worked until the age of 86, at which time she was forced to retire.

Tsantoulis dreamed of helping others, so he studied psychology in college. He began working with youth until he landed a position with PSNH as a meter reader and progressed to power lineman and eventually crew chief. Working an average of 62 hours a week, he learned to address problems head-on as effectively and efficiently as possible. Get things done right away, and correctly the first time.



Tim Tsantoulis

While he was born and raised in Manchester, Hooksett became his home 44 years ago when he built his first home here with his then father-in-law. It was about 10 years ago that Tsantoulis was outside working on his lawn that he had a conversation with his neighbor Donna. Donna had worked for the Town of Hooksett for over 15 years, and they agreed that Hooksett is a wonderful place to live. After some nudging from Donna, he decided to run for Town Council, and he is very glad he did. It has been 10 years since he has been involved with the Town of Hooksett government and he will continue until his path leads him elsewhere.

He said one of his favorite things about his work in Hooksett is the feeling of accomplishment. When things

are running smoothly it is a joint team effort. There is no I in team, and it is the people that make a difference. The friends and great families that he works with daily are why he loves Hooksett and continues to call it home.

He credits his ability to feel young from continuing to do things; keeping active is the key. When he isn’t teaching front-line electrical classes at Manchester Community College, he can be found doing anything with his grandchildren. He also enjoys landscaping at home, learning new construction techniques or basking in the sun.

Tsantoulis has two grown sons, both are engineers. He enjoys spending time with his wife as they both have a lot in common. In his own words: “Life’s journey in this case is more enjoyable shared.”

If you have any questions or concerns, you may reach out to him at 603-669-6999 or ttsantoulis@hooksett.org.

– Geraldine Ciardelli

Updates from the Hooksett historical groups

HOOKSETT – Various Hooksett historical groups present the following updates:

Historical Society

Last fall, the Hooksett Historical Society relocated its collection to the Hooksett Public Library, where volunteers diligently sorted and inventoried artifacts. The collection is now stored in archival-quality boxes, ensuring its preservation for years to come. To access these historical treasures, residents can schedule appointments with Jamie L’Italien at jlitalien@hooksettlibrary.org.

Heritage Commission

With an influx of demolition requests, the commission has been working tirelessly to evaluate buildings for historical significance. While some structures face demolition,

efforts are made to preserve their legacy. Notably, despite the impending demolition of the Texaco station on Route 3, its iconic sign will be restored, serving as a testament to Hooksett’s proud past.

Lambert Park Markers

Plans are underway to install three historical markers at Lambert Park, commemorating its pre-European history, its role as the Dundee Mills, and its transformation into a recreation area. Residents are encouraged to contribute valuable insights and information about the park’s history by contacting Abby Milonas at abzymilonas123@gmail.com.

Community roundtable and new history book

A community roundtable event will be hosted at the

Hooksett Public Library, inviting residents to share their recollections of Hooksett’s history since 1968. This collaborative effort aims to capture and preserve the collective memory of the community for future generations.

Robie’s Country Store Historic Preservation Corp.

The Robie’s Country Store Historic Preservation Corp. has created a scented candle line dubbed Nana Robie’s candles with Dot Robie’s famous foods like her lemon squares! All profits go toward the group’s work preserving the store.

Additionally, the corporation has published its 2023 Annual Report, available upon request at robieshistoricpreservation@gmail.com.

– Abby Milonas

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Top, Ursula the octopus makes an offer to Ariel the mermaid in "The Little Mermaid." Right, more scenes from the musical presented by Cawley Middle School eighth-graders in April. (Courtesy Photos)



'Little Mermaid' sparkles in underwater musical at Cawley School

HOOKSETT – The eighth-grade class of Cawley Middle School put on a dazzling performance of "The Little Mermaid Jr." on April 8, directed by performing arts teachers Elizabeth Vanderhoek and Brandon Davini.

The hallway leading into the auditorium was transformed into a magical underwater world with sparkling silvers, blues and greens to capture the ambiance of the ocean, where the musical takes place. The lighting crew magnificently lit the stage and drew attention to the intricate details of the costumes.

The designers produced costumes with vibrant colors and all kinds of different material flawlessly strung together.

Details of the flowing outfits created the illusion of how material would look drifting through the water.

The devotion to excellence shined bright in the final production, each student worked hard to develop their character and made them come to life on stage.

The eighth-grade musical is a special tradition for Cawley Middle School, as the whole grade is involved. The no-cut auditions allow for students with all different experience levels to participate. The students who chose not to be on stage worked hard on set design, marketing, lighting and costumes with the help of their respective unified arts teacher.

The lead of the perfor-



Human-form Ariel connects with her prince in the play. (Courtesy photo)

mance, Bria Tremblay, who played Ariel, is an experienced performing artist and expressed

how special it was to be a part of another production.

"This was really fun because not only was it a production which I hadn't done in a while," said Tremblay, "I got to do it with my friends. It made it ten times better."

The show had two acts filled with beautiful choreography and masterfully harmonized musical numbers. The actors professionally worked through any of the few forgotten lines, seamlessly continuing onto the next scene.

Vanderhoek said she loves getting to direct the eighth grade musical.

"I love getting to take kids who have never been on stage before and who are nervous and unsure of themselves," she said, "and help them realize what amazing things they can do."

The work the students put into the production for the past few months came together with a final, unforgettable performance.

– Madison Harressey

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Emily Vadeboncoeur named Miss Greater Hooksett

HOOKSETT – When you see a “Miss” wearing a sash and crown, what comes to mind? A beauty queen is the most popular answer. That’s certainly the way the Miss America Organization got its start way back in 1921. But it has evolved over the 10 decades of its existence, and today’s “Miss” is quite different from the “Miss” of yesteryear.

The “Four Points of the Crown” describe the core of the program and are embodied in each young woman who steps forward to participate in each local, state, and national program. You will notice that beauty is no longer a descriptive included in the qualifications to compete. However, young women who grow in their personal development, leadership skills, education, and confidence have a beauty that radiates from their faces, hearts and souls. And this is a personal development pathway in hyperdrive for those who want to embrace it!

The young woman who currently holds the title of Miss Greater Hooksett 2024, Emily Vadeboncoeur, is a 2019 graduate of Southern New Hampshire University. She first became aware



Miss Greater Hooksett 2024, Emily Vadeboncoeur. (Courtesy Photo)

of this program as a young girl when her father aired the Miss New Hampshire state competition on Manchester Community Television. She began her competition journey in 2016 and has

been participating for the ensuing eight years. Her social platform is Creating New IDDEAS: Disability Education, Acceptance and Support, which she developed and refined during the pandemic to help support neurodivergent people and first responders in crisis and emergency situations. She loves working in developmental services with people of all ages and aspires to obtain her master’s degree from Columbia University’s Teacher’s College in Developmental Disability Studies. She seeks to work in a post-secondary inclusive educational setting to help young adults find opportunities to advance in their life’s goals.

