



# The Laconia Daily Sun

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FREE

## Suspect in Tilton crypt theft charged

By **GABRIEL PERRY**  
THE LACONIA DAILY SUN

**TILTON** — Police have charged Fred Cross of Northfield in the April incident at a town cemetery where the Tilton family mausoleum was broken into and brass objects taken from the burial site.

Cross, 53, who goes by “Cricket,” was arrested and booked at 7 p.m. on Friday into the Belknap County House of Corrections, according to jail records. Cross is charged with felonies including criminal mischief, theft and interference with a cemetery or burial ground. He is held without bail.

Cross is accused of breaking into the Tilton family crypt at some

point the night of April 15, and stealing ornate brass bars, knobs handles and other hardware.

Tilton police served search warrants in Ashland and Northfield that led to the recovery of brass items believed to be those taken from the cemetery, along with over \$100,000 of construction equipment reported stolen from Concord and Ashland and a stolen 9mm handgun, according to a police press release.

Officers also recovered a decorative brass ring which had been reported stolen from a chandelier located at the Tilton Mansion last spring.

The press release stated authorities anticipate filing additional

charges against Cross.

Police could not divulge if all missing brass fixtures were recovered or what stolen construction equipment was found, citing an ongoing investigation.

The family mausoleum, located atop the tallest hill in the older portion of Park Cemetery in Tilton, was erected to house the remains of the family which founded the town. Cemetery Sexton Paul Tierney discovered the vandalism when making his morning rounds of the property.

The vandalism resulted in the exposure of the casket of Joy Tilton, who previously served in the New

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## State reviewing sale of Camp Menotomy

Charitable trusts unit deals with any purchases involving deed restrictions

By **ADAM DRAPCHO**  
THE LACONIA DAILY SUN

**MEREDITH** — The sale of the former home of Camp Menotomy, a summer camp operated by the Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts, went under agreement almost as quickly as it was advertised for sale.

The site, which for generations had served as a summer camp for children, seemed destined to be developed into fine lakeside homes, according to a statement from the buyer. That quick deal is now on hold, though, as the state is looking into the propriety of the transaction.

The property at 386 Meredith Neck Road was listed for sale on Feb. 9, with an asking price of \$20 million, according to Zillow.com. The next day, the listing was updated to “Contingent.”

At issue are the terms of the deed for the 95-acre property, which has shorefront on Lake Winnepesaukee. The deed, recorded in 1962, permits the sale of the property if the Arlington, Massachusetts, Girl Scouts, or their successor, or no other organization wishes to “hire the camp grounds for camping purposes, and if no other organization can be found to utilize the site for camping purposes...”

The deed also states that, in the event of a sale, the trustees “shall invest the proceeds of such sale” into investments, and use the proceeds from those investments for “camperships or scholarships for girls of Arlington” who are members of the local Girl Scouts organization.

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## Celebrating mom with food, fun and flowers

Dawn Marsh, right, holds flowers bought for her for Mother's Day by her daughter Ashley Marsh, who is ready to enjoy a crepe from Tin Can Co., at the Lakes Region Food Truck Festival at Tanger Outlets Tilton on Saturday afternoon. See more photos, page 8. (Daniel Sarch/The Laconia Daily Sun photo)

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**Former Wolfeboro resident sentenced for animal torture, killings** see page 6



## Melinda French Gates to resign from Gates Foundation

(NYT) — Melinda French Gates, one of the world's most influential philanthropists and the ex-wife of Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates, announced Monday that she would leave the foundation that she and her former husband founded nearly a quarter-century ago.

In a post on the social platform X, French Gates, 59, said she was "immensely proud" of the work of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation,

which the former couple started in 2000 with an endowment of around \$20 billion after merging two separate foundations.

"After careful thought and reflection, I have decided to resign from my role as co-chair of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation," French Gates said in a statement. She added that the foundation was "in strong shape," and that it was the right time for her to move "into the next chapter of my philanthropy."



The gate to 386 Meredith Neck Road, formerly the site of Camp Menotomy, this spring. The trust that owns the land wishes to sell it to a residential developer, but the state is reviewing the sale to see if deed restrictions were followed. (Adam Drapcho/The Laconia Daily Sun photo)

### CAMP from page 1

Michael Haley, director of charitable trusts for the NH Department of Justice, said in an email that the state is looking into the specific restrictions in the deed.

"The Charitable Trusts Unit, under the supervision of the attorney general, is reviewing the proposed transaction to determine whether these two requirements under the deed have been met," Haley said. He said the review has included contact with the sellers' representative "to determine what actions the sellers took to adhere to the deed requirements," and that, "At this time, no formal investigation has been initiated."

Haley declined to offer a timeline for the review process, and said such review was routine for this kind of sale.

"Whenever the Charitable Trusts Unit is made aware of a real estate transaction that involves land subject to charitable restrictions, we review the transaction as a matter of course to ensure that the restrictions are adhered to," Haley said.

Town tax records list the owner of the property as "Camp Menotomy Trust." Thomas Smurzynski, an Arlington, Massachusetts-based attorney listed as the a trustee, did not return calls for comment.

## The Preserve at Whispering Pines

The intended buyer of the property is Jeremy Martin, principal owner of Lakes Region Design Group, who intends to use the

property for the construction of seven lakeside residences.

Scott Tranchemontagne, a spokesperson for the project, said his client intends to move forward with the development once the state concludes its review.

"The buyer is aware of the regulatory requirements and Thomas Donovan, the former director of Charitable Trusts at the NH Attorney General's Office, is working with the government officials on the buyer's behalf, to satisfy the applicable procedural requirements to close the sale," Tranchemontagne said. "The buyer is committed to close the transaction and proceed with the proposed low density, environmentally sensitive project."

### 'A financial decision'

A spokesperson for the Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts, which operated Camp Menotomy for more than 60 years, said the scouting organization was never formally notified the property would be sold. However, she said GSEM had indicated to the trustees of Camp Menotomy Trust that they would no longer have a need to lease the property.

The spokesperson, who asked that her name not be used because the organization hadn't yet drafted a formal statement, explained that camping activity had "dwindled significantly" in the years prior to COVID, and that it hadn't been used at all during the pandemic.

"It was a financial decision" to move on from Camp Menotomy, the spokesperson said.

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