The Miss Greater Hooksett Program would not exist if not for the generosity of the sponsors and volunteers’ commitment to the community. She encourages young women to strongly consider this program as a source of scholarship funds and for personal leadership development. After her nine-year involvement with this program comes to an end this year, she anticipates staying involved.

Vadeboncoeur competed for the

title of Miss New Hampshire during the week of April school vacation with the state finals on April 27 at the Stockbridge Theater in Derry. She was awarded the D&M Demers Real Estate Investment Volunteer Award and the Jackie Lee Memorial Congeniality Award which added a total of \$1,500 to her accumulated scholarship funds for a grand total of just under \$15,000.

•••

For more information about the Miss Greater Hooksett program, contact Kristin Janelle, local director, at missmerrimack@gmail.com, and follow on social media at [@missgreaterhooksett](https://www.instagram.com/missgreaterhooksett) and [@missgreaterhooksettsteennh](https://www.instagram.com/missgreaterhooksettsteennh). Booking inquiries for appearances at any local events may be made through the email given. The Miss Greater Hooksett Program is an official local competition for the Miss NH Scholarship Program, and their website is www.missnh.org. The Miss Merrimack/Miss Hooksett dual crowning local program is scheduled for Sunday, Oct. 27, at the Derry Opera House.

– By Monica (Skiathitis) Charpentier.

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Town Administrator: Hooksett is attractive place to live

By Andre Garron
Hooksett Town Administrator

HOOKSETT – The 2020 Census showed us that the town of Hooksett remains a very attractive place to live, work and play. Hooksett was the second-fastest growing community in Merrimack County, moving from a population of 13,451 to 14,871, an 11% increase. Hooksett's economic expansion over the last few years has added Marmon Aerospace, Platinum Trucking, Amazon Expansion and Harley Davidson, relocating from Manchester to Hooksett. Granite Woods, Inc., plans to construct a 500,000-square-foot warehouse facility approved within Hooksett's Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District located on Hackett Hill Road, a testament to ongoing economic development efforts.

Following a recent revaluation, Hooksett experienced robust growth in the residential value and moderate growth in the commercial/industrial values. Home values have increased significantly over the last five years, from the median price of a home in 2019 of \$300,000. to \$466,000 in 2024. This represents a 55 percent increase in the price of a single-family house in town.

Several significant roadway projects are currently moving through the planning stages. The Route 3 Roadway widening project from Alice Avenue to Whitehall/Martins Ferry Road is being reviewed by the state Department of Transportation and Hooksett leaders. The project proposes to widen Route 3 from a two-lane roadway to a five-lane roadway. The project is also considering moving from two



Hooksett Town Administrator Andre Garron

Additionally, Hooksett is also reviewing upgrades to the Route 3A/Hackett Hill Road intersection and the Route 3A /Main Street intersection. The Route 3A/Hackett Hill Road intersection is currently a "T" stop sign intersection. The Route 3A/Main Street intersection is currently a traffic-light-controlled intersection. Both intersections are being considered to change from "T" intersections to

traffic light roundabout intersections. Several public workshop meetings have been held for both projects and Hooksett community leaders sincerely urge residents and property owners to come to these meetings and share your input on both projects. Details regarding future meetings can be found on Hooksett's website.

The 2024 deliberative session resulted in the community voting in a default budget for fiscal year 2024/25. This represents a reduction from the proposed budget for fiscal year 2024/25 of 3.5 percent. The administration of the default budget next year will be a significant challenge.

The current CPI at 3.4 percent, 11.3 percent increase in healthcare costs, 4-5 percent increase in personnel costs,

and 11.8 percent increase in tipping fees to haul Hooksett trash out of town, etc., presents challenging decisions on how best to continue to deliver services expected by Hooksett's constituents. The 2025/26 budget preparation will start after July 1, 2024. In September 2024, the Town Council will hold several 2025/26 budget preparation meetings. It is strongly recommended that residents and property owners attend these meetings and communicate with Town Council on what you would like to see included in the budget, don't want to see in the budget, or what the community should be thinking about funding for the future. The more input received, the better the budget can be aligned with the thoughts of the community.



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From left are Lucy Callahan, Matthew VanWagner, Jamie Godbout, Violet Lloyd, Emily Little, Reid Hamilton, Abby Chambers and Paige Reed at the National History Day Competition. (Courtesy photo)

Cawley students know their history

PLYMOUTH – Hooksett Cawley School students participated in the National History Day competition at Plymouth State University on April 8.

Matthew VanWagner, Maxine Ryan-Jacobson, Maggie McAuliffe, Jamie Godbout, Reid Hamilton, Violet Lloyd, Jaelynn Breton, Lucy Callanan, Abigail Brown, Paige Reed, Abby Chambers and Emily Little took part, with many placing in the top three.

Maxine Ryan-Jacobson won the prize for outstanding project in civics, which included all categories in both the junior and senior division.

Maxine Ryan-Jacobson, Maggie McAuliffe, Jamie Godbout, Reid Hamilton, Violet Lloyd, Emily Little and Lucy Callanan have been invited to compete in the national competition in Washington, D.C.

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HOOKSETT LIBRARY NEWS *by Mark Glisson*

HOOKSETT – The following events are taking place at the Hooksett Public Library:

Adult Programs

Adventure of a Lifetime: A Cross Country Cycling Journey – After retiring from 33 years of practicing family medicine in Suncook, Alan Stein, MD, decided to pedal his bicycle from San Francisco to Hampton Beach. It was the adventure of a lifetime. Join us on Wednesday, May 29, at 6:30 p.m. to learn about what it takes to pedal cross country, hear highlights of the trip, and see lots of photos of our great land.

“Make Your Own Mini” Wooden Flower Workshop –

Join Brittany Rouleau from White Birch Creations for a “Make Your Own Mini” Wooden Flower Workshop! Choose from a variety of pre-dyed Sola Wood Flowers and design your very own “Mini” arrangement. Two workshops will be held on Wednesday, June 5, at 5:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Summer Concert: Amherst Town Band – Join the Hooksett Public Library on Friday, June 7, at 6 p.m. for a delightful evening of music. The Amherst Town Band will play a wide variety of instrumental compositions. Gather your friends and family and get ready for a night filled with unforgettable music. This event is sponsored by the Friends of the Hooksett Library.

Songs of Old New Hampshire – Join the Hooksett Library on Friday, June 21, at 11 a.m. for this special program, generously sponsored by New Hampshire Humanities. Drawing heavily on the repertoire of traditional singer Lena Bourne Fish (1873-1944) of Jaffrey and Temple, Jeff Warner offers the songs and stories that in the words of Carl Sandburg, tell us “where we came from and

what brought us along.”

National Parks of the Northeastern United States – Not all visits to National Parks require New Englanders to make extensive travel plans. Join us on Wednesday, June 26, at 6:30 p.m. for this arm-chair travel presentation. Our adventure guide, Steve Farrar, will take us on a pictorial tour to visit six parks east of the Mississippi, stretching from the rocky seacoast of Maine to a world-class subterranean wonderworld in Kentucky.

To learn more and register for these events, visit hooksett.library.libcal.com.

Youth Programs

Summer Reading 2024: Adventures Begin at Your Library – Join us for our annual summer reading program for kids of all ages (0-18) with registration beginning the week of June 14. We will celebrate the theme “Adventures Begin at Your Library” with weekly themes including beaches and oceans, space, magic, fantasy, and more. We will have story-times, weekly crafts, STEAM programs and more.

Summer Reading Kick-off Concert with Mr. Aaron! – Join us as we kick off our summer reading program on June 20 at 6 p.m. with a concert by Mr. Aaron. Mr. Aaron brings unparalleled energy, enthusiasm and creativity to his concerts, albums, and videos. He was named Best Children’s Performer of 2018 and 2020 by New Hampshire Magazine.

Bubble Party – Join us on Monday, June 24, at 10 a.m. on the lawn of the Hooksett Library for our annual Bubble Party! We will have bubble machines, bubble pools and a water table filled with bubbles.

Tie Dye Day! – Our annual tie-dye day will take place on Friday, June 28, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Children, tweens and teens are all welcome to join us outside



on the library lawn. We will provide the instruction and the dye, you provide the items you want to tie dye (limit two items per person). Registration is required.

Science Heroes: Adventure of the Lost Treasure – Join us on Friday, July 12, at 10 a.m. for an exciting program with Science Heroes, where they will take us on a treasure-hunting adventure deep within the jungle! Along the way, the audience will help the performer conduct exciting science experiments that bring this story to life. Experiment with chemical reactions, air pressure, physical explosions and more! Don’t miss this exciting and interactive STEM learning adventure!

This program is sponsored by the Friends of the Hooksett Library.

Wildlife Encounters – Join us on Monday, July 15, at 10 a.m. as we welcome Wildlife Encounters and their ambassador animals to the Hooksett Library. This live-animal program is interactive, educational, and fun for all ages. At the end of the program, participants can have a hands-on experience with one of the animals! All of the animals visiting will be rainforest or South American animals.

This event requires registration due to space limitations.

Sponsored by the Friends of the Hooksett Library.

Magic Fred – Join us on Monday, July 22, at 10 a.m. for a high energy, family fun magic/comedy show packed with fun and surprises! Magic Fred will amaze the audience with a fun and entertaining magic show filled with tricks and il-

lusions.

This program is sponsored by the Friends of the Hooksett Library.

Touch-a-Truck – Join us to celebrate the end of Summer Reading with our annual Touch-A-Truck Event. Families can explore all types of vehicles and meet with people who help build, farm, protect and serve our community.

This program is sponsored by The Friends of the Hooksett Library, who will be providing refreshments.

To learn more and register

for these events, visit hooksett.library.libcal.com.

Library Resource Spotlight

Did you know that you can borrow WiFi hotspots, metal detectors, trail cams, a karaoke system, yard games and so much more, with your Hooksett Library card?

These materials are all part of our growing collection of Library of Things (LoTs). You can browse our collection as well as place holds on them with your Hooksett Library card from this link: bit.ly/HPL-LOTS.

Friends of Library mark 10th year

HOOKSETT – The Hooksett Public Library is an essential part of the community, providing access to books, resources and events for people of all ages. However, did you know that there is a nonprofit organization, Friends of the Hooksett Library, that helps to make the library even better?

The Friends of the Hooksett Library is a nonprofit that raises money through membership fees and fundraising events such as book sales, Easter Bunny photos, and Santa photos. These funds are used to provide additional programs for both youth and adults, making the library an even more valuable resource for the community.

Since their incorporation

as a nonprofit organization in 2014, the Friends of the Hooksett Library has been working tirelessly to make the public library an awesome place for everyone. They offer several levels of membership, all of which are very moderately priced, so that anyone can help support this important organization.

By becoming a member of the Friends of the Hooksett Library, you can help to ensure that the library continues to provide essential resources and events for the community. Join today at <https://hooksettlibrary.org/friends> and help make the Hooksett Public Library an even better place for everyone!

– Mary Ann Wells



CLUBS AND GROUPS

K Kids collect 500 books to donate

HOOKSETT – Hooksett Memorial School K Kids, sponsored by Hooksett Kiwanis, held a successful Book Drive. They promoted it at the school with posters and several promotional announcements. Books were collected at the school as well as at Merrimack County Savings Bank and Barrett Insurance.

They were able to collect more than 500 books. The books along with a handmade bookcase, made by Matt Barrett, were donated to the Elliot pediatric office in Hooksett. The books can be enjoyed while children are visiting the office and can also be taken home by their pediatric patients.



From left are Bob Willey, Kiwanis advisor for K Kids; Ashley Deangelis, Elliot Hospital Coordinator; four K Kids students; and Brandon Davini, school advisor for K Kids. (Courtesy photo)



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The New Hampshire Fiddle Ensemble played to an appreciative audience at the May meeting of the Hooksett Kiwanis Club at the Oscar Barn. (Courtesy photo)

Kiwanis enjoys Fiddle Ensemble

HOOKSETT – The Oscar Barn was filled with “The Sound of Music” from the New Hampshire Fiddle Ensemble as the Hooksett Kiwanis held its annual meeting May 1 in Hooksett.

The following slate of officers for 2024-2025 were confirmed:

• President - Shannon Ketcham

• President Elect - Amy Merrow

• Immediate Past President - Tim Sweeney

• Secretary - Judy Barrett

• Treasurer - Sue Willey

The New Hampshire Fiddle Ensemble, led by their Executive Director Ellen Carlson, played several songs including “Take me Home Country Roads” by John Denver and

“Brown Eyed Girl” by Van Morrison.

The Hooksett club was pleased to not only have good attendance of current members attending but also there were four prospective members attending.

For more about the Hooksett Kiwanis Club, visit www.hooksettkiwanis.org.

Families invited to Safety Day May 18

HOOKSETT – Hooksett Kiwanis Young Children’s Committee is hosting its third annual safety event on Saturday, May 18, at Cawley Middle School. The Hooksett Police Department and Fire Department are helping to coordinate this event.

The Hooksett Police department will conduct a car seat safety check, led by certified inspectors. Car seat safety and ensuring your child is buckled up properly can save your child’s life. It’s important

to sign up ahead of time to secure your spot for this valuable service. You can do so using the QR code.

Additionally, children in attendance will receive a new bicycle helmet.

Extra Care Auto Repair is sponsoring a bike rodeo, including checking bicycles for safety, and allowing children to ride their bike through an obstacle course. Children are

encouraged to bring their bikes along for this fun and educational activity.

The Fire Department will also be present with a fire truck for children to see up close and personal.

Above and Beyond Child-care will sponsor a popcorn and snack table.

If you have any questions or would like to help with the event, please contact Rebecca at rcollinskiwanis@gmail.com.

Write for The Hooksett Bridge!

Be a reporter for Hooksett - Email editor@thehooksettbridge.org.

CLUBS AND GROUPS

Scouts BSA Troop 292

HOOKSETT – Scouts BSA Troop 292 of Hooksett has had a busy spring and is heading into a fun-packed summer. Here's a look at some activities coming up.

On Sunday May 19, they're holding a "dine-to-donate" with Shorty's Mexican Restaurant on Bicentennial Drive. You can either dine in or order takeout, and drop your receipt in the basket at the hostess stand.

They're also in the middle of a clothing drive fundraiser, collecting any type of textile materials – clothing, sheets, blankets, towel, shoes, etc. They can pick up your bagged donations, or come to their public drop-off day on Saturday, June 8, at Barrett Insurance on Hooksett Road in front of Shaw's.

On Saturday, May 25, they'll be joining the Hooksett American Legion in placing fresh flags on veterans' graves in local cemeteries, and the following day they'll be marching in Hooksett's Memorial Day parade.

In June they're helping the Hooksett Garden Club with their annual

plant sale. In August they'll be helping the Hooksett police with National Night Out.

The troop is having a Fun Night on May 30 at Altitude trampoline park in Concord where the scouts can bounce the night away. This would be a great opportunity for any interested youth to come along and meet scouts while having a great time.

In June the troop will be taking a canoe trip on Newfound Lake, spending the weekend on an island and enjoying a variety of aquatic adventures. That leads into their week-long summer camp, the pinnacle of the scouting year.

To learn more about the troop, you're invited to a public information day on Saturday, June 15, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Lambert Park. They'll have some games, a free picnic lunch and can answer any questions you may have. You're also always welcome to visit a troop meeting. Email info@troop292nh.com or visit www.troop292nh.com.

Donate backpacks for Rotary project

HOOKSETT – The final school bell of 2024 hasn't even rung yet, but Seneca Eldredge and the other members of the Hooksett Area Rotary Club (HARC) have already been thinking nonstop about backpacks, crayons and folders for when area children go back to school in the fall.

What started in 2021, amidst the pandemic, HARC's Gear Up For School program aimed to provide area students with a brand new backpack and supplies to start their school year, is still going strong and growing. The mission is still the same, just on a larger scale.

Their goal for this year is an astonishing 2,800 backpacks to for kids in the greater Hooksett and Manchester area school districts, along with children in foster care statewide.

To accomplish that, donation efforts are ramping up through community members, businesses, other

organizations and events, such as "Dunk-a-Queen" at the Manchester Pride Festival on June 15. Don't forget about buying your ticket for thea vacation raffle! An Amazon Wishlist is also in the works.

The backpack and supply sorting setup and assembly is scheduled for Aug. 9 and 10, likely at Southern New Hampshire University's Millyard location in downtown Manchester. The location is still being discussed but HARC is actively looking for volunteers and businesses to assist in making this year's event a success.

Be sure to keep an eye out on the Hooksett Area Rotary Club's Facebook page for details at www.facebook.com/HooksettAreaRotaryClub.

To sign up to volunteer, become a community Patron for Education, or to make a donation, visit www.hooksettarea.rotary.org/gear-up-for-school.html.

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CLUBS AND GROUPS

Hooksett Lions Club turns 60



Hooksett Lions are celebrating 60 years of community service to Hooksett residents in need, assisting with eyecare, recycling eyeglasses, supporting scouting, student scholarships, sponsoring Hooksett Citizen of the Year recognition, and supporting District 44N and Lions International global efforts. The charter was presented to the club on May 1, 1964. (Courtesy photo)

Community leaders honored

HOOKSETT – The Hooksett Kiwanis Foundation 2024 Community Leaders Awards held at the Dining center at Southern New Hampshire University on May 15.

This year's awardees:

- Small Hooksett Business of the Year: **Under the Hood**

- Large Hooksett Business of the Year: **Macy Industries, Inc.**

- Hooksett Educator/Employee of the Year (grades K-8): **Mark Gregoire**

- Hooksett Municipal Employee of the Year: **Police Captain Jake Robie**

- Hooksett Adult Volunteer of the Year: **Vickie Desharnais**

- Hooksett Youth Volunteer of the Year: **Kara McIntyre**

- Community Impact Award: **Fellowship Church – Granite State**

Many pitch in on Hooksett cleanup

HOOKSETT – On what started out to be a raw gloomy Saturday May 20, the day turned out to be nothing but a bright and glorious day for the Hooksett community. More than 150 volunteers from various service organizations, including BSA Scouts, local businesses, churches, friends and neighborhood groups, registered for the cleanup event.

“Team Up to Clean-Up” was the theme for the third annual Beautify Hooksett Day.”

Before their day of hard work, the groups enjoyed coffee and cider donuts, courtesy of Roadside Common Man. Over 20 teams cleaned up the roadsides.

Additionally, Donati Park and Lambert Park were both cleaned up. The Kiwanis

Club organized cleanup along Head’s Pond Trail and the Conservation Commission organized cleanup along the recently completed Riverwalk Trail. After the event, everyone’s hard work was rewarded at a social gathering at Lambert Park where they were treated to wood-fired pizzas from New England Tap House and sandwiches from Robie’s Store.

Hooksett Community Kitchen offers free meals monthly

HOOKSETT – The Hooksett Community Kitchen offers free dinners for anyone wishing to share a meal and friendship at the Congregational Church of Hooksett, 5 Veterans Drive.

Dinners take place the

third Monday of each month. The following menus are planned:

May 20 – Italian chicken, mashed potatoes, roasted vegetables and ice cream sundaes. May’s meal is sponsored by the Hooksett Area Rotary Club.

June 17 – Pulled chicken, potato salad and strawberry shortcake.

July 15 – Chef’s salad, coleslaw and cookies.

Aug. 19 – Annual cookout.

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Hooksett Lions hear from Cub Scouts



Hooksett Cub Scout Pack 292 provided a presentation at the Hooksett Lions Club’s May 1 meeting, talking about the great scouting activities and community service projects they have been doing this year. The Lions Club is the chartering organization of Cub Pack 292. (Courtesy photo)

CLUBS AND GROUPS



Hooksett Girl Scouts Ryleigh and Jade Covey with Hooksett firefighters. (Courtesy photo)

Girl Scouts honor police, firefighters

HOOKSETT – Girl Scouts Ryleigh Covey and Jade Grant made sure local police and firefighters feel appreciated. They gathered donations at their cookie booth gave 33 packages of hand picked Girl Scout Cookies.

The fire department gave these girls a tour of the department, the trucks and the ambulance while they were there. They learned about the different types of hoses they use, the clothing they wear and the things an

ambulance carries.

They got the chance to speak with a few officers at the police department as well, and the dispatch staff too. They heard the dispatch on the radio announcing that there were cookies at the station, which made them giggle.

The police officers and the firefighters were all grateful for these delicious treats, thanking the girls for their hard work.

Hooksett Garden Club update

HOOKSETT – The Hooksett Garden club's year started in February and they have had several events since then, including a Yankee Swap and a lunch from the Back Room in February, a program on Backyard Birdscaping presented by Steve Hale, and a program on the environmental and social benefits of planting sunflowers by club member Jennifer Kippen.

Not all programs have been finalized for the upcoming season, but the ones that have include: "Plant Design for any Size Area" with Rodney Streetter of Stone Blossom Landscaping and Design in Manchester on May 22; Jane Beaulieu of Manchester, who will speak about her urban oasis in Manchester that was featured in the 2022 Palace Theatre Garden Tour on July 24; floral designer Fran Bader who

will give a demonstration on Sept. 25; and on Oct. 23, club member Elena Whitfield will show how to plant a bulb garden in a pot that will bloom in the spring.

The club's annual plant sale will take place on June 1, rain or shine, from 9 a.m. until noon at the Hooksett Library.

The club maintains several sites in Hooksett, including the public library gardens and planters, the welcome areas at Exit 9 and The Point, the Patriotic Tree at Donati Field, the town trough, and large whiskey barrels at each end of the Lilac Bridge. The 52 large flower boxes on the Memorial Bridge should soon be in full bloom with pansies and spring flowers.

Membership is open to all. See www.hooksettnhgardenclub.org.

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Hooksett Garden Club Annual Plant Sale

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31 Mount St. Mary's Way, Hooksett Plenty of Free Parking

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◆ Herbs ◆ Bulbs ◆ House Plants

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- Garden-Themed Yard Sale • Raffle with Items Donated from Local Crafters and Businesses

SUNCOOK

First bells ring at new K-8 school

Allenstown Community School welcomes its first students after a six-year effort to replace old buildings

ALLENSTOWN – Friday, May 3, 2024, marked the beginning of a new educational journey for the children of Allenstown.

Following an extended April vacation break, the children said goodbye to the Allenstown Elementary School and Armand R. Dupont School and entered the new Allenstown Community School with smiles and excitement.

Following the first day of classes, a ribbon cutting ceremony was held to dedicate the new school's stage to former Superintendent Peter Warburton. The gym/auditorium has bleacher seating, something the old schools did not have.

The library is huge, with a sectional couch for students to relax on. Classrooms have the latest technology, and a consumer science classroom offers three kitchens for students to use. There's also a dedicated art room.

The Allenstown Community School is an 83,000-square-foot, state of the art, K-8 educational facility located at 171 River Road. The property is situated on a 59-acre parcel and offers ample opportunities for future growth. The building meets all state Department of Education requirements, offers a safe learning environment, and provides the children with new and exciting spaces, suitable for 21st century learning, which the former facilities could not offer.

The Allenstown Community School project was the result of significant deficiencies and space requirements identified in a feasibility study con-



Allenstown Community School Principal Shannon Krueger stands in front of the new school's mascot, hand painted by a local artist from Allenstown. (Michael Frascinella Photo)



The new Allenstown Community School. (Tony LaCasse Photo)

ducted by Harriman in 2019. A renovation/repairs committee, along with a new building committee, were put into place to address the concerns noted in the report and provide a vi-

able solution to Allenstown's children while being sensitive to tax impacts.

Items of concern consisted of the following:

- Allenstown Elementary School, a 35,440-square-foot facility, was built in 1962 on a 6.1 acre parcel. In 2019, enrollment totaled 195 students, with a building capacity of 179.

- Armand R. Dupont School, built as a parochial school in 1973, a 36,030-square-foot facility, was situated on a 2.5 acre parcel. Enrollment in 2019 totaled 160 students, with a capacity of 144.

The cost to renovate, expand and repair the elementary and Dupont buildings ranged from \$14 million to \$18 million and were limited at best, failing to address long term issues. The cost to build a new middle school for Grades 5-8 was estimated to be \$24 million.

In comparison, the Allenstown Community School total project cost was \$32,499,360. A New Hampshire School Building Aid grant covered \$19,499,736 of that. The remaining portion, financed by the New Hampshire Municipal Bond Bank in the amount of \$12,999,624, was approved by the citizens of Allenstown in March 2020. This financing, payable over a 20-year term, is priced favorably at a fixed rate of 2.16 percent. The building committee determined that a new build for a K-8 facility was the most viable option for the children of this community.

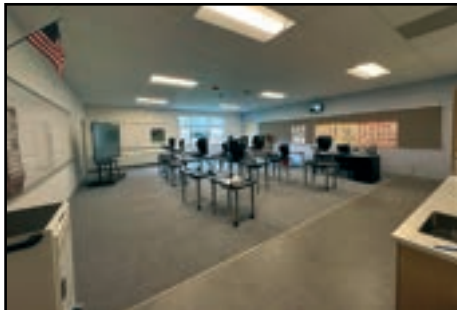
– Melaine Boisvert

SUNCOOK

A look at the new school facilities



The new library. (Tony LaCasse Photo)



A classroom. (Tony LaCasse Photo)



Consumer science kitchen. (Tony LaCasse Photo)



The gym and auditorium. (Tony LaCasse Photo)





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SUNCOOK - News of Allenstown and Pembroke

Allenstown nears completion of rail trail to Hooksett

By Michael Frascinella
Hooksett Bridge

ALLENSTOWN – Get ready to lace up your hiking boots or bring your bike to the new Allenstown Rail Trail, which connects to the Riverwalk Trail in Hooksett.

Allenstown Highway Department workers are close to completing the walking trail built on the bed of the old Boston & Maine Railroad. This railroad once ran from Manchester and Hooksett past the China Mill in Allenstown and across the Suncook River into Pembroke and Concord. Opening day is tentatively set for mid-June 2024.

This project was inspired by the New Hampshire Rail Trails Coalition, which promotes conversion of old New Hampshire railroad corridors into trails for year round recreation.

Since December 2022, countless days have been spent by workers cutting down and hauling away the jungle of shrubs, bittersweet vines and trees that had taken over the railroad bed. Tons of crushed stone and stone dust were hauled in and spread out. Low bridges for drainage were rebuilt. The town would have faced a large cash expenditure were it not for the generous donation of paving materials by Allenstown Aggregate and the donation of reclaimed timbers from a local contractor.

The Allenstown Rail Trail, about 10 feet wide, runs from the lower end of Ferry Street near Canal Street southward to the rail trail coming from Hooksett. It traverses wetland that is dense with skunk cabbage, shrubs, vines and trees. For most of its length, the bed



Allenstown Rail Trail (Michael Frascinella Photo)

is about 3-8 feet above the surrounding terrain. It is designed for non-motorized travel only.

The project began to take shape in May 2021 when selectmen signed a purchase and sales agreement for three railroad lots. In July 2021, selectmen approved the transfer of \$17,900 from the Parks and Recreation Capital Reserve

Fund to the general fund for the purchase. Later that year, it was determined that the railroad bed needed to be cleaned of barbed wire, shrubs, vines and dead trees. Locations for bridges were also identified.

Taking a tour

During an inspection tour in mid-April, Road Agent Chad Pelissier pointed out sev-

eral concrete foundations.

“We determined that this was the base for an old water tower that was used to refill the boilers on the steam engines,” he said. “I’m going to ask Armand Verville at the Historical Society for ideas for signage.”

A huge boulder could also be seen a short distance from the bed.

“This rock used to provide outdoor entertainment for local kids in the pre-social media era,” Pelissier said.

Work began in December 2022 when the trail was roughed out from Ferry Street to the trail at the Hooksett town line. Starting at Ferry Street, Pelissier explained how shrubs, vines and trees were steadily cut down and hauled away. Some of the invasive bittersweet vines choking the trees were over one inch in diameter. With a lot of wetland on either side of the roadbed, old bridges had to be rebuilt to allow for drainage.

“We pulled up the old timbers and repaired it with ‘swamp logs.’” Pelissier said of the bridge. “Those are heavy timbers laid one beside another on wet ground to support construction equipment passing through.”

One day in June 2023, Pelissier took a phone call from a local contractor. The company had reclaimed a number of timbers from a renovation project and offered to donate them to Allenstown, to which Pelissier

See TRAIL next page



Old bridge. (Michael Frascinella Photo)



Old bridge. (Michael Frascinella Photo)

SUNCOOK - News of Allenstown and Pembroke

Charlie Connor named Pembroke's Citizen of Year

By Patricia Fowler

Hooksett Bridge

PEMBROKE – Charles “Charlie” Connor, a longtime resident of Pembroke was presented the Citizen of the Year Award for his lifetime commitment to public service on March 16. The Citizen of the Year is chosen by Pembroke town officials and was presented at Pembroke’s Town Meeting.

As member of the U.S. Air Force during the Korean War he humbly served his country. Connor began his career in state government in 1968 working most of his professional life

for the state of New Hampshire for both the legislative and executive branches. During his 28 years working for the Legislature, he became well versed in state budget and formulated legislation, excelled in knowledge of Medicare and Medicaid, provided guidance to our Congressional delegation in Washington, D.C., and served as budget director for Gov. Jeanne Shaheen.

An intelligent man, Pembroke was fortunate Connor found time to share his expertise for the benefit of his town. He volunteered at St. John the Baptist Church for several years as budget analyst and bookkeeper. He served 16 years on the Pembroke Budget Com-



Charlie Connor (Courtesy Photo)

mittee, nine of which were as chairperson. Connor was deputy treasurer for one year and assumed the position of town treasurer for the next seven years.

His recommendation to the Pembroke Select Board that property taxes

be collected twice a year was adopted, saving the town tens of thousands of dollars.

There are many other unsung achievements to society and goodness to others.

Connor might be most recognized for his quiet, modest, unassuming demeanor. Generous in his well-rounded, expansive knowledge, he is a fascinating conversationalist on any subject. His most successful life attributes are his sincere devotion to his town, neighbors, friends, family and ultimately his wife, Cecile, and daughter, Susan, whom he loved dearly.

Connor’s approach to life in general has always been and continues to be positive and exemplifies what we all should attempt to imitate. A true humanitarian.

Charlie’s response upon accepting this distinguished award was “I’m pleased, honored, and humbled.”

TRAIL - cont.

Continued from Page 28

said, “You bet! I sure could use them for our rail trail project and maybe others! Thanks!”

He sent Allenstown Highway Department trucks to retrieve the timbers, some of which were up to 12x14 inches thick. Those timbers were then used to rebuild the remaining small bridges.

Once the railroad bed was cleared and graded, the next phase was to truck in the crushed stone base.

Allenstown Aggregate, in a spirit of economic generosity, offered to donate 3/4-inch crushed stone and stone dust from their quarry. When asked what prompted this amazing donation, Manager Aaron Firman said “Allenstown Aggregate has been a successful part of the town for many years and we decided that, as a member of the community, it was important to give something back to the town. The Rail Trail Project was a good way for us to support the town, so we donated the gravel and stone dust so that residents and visitors can have a new, safe place for hiking and biking.”

Highway Department dump trucks loaded at the quarry and dumped the stone along the railroad bed. A steer skidder then spread the stone.

How did the trucks get back to a paved road? At the Hooksett end of the walk, Pelissier said “They drove south

on the railroad bed to McNamara’s Farm, where a dirt farm road led back to South Main Street.”

When asked about the electrical insulators nailed to trees, he laughed and said that “When Mr. McNamara used to keep cows, he installed an electric fence along the railroad bed to keep the cows from wandering away.”

To prevent another takeover of vegetation, Pelissier pointed out a roll of woven geo-textile fabric.

“We are going to spread this material over the entire length of Allenstown’s trail to smooth out the surface. Then we will cover it with a layer of stone dust, once again donated by Allenstown Aggregate. The stone dust will provide a final smooth surface for walking or biking.”

Pelissier also mentioned that “You might have noticed that the Highway Department has been accepting wood chips recently. Well, we are going to use that material as a final touch to dress the edges of the rail trail.”

To finish it all up, Armand Verville, president of the Allenstown Historical Society, is building a welcome sign to be posted on Ferry Street. A park bench was being considered in memory of longtime Selectman Sandy McKenney, who died on Feb. 21.

Under investigation is a structure to cross the Suncook River and join the rail trail in Pembroke.

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SUNCOOK - News of Allenstown and Pembroke

Pembroke faces school cuts after tax backlash

PEMBROKE – At the March 9 Pembroke Town Meeting, a tax revolt by voters cut \$3 million from the 2024-25 proposed budget of \$34,093,987, a reduction of 10 percent.

The cut reduced the school budget to an amount close to the 2023-24 budget (\$30,779,520). The \$3.3 million proposed jump would have increased annual taxes by an estimated \$2,300 for a \$300,000 home. The average Pembroke home price is around \$425,000. This increase was deemed necessary due to rapidly increasing costs for all parts of the budget.

According to The Concord

Monitor, Superintendent Patty Sherman suggested eliminating \$2.3 million worth of staff positions and cutting \$671,000 from the non-personnel costs to reach the new budget.

Sherman indicated that about half the cuts would be made at Pembroke Academy, 37 percent would be made at the Pembroke Hill Elementary School, and 13 percent would be made at the Three Rivers Middle School.

Both Pembroke and Allenstown students attend Pembroke Academy, along with a few Hooksett students who choose to attend the high school.

Allenstown to add second ambulance, workers

ALLENSTOWN – Allenstown will soon have four new ambulance workers, and hopes to add a second ambulance.

“Four new full-time people are to start on May 28 for training and will be ready for shift work by mid-June,” said Fire Chief Eric Lambert. “They come from experi-

enced backgrounds and two of them come from in-house! All of them are to be cross-trained as advanced EMTs and firefighters.”

The town’s second ambulance is on order.

“We are awaiting a chassis for the ambulance, which is to be built with a delivery date of early 2025,” said

Lambert. “When our vendor receives the chassis, they will start building the ambulance body. There was a scheduling delay due to a shortage of chassis at all the vendors.”

All this effort is being made in preparation for the planned July 1 departure from Tri-Town EMS.

Tate is new town clerk/tax collector

ALLENSTOWN – After long-serving Town Clerk/Tax Collector Kathleen Pelissier gave notice last August, selectmen sought applicants for these positions. One person holds both positions.

Resident Jackie Tate was appointed in January, ran for office, and was successfully elected for a three-year term

beginning on March 12, 2024.

Tate later nominated resident Matt LaFlamme to be Deputy Town Clerk/Tax Collector starting on April 1.

Town Clerk/Tax Collector office hours are Monday to Thursday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. with future enhanced hours coming later this year. The office will be closed from

time to time as the staff continues to attend Town Clerk and DMV training classes and workshops, but operations are on the road back to normal.

It would be best to check the town website for the latest news on business days and hours.

Suncook United Methodist Church activities

PEMBROKE – Suncook United Methodist Church, 156 Main St., has a lot planned for the spring and summer. We hope you will join some of our activities. We love meeting new friends.

We are participating in Pembroke’s Community Yard Sale on May 18. Come see what we have.

On May 25 we will have a Game Night. It starts with a free potluck supper provided by church members. Bring a game or play one from our large collection of competitive and cooperative games. We have games for all ages. Some of our games include Catan, Ticket to Ride, Scrabble, Exploding Kittens, Castle Panic, My First Castle Panic, and many more. Join us beginning



at 5 p.m.

On June 1 we will host a public supper. The menu will be grilled hot dogs and burgers, baked beans, potato salad, coleslaw, and assorted summer desserts. The price is \$12 for adults, \$6 for kids 6-12 and kids 5 and under eat free. The supper is served buffet style and takeouts are available.

We expect to have a game night in July as well but the date has not been determined.

Watch our Facebook page for news.

In August we will host Vacation Bible School for all ages. Join us Aug. 13-17, 5:30-8 p.m. Camp Firelight, A Summer Camp Adventure with God, will be fun and faith-filled for the whole family. It is free and each night starts with a light supper.

As usual, we will be selling our delicious fried dough at Pembroke and Allenstown Old Home Day, Aug. 24. Stop by and see us.

Of course we also invite you to worship with us each Sunday morning. worship begins at 10 a.m. Sunday School is available for kids 3 and up. The service is live-streamed as well. See www.suncookumc.org for details.

PEMBROKE

TOWN WIDE

YARD SALE

WHEN
May 18, 2024
8am – 4pm

WHERE
Your Location

Pembroke Women's Club will continue to advertise for this event. Signs will be delivered before the event and picked up after.

REGISTRATION
Email: PWC.GFWC.NH@gmail.com
Venmo: PWCNH2349 (in the memo write your house #)
Or Mail Checks to: P.O. BOX 125 Suncook

Cost: \$15
*Registration and payment must be received by **MAY 11**.

Details - You organize and set-up, we advertise and put you on the map! Our map and directory will have a special mark at your address and some items you will have for sale.

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WANT TO SELL?
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FREE MAPS
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At Pembroke Library
Thurs. 5/16 - Fri. 5/17,
Sun-Sun. &
Sat. 5/18. 9am-11am
Printed maps are cost \$2



Benefiting
Pembroke Women's Club
Community events and Scholarship programs.

SUNCOOK - News of Allenstown and Pembroke

Celebrate Pembroke-Allenstown Old Home Day Aug. 24

SUNCOOK – Pembroke and Allenstown Old Home Day is an annual community event held on the fourth Saturday in August - this year on Aug. 24.

The purpose of Old Home Day is to promote and encourage families, neighbors and friends to gather for an enjoyable day. The theme this year is “Let the Adventure Begin.”

The celebration kicks off with pre-parade live music entertainment at the Allenstown Town Hall gazebo and the reviewing stand in Suncook Village. The parade starts at 10 a.m. on School Street in Allenstown, proceeds to Main Street and ends at Memorial Park in Pembroke.

The day features free admission,

parking, entertainment, balloon animals, door prizes, a petting zoo and fireworks.

Memorial Park activities

- The National Anthem sung at noon, signifying the start of festivities
- Hay wagon rides
- 9-hole mini golf
- raffles (adult, children’s and 50/50)
- Antique/classic car, truck and tractor display
- Wide variety of food vendors
- Crafters and informational booths
- Two stages of entertainment
- Inflatable fun passes
- Children’s games
- Petting zoo

- Dunking booth
- Memorial 3-on-3 basketball tournament

• Fantastic fireworks at dusk sponsored by Associated Grocers of New England.

• Police, fire and ambulance vehicles on display.

A Safety Command Center will be on site monitoring the premises throughout the event.

No pets, alcohol, weapons or smoking are permitted at the park. Bicycles, scooters, skateboards and roller blades are prohibited. Police will reinforce – they reserve the right to refuse admission to anyone who is a risk to the safety and wellbeing of others.

There is no ATM located at Memorial Park. The nearest ATM is at Sully’s on Route 3 in Allenstown.

Old Home Day is unable to accept checks, cash apps or debit/credit cards.

Pembroke and Allenstown Old

Home Day is a nonprofit organization funded by donations from local businesses and individuals.

Sponsors and volunteers have given countless hours dedicated to this event. This is a perfect opportunity for high school students to earn community service hours.

Organizers are always looking for new members and volunteers for set up and clean up. Please contact Jenn at 603-545-7391. Call Steve at 603-340-1487 with any other questions.

To sponsor an event or make a monetary donation, call JoAnn at 603-369-2369 or Linda at 503-759-5984.

To donate prizes or certificates for the Old Home Day Raffle contact Pat at 603-340-1497.

Check out the Pembroke and Allenstown Old Home Day Facebook page for more information and up to date postings as well as the website: www.pembrokeallenstownoldhomeday.org.

Summer concert series starts

ALLENSTOWN – The Economic Development Committee has signed up a slate of four local music groups to perform concerts during the summer months to help build community spirit and provide residents with an enjoyable time together.

All concerts will be held outside the Allenstown Town Hall on Sunday afternoons from 3-6 p.m., weather permitting.

In tandem, a Cruise Night will be held for classic car buffs. A fire truck for youngsters to explore has been invited.

• May 19, Out on Bail – A local five-piece band with many family members in law enforcement (hence the name) performs classic rock, coun-

try, oldies and blues from the ’60s, ’70s, ’80s and ’90s.

• June 23, Jennifer Mitchell Band – A professional four-piece band with pro sound equipment that plays a variety of music from today’s hits to some of the oldies. Jennifer is an award winning singer/songwriter.

• Aug. 11, BoneShakerz – A local three-piece band playing hard rock including Bowie, U2, Zappa and Zeppelin.

• Sept. 15, Bob DePaolo – By combining the flute, keyboard, conga drums, and harmonica, DePaolo interprets the music of Jethro Tull, Dylan, Santana, Vanity Fair, Eric Clapton, the Beatles, and others in a one-man band format.



Shirley's KITCHEN (Est. 2023)

Wed - Sat 7am - 2pm
Sun 7am - 1pm

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shirleyskitchen2023@gmail.com

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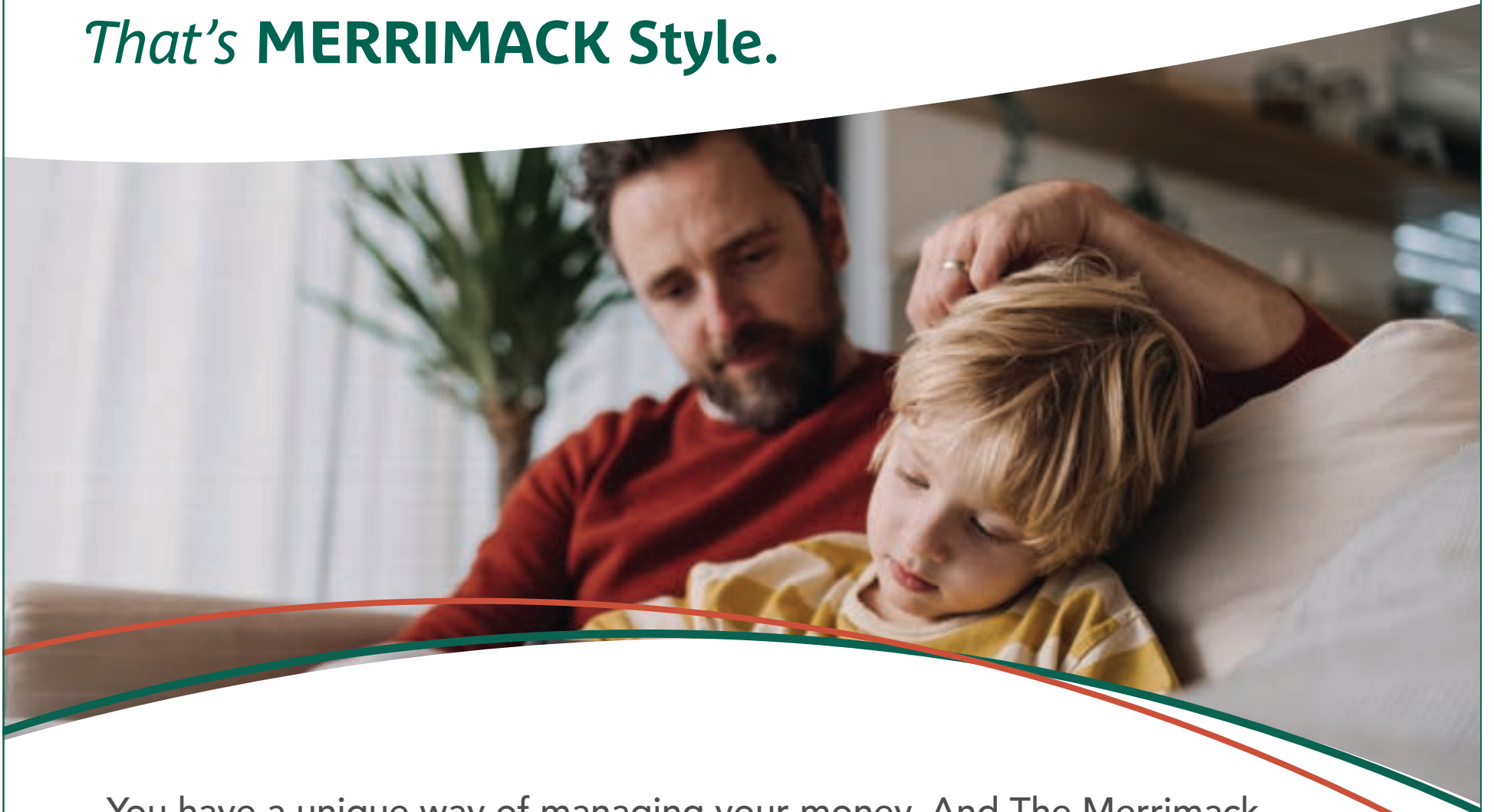
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